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Community& Government Affairs Meeting Minutes 7/13/2011

University of South Florida. Student Government Senate

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University of South Florida
Student Government Fifty-Second Student Senate

SUMMER SESSION
July 13th 2011

Meeting called to order by Chairman Abdool Aziz at 12:06PM.

Aziz- First item on the agenda is roll call. We have me; I'm here. Sara Bijan?

Bijan- Present.

Aziz- Ali?

Antar- Present.

Aziz- Bianca is excused. Sara Chaudry? Unexcused. Tyler Carpenter? Unexcused. Ashley is on a trip. Omar is unexcused. And Lee Farrell is out of the country. Next item on the agenda is additions/deletions to the agenda. We have guest Jeff Gao with us and Mr. Gary Manka.

Motion to approve the agenda by Senator Antar.

Aziz- Motion is approved. Next item is approval of the minutes. I sent out both.

Motion to approve the minutes by Senator Antar.

Aziz- Next item on the agenda is open forum.

Open Forum

Gao- Don't forget to sign up for Plunge. Anything to get them there.

Aziz- So, plunge is basically the thing for student government that we have to team build.

Sara Chaudry enters at 12:08.

Manka- August 7th and August 8th. We get on a bus at 12:30 and we come back Monday night at 7:30. It consists of leadership activities. Do some workshops on intelligence, leadership style inventories. We're going to go over our mission. Like Khalid and Rachel for your respective branch will share senate's hopes. Food and beverages will be provided and it will be there.

Gao- WE'LL SIT around a bonfire and talk about each other's lives.

Manka- Day springs is a retreat center and everybody has bunk beds; everybody gets their own bed. So it's going to be a lot of fun. It's not like a spa. There are no cucumbers.

Gao- You can bring your own cucumbers.

Aziz- Do you invite all senators.

Manka- Everybody in student government is invited to attend because retreat facilities have a ceiling of 75 people. There's about 150 students on student government. It will be senate, your executive branch and your safe team.

Gao- I can just see it right now.

Chaudry- You excited?

Aziz- Any other things for open forum? Next thing on the agenda is ice breakers. We need a motion for unmoderated caucus.

Motion for unmoderated caucus by Senator Jeff Gao.

Aziz- Motion accepted.

Unmoderated Caucus

Aziz- Moving onto the second item on the agenda is update on student initiatives. The first thing we have here; some of these things about forms. On other student government websites, they have links to forms. I think having this one page just for forms for things like stream line, other schools have things like streamlines for harassment complaints. Some people don't report things because they don't know where to go. We can help them know where to go. And also on Adhoc committees, would be having student lunch with student government. Where we can go down and have lunch with a group of students and just talk with them, because once you get talking, people have issues that they don't casually talk about. Having lunch with president or vice president would be good. Also in Adhoc they were talking about meeting with organizations to discuss budgetary things. Other things they have here is mobile ticketing using smart phones. Instead of using physical tickets; keeping us modern. And also I think this is the financial aid that they are working on. Other schools, Florida State has all of their expenses all online for anyone to view. Having that would help our transference. Any student. And working on this Landlord Ratings. That would be something with SLT we could work on. Have our own little review system. They only tell you the good stuff you want to hear. You want to know what's bad. We'll go through this next week. The next item on the agenda is the update on Tent Day which was Monday. We didn't have a large turnout. People have Summer B classes. Ali was there and he did a really good job; he got like 40 responses by himself. Also, when Omar was here, we did a lot of talking to students. There were a lot of freshman taking summer classes and they really enjoyed talking to someone who knows how to guide them. They know about these services but they don't know who to

talk to so that really helps. Our next tent day is going to be next month. I think in senate I passed out a sheet. So, work on that and get the Doodle up earlier. And also a different location. Also, do you guys have any location suggestions.

Manka- Where have you been so far?

Aziz- We've been in front of the MSC twice, the library and Chemistry.

Bijan- How about Andros, because I know it's more social than Juniper.

Gao- The thing is no one moves into Andros. You want JP because there are new freshman there.

Aziz- Any other suggestions for ideas of places.

Gao- Do it in front of the gym. Never mind, it's closed from July 16th to August 16th.

Aziz- You could do it for the fall.

Bijan- Yes in the fall.

