



Albany Law School
STUDENT BAR ASSOCIATION
Meeting Minutes

Date: October 18th, 2023

Room: 200

Time: 7:30 PM

I. CALL TO ORDER

- a. Welcome/Introduction
- b. Roll Call for Quorum: Set at 19
 - i. 23/24 Members Present
 1. Meg Tylenda
 2. Max Sevor
 3. Ashlyn Henrichs
 4. Natalie Turney
 5. Jonathan Stein
 6. Michael Wood
 7. Julia Vavrinec
 8. Jack Rainey
 9. Stephen Giorgianni
 10. Alex Hollocher
 11. Chloe Kangarlu
 12. Frank Pacella
 13. Azad Kurd
 14. Mitch Whittaker
 15. Katie Pedlow
 16. Colin Baker
 17. Mitch Spaulding
 18. Dean Kaknis
 19. Taylor Alimari (Absent)
 20. Noah Jacobs
 21. Ben Jacobs
 22. Olivia Vecchio
 23. Madeleine Jones
 24. Veronica Esteves

II. OPEN FORUM

- a. Student asking whether there can be a time limit to the flyers posted for events- some event flyers are posted months in advance and take up space.

III. BYLAWS

- a. Nothing scheduled.

IV. ROLLING BUDGET

- a. Bill No. 022 – PAD
 - i. **MOTION TO TABLE PAD AND RETURN TO IT AT THE END OF THE SESSION, SECONDED, 18-0-0, PASSES**
 - ii. **MOTION TO RETURN TO PAD, 21-0-0, PASSES**
 - iii. Discussion:
 - 1. PAD requests additional funding for trick or treat street event and they are really excited for it but prices have changed- Walmart prices have gone up. Also thought items could be reused but ended up not being able to- asking for up to \$100 and the order has to be sent to Julie Pierce for order soon. Appreciated the support SBA has given and asks for volunteers as well to help out with this community event.
- b. Bill No. 023 – The Bell Collective
 - i. Allocated 163 for judges event, requesting reallocation of funds of 151 from a separate event. Since BLSA and Bell Collective are collaborating there will be a big turnout- several people and organizations have said that they want to come. So, they want to request some of the funds from judges panel be transferred to networking reception.

V. STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

- a. PHILANTHROPY COMMITTEE- *nothing to report, working through ideas.*
- b. FINANCE COMMITTEE- *if student orgs could send in reimbursement requests same week or week after event that would be really great.*
- c. DIVERSITY COMMITTEE- *meet biweekly on Mondays, planning event.*
- d. ETHICS COMMITTEE- *nothing to report.*
- e. EVENTS COMMITTEE- *met, talked about the grilled cheese event, talked about the alumni event, basically figuring out the timeline of different events. Looking into reorganizing for budget meeting.*
- f. ELECTION COMMITTEE- *nothing to report.*
- g. BY-LAWS COMMITTEE- *biweekly meeting this time last Wednesday, set plan for next few weeks, working on drafting bi-law change to adopt a safety committee. Also changes to ethics committee and ethics process as well as budget.*
- h. TRANSITION COMMITTEE – *nothing to report.*
- i. ALUMNI COMMITTEE- *event to bring in alumni who work outside of the Albany area- too hasty to do this semester but looking into next semester to partner with men rugby and PAD to allocate for a large alumni event in the spring.*

VI. SENATE REPORTS

a. EXECUTIVE BOARD

- i. President Max Sevor – *wanted to mention that next week is townhall being hosted Wednesday at noon in 209 re: increasing the student activity fee, just today got numbers for SBA and will email after Crim Pro midterm, class presidents will put out a survey and make sure to attend events because people appreciate it.*
- ii. Vice President Noah Jacobs – *important to show up to events and agrees with Max, the faculty student committee met- forming a safety committee should happen and the idea is that students feel like they are safe and up to date on procedures and middle ground for students and faculty. Plans to work closely with faculty and security. Once finalized it will get sent through the Bylaws committee and then eventually a permanent addition to the constitution.*
- iii. Treasurer Meg Tylenda – *a little over 8k has been reimbursed. Will have more for budget discussion.*
- iv. Secretary Ashlyn Henrichs– *just a reminder to try and get things in Sun/Mon during the week of meetings.*

