SGA Minutes 4/23/17

I. Attendance
Senators McCarthy and Cohen are absent and have not sent a proxy in their places. Senators Duran and Wilson are absent but have sent a proxy in their places. Senator McCormick was not present at the time of attendance but arrived at 7:05. All other senators are present for today’s meeting.

II. Acceptance of the Minutes
Senator Pustejovsky motions to accept the minutes from last week. The motion is seconded. 14-0-0. The motion passes and the minutes from the previous week are recorded.

III. Announcements
President Toy tells the senators to look at the Eat Real survey. She states that there will probably be no legislation from the club this semester but that it would still be useful to continue the conversation onto next year. She also states that soon there will be a search for a new student liaison for endowment affairs. She states that the current liaison will come in next week to give a “rundown.”

Senator Fleischer asks about the process for the search. President Toy responds and says it would require senators to read over application and then help narrow down the candidates to 2 or 3. She continues to announce that the SGA and The Campus are co-hosting a panel on free speech. She states that there will be administrators there with students too who will be on the panel. There will be an email sent out shortly. President Toy remarks that this event is extremely important in the ongoing conversations on campus and she hopes that the word gets out there about the opportunity.

Senator Aaron remarks that putting the event on the Events Calendar would be a good idea.

President Toy replies and states that it is possibly too late to put it on the calendar but that an all student email will hopefully suffice. President Toy also motions to move the agenda and discuss New Business before Old Business just for timely purposes. The motion is seconded. 14-0-0. The motion passes and the agenda is changed.

Senator Lantigua asks the body if there are any updates. Senator Pustejovsky brings up the discussion on laundry as she has been in many discussions with her constituents about it. She states that there is no other way but to use the designated machines to put more money on their cards and that there is “no other system.” She asks if there is an idea about “bundling that around.”
President Toy states that she has been discussing with laundry and that she mentioned the possibility to “bundle it.” She has heard the complaint about no other way to add money but that they are trying to work on finding another system. President Toy yields to Doug Adams.

Adams states that to work with business services and the laundry vendor. This would be a way to look into adding another system. He mentions the name Matt Curran to Senator Pustejovsky.

Senator Goldfield announces that there is a first year takeover at the Grille from 8 to 11 on Thursday. He is looking for a crowd manager if anybody would like to help out. There is a mention about paying the crowd managers too by President Toy.

Senators Andrews announces that Ross commons will be holding an event in Atwater called Rosstaurant. Tickets are 3 dollars and the menu has been posted. It is this upcoming Saturday and it is from 6 to 8.

Senator Wright brings up the new housing selection process and that many of his constituents have been complaining on a “lack of training.” He states that there should be more training for students who are on Reslife.

Senator Pustejovsky brings up the fact that both information sessions were cancelled and she calls for more information towards students. She states many first years have mentioned to her about their confusion surrounding the new system.

Senator Pustejovsky yields to Doug Adams.

Adams responds and states that with rising sophomores the new housing system should be worked on with their commons. He does admit that there is a “learning curve” and that next year they are working on incorporating it with reslife training and increased learning session.

### III. New Business

The presentation about the SGA Dining Committee is sent by email to the senators so they will look upon the presentation individually.

Elisa Gan, the liaison to the SGA from the SGA Dining Committee, and she begins by stating that there are “big changes” regarding next fall’s dining system. She states that they are proposing this as of now. She continues by talking about the current system of the “open dining system” and she states that it is one of the “few or only one” across the nation that has this system and it something “we have taken pride in.” She continues that the system has become “financially unstable.” The problems that occur are free riders who are taking advantage of not paying for the dining hall and do not pay the fee that they are supposed to. Having a swipe system would combat this and would hopefully save hundreds of thousands of dollars. Also, the dining hall with the swipe system would help them collect data because as of now they have no way of collecting any data. This data would help them decide how to run staff and help the management of food. She then switches the conversation to talk about the “most debated” topic of the committee: the meal plan. She states that into next fall it will continue with one universal
plan she states that this will all for a “transition period” to make sure everything is set or to recalibrate their thoughts. There will also be a 50 dollar credit put onto students cards which they can use at places like: Crossroads, Snow Bowl, the Grille, 51 Main and more. This will hopefully allow for more students to utilize other places for food around campus rather than just the dining halls. The fall semester, she reiterates, will be a period of adjustment and discussion about the system. There are also plans to improve current retail places on campus and redo menus there and possibly bring in full menu options.

Senator Ou asks about how language tables would fit into the system. Gan replies that the question hasn’t been brought up yet but that it will be likely incorporated into the system and that it should not be a worry for students.

Senator Pustejovsky reiterates that there are a few things that need to be aware in the conversation about meal plans and these are students on financial aid, and those living off campus.

President Toy asks about how the system would work with guest swipes. Gan seems unsure about the answer and states that she assumes they would have to pay either cash or credit if they wanted to eat in the dining halls.

Senator Goldfield asks about if the dining halls will have different food options starting next fall.

Gan responds and states that the universal menu was to reduce cost because of the deficit the college is in. However, she is not sure when they will bring back the diverse menu.

