# SFRB

# Meeting Minutes

February 9, 2015

1. Call to order

Lance Li Puma called to order the regular meeting of the Student Fee Review Board at 5PM on February 9, 2015 at Lory Student Center room 304/306.

1. Roll Call

Lance administered roll call.

1. Gallery Input

None.

Lance: I want to note that Brandon and I had applications open and had a numerous amount of applications. We settled with six (6) full members and three (3) associates as a number to join. They will be ratified in this Wednesday and the rest are joining the upcoming month.

1. Fee Area Presentations

Kathy Howard: Student Legal Services

 Kathy:

1. I am honored to be the first presenter. I get put in this position because my budget is very small and simple. What I want to do is make sure that everybody knows what we do. I met most of you in the fall. So we will get to the numbers in front of you, but first I want to give some high points of our office. We are a small office downstairs; I am the full-time employee and we have two 11 month attorneys. We are at the beginning of a search because one left halfway through. This is my ninth year here, and we haven’t really done any hiring quite like this. I am open to hiring two part-time people to add expertise in the office because we do so many kinds of legal help for students. I’m interested in looking at the applicant pool and doing that. Valerie is our long-time office manager, and we work with students. We have a student advisory board: lots of students want to be on the advisory board. I try to bring in guest speakers and make it relevant. An off-campus attorney and off-campus life come. I also advice to elections manager, who is sitting among you. I want to do some bragging about how we help students. 76% say that the stress of legal issues distract from studies; I think it is higher but people don’t like to admit that. They would recommend us to others, as well. We refer people all over the place and many become aware of more resources. We regularly get these comments from students. [Goes to Slide 7]. I wanted to highlight in the middle about how a student was helped in his company launching, in the Blue Enterprise Contest. I think CSU is really on the forefront of entrepreneurial topics. I would like to add a bit more expertise and intellectual property law for the business area. These would be things like patents, hence partly why I want to hire two people to fill the one position because hopefully they will have patent experience.
2. 93% of our budget is salaries and benefits for the employees, and that is because we are and advising office. The rest of our expenses are low and we have always kept them low.
3. We are asking for an increase comprise for 2 parts: the 2% mandatory increase that you all have seen for FY2016. We also have an equity/special increase, which is a very different process. I had to apply and say why we wanted it and show how the staff attorney salaries were so low. They approved a $7000 increase for Staff Attorney salaries and then a $6000 increase in the Director salary. The reason for it was that data from a program review five or six years ago shows it was blatantly apparent that our salaries were low in comparison to SLS (Student Legal Services) at other campuses. We are well below many salaries, and that is why we ask for the special equity increase. It was approved for the beginning of the fiscal year, so the fee from last year doesn’t account for that. The salary increase has been very helpful, because now when I give the search I have a better salary to offer. I am so grateful to have this because I think we are attracting a good pool.
4. Given the increase I am asking for, you will see on the template here that we will have a projected reserve of $25,000 which is 29% of our budget. We believe that this is a prudent reserve, because the standard advice is to go at least 6 months of savings ahead for personal finance; outside of personal it is 6-9 months or a year. That would be 50-75% of a reserve. We are at a 25%. The reserve is used for, in an anticipatory manner, the displayed topics here [Slide 11]. Three of our office computers will need to be replaced. Our office manager has taken on paralegal duties, and we really need to reclassify her into a legal assistant so it will increase her salary. That will initially come out of the reserve. The last two, people keep in general from reserves. Our office manager just had twenty-five (25) years here so she will have a big build-up when she leaves. And we always worry about the last one, just in case.
5. That brings me to what I am asking for. It is all based on what I have previously discussed. We try to be really flexible for students who don’t pay the fee to pay a smaller fee and still get the help. That’s all I have on slides.

