

## MINUTES<sup>1</sup>

### USG Senate Meeting

Thursday, February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2011

Meeting called to order at 7:15 pm. Meeting held in Wang Center – Room 201.

#### Agenda item 1.0: Attendance

The roll was called:

Senator Allen Abraham	Present
Senator Tahir Ahmad	Present
Senator Ory Baum	Present
Senator Spenser Cushing	Present
Senator Samuel Cushner	Present
Senator Ray Fan	Present
Senator Frank Fanizza	Absent
Senator Christian Giraldo	Present
Senator Mahyar Kashan	Present
Senator Sidrah Khan	Present - Left early at 8:17 pm
Senator Thomas Kirnbauer	Present
Senator Yan Leyfman	Present by Proxy (Mr. Hagan)
Senator Deborah Machalow (PPT)	Present
Senator Kirin Mahmud	Late – 7:49 pm
Senator Shivani Rampersad	Present - Left early at 8:24 pm
Senator Masood Rustemi	Present

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<sup>1</sup> Typically, minutes should only contain the essentials of a meeting. This includes the meeting time and location, a list of those who attended, as well as a record of all motions made and their outcome. Debate or even a summary of debate is usually not included. I include it here at the request of the Chair. Mistakes and omissions are likely, so Senators are encouraged to e-mail the Secretary with corrections prior to the next Senate meeting, so that the record reflects what was actually said at the meeting and so corrections can be made efficiently.

Senator Najee Simmons	Present
Senator Harminder Singh	Present
Senator Priya Sohi	Present
Senator Peter Stratoudakis	Present
Senator Russell Williams	Present

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President Matthew Graham	Present
Executive Vice President (EVP) Alexander Dimitriyadi (Chair)	Present
Treasurer Mark	Present
Vice President of Academic Affairs Forbes	Present
Vice President of Clubs and Organizations Jennifer Chan	Absent
Vice President of Communications David Mazza	Present
Vice President of Student Life Peter Molloy	Absent
Senior Class Representative Dexter Daniel	Absent
Junior Class Representative Emilissa Trotman	Absent
Sophomore Class Representative Neville Hall Jr.	Absent
Freshman Class Representative Rodriguez	Absent

Quorum established.

Agenda item 2.0: Announcements

The Chair indicated that the Wang building staff does not allow food or drink, including water, in the meeting room.

The Chair announced that there is a meeting of the Rules Committee on Monday at 1 pm in the USG Senate Office.

Agenda item 3.0: Approval of the Minutes from 2/17/2011

- Motion to amend the minutes, by striking “Roll Call #6” and replacing with “Roll Call #5” under “Stony Brook Ringers Club” in agenda item 5.0.
  - Motion was approved without objection.

- Motion to amend the minutes, by striking “quash” and replacing with “squash” in the third bullet, eleventh sub-bullet of the third bullet point in agenda item 9.0.
  - Motion was approved without objection.
- Motion to approve the 2/17/2011 minutes, as amended.
  - Motion was approved without objection.

**Agenda item 4.0: Men’s Rugby Contract for Mike Barnett**

- Senator Kirnbauer presented the legislation.
- Motion to strike the title and replace with “Men’s Rugby Contract for Mark Moulton” by Senator Ahmad.
  - Motion was approved without objection.
- Motion to approve the “Men’s Rugby Contract for Mark Moulton.”
  - Roll Call #1: Motion approved by a vote of 18-0-1.

**Agenda item 5.0: African Students Union Grant**

- Treasurer Mark presented the grant application.
- Senator Khan moved to approve the “African Students Union Grant” for “\$4500.”
  - Roll Call #2: Motion approved by a vote of 17-0-2.