President Toy remind the senators to communicate the changes to their constituents about what they are proposing. She then reminds the body that the swipe system is about “100 percent” going to happen. This was a decision made by the administration but that the conversation is open after that.

Senator Ou asks how this would affect those abroad.

Gan responds and states that it would not really affect them because the plans for next spring have not been finalized.

Senators Aaron and Pustejovsky state that the swipe systems can already be seen in the dining halls already.

Senator Duran questions the system especially regarding guests because many schools include guests in their plans.

Gan responds and states that she is not sure about the guests but the whole sentiment behind the dining hall change is to put financial accountability on everyone who uses the dining hall.

President Toy questions the decision regarding guest swipes and thinks that it should be incorporated in the universal aspect of the meal plan. President Toy explains the history of the Dining Services Committee which is technically an ad-hoc committee and motions to extend the committee for another year.

The motion is seconded.

14-0-0
The motion passes and the committee is extended.

Kevin Benscheidt begins the “year in a review.” He states that everything is “on par” and the has resulted in about a expenditure of 1.1 million dollars. He states that this is a “little less than last year.” This has ultimately resulted in the reserve balance around 90-110 thousand dollars. He also states that he has met with over 76 organizations and clusters in the past week to go over their budgets and he is here to present 12 budgets that are over 10 thousand dollars.

President Toy reminds the body that this is now a power of the SGA due to a bill passed earlier in the year. She states that they will not vote on the budgets but will rather present them now and vote next week.

Senator McCormick questions how the budgets of clusters work.

Benscheidt answers and states that it is all those budgets and the leaders of the clusters help with the oversight of these budgets as well.

Senator Lantigua asks why they only met with 76 organizations and couldn’t meet with more.

Benscheidt answers and states that time caused them to not meet with every club and organization. Also he states that while he reached out to all the clubs many of them did not respond, and their budgets are pretty settled.

Benscheidt first introduces the Service Cluster Board and praises the leadership at being very good at managing the other budgets of the organizations that make up the cluster. He calls the cluster a “fantastic model for the system.” Benscheidt yields to Jin Sohn to discuss more about the Service Cluster Board.

Sohn explains that the cluster took on two new organizations too and they have been increasing their programing too. Even though they have taken in more organizations they still have maintained an accurate budget. She also explains that many of the expenses for the cluster come from transportation. To find all the organizations in the cluster you can go to go/middlink and look up the clusters their.

Benscheidt next presents the cluster MILC and he states that they have been “great.” He praises their two leaders. MILC represents the cultural organizations and their budget has increased a little but they have absorbed more initiatives.

President Toy states to the body for the senators not to totally openly discuss these numbers because their numbers could still change and are not completely set.

Benscheidt then presents the Religious Life Cluster which is seeing a decrease in the amount of funds they are requesting. He states their leadership has been “crucial” and this year reflects that. He states that there was an important conversation that came up with their discussion and that was the role of spring break trips. He states that for budgeting they are being more critical towards spring break trips in budgets.

Benscheidt then presents the SGA budget. He first highlights that the first year senators
budget has been reduced.

Senator Goldfield responds and states that the reduction is fine.

Benscheidt continues and discusses the broke down version of “what we spend on each position.” These positions are like the arts and crafts manager and the secretary.

Senator McCormick asks if people are paid a “lump sum” or if it's in stipends.

The senators then discuss middlink and the NY Time subscription budgets for the SGA. One of the senators questions the use of middlink.

President Toy states that middlink is primarily used by student activities especially for “historical data and administrative stuff.”

The senators then view the additional budget for the j-term workshop fund and the staff appreciation day.

Benscheidt states that he is considering proposing a change for the sga. It would be a financial aid type program for clubs that required a personal contribution. He states that his idea would be for a budget around 5 thousand and he hopes to leave this idea with his predecessor to also speak with Derek Doucet too.

Senator Lantigua asks if this could be used for social houses.

Benscheidt responds that it probably would not be used for that reason just because of the alcohol associated with them.

President Toy states an email she received from Gan which says that each person will receive 4 guest swipes a semester.

Senator Ou asks if this would be the case during events like “family move-in.”

President Toy urges him to speak with Dan on that issue.

Benscheidt continues with speaking about MCAB. They requested more money this year but were granted about the same amount they received last year. Benscheidt has sent the budget to the senators for them to look at. He states that programs like small concerts have received an increase. He then discusses the haunted house which he states went very “well” but that it was likely to reduce the funds for it. He then moves to speakers and states that their budget has been increased due to higher security costs. He then moves to the symposium which states that the symposium on Syrian refugees was “the most successful.” Then he states that Winter Carnival had a huge cost with food and that will likely be reduced also with the T-Shirts MCAB makes. He then reiterates that security costs are rising.

Senator Fleischer questions the high cost of the Spring Concert.

A representative from MCAB states that she has been on MCAB and that the budget looks accurate and it probably comes at a cost to 40 dollars per person at Middlebury.

Benscheidt states that running MCAB traditions is a difficult job. However, there are conversations circulating about the cost of tickets for non-Middlebury affiliates. If they should be higher because now they are “well below market price.”