Questions

Lance: Looking at the full balance projections, what was the additional $20,000 increase in the reserves involving?
*Answer: This is due to the operations increase of $17,000 in the actual 2014 Fiscal Year, which made the reserve go up. You don’t know that until you’ve already submitted for Fiscal Year 2015, so we were looking at what we thought would happen. But Fiscal Year 2014 ended up being $17,000 higher. This is because we collected more than we thought and we also had some more savings due to an employee cutting some hours due to personal reasons.*

Lance: What kind of salary savings are you expecting since an individual resigned?
*Answer: Initially, I expected that we would have had to deplete some of the reserve, but because of the salary saving, we came out better than I expected. We saved in December and probably won’t get another person until April, which is four months of salary savings. But again, starting July of this year the salaries went up which wasn’t approved last Fiscal Year. But we are having that built in into the actual budget. The Fiscal Year 2015 projected takes all that into account. We factored in those four months of salary saving.*
Dwane: So will you get a new Office Manager when she gets classified as a Legal Assistant or will she just do two roles?
*Answer: We are thinking two roles. She will do both. We don’t have space to add new people. We can be efficient and are always hopping in the office. As far as serving the individual students, they are getting them in on time and serving them well. This is despite the fact that we did a few new things this year, such as making brochures for international students. Fifty (50) international students showed up to hear an international specialist talk about how they could work and stay after they graduate. It’s an exciting prospect and relates back to the need for specialists that I was talking about. International students are the trend and CSU wants more international students, and there is a huge demand for them to understand their legal options. And the other trend is the entrepreneurial. Other Student Legal Services fixate on landlord tickets and convictions but we are capable of expanding and making it even greater.*

Lance: The proposal for the $7000 and $6000 salary increase still keeps us below what the current averages are. In the future, would you come back with increasing it and making it even more competitive?
*Answer: I don’t have an intent to do that anytime soon. Would we have to do it down the road? Maybe. But I kind of took the shot for it that made the most sense since I know you don’t want fees to raise. We are very frugal and don’t want to have to ask you for a raise because we are proud and happy with how low we keep our fees. It’s not great to be paid below but I’m doing OK. We have great staff. I can’t imagine asking for it again anytime soon; it would be years down the road.*

Rose Kreston: Resources for Disabled Students

Rose:

1. I don’t have a formal presentation, because my fee is even smaller. We aren’t asking for any increase. I’m just here to tell you what the fee does. The fee is not part of my office budget so it’s a little different than the other areas. We do not use it for operating my office. It is used to enhance the accessibility of campus to make it easier for students who have disabilities to be here. The committed is comprised of students with disabilities, usually operating by email because it is hard to get together in one group. Proposals come to me and then I give them to the committee, they vote, I report the tally, and a simple majority passed.
2. The two proposals they [the committee] looked at last semester were
1) to help the RDS office be part of the homecoming parade (for the first time ever), and it was nice to have a presence and show disabled students exist here on campus. Sometimes they are invisible. Most of our students have non-visible disabilities. You don’t see those, because they look like everyone else. We had our van in the parade, which is accessible, for our small transportation system on campus. Speaking of the van, fees also power that. The program serves both temporary disabilities and permanent disabilities. Our schedule is always *so* full, within the two days of the service offer. So those are what the fees help us do, to make sure we can provide the transportation service. It’s not a required accommodation; it is an enhancement. And;
2) Bringing a guest speaker on campus who was international who spoke about having cerebral palsy. We were going to bring her here in October in conjunction with Equal Opportunity but she wasn’t available on the day we wanted. They [the committee] approved the funds, but we didn’t use the funds.
3. Coming this semester, there are a few proposals we are thinking of:
1) To help us furnish the RDS Satellite Office, because right now the furniture is whatever we could find. We want to make it more of a relaxing lounge. We want good seating. We have office –but not lounge— furniture. We did get a TV though! Students can come in and watch TV or to sit and talk, have a cup of coffee, make it their space, etc. The proposal will go to CVSA and they will vote on whether to help provide that.
2) To ask for laptops/tablets to help our service in terms of in-class note-taking for students who are hearing impaired or who have difficulties attending to what is being said and writing their notes. Note takers are non-students we hire to basically act like transcribers. And we need the machines in order to do that; at the moment we are borrowing them from another entity on campus and they have asked to find another source.
3) To help us replace some of our wheelchairs for our wheelchair loaning service; our current ones should have been replaced almost five years ago. It costs the students no money to rent them.
4) There is an honors society for Students with Disabilities and they are thinking of doing a t-shirt campaign; they might ask CVSA to help give money for the t-shirts. The message would be one of reframing disability.

I don’t make the decisions, the committee does.

