

Student Senate Minutes

November 30, 2005

I) Roll Call

II) Invocation

III) Pledges

IV) Open Forum

A) Jennifer Faulkner

- 1) Student Senate is having a transportation forum on Friday in Rumours at 1 PM. We need people to help. Salvation Army is having a drive, and I would like to raise money through senate, and so I am passing around a money bucket.

B) Lanning

- 1) The Diversity Panel is in Rudder Tower at 7-8:15 PM.

C) Linda Salzar

- 1) She is speaking on behalf of bonfire. What's in your heart is what you should tell your fellow Aggies. Bonfire Coalition for Students stands for more than just the bonfire, we stand for all of the traditions and the Aggie spirit. It's not just our responsibility to come up with an opinion or to solve matters about bonfire, senate must also help.

D) Andy Liddell

- 1) SSFAB - speaking in favor of the student service fee advisory committee. Jack Hooper and SSFAB have spent hundreds of hours to approve each request. They did their jobs thoroughly, and they believe wholeheartedly in what they have requested. Student Service Fee has stayed flat for many years, even though tuition has risen by almost 60%.

E) Maggie Olona

- 1) From Student Counseling Services – we provided over 20,000 appointments last year. We contact over 50,000 students through outreach programs. Predictions say that over 4,500 students at Texas A&M have thought about suicide. We have 1 to 1800 counselors and the recommended is 1 to 1500. Yet, we have one of the best programs in the nation.

F) Ann Reber

- 1) Director of Disability Services – We are going to break records this semester for serving over 600 students. We also have a number of individuals with significant disabilities. These students feel very welcome to come to Texas A&M. We just had some of our disabled students showcased in a recent Texas A&M publication. We also offer a testing center to accommodate specific students. I encourage you to support the SSFAB recommendations.

G) Will Dugat

- 1) I urge you to vote in favor of SSFAB and Bill 16. SSFAB recommendations are for the good of the students. They have spent hours deliberating over this. I'm here to talk about the Texas A&M Band. We have many incredible trips, yet it costs us a quarter of a million dollar for each trip. We can not do this on our own. If you want to continue to see the Aggie Band represent Texas A&M, vote yes for SSFAB and Bill 16.

V) Special Presentations

A) Dr. Pierce Cantrell (Associate Provost for Informational Technology (IT))

- 1) We have a student service fee increase request of a \$1.50 for each student for IT. Our fees are less than almost all other major colleges in Texas. We have 10,000 obsolete internet connections, and we need to update these. Our wireless connections are embarrassing, because we only cover 1/3 of the buildings on campus. We really need to spend another 2 million dollars on Networking, and, to do this, we need to increase various fees. We currently have 1 Gbps for our bandwidth, but we are only using use about 500 Mbps. This is alright, because we always have to update our system. Our supercomputing costs \$100,000 per year, and this is not even close to par. This negatively affects WebCT, as we do not have the supercomputing resources to always keep it running smoothly.

2) Questions

- (a) Senator Johnson – Have energy costs been considered? No, as we do not get billed for the electricity, but that may change. Has the group asking for the request focused on saving energy so that they could use that saved money for IT? That would not have a great effect.
- (b) Senator Weizel – What is your plan for wireless internet? We will do whatever we get the funds for. We would love to get the supplies necessary to get all buildings covered, and that is the hope for the future.
- (c) Chair Smith – Walk us through the process on how you will propose the increase in enhancement fees to the regents? We made a presentation and we answered their questions, but it is up to the president as to what he finally decides.
- (d) Folely – I want you to encourage professors to post their notes on-line.

B) Jack Hooper (Student Services Fee Advisory Board, Chairman)

- 1) We hope we have presented and worked with you enough that you understand exactly what we are planning on doing. We have done all that we can do to get outside funds for student services. If you do not support the increases, it will pull hundreds of thousands of dollars away from student services.

2) Questions

- (a) Senator Campbell – In the past, what is the response to the referendums? We ran a survey after last referendum, and it showed that the issue is the jump from the \$150 cap to the \$250 cap. The survey also showed that the students who are more educated on the issues are more likely to vote in favor of the referendum.

- (b) Pro-Tempore Lanning – How could we lose control of the fees? University can get money from two sources: students or government. No matter what, the University is going to get the money that they need. Our influence will start to wane if we do not allow for necessary fees.
- (c) Senator Folely – We voted down a raise in computer fees that Dr. Gates decided to accept, so the University does not always have absolute influence over us.
- 3) Debate (SSFAB Recommendation Letter – This is a letter that will be written by Speaker Hailey and proofread by Senate leadership. The letter will be sent to Dean Bresciani, and it will contain Senate's recommendations for student service fees.)
 - (a) Senator Weizel – In favor – I know they worked hard and they are not ignorant. These recommendations seem reasonable.
 - (b) Senator Lawler – They're asking for a 58 cent increase, and I agree with most of the increases. However, we are making a move towards destroying the cap
 - (c) Senator Folely – against – We know that our constituents have real money issues, and they have not had an opportunity to voice their opinions.
 - (d) Chair Nichols – We can both send this letter to the Dean and vote down the referendum. We should vote yes for the increase over the cap.
 - (e) Chair Smith – Against – I don't believe that it is right that students at this university should be subsidizing the child care of faculty members. Singing Cadets are well funded and should not ask for money. I am in favor of a new IT person, because it has great cost saving measures. We do not need to be spending money on getting professionals to polish many of our statues.
 - (f) Point of Information: What goes in the letter? The vote on the recommendation will go first and then he will give the pros and the cons.
 - (g) Senator Koranek - We are paying more money for gas, so the singing cadets need more money to fund travel. And just because you disagree with one thing about the whole proposal, do not vote it down.
- 4) Vote: Passed.

