Student Government Association Minutes from October 24, 2012

October 24, 2012

Present: President Bergenn, Vice President Braun, Treasurer Alaimo, Senators Anderson, Baldassario, Berriault, Choplick, Dattilo, Fellows, Fernandez, Fung, Germaine, Hubbard, Kitchener, Lopez, Manento, Marcelli, Mgushi, Mills, Narcisse, Ott, Radden, Rodriguez, Sonet, Towler, Truex, Zohlman, Fox, Testa, Sejdiraj, Fallanca, Kirk, Lee, Szabo

Meeting called to order at 3:10 p.m. by President Bergenn.

Motion to approve minutes from October 17, 2012 Meeting. (Mills, Sonet)

Motion Passes Unanimously

Student Affairs Report

Jason Powell, Chief of Police: Mr. Powell spoke to give more information on the assault that happened earlier in the week on Tuesday at 5p. There was an assault on Paul Manafort Drive, but the two assailants fled. They are investigating the robbery/assault so they can’t release any further details, but they are making progress.

Bergenn: Does the police thing there is a raised sense of danger on campus?

Powell: The assailants fled so there is no more danger than any other day, things like this happen in cities, but they don’t anticipate anything happening again any time soon.

Towler: If it happened at 5p how come it took until 7p for students to be notified.

Powell: two hours is a good time, they have 24 hours to notify people and all the information just had to go through the right people and there can be a lot of miscommunications.

Truex: where on Paul Manafort did it happen?

Powell: it started near Campus View, crossed the street to near East Hall and moved over the sidewalk to where the two sidewalks intersect near Well St.

Szabo: Was this random or did they know each other?
Powell: that’s still being looked into

**Guest Speaker:**

_Cindy Cayer: Office for Institutional Advancement_

This year they want students to be involved in the Student Giving Campaign. They want student leaders from SGA, IRC, SUBOG and CAN to help get people involved. The event kicks off on Nov. 4 and runs through Nov. 20. There will be different events to get involved like the Nov. 10 football game and the Living Room Conversation Events. There are incentives this year, for the first 100 gifts donated members of the student committees will work with the work crews for a day. Then for every 50 gifts another administrator will join them. It all culminates to the Pack the House basketball game on Nov. 16. SGA has yet to pick an activity but everyone is invited the a BBQ from 10-12p on Nov. 10, before the football game in the alumni tent. Eric is sending out an email for you to RSVP to the event.

Berriault: how do I use my own money to donate a gift?

Cayer: You can make a gift any time online and you can choose what destination in the school it goes to. Another reminder we are still trying to think of a slogan for the drive so any ideas let Eric know.

**Public Hearing**

Ian Manignone: IRC hopes the SGA has a good day

Dr. Tordenti: we’re extremely fortunate to have a police department like ours working on the case. In terms of the new residence hall, the BOR has approved it. The plans now go to the secretary to the OPM and then the state treasurer.

**President’s Report**

**Committee Budgets:**

- Student Life was approved $7700
- Public Affairs was approved $27,675, with a lot of that going to past events like pep rally and the Devil’s Den
- Academic Affairs was approved $1000

Just let a member of the e-board know before you make a purchase.

We are having a meeting to lock down details on the spring concert, more details of that to come.

NickMercier will be stopping by to speak on the New Britain ordinances.
With new business I recommend keeping FC13-038 separate because I’ll have to pass the chair to Vice President Braun.

I’ll be collaborating with different clubs for the Student Giving Campaign so I would also like to work with their liaisons and Public Affairs may want to think of a separate event. All the information will be sent out in an email after the meeting.

**Vice President’s Report**

New senator training went well

The second liaison email was sent out, they are due by next Wednesday, Oct. 31. New liaison assignments were attached to the email too, any questions ask me.

**Treasurer’s Report**

Monday was a good meeting and a lot got done. There were a few Line-Item changes and we decided to deny the exercise science contingency.

Nov. 9 contingency and co-sponsorships are due!

Dattilo: can you speak more on the dance team?

Truex: they don’t need $500 to travel to games so they want to move it flights for nationals, they already have the pom-poms from athletics so they want to move money towards nationals and they think their talents are better suited for nationals rather than a local competition so they want to move that money.

Baldassario: did they request money for nationals and did any get denied?