Senator Wright asks about the lights and the setup and if students could possibly be hired
rather than a team to save on costs.

The rep from MCAB responds and states that it wouldn’t really be plausible because the equipment itself is already so expensive and hiring set up shortens the amount of time needed.

President Toy questions the price of the artist for Spring Concert. She states that a lot of money could be saved if we did not allocate so much funds and so much necessity to the Spring Concert.

The rep from MCAB responds and states that “artist prices are increasing per six months.” She states that they usually do a great job on their budget but that it truly just comes down to the artist and how much they want to ask for an event. She also continues the conversation about raising the prices for non-Middlebury tickets.

Senator Fleischer agrees that the price should be raised for non-Middlebury tickets. He still continues the validity of such a high budget for the artist if not everyone is going to be invested in going to the concert.

The rep from MCAB responds and states that they try to make the decision about the Spring Concert as welcoming as they can and they have sent out many surveys before. Also the small concert initiative is a great to get other concerts to Middlebury. She finishes by stating that well over half the student body went to the last spring concert and that many people seem to highlight it.

Senator Pustejovsky responds and states that sometimes Middlebury can be “very isolating.” So having a spring concert is beneficial to student life because it brings big artists here without having to drive far to see them.

Senator Wright agrees and discusses the “integral” part that the concert has. He states that it is so largely attended and that it helps with accessibility to the outside world.

Benscheidt continues and states that these aren’t final yet but are “continuing.”

Senator Pustejovsky states her worry in having to cut the budget from the haunted house which already had to stop attendance last year because they couldn’t afford to pay the actors for any longer.

Benscheidt continues by discussing WRMC and states that it serves a “different music scene” and that everything seems to be going well and “happy.”

Senator McCormick questions how many artists WRMC brings to campus.

Benscheidt responds that they bring many different artists throughout the year and they have two large events every year.

Benscheidt then presents the budget for The Campus. He states that it is pretty much “the same budget.”

President Toy points out that they reduced the amount of money that goes towards the physical printing of the paper. She continues, “every year we knock it down.”

Senator Fleischer questions why there is still printing due to financial and environmental reasons.
President Toy urges the senator to talk to the newspaper but she does state that people “do like to read the physical copies.” She also brings up that The Campus is working on their website too.

Co-Chair Sanderson agrees with the sentiments made by President Toy.

Senator McCormick points out that the body is spending more to print The Campus then on the NY Times.

Benscheidt presents the budget for Dolci and it stays the same. He remarks that they have it “down to a science.”

Benscheidt then presents the budget for Men's Rugby. He talks about the change in club sports funding which he states was a “nice” change.

Senator Wright questions how many people are on the team and Senator Fleischer questions why the transportation is so pricey.

Benscheidt responds and states that the team is around 42 people and that the college mandates that if a team is over a certain capacity then they have to take a bus to events which is very costly.

Benscheidt presents the budget for Crew and states that the budget stayed consistent which was “awesome.”

Benscheidt introduces the budget for Equestrian and states that it was a decrease but that they did increase their participation.

Benscheidt presents the budget for Sailing. Originally they had requested much more over their upper bound but were granted their upper bound which seemed “reasonable.”

Finally, Benscheidt states that the 40 thousand granted to Inter-Commons Council. He states his worry in the discontinuity of the big expensive events they put on and he might work on proposing a “flex fund” rather than allocating a certain amount of money to the ICC.

Senator Pustejovksy brings up the fact that the ICC and MCAB are considering merging.

President Toy ends the conversation on the budget review by stating that they will vote on the easier ones next week and continue discussing the budgets throughout the next couple of weeks.

Co-Chair Sanderson begins on the Protest Policy Reform. He states that they have taken into account many different conversation including one with public safety who started that using no violence was already their practice and the Community Council
Senator Wright agrees with Co-Chair Sanderson and states that they have continued to have different conversations about protests and their regulation in the system.

President Toy questions if the policy was directed towards people outside the college and questions some of the semantics of the bill.

Co-Chair Sanderson responds and states that the bill should clarify that it is for students but that it protects the student's right to protest.

Senator Aaron points out “the first point” on violent disruption.

Co-Chair Sanderson responds and states that the line was amended so that the policy states now that it is violent disruption instead of “all disruption.”

Senator Goldfield questions the “second to last line” of the bill and how it pertains to the bill.

Senator Wright responds and states that it would be “retroactively” received.

President Toy brings up the concept of “riders” and states she does not want to make it a common practice but it is when something is attached to the bill like “a random phrase” that goes along with it.

Senator Wright motions to vote.

The motion is seconded.

12-2-0

Senators Wilson and Goldfield oppose the motion to vote.

The motion to vote passes.

10-3-1

Senators Aaron, Goldfield and McCormick oppose the bill.

Senator Hayes abstains.

The motion passes.

President Toy states that she will send the bill to Katie Smith Abbott. In a later meeting they will discuss the Bylaws Amendment Bill

President Toy motions to table the bill.

The motion is seconded.

13-0-1

Senator Duran abstains.

There is a motion to adjourn.

The motion is seconded.

14-0-0

The motion passes.