**Agenda item 6.0: PASS Tutor Pay Increase Act**

- VP Forbes presented the act.
  - Previously, tutors were given \$15/hour. The budget committee reduced the pay last year to \$12/hour, for unclear reasons.
  - The act would increase the pay back to \$15/hour.
  - It is difficult for the program to compete with talented tutors for anything less than \$15/hour.
  - Previously, the Budget for the program was not overspent even at \$15/hour.
- Senator Stratoudakis moved to approve the “PASS Tutor Pay Increase Act.”
  - Senator Fan: 20 hour limit for tutors?
    - EVP: All USG members have a maximum limit of 20 hours per week, except for USG Executive Council officers, who are limited to 15 hours per week but are paid on a stipend.
  - Senator Kashan: I commend the work tutors do and support this act.
- Roll Call #3: The motion to adopt the act was approved by a vote of 19-0-0.

**Agenda item 7.0: Weekend Life Grant Act**

- Senator Abraham presented the “Weekend Life Grant Act.”
  - The objective is to improve weekend life within clubs.
  - Many clubs do not have enough money for events during the weekend.
  - Clubs would be able to apply for this grant funding once per year.

- Competition: The Budget Committee would pick the best programs to promote weekend life on campus.
- Senator Ahmad moved to adopt the “Weekend Life Grant Act” in the amended form.
  - Passes Unanimously.
- Senator Baum moved to adopt the “Weekend Life Grant Act:”
  - Roll call #4: 19-0-0. Motion was approved.

**Agenda item 8.0: Special Services Council Recommendations**

EVP out of the Chair. PPT Machalow in the Chair.

**The Photography Club**

- Chair of Programming and Activities Committee (Senator Abraham) presented the SSC recommendation.
  - The club wants to apply for funding for safety equipment.
  - There is no current photography club on campus.
  - Senator Ahmad (Q):
    - I have mentioned this last semester. I would make the suggestion again. The office of the Treasury needs to implement a system to track all the equipment that is being purchased. We need to have a way for accounting for these things, perhaps a storage unit.
    - I would request that someone come up with a proposal for how these assets could be tracked.
  - Senator Ahmad moved that the USG Senate grant recognition for the Photography Club.
    - Roll Call #5: 18-0-0. Motion was approved.

**Stony Brook Field Hockey Club**

- Chair of Programming and Activities Committee (Senator Abraham) presented the SSC recommendation.
  - The club needs money to organize and build up a strong team, so that they can start doing competitive events.
- Senator Kashan moved that the USG Senate grant recognition for the Field Hockey Club.
  - Roll Call #6: 18-0-0. Motion was approved.

**Speech and Debate Society**

- Chair of Programming and Activities Committee (Senator Abraham) presented the SSC recommendation.
  - This would be a new club.
  - Their mission is to go to intercollegiate tournaments and face debate teams from other colleges.
  - Improve public speaking skills and give Stony Brook more recognition.

- Senator Stratoudakis moved that the USG Senate grant recognition for the Field Hockey Club.
  - Roll Call #7: 18-0-0. Motion was approved.

PPT vacated the Chair. EVP returned to Chair.

#### Agenda item 9.0: Appropriations Act #1462 for Fiscal Year 2010-2011

- Senator Ahmad presented the act.
  - The Special Services Council has approximately \$8000 left for the end of the semester, to be disbursed amongst 32 clubs seeking funding.
  - If each club is given an equal amount, that would limit clubs to \$250 each.
  - Unfortunately, this is a very small amount.
  - \$14,000 was reacquired from defunding SASA. This money can be used to increase the funding for the SSC in making its allocation decisions.
- EVP amended the title to Appropriations Act #16.
  - Senator Machalow: I appeal from the decision of the Chair.<sup>2</sup>
    - Roll Call #8: Chair's decision sustained, by a vote of 7-8-4.
- Senator Khan moved to approve Appropriations Act #16.
- Senator Ahmad moved to table "Appropriations Act #16."
  - Roll Call #9: Motion to table was Passed with a vote of 18-1-0.