VI) Old Business

A) S.B. 05(F) 11 (Bonfire Bill)

- 1) Introduction – Speaker Hailey – This bill only means thanks and nothing else.
- 2) Questions
 - (a) Senator Van Meter – Why is this a bill and not a resolution? It makes it student government policy.
- 3) Debate:
 - (a) After my first burn, I realized why we are thanking them.
 - (b) Senator Berry – Regardless of whatever we think about bonfire, I think that it is unwise to thank an unrecognized organization.
 - (c) Speaker Hailey – There is precedent for thanking such organizations.
 - (d) Senator Mayfield – This has become a bit of a mockery for the student senate. I don't think that it's worth it.

- (e) Senator Folely – I want to thank this organization because it showed me how the Aggie Spirit is something that “Can ne’er be told.”
- (f) Senator Johnson – There’s a lot of emotional rhetoric on this bill. We must simply use logic for deliberating this. There is an inherent amount of risk in supporting this.
- (g) Chair Nichols – When students put hard work to something, we should thank them. There’s not much risk in thanking somebody. For example, we thanked the Houston Astros last year. How could we screw over the university in thanking them? There would be a big problem in officially recognizing this, but we are not even coming close to that.

4) Vote: Passed.

B) S.B. 05(F) 12 (Senate Accountability Bill)

1) Introduction – Senator Frenzel – This will show our constituents what we are voting on.

2) Questions

- (a) When will the results be posted on votes? Ballots will be handed out individually, and then we will give it to the Chief Justice and her crew and they will count the votes before we move on to the next piece of legislation.
- (b) Roll Call vote needs 1/6th of Senators to second and Ballot vote needs only one senatorial second.
- (c) Will our notes be attached to our votes? Yes, you can show our constituents why you voted in the way that you did.
- (d) Why do we have to have the bill when we could already do it? This ensures that we actually do it.
- (e) Senator Lutz: Why do we have to show both bills and resolutions, and not just bills? This ensures that the senators are able to show what they feel strongly about it.

3) Debate

(a) Lutz - Move to amend “bills and resolutions” to simply “bills” on the bill.

(i) Debate

- State congressmen must put *everything* on the internet, because everything has importance. Therefore, we should also do that because someone actually took the time to make the resolutions, and so we should also show the importance of the resolutions and what the senators voted for.
- Senator Weizel – we should hold ourselves to vote responsibly. It would also take too much time to cover all resolutions.

(ii) Motion failed.

- (b) Senator Folely – Everything is basically a resolution, as we can only change ourselves, so we should also include resolutions in this bill.
- (c) Senator Hill – Personally, I do not think that this is very efficient, as we should not have a ballot vote for *every single* vote because everything is not that important.

- (d) Chair Nichols – This procedure will take very little time, and it only adds to the final action of the bill. The only way to effectively offer access to students to the way in which we are voting is to put it on the internet.
- 4) Vote: Passed.
- C) S.B. 05(F) 9 (Author's Closing Summation bill)
 - 1) Introduction
 - (a) Senator Ball – I wrote this bill to allow the author to summarize at the end of debate and to restrict the author from objecting and speaking during debate. We spent two meetings in Rules and Regulations to debate the bill, and they still did not offer their stamp of approval.
 - (b) Chair Nichols – Rules and Regulation did not offer the stamp of approval, because the author already has the opportunity to speak during debate.
 - 2) Questions
 - (a) Senator Folely – Would the author strike the restriction on debating? It would allow the author too much time to speak.
 - 3) Debate
 - (a) Senator Bathman: We already have the means of allowing the author to speak in summation during debating.
 - (b) Senator Ball – Are we making the most efficient use of our time? As student senators, we should seek to improve our processes.
 - (c) Chair Nichols – This violates Robert's Rules of Order, as it allows debatable speaking after the senate has decided to suspend debate. It is totally contradictory to Robert's Rules of Order. Also, authors have the opportunity already to speak for up to half an hour.
 - (d) Senator Folely – Amendment – The amendment allows the author to debate and to have a closing summation.
 - (i) Amendment: Failed.
 - 4) Bill: Fails.
- D) S.B. 05(F)13 (59th Session Reapportionment Bill)
 - 1) Introduction – Chair Nichols – This should not take long.
 - 2) Debate
 - (a) Senator Folely – We should vote it down so that we can fill up this room.
 - 3) Bill: passed.
- E) S.B. 05(F)14 (Student Services Fee Referendum Bill)
 - 1) Introduction – Chair Nichols – I perceive this bill to put the student service fees into the students hands and out of ours, but I think that we should table the motion.
 - 2) 2nd Introduction – Chair Smith – We should not table this, so that we can see what everyone thinks about this bill.
 - 3) Questions
 - (a) Senator Folely – If we vote up the SSFAB recommendation will the In Senate Vote Bill become emergency legislation? Yes.
 - (b) Senator Bathman – What is going to happen if we pass or not pass this? If we pass the referendum bill then we won't have to take a third step to remove this from the table depending on what we vote like on the In Senate Bill. *As long as one of the two voting bodies (Senate or*

referendum) passes the SSFAB Recommendations, the Recommendations will pass.