b. SENATE REPORTS

- i. Third Year President Natalie Turney- *mentorship mixer this Friday and tonight 3L finalized idea for class gift, also looking into something finals related. Typically cap for farewell party is 4 but will provide info soon. Cap and gown survey completed and will be sent out soon.*
- ii. Second Year President Jonathan Stein – *Scarristers- thanks for signing up for shifts and email will be sent out as a reminder as well, getting funds together for beverages and decorating will happen Thursday and sound system is incoming and will then be available for students to borrow for other events. Barristers on behalf of 2L senate- appreciates the feedback from the last meeting and spent hours on and off and has locked in the initial venue of Glen Sanders Mansion. Harding and Mazotti will sponsor Uber vouchers too. Veronica is circling in on a DJ and will hopefully get a contract in this week and asks if electronic voting will be allowed (Max indicates it will be).*
- iii. First Year President Frank Pacella – *1L class has decided on one event and will have a 1L morale lunch at the end of November and will be catered by Maurices sandwiches- hoping to feed 100 people. Considering an event in spring for a BBQ. Alex Hollocher notes to please email for food pantry fundraising ideas.*
- iv. ABA Senator Mitchell Spaulding – *nothing to report.*
- v. ACBA Senator Colin Baker – *nothing to report, the Bell Collective/BLSA networking event will be collaborative with ACBA to get attendance by attorneys.*
- vi. Diversity Senator Azad Kurd – *nothing to report.*
- vii. NYSBA Senator Mitchell Whittaker – *nothing to report.*
- viii. Spring Start Senator Olivia Vecchio – *nothing to report.*

c. **FACULTY REPORTS**

- i. Dean Taranto – *couple things to mention about safety committee- would like to be created for several reasons, especially with bringing concerns from students, safety group has been on many security communication lines, there has been an increase in security on inside and outside as well as more foot patrol on campus, also Noah Jacobs suggested a stop the bleed program and Bob Sears is happy to help coordinate that. Also came up in discussion on Narcan, there is now one in all security desks on campus. Another thing recommended, if you ever feel unsafe make sure to call. Food Pantry is opening tomorrow, and an email will go out to lay out a couple of things, concerns with stability with this initiative. Would love to work with any SBA clubs to help out too. Bulletin boards are in the food pantry to post flyers/ information regarding student discounts and other such information. Legal aide can help with SNAP applications.*
- ii. Dean Cruz- *nothing to report, please come talk about anything though.*

MOTION TO MOVE INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION, SECONDED, 20-1-0, PASSES

VII. *EXECUTIVE SESSION*

a. **BYLAWS**

- i. None.

b. **ROLLING BUDGET**

i. Bill No. 022 – PAD

1. Motion: **MOTION TO FUND \$100 IN FULL, SECONDED**
2. Status: 20-0-0, **PASSES**
3. Reasoning:

a. For: it is a great event for the kids of the community and they have a great time and it is a way to give back, sounds like they have tried hard to budget with new costs so we should fund the \$100 in full if not a portion of it; the \$100 was to be safe and trust them to not use it all just because they have it;

b. Against: -

ii. Bill No. 023 – The Bell Collective

1. Motion: **FUND REALLOCATION OF BUDGET, SECONDED**
2. Status: 22-0-0, **PASSES**
3. Reasoning:

a. For: reallocation of funds they have already been approves and no extra expenditures

b. Against: -

MOTION TO MOVE OUT OF EXECUTIVE SESSION, SECONDED, 21-0-0, PASSES

VIII. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a. Veterans Law Day is upcoming and email Farrah Fiacco to get involved.
- b. Trick or Treat Street is a huge deal, please get involved if you can. SBA has its own table- sign up! 😊