#### Agenda item 10.0: Open Agenda

- Senator Kirnbauer moved to consider the nominations of "Karen La Grega" and "Benjamin T. Hayashi" as members of the Elections Committee.
  - Senator Ahmad: It was my assumption that when the idea was for the members of the Vetting Committee who could be present could ask questions, present a written report to the full committee, for the Vetting Committee to then make a final recommendation on the candidates.
  - Senator Machalow: I believe that was my understanding as well.
  - Senator Kirnbauer: Members of the Vetting Committee who were present decided on this course of action, to take a decision on the candidates now.
  - Senator Ahmad: I do not believe we should consider these nominations until all members of the Vetting Committee have met and made their recommendation.
  - President Graham: The Elections Process goes poorly when members of the Election Committee are not in place before elections.
  - VP of Academic Affairs Forbes: Regardless of the personal struggles or promises internally within the Vetting Committee, the candidates were interviewed and are present today. In terms of Senate meetings and scheduling additional meetings, this will

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<sup>2</sup> The form of the vote, in this instance, was # of Senators in favor of the appeal - # of Senators sustaining the decision of the Chair - # Senators abstaining. A majority of Senators is required to appeal from the decision of the Chair, which was not reached, thus the decision of the Chair was sustained.

all take too long. I just think that as a Senate, you should unite and decide if these candidates are who you want.

- Senator Forbes moved to end debate.
  - Roll Call #10: Motion approved by a vote of 14-4-2.
- On the motion to consider the candidates and include them in the agenda:
  - Passes with a vote of 15-4-1. (Hand vote.)
- Senator Cushing presented the nomination of Karen La Grega.
  - Senator Cushing read a report of several members of the Vetting Committee regarding their opinion on the candidate's qualifications.
- Senator Cushing moved to approve the nomination of Karen La Grega to membership of the Elections Board.
  - Senator Ahmad:
    - The candidate has not been formally vetted.
    - Last semester we successfully vetted the Supreme Court justices. That process took a month.
    - We sat and talked for at least twenty minutes regarding each candidate.
    - What was nice about what we planned on agreed upon this time, was to have Senators who could meet with candidates to talk to them, present a written report, and then for the Vetting Committee to decide on the candidate.
    - This process could only take a week, and is worthwhile.
    - Why can't we wait one week to have a formal decision? I can't see why we can't be patient.
    - We should not sneak this into the Senate.
  - Senator Machalow:
    - I wholeheartedly agree with my esteemed colleague, Senator Ahmad.
  - Senator Simmons:
    - I was looking at it in terms of the legality.
    - The committee does not require a quorum. There is no issue of law that is stopping us today.
    - There is a necessity regarding how quickly we need to get this happening.
  - VP Forbes:
    - This debate happened already and what we are already discussing now are the two candidates.
    - I believe the Senator should focus on the credentials of the candidates at this point.
  - Senator Ahmad:
    - The candidate has not been formally vetted, so I move that we reject the candidate.
  - President Graham:
    - Karen would do a great job on the Elections Board. She has acquired an excellent skills set and would be a valuable addition to the Elections Board.
  - Senator Machalow:

- Is the candidate present at this time?
    - President Graham: She class at this time.
  - Roll Call #11: 12-3-3, 1 voting present. Candidate confirmed.
- Senator Cushing presented the nomination of Benjamin T. Hayashi.
  - Senator Machalow: Is the candidate present?
  - President Graham: No, the candidate has class at this time.
- Senator Abraham moved to approve the nomination of Benjamin T. Hayashi to the Elections Board.
  - Roll Call #12: Candidate confirmed, by a vote of 12-3-1, 1 Present.
- Senator Ahmad: I am very disappointed in everyone today. You have gone back on your own will from last meeting. We all said that we wanted a formal vetting. Most of you have gone ahead and considered these two candidates without a legitimate report. How could you go back on your word? These are your principles, which are just as important as laws. Most of you said, forget the process. It is hypocritical. I want everyone tonight to think about this. Think about this the next time you approve, deny, or abstain from a motion.
- Senator Simmons: The Senate’s general desire was that somebody talks to the candidates. The process that the vetting committee went through should suffice.
- Senator Baum: I agree with Senator Simmons.
- President Graham: I wanted to make the point that the nominees must have made a great impression if so many Senators fought so hard to have them approved.
- Senator Sohi: Considering the candidates tonight was not such a big issue.
- EVP: I am starting to believe that this is a matter that should be debated on the Senate’s own time.
- President Graham: The University is editing the Student Conduct Code. This is what gives the students rights. I am on the committee and I can e-mail the proposed changes and want you to review them and brainstorm any ideas regarding any modifications of the code.
  - Next, as you all now, there has been a proposal to increase student fees. Committees have been created to consult with the administration. I would encourage all students to be involved in that.
    - The administration is trying to be transparent about why they want to raise the fees, and you should continue to challenge them regarding their justifications and whether students want these increased fees.
  - MOMMIX Event
    - It is like a “dancing” show. It looks cool. Music, dancing, and stuff. It is a visual show.
    - Proxy Hagan: Regarding the MOMMIX event: It is like a “cool” ballet.
    - Senator Machalow gave some details regarding the event.
- Senator Baum: There is an event next week – Wednesday evening in the SAC Ballroom.
- EVP: I have an announcement.
  - It has been a pleasure working with all of you.