4) Bill: Tabled.

VII) New Business

A) S.B. 05(F) 15 (Election Rules Bill)

- 1) Introduction – Chair Nichols - This bill is extremely important.
- 2) Daniel Jones (Election Commissioner) – This bill changes the election code, and I thank you for contacting your constituents to find out what we should do to our code. Commissioner Jones preceded to cover the new changes to the election code. See the new code at <http://election.tamu.edu/>.

3) Questions

- (a) “I voted stickers” are at the MSC.
- (b) Senator Van Meter – Explain the rule on violations not exceeding 10% of a campaigners allotted budget. This simply means that no violation may be more than 10 percent of a campaigner’s budget. For example, an SBP’s violation cannot exceed \$100.
- (c) Why is the rule on the animals in there? It is there just in case somebody does want to take drastic measures and do something potentially dangerous with animals. It could easily go out of hand.
- (d) Why is the rule in there about mass emails? Just so students do not have to deal with a lot of mass emails. Yet, if a candidate wants to make a *closed* group for his or her campaign managers, it is alright to send mass emails to the members within that group.

4) Vote for Emergency legislation: Passed.

5) Debate

- (a) Senator Lawler – It is hard to regulate putting a sign in private property. I mind the regulations of the placement of signs, because the campaigners want to place their signs in strategic locations.
- (b) Chair Nichols – It is perfectly legitimate to regulate the signs. Yet, because of the cheating, regulating signs will limit this. Putting signs behind windows will also fix this problem. We need to pass these tonight so that the candidates can plan accordingly over the break. We can only approve this or deny this, we cannot amend this.
- (c) Any problems that you have with fines you can appeal to Judicial Court.

6) Bill: Passed.

B) S.B. 05(F) 16 (SSFAB In-Senate Vote Bill)

- 1) Introduction – Senator Johnson – This is emergency legislation, because we cannot wait until January to approve this. It is not feasible to educate the entire student body with this, because it took Senate *three months* to understand this. Think how long it would take to inform the student body. More than likely, if we move the SSFAB decision to referendum, the students will vote the SSFAB recommendations down. That means that we would have wasted our time. Also, remember inflation, it is alright to move up the fees because of the rapidly raising prices.

- 2) Pro Tempore Lanning – this is the best plan to save money in the long run. This price raise is about controlled growth. We are not raising the fee very much at all.
- 3) You have two issues – do you want to send it to students for a straight up or down vote and what percentage do you want to keep with the bill.
- 4) Debate
 - (a) The presentations I have seen and the people I have talked to have shown that SSFAB has put in an extreme amount of hours. We have all the information, and we are educated enough. Yet, it would take an extreme amount of work and resources to educate the student body for a referendum.
 - (b) Senator Lutz – We are the most informed about this, but I do not think that any of us had the time to talk to our constituents about this. Moved to table until next meeting.
 - (i) Motion denied.
 - (c) Vote passed to Change 7% to 6% in bill.
 - (d) Senator Frenzel – We need extra time to talk with our constituents.
 - (e) Senator Campbell – I was up there talking in favor of the referendum, but now I recognize that I would have to drop out of all my classes just to help educate the students for the referendum. We cannot bring the rest of the student body up to the understanding that we currently have. The six percent rise is a little higher than normal, but we should just trust SSFAB to do their job. By putting in the statement about the Graduate Student Council in the Senate, it ensures that SSFAB will give us and other pertinent organization the proper information. This is important for students today and tomorrow.
 - (f) Chair Nichols – SSFAB has given the student body and we clear education on this. Also, our constituents voted so that we could represent them. I have a mandate from my constituents to vote yes for this bill.
 - (g) Bill passed.

VIII) Reports

- A) Chair Smith – Reed might have a host of bands come. They are thinking about connecting the Northside parking lots. We have an insurance policy on Reveille.
- B) Senator Kristina – Caucus leaders keep on checking your emails over the break.

IX) Open Session

- A) S.B. 05(F) 17 – Chair Murray – We should order pepperoni pizza instead of cheese.
 - 1) Failed to be put on the agenda.

X) Announcement

- A) Senator Johnson – We are opening up classes for multiple languages for next semester, but you will not receive grades for this.
- B) Transportation Forum this Friday 1 PM at Rumours.

C) We are now taking namesakes for Fish Camp, and you can nominate them through fishcamp@tamu.edu.

XI) Adjourned