1. Questions?

Lance: What is the current fund balance of CVSB?
*Answer
Rose: It is on the sheet but I didn’t bring it with me. I don’t have it in my head right now.
Lance: I am sure that is something our liaison will be able to get for us.
Nora: I have it. It is $47,419.
Rose: Yes. This was helpful in purchasing the car.*

Dwane: What is the current fee for RDS?
*Answer: forty-eight (48) cents. It used to be a little bit higher, around fifty-two (52) cents, but that changed.*

Sam: Do you have a deadline for those proposals that the CVSB has?
*Answer: No. It’s when they come in. But I keep them punctual.*

1. Recess for Dinner
2. Old Business- None
3. New business
4. Deliberation of Fee Areas
* Lance: Keep in mind that a vote in the negative in a mandatory fee area does not make it fail. It instead opens it up for discussion.

Bondi: I would like to open up discussion on RDS and their fee. I think we should keep the fee at fifty cents to just make it flat, if we can do that.

Sam: Rose told me pretty clearly that it didn’t have anything to do with SFRB last year and she doesn’t want it raised. I would object to that strongly.

Andrai: It sounds like she was peeved and confused a little bit. She seemed confused on why it was forty-eight (48), and as a liaison I’ll check in.

Mark: The summer model changed it to forty-eight (48), and we would have made copy sheets but we forget. And I think she forgot about it as well.

Andrei: Again, I’ll bring it up to her.

* Lance: No further discussion. I want to move on to Student Legal Services. It is a mandatory fee increase, and I think it is a good idea because we want to keep it pretty consistent. And there is a pretty wide depth in what Student Legal Services provides, so it helps. Increasing the salaries shows that we are competitive and can keep the great people we have. And having the increase for the new hire position will help as well.

Rio: This is definitely a mandatory increase, because they have already been paying this increase, and it would have been coming out of the budget if they hadn’t had the employee quit. Denying it would say, “We are taking away money from you.”

Lance: A reduction of services.

Rio: Exactly.
* Lance: It is up to the board if we want to do a vote of confidence it.

Bondi: I move to take a vote of confidence on the Student Legal Service fee area. [Seconded].

Rio: Point of information— a confidence vote is the only vote until the Long Bill for a mandatory increase, correct?

Lance: Yes. I will now open up discussion and debate. Bondi, you still hold the floor.

Bondi: For three years running, Kathy has kept it going great. Whenever there are mandatory increases we have to cover that. The fact that she is planning on hiring two people to cover what is originally one position in order to diversify is also one of the thriftiest moves she could have pulled off to support the office as a whole. Forest, the current, and Rob, who is the past, had relatively similar skill sets; so diversity as a goal will help significantly. I see no reason to deny this. I yield.

Andrei: I agree with previous speaker. Note that equity is also held by the president’s office so it doesn’t hold ground. I yield.

Lance: We will move into a vote on the mandatory fee increase for Student Legal Services. This would increase the fee to $7.26 for the Fall and Spring semesters and $4.72 for the Summer. We will do a roll call vote.

Result: *Passes unanimously.*

* Sam: I move to have a confidence vote the fee area for Resources for Disabled Students [Seconded by Dwane]

Lance: I will now open up discussion and debate on the fee area for Resources for Disabled Students.

Rioux: We want to know the point of view from Rose on raising the amount to fifty (50) cents or not. I suggest we wait to find out before we vote. I yield.

Dwane: Echoing previous speaker. We should hold off. I yield.

Andrei: I agree. Yield.

Lance: We will move into a yay or nay vote on the Resources for Disabled Students fee area.

[Yay or Nay vote occurs].

Let the minutes show that we will hold off on the Resources for Disabled Students fee area vote, seeking for more information.

1. Adjournment
2. Mike: You should try to get the fee breakdown sheet a week in advance so that we can have the fee areas available to you all. They may not think it is important but it can be informative and it sets precedent for fee areas in the future

Lyn: If you ever want help from us, we are more than happy to look at it. There can be problems with the layout and information sometimes. It may not be things you even pick up on but we can certainly pick up on that.

1. Lance: Before we adjourn, I would like to note that we have Interpersonal Violence Fund (Women and Gender Advocacy Center) and Adult Learner and Veteran Services fee area presentations coming up next week.
2. Lance Li Puma: I will entertain a motion to adjourn.

Bondi: So moved. [Seconded by Rioux]

*Lance LiPuma adjourned the meeting at 6:11PM.*

Minutes submitted by: Michelle Sogge

Minutes approved by: [Name]