- I've spent many hours in USG and I think there have been many accomplishments we have had in the past year.
  - Internal reform, restructuring of some laws.
  - ALLOCATE – revamped how clubs access their money.
  - Restructuring of the Student Activities Board.
- Big growth of USG, especially when looking back to the way it was five years ago.
- We have made many great strides and there are many great events that have been planned this year.
- The time that I have put as EVP has been enormous. There are some other things I'd like to attempt and tackle in life. I submitted my resignation letter, effective March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2011. I will still be around to support the organization if needed.
  - President Graham: Alex and I have disagreed much, but it has been an enormous pleasure working with you, and we have accomplished much this year.
- Mr. Baiden (Gallery):
  - I wanted to present some information that was not available when you voted last meeting.
  - We did not just have a membership of four – we have one of about 15.
  - SBU TV has bylaws that govern our organization, and SBU TV is a valid and recognized organization.
  - SBU TV has been fiscally responsible.
  - We actively recruited students.
  - SBU TV has won countless awards.
  - We were not paid but we were still working for the students, and still met and kept working, even though we were not paid.
  - SBU TV had plans (and has documentation) that we were planning expansion into streaming and other advances.
  - My last statement is: There was a point about our budget. Our Operations Manager made approximately \$8000 only.
- Arthi (NYPIRG):
  - NYPIRG interns led a climate activist training.
  - Yesterday, students were trained for Small Claims Training.
  - Higher Education lobby day.
- Meeting adjourned at 8:43 pm.



Senator	Abraham	Roll Call #1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10	#11	#12
Senator	Ahmad	Yes	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
Senator	Baum	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	N	N
Senator	Cushing	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y
Senator	Cushner	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
Senator	Fan	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
Senator	Fanizza	Absent											
Senator	Giraldo	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	A	Y	Y	Y	Y
Senator	Kashan	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	A	Abstain
Senator	Khan	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Absent	
Senator	Kirnbauer	A	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Proxy	Hagan	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	A	Y	Y
Senator	Machalow	Y	Y	Y	Y	Chair	Chair	Chair	Y	Y	N	P	P
Senator	Mahmud	Absent									N	N	N
Senator	Rampersad	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	A	Absent
Senator	Rustemi	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	A	Y	Y	Y	Y
Senator	Simmons	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
Senator	Singh	Y	A	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	A	N	N
Senator	Stratoudakis	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Absent
Senator	Sohi	Y	A	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	A	Y	Y	A	Y
Senator	Williams	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Total:		18-0-1	17-0-2	19-0-0	19-0-0	18-0-0	18-0-0	18-0-0	7-8-4	18-1-0	14-4-2	12-3-3-1	12-3-1-1
Decision:		Passes	Passes	Passes	Passes	Passes	Passes	Passes	Fails	Passes	Passes	Passes	Passes

Y = Yes; N = No; A = Abstain; Ab = Absent

Total is in Y-N-A format.

Roll Call votes for 24-Feb-2011 USG Senate Meeting