Alaimo: travel was denied to stay on budget

Bergenn: on pages 5 and 6, the motion was withdrawn because the team came to the meeting as we were talking about it so all the information is on page six.

Dattilo: On page 10, did no one speak against the $15,000 recommendation?

Bergenn: no I spoke a lot about it on open floor of the meeting

**Committee Reports:**

**Student Life:**

Sonet: Competition for a Cause: It starts up next week and we’re running it like a multi-tiered system with the CCSU and New Britain communities. For instance clubs will go against clubs, administration versus administration and academic departments against academic departments. There are a lot of groups involved in the communities and I’ll have a full list soon. This is going
to be a city-wide competition running Nov. 1-14th. Bins will be outside Kaiser, memorial hall and the student center, while departments are responsible for their own bins. Scoring will be based on a points system, gift cards will be counted by dollar amount while large cans get 2 points and small cans get 1. Bins will be emptied every Monday, Wednesday and Friday and the Facebook page will be updated those days to keep it competitive. A banquet will be held Friday Nov. 16 for everyone who is involved. This is a great way to show Central Cares.

Berriault: will the SGA have their own team?
Sonet: Since Student Life is hosting it that would be a conflict of interest

Berriault: can we keep track of how many each group has?
Sonet: the page will be updated every Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

Truex: where will the food be donated to?
Sonet: the YMCA supplied me with a list of registered food pantries in New Britain.

Public Affairs:
Fernandez: COSGA applications are out and due next Wednesday at 3p. There is a $75 fee for attending and if you have any questions my contact info is in the packet.

Student Life:
Sonet: if people ask you how to register their clubs just tell them to email me or Sen. Zohlman. All they have to do is say what club they’re representing and that they are participating. An info session will be held Oct. 25 at 4:30p in the SGA office.

VP Braun: Internal Affairs will meet Friday at 3:15 to go over a contradiction in the By-Laws, 4-3B.

Unfinished Business

Internal Affair Recommendation:
Motion to approve Finance Committee recommendation. (Berriault, Radden)

Bergenn: the motion has already been made to accept it, we’re on points against.

Move to table the motion. (Truex, Mills)

Bergenn: there’s no debate, it needs the majority vote to pass.

Vote: 8Y 20N 4A
Motion doesn’t carry

Bergenn: the Oct. 10 minutes have the motion and we are points against

Against: Hubbard: I don’t think it’s necessary

For: Alaimo: I strongly recommend we vote yes for this. Members leave between elections all the time and it is easier this way, this is also how a lot of governments work. The system we have right now is made for the number of Senators we have, losing senators means we become less efficient. The system needs to be fixed. This vote isn’t about our opinions, voting yes gives the student body the decision to decide how the representation is filled, no says they don’t need to decide. Let this go to a referendum and operate to full capacity.

Against: Kitchener: This makes me nervous. What percentage are senators comfortable with being appointed and not elected. If three people leave and one person is appointed then that new appointment can vote on the other two. The President nominates someone, but how well would we know that person? And once it comes to the elections the interim senators would have a leg up because they’ve sat on Senate.

For: Baldassario: How comfortable are you voting for a senator in an election? How many of you actually take the time to look at the biographies. You ask how comfortable are we with number of appointments? Say 20 people leave are you comfortable with 16 people running senate? You preach comfort and efficiency but I don’t see that as a valid argument. This isn’t perfect but it is a valid argument to present this to the students.

POI Dattilo: what is the number of votes needed to pass a referendum?

Bergenn: the majority

Against: Rodriguez: It’s good to put to referendum but what if the people who weren’t voted in were the first people looked at for appointments? The student body didn’t vote them in for a reason and that’s not ok if they get appointed.

For: Truex: Not voted by students means they shouldn’t be selected? I don’t like that argument. 200 people voted this last election, that isn’t a good student representation. I have an issue with a lot of empty seats. That happened last year and we lost quorum because of it and we couldn’t vote on anything. If the President nominated someone we still have a system of checks and balances in the 2/3 vote by Senate.

Against: Radden: A special election is the best way to be brought to the student body, not a referendum. It’s best for the students and it helps the SGA’s ability to run elections, which isn’t something we get to practice too often. I trust Eric, but what if senators don’t like a future president and decide to vote against his nomination no matter what and a capable senator loses
out. Eventually the requirements for a senator will go down until everyone agrees. This is just putting a “band-aid” over the problem; special elections would fix the problem.

