



POLICY COMMITTEE MINUTES

2011 - 2012 # 11

Date: November 1, 2011

Time: 6:34 PM

In Attendance:

PETROS KUSMU (Chair)

FARID ISKANDAR

COLTEN YAMIGISHI (6:38 onwards)

ANDREW FEHR

RAPHAEL LEPAGE FORTIN

AVINASH KARUVELIL

EMERSON CSORBA (6:34 - 7:00 PM)

NAVNEET KHINDA

Excused Absence:

ADAM WOODS

Others in Attendance:

NIKKI WAY

ELAUNA BOUTWELL

VALANTINA AMALRAJ

1. CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order by *KUSMU* at 6:34 pm.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA *LEPAGE FORTIN* amended agenda to exclude *The Smoking Policy*.
LEPAGE FORTIN moved that the *November 1, 2011* agenda be approved as amended.
Seconded by *NAVNEET*.
Vote on Motion 8 / 0 / 1
CARRIED.

3. APPROVAL OF *LEPAGE FORTIN* amended minutes...(2of6) to say "*Publicites*" instead of

MINUTES

“Publicides”

KARUVELIL amended minutes...(2of6) to say *“KARUVELIL”* instead of *“KRUVELIL”*

ISKANDAR amended minutes...(4of6) to exclude *“ISKANDAR: Ummmmmm...”*

ISKANDAR amended minutes...(5of6) to say *“PSE platform”* instead of *“PSC platform”*

FEHR moved that the *October 4, 2011* minutes be approved as *amended*. The motion was seconded by *ISKANDAR*.

Vote on Motion 8/ 0 / 1
CARRIED.

4. ANNOUNCEMENTS *None*

5. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORTS

TO VPA – CSORBA

CSORBA: It’s all been about the Undergraduate Symposium. We raised 5 thousand dollars over the last two days; we want to hit 10 thousand by the end of the week. I have put together a team of 20 judges from the faculty. The closing ceremony is fully sponsored by the office of advancement. I have lined up 12 interviews with the U of A multimedia team. Nov 17 is going to be a beautiful opening night.

KUSMU: Any comments on the report? Questions? I have one: What is the international report?

CSORBA: The International Student Association is housed under the SU, so we can advocate towards the needs of the international students. Chakka has been setting up summits between international students. Once the symposium is done, there will be a lot of progress from that section.

KUSMU: Regarding Dr. Gwyn Morgan’s lecture, in terms of your discussions, are you going to highlight that? I know a lot of your goals is focused on research and quality instruction.

CSORBA: Gwyn Morgan talked about oil. He was talking about all anecdotal things. It’s important but it is not the way to form opinions. What we are advocating for is in terms of improvement. There are two main points: 1) research as a form of applying knowledge. 2) Student attributes. Goals U of A students should achieve by the time they graduate. He is discipline focused saying that the ability to think is more important.

FEHR: You were collecting information on capstone classes, do I recall correctly?

CSORBA: Yes, that is something we will do after the symposium. We want more students doing active things within class. We want to focus on integrating citizenship into class.

TO VPSL – YAMAGISHI

YAMAGISHI: I managed to successfully advocate against a differential increase to residence rates next year. I also attended a meeting to discuss

the creation of an LGBTQ cohort in HUB, that was interesting. Councillor Sumar asked a question about an approximate \$50000 new television expenditure that he claims that he saw on a residence budget but we can't find it and we will continue searching for information.

I attended Take Back the Term this weekend, the ISSS Open House, the Gateway's WPNCUP conference, the CFB Halloween Bakesale, the NSA Bison BBQ, the UofA Open House, the Campus Sustainability Summit, I did a Safewalk Shift, attended an IFC Meeting, attended a School of Business guest lecture, and gave out Halloween candy today to students while dressed in a banana costume. Tonight I will be participating in the CFB's Trick or Treat food fund raiser.

FEHR: If you had to make any changes to the Free Store. What would they be?

YAMAGISHI: Move the donation box closer to the bookstore. 35 people dropped off stuff and 84 people took them. Overall, I think we did a pretty good job.

FEHR: I would like to make a comment: I think it is a really good idea to have that. A lot of people might be weary of going to the free store. We need to keep in mind the three Rs: Reduce, Reuse, And Recycle. Reduce is the best and recycle is the worst. We are at the front of the Reuse. I just wanted to add that.

