

Washington Student Lobby
State Board Meeting Minutes
September 23, 2006, Cheney, WA

The Washington Student Lobby State Board met on September 23, 2006 in the Pence Union Building 307 at Eastern Washington University. President Dan Shafar called the meeting to order at 12:11 p.m.

Attendees* included: Dan Shafar, WSU; Sasha Sleiman, WWU; Jake Stillwell, CWU; Antasia Parker, WWU (1); Alicia Kinne, EWU (1); Camille Andersen, EWU; Mike Bogatay, CWU; Jadon Berry, CWU; Steve DuPont, CWU (1); Bryce McKibben, UW; Cullen White, UW (1); Hannah Lommers-Johnson, UW; Erika Miller, WSU; Marcus Riccelli, UW; Rachel Norris, WSU; Chris Reigelsperger; WSU (1); Kristina Mader, WWU; Steve Lindstrom, WSL Olympia. Guest Joel Murray, Young Voters Outreach Coordinator of "Vote No on I-920" (* Parenthetical numbers indicate voting member)

White moved to postpone Murray's "Vote No on I-920" presentation until he arrived. Parker seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Shafar calls for a motion to accept the draft minutes of the June 4, 2006 meeting. DuPont moved to adopt minutes as amended. White seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Shafar calls for nominations for the vacant position of Vice President of Legislative Affairs. DuPont moved to suspend the by-laws to allow the current WSL members to vote. White seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

DuPont nominated Mike Bogatay of CWU. Bogatay made a presentation followed by questions from the Board. Bogatay stepped out of the room while the Board discussed his nomination. White moved to cast a unanimous ballot for the election of Bogatay. DuPont seconded. Motion passed unanimously. Bogatay was elected Vice President of Legislative Affairs.

Discussion of the new organization took place during which Shafar clarified that the new WSL Constitution applies starting this year, not next year. Lindstrom discussed communication between member school liaisons. He reminded the Board that the Washington State Legislature begins January 8, but liaisons go to work with training on January 2. Regarding the General Assembly, Shafar noted that more information will be presented during the October meeting. The employment of a full time staff person will also be discussed.

Shafar declared a short break. The Board reconvened at 1:15.

Opening the legislative issues roundtable, WSU intends to work towards getting the Legislature to commit to a 10-year tuition increase schedule so students applying to college know how much they would eventually have to pay. Such a policy would enable

students to adequately plan where it would be financially sound to attend college. Concerns arose that 10 years might not be feasible for the Legislature to commit to. Others suggest that 4 years might be more realistic. White suggested that unforeseen events may dramatically affect tuition levels. Norris clarified that the goal is for the Legislature to establish a general tuition level so students can get a feel for how much attendance will cost.

On behalf of GPSS, Riccelli announced that a report issued by Washington Learns shows that without federal funding, Washington State is falling behind in regards to higher education funding. He continued that mental health counseling and childcare are very important issues for graduate students. GPSS is having a discussion regarding the definition of diversity.

Miller agrees that for GPSA students childcare is an important issue. She added that health insurance is also a primary issue.

White introduced UW administration's 6-year pilot plan to address a \$4,000 gap per student between UW and other similar public research universities. He says that the UW administration will be submitting policy legislation for the 2007-2009 biennium. The representatives from the UW went over the elements of the legislative request. Lindstrom warns that this program must stay in context or else unintended consequences could ensue. He advises that those advocating for this new policy must keep a broad prospective. White continued that research and development of biofuels will be another high priority for UW.

For CWU's update, DuPont addressed the issue of textbooks, saying that the sales tax exemption is not going to work. He proposed the Florida-modeled "sales tax holiday" in which textbooks would be exempt for a short period of time, preferably right before the school year. He said that the revenue lost from the sales tax would be offset by a sale increases. The issue arose that not all Washington public schools start at the same time. DuPont suggested that students purchasing textbooks online could solve the problem, but Berry brought up the point that the issue will be students who register at different times. DuPont said that the holiday could split between September and January; Stillwell added that maybe two holidays could benefit separately-scheduled school starts. Shafer pointed out that all schools start closer together in January, be it the beginning of winter quarter or spring semester. Changing gears, Bogatay brought up the issue of student voter turnout. He wanted to push for a standardized voter system on campus instead of absentee ballots. The goal is to simplify voting for students.

Kinne announced that EWU will be requesting more money for undergraduate research. The school will also be hosting the Associated Press Election Return tabulations again this year.

Parker said that the WWU school year hasn't started, so they do not have a legislative agenda yet. The campus will be hosting a number of political debates during the mid-term elections. Mader added that voter registration will be a priority for WWU this year.

Joel Murray introduced the “Vote No on I-920” which is an initiative that would repeal the Washington Estate Tax. Revenue from the tax helps fund the Education Legacy Trust Account, which helps the State Need Grant program. Murray encouraged student leaders to help spread the word on campus that I-920 will mean the loss of critical higher education funds.

Parker announced for the first school report that WWU students want a gender-neutral bathroom. Mader added that WWU is getting a new transportation program. They have "debt-check" for students showing their debts that they are sending to the Legislature to make a point about the cost of higher education.

Kinne discussed how the EWU administration has hired a lobbying firm this year. Their transportation system has switched from being paid for via subsidies to student fees this year. EWU will be hosting Kirk Johnson from the New York Times during Constitution Week. Kinne continued that EWU is enjoying its 12th consecutive term of enrollment increase this year. She concluded that the recreation center is on its way and student fees will be raised \$65 per term to pay for it.

DuPont updated that the Battle in Seattle against WWU will be October 21. His office will be working on voter registration in the next few weeks. Tuition waivers are still a primary issue for the CWU student government and the CWU administration.

The UW is largely focused on the 6-year tuition plan for the upcoming year. The school has recently purchased the SafeCo building along with others in the area of the campus.

Miller discussed GPSA's strategic plan document stating its goals and getting its program message out.

Riccelli said that GPSS has its new website up and running. It is also looking to open up the “PUB.”

Norris affirmed that ASWSU had a great student leadership retreat. ASWSU will be hosting a scavenger hunt for on-campus information and programs to get students acquainted to the school. The WSL Chapter may be restructured to promote more student awareness.

To begin the executive summaries, Shafar accepted comments or questions about the executive boards job descriptions. Seeing none, he continues that the new website is almost done and has received good feedback so far.

Sleiman gave the treasurer's report: \$10,435.30 in checking and \$30,129.43 in savings .

Stillwell updated the board on federal issues presented by the United States Students Association. Highlighted items were the Grant Aid Now! Program, the Higher Education Act Reauthorization campaign goals, Student Vote 2006, the 2006 mid-term election, and

the U.S. Secretary of Education's Future of Higher Education Commission. He also talked about various political candidates he met with over the summer.

Lindstrom concluded the executive summaries by requesting that each institution send a school pennant or flag to the WSL Olympia office. He reminded the board that last spring, the board passed an unbalanced budget. In a good faith effort, WWU and WSU agreed to continue to pay more than basic dues as long as the other schools pay the basic dues in full and on time. He also needs to know the faculty representatives from each school. He recommended that members of the board pay attention to the HEC Board because current happenings are important.

The board decided that the October meeting will be the 15th at Noon at WSU. The November meeting will be a CWU on the 19th, the Board of Directors will meet at Noon, concluding at 1:30 p.m.; the General Assembly will convene at 1:30 p.m., with the Board of Directors reconvening after that. The December meeting will be on the 10th at the UW at 1:00 p.m. one.

Shafar called for a motion to adjourn. DuPont moved and Miller seconded. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 3:45 p.m..