

Union Council Minutes
December 13, 2018
Union South - Industry

Present: Mark Guthier, Susan Dibbell, Mills Botham, Farhat Bhuiyan, Brennan Bahr, David O'Keeffe, Yogev Ben-Yitschak, Dan Grabois, Fernanda Martinez, Argyle Wade, Chris Verhaeghe, Heidi Lang

Absent: Sam Kodzick, Liz Preston, Rachelle Stone, Zaakir Abdul-Wahid, Annika Chatterjee

Guests: Edie Block

Mills called the meeting to order at 6:02pm.

Land Acknowledgement

Mills recognized that the university is located on Ho-Chunk land and read through a land acknowledgement.

Action Items

Minutes

Yogev moved to approve the November meeting minutes. Chris seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Agenda

Brennan moved to approve the meeting's agenda. Dan seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Reports

Porter Butts Kiosk Committee

Farhat explained that they have formed a committee to discuss how to tell the story of Porter Butts. She updated that they have had two meetings and are now working on a bid. Zebradog, who created the Gold Star Honor Roll kiosk, has been invited to the January meeting to help the committee with potential concepts. The committee has generated themes for the content.

Susan added that a writer has been hired to help tell the story in a visual way. Farhat added that in addition to the kiosk there will be a website so you can access the information at the Union or separately online.

Fredric March and Named Spaces Committees

Mills explained that they are working on creating committees for the Fredric March Play Circle as well as how to go about naming spaces in general. He updated that Jim Rogers has been conducting research on Fredric March.

Susan asked Mills for an update on the research for the Fredric March Play Circle at a spring meeting.

New Business

Wisconsin Union Directorate Goals

Mills read the Wisconsin Union Directorate goals for the year. Dan recommended that they meet with a specific faculty member who is involved in researching Lake Mendota and the environmental changes it has undergone.

Fernanda asked if WUD could go review these again to refresh everyone. David suggested that they also review these at the January retreat.

David moved to approve and Fernanda seconded. Council voted to approve the goals.

Wisconsin Union Directorate Budget

Mills walked through the proposed Wisconsin Union Directorate fiscal year '20 budget and explained the reasoning for allocating certain funds to various committees and increasing some budgets.

Susan asked what the reason behind the Art Committee budget increase was. He explained that it had a lot to do with the payment for artists.

Fernanda noted that Publications Committee was under the assumption that they had more money to work with this year than what was listed in the budget. Mills said that they would be able to work that out.

Farhat noticed that there was a typo for Distinguished Lecture Series for 2010-2011 and 2011-2012, and Mills took note.

Heidi provided some background on the DLS budget. The increase is due to an increase in speaker fees. The committee has chosen to do fewer lectures with bigger name people. The series would now include at least two speakers a semester.

Chris asked what the Union's philosophy is on sponsorship and potentially getting additional funding for the program. Heidi explained that the hope is to keep the program in the hands of the students, and a concern is that if there is outside funding, they will influence who is selected to speak.

Dan asked about attendance at lectures. Brennan explained that there has been a lot of strong advertising but it is difficult to bring in recognizable speakers who can connect and relate with students. Heidi also added that the series has moved between Memorial Union and Union South due to construction. Now that the construction is over the lectures are back in Shannon Hall.

Fernanda announced that the Administration Advisory Board has not reviewed the WUD budget and asked for specific information related to the DLS budget increase but

they have yet to review the information and will not be able to do so until classes resume. She was uncomfortable approving a budget not reviewed by Administration.

Dan asked if there is time to wait until the advisory board has gone over the budget. Mark clarified that the budget serves as a guideline.

Heidi noted that there are new positions being requested and are part of this budget. Brennan added recruitment for the positions would start as soon as possible. Heidi explained that it would be helpful to discuss the new summer positions. Mark clarified that by approving the positions they are approving funding for them.

Chris moved using the recommended \$847,000 budget as a target for Union budgeting but that final approval happen after the Administration Committee has reviewed the budget and requested detail. Fernanda seconded. The motion was approved.

Wisconsin Union Directorate Position Descriptions

Farhat walked through the various descriptions and edits for the Wisconsin Union Directorate positions. She specifically addressed descriptions for the Global Connections, Distinguished Lecture Series and Society and Politics committees.

Farhat moved approval for the Global Connections position description as amended. Yogev seconded. The revised position description was approved.

Farhat went over the edits for the Distinguished Lecture Series position. She explained that most changes are in the language. Dan suggested that they get rid of “strives to” and change it to “The DLS committee creates programming...” It was also recommended to spell out maximum in the first paragraph. The DLS position description was approved as amended.