LEPAGE FORTIN: Is there a possibility to get funding from the office of sustainability?

YAMAGISHI: The Free Store doesn't really cost anything.

KUSMU: What do you do with all the left over stuff at the Free Store?

YAMAGISHI: The amount of stuff you have builds up fast. Answering Raph: for space, I wouldn't want grant funding. I would like to limit the stuff that people bring. The people at the photo booth said that when there is no one at the table, a lot more people come and pick them up.

LEPAGE FORTIN: How do you control the quality of the things that are brought in?

YAMAGISHI: If it is broken, unused or dirty, then we won't take it. How often would you want to see the Free Store?

LEPAGE FORTIN: All week, start of the year, end of the year. More often in winter or start at winter. We are looking at winter.

6. OLD BUSINESS

FOOD POLICY

Defining Organic (With Ms. Nikki Way)

WAY: I haven't been able to focus on finding a good definition of organic. I have been in contact with Andrew Hammermeister. He says that it is really

hard to define organic. He takes a production system approach. It is making it difficult. We can define it by certified organic but it cuts is off from a lot of food. Essentially we would just be promoting rich farmers but that's not going to work for us.

LEPAGE FORTIN: What is the problem with saying organic? Why are we certifying? As long as we are saying organic, I feel that we are giving it a leniency by giving a general definition.

WAY: That is what we are trying to do but we have to keep in mind if pesticides are being used.

LEPAGE FORTIN: Then why don't we just say no pesticides?

WAY: There are different measures: it might not be a good quality product.

LEPAGE FORTIN: Then why can't we say that?

FEHR: It is going to be impossible to put a definition on it. I don't think we are going to be able to put a definition down unless we can put a certification.

KHINDA: It's not realistic to have certification. We are looking at it externally, so I feel like we all know what we are taking about. So why can't we put that on the policy

YAMAGISHI: When I am advocating this, I don't think the university is going to ask me specifically what organic means. It's more just to push them in that direction.

KUSMU: Farid: what are your thoughts on this issue?

ISKANDAR: I am fine with organic being undefined.

WAY: Do you want to include the IFOAM definition?

ISKANDAR: What is the problem of not defining organic?

WAY: It would be like green washing. There are tons of little elements. Certified is what we are aiming for. If it's GMO, then technically, then it is not organic, but they call it organic.

KUSMU: So you ideally want the absolute high standard of organic?

WAY: Well, no. There is a good standard.

KUSMU: Well the general consensus seems to be a specific yet broad definition.

KARUVELIL: So what are we saying, we are going to take IFOAM'S definition?

KUSMU: Citations are problematic because they might change.

KHINDA: We could have the date.

KARUVELIL: So what are we doing, putting the date on?

YAMAGISHI: Yeah, just like a foot note?

WAY: Did you read the second definition?

YAMAGISHI: I found that the IFOAM was a lot more concrete.

WAY: OK

KUSMU: IFOAM or the Canadian definitions are what we are comfortable with...so is that where we are at right now.

ISKANDAR: Where did you find the Canadian standard?

WAY: This is something that the expert sent.

YAMAGISHI: In IFOAM words like holistic and harmonious are used.

WAY: There is a third one he wrote also: "Organic food is produced in a manner that sustains the health of soils, ecosystems and people, by emphasizing management ecological processes and natural animal behaviours rather than reliance on synthetic inputs or intense production systems"

KHINDA: I think the common thing they both have is not using external things like pesticides so I think that is what our definition should be. It does come down to the execs who are advocating for this.

KUSMU: It seems like it is a toss-up between the definitions. I think we are going to have to vote.

KARUVELIL: I think if we are going to use a definition from somewhere else, it should be the Canadian one.

KUSMU: It seems almost weird that we are picking a definition while most of us don't have a solid understanding on the difference between the definitions.

KARUVELIL: What happened to leaving it as organic?

WAY: But that's green washing right?

KARUVELIL: Didn't we agree on what is interpreted by the VP?

LEPAGE FORTIN: If we do see that it becomes an issue, then we can change it later.

KUSMU: Do you want to look over the definitions before we pass the definition? Should we vote?