Aziz-Right now talking with Scott he wants the business. Talking to a lot of freshman walking by juniper poplar there are a lot of people there. If we could have a tent in the middle of two buildings would be really good. If you guys like that idea we can talk about it. We tried to see how many people walked by and stuff like that. Next item on the agenda is draft letters to elected officials. I know Sara has hers. What did you write about?

Bijan- I'm on the federal committee, so I wrote to our two senators about budget cuts and pell grant cuts. I learned that I'm very disappointed with this situation. They're raising costs for students and lowering financial aid. They rely on this grant to pay for everything.

Antar- I wanted to write about certain projects that are governor approved in Orlando. I didn't know what to say though and be like "I'm angry at you."

Aziz- I know one thing is not to sound angry when writing a letter. So, try to get your point across without yelling at them.

Manka- I think it's fair to say you're disappointed. But you need to back it with facts figures whatever because it may be common sense, you may be asked why you did fund this and not this. Why did you go into debt. His argument was contrary. His actions and his arguments are not lining up with each other. There's ways you can do that. You can also write letters to senators. Maybe make a difference in those kinds of things.

Chaudry- I honestly didn't start that yet. I have way too many classes.

Aziz- Do you have anything to add?

Chaudry- That kind of hits home with me, but other than that I'll have to look into some stuff.

Gao- I want to write to the national government. I want to stop California from seceding. They do manage to become southern California. They will be bankrupt in a year. The funny thing is they want to leave LA out of southern California because they don't want the liberalness of LA. There's some really crazy people in this world.

Aziz- Here we have a sample letter. The first thing you want to address is honorable. Here's a sample, let's say you want to address Senator Bill Nelson. We're trying to be very specific about things; we're talking about Pell grants and if it's inn legislation to cut it. And we'll write it in and say that you're addressing an issue concisely. You have to basically in your letter say that you're very passionate about a issue that you care and it's personal to you and it's going to directly affect you and it's parallel to my interest because I am a certified academic language therapist, parent, teacher. It will make it harder for you to get an education which is something everyone strives to get. This issue impacts students, my profession, and the way we function. Be as detailed as possible. Like for Sarah, a good example of directly affecting. The more personal the letter, the more likely to get the response you'd want.

Manka- If you see how the three things relate to each other, if you can give them ammo, that helps. Where it says the interest to me, if you don't put that in there, your letter is less important. Then, the third part is who else? Are you just one person, or are you more of those. Those three are related specifically.

Aziz- So, the second paragraph, describe major specific concern within the larger issue. Being very specific again, because with only as many relevant details as necessary to make your point. Try to keep that flow throughout the entire letter of keeping your points on target. The same issues that affect my student. Basically grab all of the facts that encompass it, put it concisely. It could be socially, economically, politically. How it all flows based on this cut. It may be small to them. Here at the end is although I've read reports of your positions in the newspapers, I realize this may not fully represent your viewpoint. Trying to sway them in a way. You'll have the ability as an official to convince them. And therefore I look forward to your reply expressing your opinions and your current stance on the issue. And lastly you want to thank your senator or elected official. That's the main thing; to stay courteous. Maintain a professional matter and be polite. They want to be professional and very concise. And also I believe it is an important issue and would like to see the legislation pass or fail to ensure effective educational services for the student involved. It doesn't have to be very long and cumbersome. And here's another one. Basically, this one gives more examples of things; I'll email it to you guys. Basically, it is a real sample of just filling in the blanks. And does anyone have any questions?

Manka- I think it's important on how you write the letter as an individual citizen, it can say this is very important to me; you want to avoid that as an SG elective. So, know the frame of reference that you're using. Whether it be representing a body or yourself. The format is the same, but it can more caustic as opposed to diplomatic, then politics is all about the diplomacy. Next item on the agenda is announcements. Ms. Lindsay Luis and I went to go meet with Ms. Gerber. She gave us some good ideas on how to make the program more interactive and how to avoid problems she encountered last time. Make sure people don't ask random questions. And also for us to have help. That we'll need around 5 to 10 people. That's about it for that. So, as the process goes along I'll give you guys more updates.

Bijan- Do we know exactly when?

Aziz- September 10th at the Oval Theatre. Having a picture of the mayor and Judy Genshaft with the SG Facebook and get a prize, was an idea she had. And does anyone have a motion to adjourn?

Motion to adjourn by Senator Bijan.

Aziz- Motion is accepted.

Adjournment called by Chairman Abdool Aziz at 12:39PM.