Heidi reviewed the creation of the Wisconsin Union Welcome Team (4 summer positions). She explained that students would help welcome and engage students who are attending the SOAR program. The students will coordinate and manage the evening student social held at Union South.

Chris added that this programming is currently happening, but this is to elevate it to another level.

David added that when he left SOAR, he was unaware of the opportunities and experiences offered at the Union, and asked if there was any way they could promote that during these events. Brennan explained that there is a WUD/Union presence but this would help increase awareness.

Chris asked if a summer stipend tied to tuition could be offered to the Welcome Team as an incentive for students to apply. Mills also suggested that this be an option for Hoofers who are active in the summer as well.

Farhat motioned to approve the Wisconsin Union Welcome Team positions. Chris seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Dan moved to vote on the rest of the positions. Chris seconded and Council agreed to approve the remaining three officers and committee director position descriptions. Mills motioned to approve the remaining officers and committee directors. Farhat seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Wisconsin Union Fiscal Year 2019-20 Budget

Mills explained that the Union is preparing its budget for the upcoming fiscal year and requested that if anyone had suggestions as to what should go in there, they make them.

Farhat asked if there was any assistive technology or if they have considered investing in it. Yogev noted that ASM has \$10,000 that goes to support disability accommodations and these funds are often untapped.

Argyle also added that if people do not know how to request accommodation, it is difficult to actually access it. He suggested that they increase awareness regarding actual technology. Fernanda noted that the Distinguished Lecture Series Committee will explain what someone might need in terms of accessibility tools as well as how to obtain them.

Chris stated that a lot of rooms and spaces do not have a way to communicate with staff in the event that a person needs assistive technology.

David asked if there was anyone who is responsible for sustainability in the Union and whether or not that could be an option. Mark explained that there is not a specific person. Susan added that duties fall in a couple people's positions.

Fernanda addressed the matter of catering being expensive. Mark explained that it would be difficult to lower costs while providing a living wage and full benefits for employees.

Advisory Boards

Administration

Fernanda updated everyone that they talked about the budget and wanted to see both the budget of the last three years as well as the final request. She added that they are waiting for information and are hoping to discuss it further.

Dining and Hospitality

David updated that they are creating a sustainability internship to continue the conversation regarding being sustainable in the Union. He also explained that they discussed potential positions and descriptions that would tackle this role.

He added that they implemented a straw study in Union South where they would not offer people straws unless they explicitly requested one. So far no one has noticed and/or complained.

External Relations

Brennan updated that they passed the digital signage practice. Dan Plummer discussed donations to the Union and gift funds. Brennan added that the committee began the discussion of Veterans receiving Union Membership. The membership director is looking into it as an option.

Facilities

Mills updated that he is working with Dining and Hospitality on sustainability throughout the Union. He stated that he is forming a small subcommittee to make signage to clarify where certain items are to be disposed of. He also added that Ms. Neargard talked through what the campus is doing in regards to sustainability.

He added that they are discussing building safety. Mark added that the Union is considering a different approach to staffing to address concerns.

Program and Leadership

Farhat reported that they were working on revising position descriptions. .

Officer Reports

Treasurer

Susan went over the October financial snapshot, highlighting how they are managing expenses and noting that some spending is below what they expected.

Mark explained that much of the savings is in the student salaries line. He added that we might have to budget differently since we are unable to hire as many students as needed.

Dan asked how positions are advertised and Mark responded that there is advertising everywhere, on every platform and in every space.

David asked if there is a “refer-a-friend” incentive. Mark explained that yes there is.

Secretary

Mark explained that they hired a new Event Operations Director.

Vice President Internal Relations

Farhat updated that they are planning for spring semester, including the WUD retreat.

President

Mills updated that they are getting Winter Carnival programming ready as well as preparing the Sailing Club. He added that he is working with the Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs, planning for next spring’s Union Council and Advisory Board meetings. He also noted that he, Susan, Mark and Jane went to the SSFC meeting to present the budget.

Vice President External Relations

Brennan updated that they are working on leadership recruitment through physical and digital outreach. He added that he hopes to showcase the committee experience. He also noted that they are implementing a new marketing email system, thinking about marketing for the Winter Carnival and are beginning to plan the Bring Back the Terrace Chair Event in the spring.

ASM

Yogev updated that they just passed the SSFC budget as well as the SAC Governing budget. He noted that the Union budget would be going to SSFC in the future. He added that he is excited for the new campaigns and the new voices that will be brought to the table.

Open Forum

Heidi explained that later that evening WUD would be hosting a free evening breakfast event and asked everyone to promote it.