Vote

Canadian / IFOAM / Against both / Absent

0 / 4 / 3 / 2

ISKANDAR: We need something measurable to give the VP more direction on what to lobby for.

KHINDA: Why does it have to be measurable? I think a definition is supposed to give something to fall back on.

YAMAGISHI: I don't want to have a threshold of what organic is or not. I think it is good be a bit more specific.

KUSMU: Now that we have this, how do we include this in the policy?

YAMAGISHI: I would like to have a footnote with the quotation and then the date.

KUSMU: So do you want to copy and paste the specific quotation on it?

YAMAGISHI: I don't think anyone is going to research it. Yes.

KUSMU: thoughts on that? Ok here. I found the document. Are we content with that?

LEPAGE FORTIN: do we even know what that says?

ISKANDAR: I would be more in favor of the citation without quotation

KUSMU: Vote on that?

Vote

Both / Citation only / Abstentions / Absent

3 / 1 / 3 / 2

KUSMU: So we need a footnote each time it says organic?

WAY: No, you only have to say it once.

KUSMU: We are done with defining organic.

Fair Trade Clause (with Ms.Valentina)

BOUTWELL: We are going to talk about what fair trade is and just clear some stuff for you. It is something we are going to be doing with the university. There are 3 student groups promoting fair trade: EWB, WUSC and make poverty history. There are 13 student groups backing this.

AMALRAJ: fair trade certification is an independent organization for products grown in the developing world. Looks at all the phases of production. The criterion is that treaties are signed by international labor organization. So do you want me to go over the criticisms or do you guys have questions?

KUSMU: Could you please go over the criticisms?

AMALRAJ: The main criticism is that there are different logos. However, there are only two that look for fair labor. The Rainforest Alliance looks only for 30 percent fair labor, then they can put the logo on their products. It is a little misleading. Their focus mostly on environmental sustainability. Whatever standard already exists then make it the minimum standards. They don't focus on animal diversity. Fair trade products are expensive. Cadbury and PC sell their fair trade products at the same price as they were before so I don't think that is an issue. In regards to "local coffee": we don't grow it here, it's just roasted here. Next criticism is that fair trade creates an artificial market and doesn't provide so much incentive, like minimum wage distorts the market.. Farmers are encouraged to move to other products if there is not much demand for the product they are currently producing. Fair trade is not meant to be anti-capitalistic.

FEHR: Farmers have to pay a fee to have their stuff fair trade certified. I want to know how much of a barrier this creates.

AMALRAJ: The organization will incur costs for the first few years.

KARUVELIL: I am just looking for some clarifications: how would a farmer go about getting the fair trade label?

AMALRAJ: It's just an auditing organization. They set the standard and there is an organization that audits. The farmer would have to apply to have somebody come and audit. There are more farms that are certified then there are consumer and demand. They make surprise audits. They audit once every three years.

KARUVELIL: Why are farmers wanting to get the logo, if there is a surplus? If it creates an over supply, then it doesn't help the other farmers.

AMALRAJ: In the regular market, if you buy generic coffee, it's like \$10. With the fair trade market they get paid \$1 for a pound instead of 45 cents.

The idea is like a minimum wage. Trans charges \$5 a pound, because it's like a charity. It shouldn't be keeping people in the market if they should be doing something else. Over 50% of products are grown by small family farmers. The distortion happens where the farmers don't know what is happening in the market.

KARUVELIL: where does the extra many come from?

AMALRAJ: profits.

KUSMU: We are working on a smoking policy, food policy, and defining organic, touching on philosophical side, should we be spending so much time on this? What is the benefit on campus? I guess my question is: how are you going to sell this to someone who is going to say no?

WAY: Sub mart and cram dunk already only sell fair trade products.

BOUTWELL: The SU is already supporting us. It is already in the policies.

AMALRAJ: It is becoming more normalized, like recycling. It would really suck if Edmonton became fair trade city before the U of A. I think it fits well with the office of sustainability, focusing on economic and social sustainability.

KUSMU: You need a committee to back you up, where do you see the committee come from?

BOUTWELL: what do you mean?

KUSMU: It says it needs to be struck by the university so looks like it is going to fall into the SU.

AMALRAJ: We are more concerned about the substantial steps. Our main concern is the availability. It will be great to have the SU's support.

KUSMU: have you done the math? Have you calculated how many stores sell fair trade chocolate?