For: Berriault: If the Senate votes yes, it doesn’t automatically go into effect the student body still has to decide. Last year we had 10% of the seats vacant, which means less people in the committees and business duties not being met. On paper a special election sounds good, but it takes too much time. We can’t function with 10% vacancy. The amendment is just a foundation to build on in the by-laws. Let the students decide.

Against: Marcelli: If we’re going with the foundation analogy, the Constitution is a foundation and the amendment is just messing with it. There is nothing wrong with this foundation and the amendment is not good enough to put in the constitution. 10% vacant? That’s four people. We were able to operate 7 people short, that’s why we changed the structure of the committees so we could operate with vacancies if we had to. Also, quorum changes with the amount of people we have on Senate. If we hold special elections we can have someone in the seat in four weeks. It is better to hold an election and let students elect their own representatives.

For: Baldassario: the idea that this is just a Band-Aid only fits in today’s context. What if in the future we have 300 people running for 16 spots, there will be capable people in the left over candidates? All these arguments work in our context now, but not necessarily in future context. Look at the amendment, it doesn’t say the president needs to appoint someone if a senator seat is vacant, we can still hold special elections. It’s not always about forcing someone in, but having an appointment system in place makes sense.

Against: Hubbard: the method of this is wrong. So if 20 people drop, you want 16 people to be responsible for choosing the majority of Senate without a student body election. The referendum gives the students the right to decide on the student body’s right to vote? You can’t argue against our efficiency with vacancies. We’re still effective. We waited until October with 7 vacant seats and we were still effective. Those new senators have a voice because the student body voted them in. you also need to look at the position of President, Eric won’t be around forever.

For: Fernandez: the students give us power to do stuff so we should utilize that power and vote on who we feel is eligible to sit with us on Senate. Bringing in someone means I’m confident in them and they want to be here because they can always say no. we are here to make decisions for the student body.

Against: Sonet: we’re given power to make decisions on policy, not who is worthy of holding office. It is inappropriate to use that power to decide who is good for office, we don’t decide that people do. We can’t judge a person’s character. By voting this in we get rid of the checks and balances.

Point of Order: Berriault: it’s not germane to the motion
Not well taken

Sonet: do you want a small group appointing the rest of the Senate? We need to stand on principle and this is the easy way out.

For: Truex: you say this gives the President too much power? But the President “shall” have the power doesn’t mean he has to. There will be things that need to get done and we will be short in committees, we consolidated but we have the same people doing the same amount of work. This isn’t taking away the right to hold a special election this just gives the President the right to appoint. This provides a different route.

Call to question (Mills, Fung)

Vote: 17Y 11N

Motion fails, debate continues

Against: Dattilo: realistically there will only be a few seats empty, it’s not about the number it’s about the principle of this. A lot of power and influence is given to the President. In the past there have been corrupt e-boards and that can happen again. We don’t have the power to nominate someone, we can suggest someone but not elect them. If they want to be on senate they can run in a special election or sit on committees as a nonsenator and run in regular elections, but with the nomination system they are not allowed to do that. If there are seats open it is p to us to pick up the slack and get more people to run.

POI Testa: if appointed do we not fill those seats in the next election?

Bergenn: this is to fill seats between the two elections.

Vote: 5Y (Berriault, Choplick, Fallanca, Lee, Truex) 21N (Braun, Anderson, Dattilo, Fellows, Hubbard, Kitchener, Kirk, Lopez, Manento, Marcelli, Mgushi, Mills, Narceiis, Ott, Radden, Rodriguez, Sonet, Szabo, Testa, Towler, Zohlman) 3A (Baldassario, Fung, Sejdiraj)

Motion Fails

New Business

Motion to approve Finance Committee recommendations FC13-033, FC13-034 and FC13-036 (Baldassario, Choplick)

For: Baldassario: these are three neutral recommendations and they’re approvable.

Vote: 29Y (Braun, Anderson, Baldassario, Berriault, Choplick, Dattilo, Fallanca, Fellows, Fung, Hubbard, Kitchener, Kirk, Lee, Lopez, Manento, Marcelli, Mgushi, Mills, Narcisse, Ott, Radden, Rodriguez, Sejdiraj, Sonet, Szabo, Testa, Towler, Truex, Zohlman) 0N 0A

Motion Passes
Motion to approve Finance Committee recommendation FC13-035. (Mills, Choplick)

For: Mills: The Dance Team came on Monday and presented after we had already started talking about them request. They weren’t invited by athletics to the football games, they already have pom-poms and the local dance competition no longer fits their mission. They are confident they can be top 10 in nationals and travel was only trimmed to stay on budget.