IX. NEW BUSINESS

- a. **Budget Discussion and Budget Process** *outside Executive Session*
 - i. **Meg and Max** thank everyone for filing out the survey that was sent out.
 1. **Meg** indicates people really need to fill out forms to see what actual problems can be fixed, so please take the time to complete such surveys.
 - ii. **Points of Discussion:**
 1. **Meg:** from feedback- received notes re: deadlines being difficult for student leaders and would like to note that student leaders are made aware of the deadline in June, July, and early August and have the summer to come up with events. Additionally, the reason that we allow student groups to update up until the budget meeting is because plans change.
 2. **Max:** for context on deadlines early in the semester, last year there were a lot of student groups and a lot of events- not well planned or funded and too many happened at once, stretched the school thin and had low attendance. The idea is to have events planned out early and more thoughtfully.
 3. **Natalie:** would like to note that we should think critically about the order in which the budget requests are considered. Think about equitable distribution and make that a priority.
 4. **Veronica:** re: the SBA budget process, having a whole day is good as opposed to throughout the semester. Was concerned about the time spent and how everyone was exhausted towards the end and the cuts made- there needs to be more priority to affinity groups as they represent underrepresented groups of people.
 5. **Mitch S.:** Bylaws has brought up in committee changing the budgeting process so that initial cuts would be made by the finance committee and then presented to the group to look at. Events committee has discussed being more involved in that process to get clubs to do events together/ let clubs know other clubs have similar events planned.
 6. **Jonathan:** Definitely for one day budget over the two days proposal for budget meeting, changing to two days would slow down the process. To Mitch S.'s point, finance committee to make initial cuts would be a great idea- would allow more meaningful discussion. Maybe indicate tags for events like, food, social, and cultural events to better organize the types of events funded.

7. **Alex:** thinks that the real issue is that we did it the day it was due and overall felt like context was missing and what events were priorities. If the finance committee had first look, then we would have more time to get context and answers on hand. Overall, budget process could have been done in committee as opposed to everyone spending 16 hours on it whether they wanted to or not. Would be in favor of expanding the committee and reserving a spot for incoming first years on the committee if there was a significant amount of say in the process.
8. **Meg:** in terms of role of event committee in the process, understands the idea but hesitant to the idea and notes that the student leaders were encouraged many times to collaborate and there is a group message with student leaders that could be utilized to seek out collaborations. There is a certain level of responsibility as a leader of a student group to look into collaboration and should not fall on solely on the events committee. Endorses the idea of expanding finance committee.
9. **Noah:** thinks a lot of what Alex said was a good idea, if the finance committee could look at cutting first, then we could discuss without getting to the number/ original cut first, which took a lot of time during the budget meeting.
10. **Natalie:** agrees with Noah on being stuck with motions the whole time. Maybe discussion at a certain amount of time for each budget before voting. Events committee could come in and assist with finance in filtering through requests and looking at event-report forms from the previous semester.
11. **Ben:** The biggest problem was the order of groups; clubs who request the least should be at the top of the agenda. With the exception of the class groups.
12. **Mitch W.:** similar to Ben, might be worth looking at putting a cap on what student groups can ask for and might be more equitable.
13. **Alex:** indicated in survey, if a group is requesting low funding- could we have informal votes/ call to objections before voting and to see how long the discussion may be.
14. **Frank:** Notes that clubs must make good faith showing to secure outside funding, fundraising, and external funding- if talking about saving money then this needs to happen, and it is a networking activity and not very hard.
15. **Meg:** Understands Frank's point but the whole point of the student activity fee is to fund student events at the school and doesn't think they should be forced to solicit funds for such events.
16. **Vernica:** Notes from working with alumni committee on the idea to secure funding; if you encourage clubs to solicit funds they have to know you cannot go straight to an alumni to ask for funds and students may not follow rules and could be cause for concern.