AMALRAJ: Well the pamphlets tell you that. There are three groups that were handing out fair trade hot chocolate.

BOUTWELL: A lot of the stuff the students know is from their classes.

LEPAGE FORTIN: Especially in high schools. Fair trade is growing in our community at every level. I remember in high school, we would sell fair trade lunches during lunch.

AMALRAJ: it is only businesses; it doesn't affect Tim Horton's etc.

KUSMU: The university doesn't run anything other than the bookstore.

AMALRAJ: The SU is already there, the university isn't.

KHINDA: I think if we do this, we should use capital F and capital T then. Campus turning in to a fair trade campus would push for the city to become a fair trade city.

LEPAGE FORTIN: I feel that it is do-able.

YAMAGISHI: I think it is fine as long as we keep everything affordable. Just so Aramark doesn't use that as an opportunity to raise prices.

AMALRAJ: Aramark just caters for the university.

YAMAGISHI: No, they do food service.

WAY: There is one point. Purchasing under direct control of the university. In our case, it's only the students union.

AMALRAJ: we called Aramark and they said no.

WAY: Aramark is directly with the university that is the grey area.

ISKANDAR: If Aramark is not fair trade, we can't say that a fair trade campus.

BOUTWELL: Ideally we would love to get Aramark on board.

KUSMU: It's just pursuing fair trade ideals.

FEHR: I guess my only hesitation would be: I don't think we have heard from a genuine critique. I don't feel knowledgeable about this issue.

KUSMU: Do you know about any critical professors or student groups?

AMALRAJ: I don't know.

FEHR: I have a prof I can talk to.

KARUVELIL: In the operating policy, they don't say capital FT. I think we should keep it as small FT.

KHINDA: If we have small F and small T, then we are losing the point. They have no incentive for advocating.

AMALRAJ: If you use small FT, everybody claims that they stuff is fair trade. You can either go with the logo or do the research of the products by yourself.

KUSMU: We can have the professor come in next week. The policy is not going to council because we still have to figure out the fair trade.

9. NEW BUSINESS

None

10. DISCUSSION AND INFORMATION ITEMS

YAMAGISHI moved that the *October 4 minutes* be reconsidered. The motion was seconded by FEHR.

Vote on Motion 7 / 0 / 9
CARRIED.

YAMAGISHI amended minutes...(2of6) to say "*Booster Juice in lister may cost more*" instead of "*Booster Juice in lister cost more.*"

YAMAGISHI amended minutes...(2of6) to say "*recommendations for PAW and recommended the creation of a pedway from PAW to sub*" instead of "*recommendation to connect the PAW center to sub.*"

YAMAGISHI amended minutes...(2of6) to say "*deferred maintenance*" instead of "*differed maintenance*"

YAMAGISHI amended minutes...(3of6) to exclude "*It's really difficult*"

YAMAGISHI amended minutes...(3of6) to say "*I got to pie Cheema at the Relay for Life. I also attended the IFC toga party*" instead of "*I got to pie Chima at the IOC toga party*"

YAMAGISHI amended minutes...(3of6) to say "*I will be talking about*"

instead of “Talking about ”

YAMAGISHI amended minutes...(3of6) to say “Registrar’s welcome centre project” instead of “Registrar’s walk in centre project”

YAMAGISHI amended minutes...(3of6) to say “Did Farid met...ancillary services?” instead of “Did Farid meet...anicillary services”

YAMAGISHI amended minutes...(3of6) to say “No, Adi did” instead of “No,Adi.”

YAMAGISHI amended minutes...all occurrences of “van villet” to say “van vliet”

YAMAGISHI amended minutes...(4of6) to say “Dima Utgoff” instead of “Dema Goth”

KHINDA moved that the October 4, 2011 minutes be approved as amended. The motion was seconded by FEHR.

*Vote on Motion 7/ 0 / 2
CARRIED.*

11. CLOSED SESSION *NIL*

12. NEXT MEETING *Date: 14 November, 2011. Time: 6:30 PM*

13. ADJOURNMENT *KARUVELIL moved that the meeting be adjourned. The motion was seconded by ISKANDAR.*

*Vote on Motion 7 / 0 / 2
CARRIED.*

Meeting adjourned at 8:04 PM.