Against: Baldassario: despite the reason for denial I don’t think we should flip flop on decisions. I feel we always give the dance team leeway but I’m not comfortable with this if we denied the airfare.

For: Mills: there was no consensus reached on the loophole. This is a line item not contingency there is no rule saying we can’t give them this after being denied. They were only denied to stay on budget and nationals are their new priorities.

Against: Baldassario: they were budgeted to go to the New England competition and they changed their minds. With the reasoning behind it I don’t think it is moral to pass this.

For: Mgushi: we talked about loop holes but the standing rule didn’t pass so I don’t consider this a loophole. They already have the money so if they want to go to nationals let them. They don’t want extra money they just want to move around the money that have and we should support that.

Against: Truex: I was chair during this so I couldn’t speak against it. This is a loop hole. They want money to get to nationals but we told them no, no means no.

For: Marcelli: yes it’s a loophole but until that loop hole is dealt with we can’t use the argument. It’s not illegal so there is no reason we can’t do this now. They went last year and raised $9000 while also putting up money of their own and they’ll probably do that this year. What they are requesting isn’t a lot but it will help.

Vote: 21 Y (Braun, Anderson, Berriault, Choplick, Fallanca, Fellows, Hubbard, Kirk, Lee, Lopez, Marcelli, Mgushi, Mills, Narcisse, Ott, Radden, Sejdiraj, Sonet, Szabo, Testa, Towler) 3 N (Baldassario, Kitchener, Truex) 4 A (Dattilo, Manento, Rodriguez, Zohlman)

Motion Passes SG13-050

Guest Speaker:

Nick Mercier: President of the City Property Owner's Association:

I don’t own rented property but the ordinances are effecting the renting market and the city. When the ordinances go into effect rates will be raised because landlords can’t afford them and the money will be passed to non-tenants, which effects the property value. Flippers will leave New Britain and landlords are thinking of closing which limits the number of off-campus housing. We’re trying to improve quality of life but that depends on a healthy population, not a ghost town. The students improve the community. The police hot spot fees are meant to target students, which is what I’m hearing by word of mouth. Ordinances allow the police to find areas and go after the owners not the people called on, which can ultimately force a foreclosure. How do the owners know if the student is a partier or not? They can’t so people are suggesting not
rent to students. This is the wrong track for the city. Closing down a lot of properties effects a lot of people and I just wanted to pass along the info I have.

Bergenn: if we can hold questioning because we are limited on time and maybe have interested Senators get in contact with you.

Mercier: My email is nichmer@gmail.com or you can reach my through CPOANB.org.

**New Business:**

**Motion to approve Finance Committee recommendation FC13-037. (Truex, Mills)**

For: Truex: It was a major decision to deny after multiple motions were denied or withdrawn.

Vote: 26Y (Braun, Anderson, Baldassario, Berriault, Choplick, Dattilo, Fallanca, Fellows, Fung, Hubbard, Kitchener, Kirk, Lee, Lopez, Manento, Marcelli, Mills, Narcisse, Ott, Radden, Rodriguez, Sejdiraj, Sonet, Szabo, Testa, Truex) 0N 1A (Towler)

**Motion Passes**

SG13-051

**Motion to approve Finance Committee recommendation FC13-038. (Berriault, Towler)**

For: Berriault: I think this is a great opportunity to get students out and about and a great way for students to stay on campus on the weekends. This is good for CCSU and the local communities.

Move to postpone until next meeting. (Dattilo, Hubbard)

For: Dattilo: there isn’t a lot of time to discuss and I want to have a deeper discussion about this.

POI: Manento: is this time sensitive?

Bergenn: I need to put stuff to bid but it can wait another week

Vote: 23Y 4N 0A

**Motion Passes**

SG13-052

Radden: Motion to open up nominations for Public Affairs Committee chair.

Bergenn: with the consolidation we still need to solidify chairs but I don’t think there is enough time now, but we can put it on top of new business next week.

Motion to adjourn (Berriault, Mills)

Meeting adjourned at 5:02p

Respectfully submitted by University Assistant Brittany Burke.