- 17. Max:** would like to note that students went rouge on sponsorships and solicitation of funds instead of through alumni office for outside funding; informational document in OneDrive is available regarding the protocol re: alumni funding.
- 18. Dean Taranto:** notes and appreciates initiative for outside funding, but also indicates that working with alumni affairs is very important for outside funding because of the institutional advancements and alumni affairs offices- we cannot step on their toes with the work they do. It also creates many problems- it is one thing to have a bake sale or t-shirt fundraiser, but it is very tricky to solicit funds or seek out sponsorships. They (the offices) are working intentionally, and we do not want to interfere with the relationship they are working on. Notes how budget meetings work on a different level and maybe something we should look into; Maybe look at holistically instead of club by club and revise and adjust so resulting in a fairer outcome- then vote up or down on the changes then if fails finance committee goes back to drawing board. Also, sponsorships are very difficult and there are a lot of tax ramifications and it is a big deal with a lot involved. Sponsorship is different than gifts to the school. Should avoid sponsorships if possible.
- 19. Frank:** Asks Dean Taranto why sponsorships should be avoided;

 - a. Dean Taranto** says that sponsorships indicate that alumni believe there is a reciprocal aspect that they expect a signage or other thing in return as it is not a donation and cannot be claimed as not for profit and has the potential to interfere with the offices of the school that are in charge of alumni relations and funding. Would more recommend a fundraiser more than any sponsorships.
- 20. Frank:** Notes that the student activity fee does exist, but the fact is even if we pass a resolution requesting a higher activity fee and send that letter, the student activity fee must be raised by the board and it is not a guaranteed outcome. Notes that he is not aware if the board has said they will look favorably upon it and welcomes any information contradicting his statement. To Dean Taranto's point, wants to speak on his practical experience and how he has spoken to the alumni office regarding sponsorships and funding. Would like to coordinate a meeting with the alumni office on figuring out processes and overlap with them to get information. Notes sponsorships and outside funding should be used, especially if things like Barristers are going to continue to be funded.

 - a. Dean Taranto;** Notes that we must consider the event when approaching alumni and what kind of event you are trying to get funded- not just to subsidize a party or something like that. Need to make sure it is more educational in nature so that it is an appropriate ask of an

alumni funding. The process is in place and does not need to be over complicated; the process is you just need to talk to institutional advancement and work with them.

- b. **Max:** Notes that we may invite institutional advancement to speak on this further, but look in the folder as it is all there re: the process for this kind of funding.

- 21. **Michael:** Noting the classic contracts case prior to opinion; Seeking sponsorships should be avoided, people are not going to follow rules perfectly whether by misunderstanding, not knowing, or by disregard. As much as there is a potential benefit, the chance of harm is high for the school.
- 22. **Max:** Appreciates discussion re: sponsorships and outside funding, but wants to return to the budget discussion and continue that.
- 23. **Jonathan:** Notes to go to the office (alumni and funding) as it will save you time - there are certain events where it is a waste of time and energy to try and seek funding for non-educational events. Thinks that the best thing to do is create a more equitable solution for funding with the student activity fee that is available, like finance committee proposing the cuts and saving discussion time in the actual budget meeting. Efficiency and equitability should be the hand in hand goals.
- 24. **Alex:** backs up Jonathan. Notes that it is almost November and thinks the priority needs to be quickly and efficiently making changes to next semester budget. Did not hear objections to finance committee to taking first swing at budget cuts and encourages those who do object to that idea to come forth.
- 25. **Meg:** Notes that if you haven't, you can put feedback on the survey as you can send multiple submissions on the form. Will be meeting with Mitch S. on trying to get this through bylaws.
- 26. **Max:** with that note from Meg, the list for discussion has lapsed and would like something to be proposed in November so that we can give notice and inform the student leaders and clubs, especially per bylaws which is 30 days in advance (noted by Meg). Appreciates the discussion and hearing the feedback and hearing people are on the same page about a lot of things.

X. GOOD OF THE ORDER

- a. The next SBA meeting is scheduled for November 1st, 2023, at 7:30 PM in Room 200.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION TO ADJOURN, SECONDED, 22-0-0, PASSES