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Appropriations Committee Meeting Minutes 10/17/2011

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University of South Florida
Student Government Fifty-Second Student Senate

FALL SESSION
October 17th 2011

Meeting called to order by Chairman Jeff Gao at 2:01PM.

Gao- First thing on the agenda is roll call I am present.

Gao- And we do have quorum, next thing on the agenda we have additions/deletions to the agenda.

Brinkworth-

Gao- Any objections? None. Okay. I need a motion to approve.

Motion to approve the agenda by Senator Marc.

Gao- Any objections? None. Approved. Next is open forum.

Open Forum

Gao- Speak clearly as much as possible for our secretary and speak once I call your name. Aziz?

Aziz-International festival is online. If you want to be in charge of volunteers.

Gao- Any other announcements? Shelly Marc.

Marc- It is my birthday tomorrow and I would like the world to know on the minutes.

Belmont- We won our last SG football game.

Gao- Interdisciplinary Oncology Interest Group. As you can see they requested \$700 and I recommended \$700. They missed...the spreadsheet was calculated wrong. As you can see all they put is meetings. I did talk to them in depth. Turns out they're having speakers. They are not general body meetings. They are going to have November, December, January and March. This is the college of medicine and they have time in December to have a speaker. As you can see, there's really no descriptions. They're telling me they're getting speakers from local colleges and speakers to talk about oncology. Any questions?

Marc-So, \$175 is for food at the event.

Gao- Brinkworth?

Brinkworth- How many meetings per semester is this?

Gao- January, then march. Abdool Aziz?

Aziz-Nevermind.

Gao- Shelly Marc?

Marc- That doesn't make sense?

Gao- They're having one meeting in November, December and January, one meeting in march.

Brinkworth- I'm struggling to see how this sent a general body meeting.

Gao- I was assured that the speaker is not a general body meeting. It is up to your discretion.

Castaneda- They have other meetings than these meetings, correct?

Gao- They have a meeting between their members and a committee meeting.

Thomas- how many students are in this?

Gao- Any questions?

Brinkworth- I'm not comfortable. It feels like a body meeting to me.

Gao-You can recommend A) or you can fail it to zero funding, or you can pass it. Yes, Cesar?

Cesar- Can you ask for descriptions?

Gao- Motion to postpone?

Motion to postpone by Senator Castaneda.

Gao- Any objections. Next we have friends of Sri Lanka Club. They requested 1,060. They have a few events going on. They have a sand volleyball tournament. They have a fall film festival, and they have a summer film festival. I based it off what they requested or what was needed. This one is where they want to have tournament for students interested in Sri Lanka culture. Apparently there is a large film culture in Sri Lanka and they are going to have a festival in the Oval Theatre. This is their budget for foods and materials. I told them they have limited USF population in summer and they told me they would move it to early summer, late spring.

Aziz- Since it's a spring film festival them. How come one is 150 and one are 200?

Gao- Less people. I had a reason for this, just give me a second. I might not remember. Oh, because it was so...they were complaining on doing it late spring. It might not attract as many people as this one and they might not use the oval theatre. There is tech fee.

Cesar- Can you scroll up really quick. What were the materials?

Gao- Volleyballs. You can get them at the rec center for free.

Marc- I thought the oval theatre was free?

Gao- There is tech fee and security for 200.

Brinkworth- I would prefer to be consistent between the two film festivals. I guess I move to adjust the film festival for 200 as well.

Gao- Objections? No? Okay. 200. Their total is 742. Any questions? Any motions?

Brinkworth moves to approve the budget.

Gao- Any objections? None. The budget is approved. Who would like to present this budget in senate?

Sloane- I'll give you guys all that information in senate. Next on the agenda we have executive interim budgets for executive deputy assistant general. I have a nod from everybody correct. I have this email sent to me from our advisor; you guys can read through this as well. Just let me know when you guys are done reading. Yes? Hughes?

Hughes- Could you zoom in a little. Well, I guess nobody would be able to read it all. Never mind. You can zoom it back out so everybody else can read it.

Gao- I'll read it out loud:

Jeff,

Thanks for the materials. As advisor, I do have some concerns about the growing bureaucracy of the Executive Branch especially during a time when budgets are tight. I hope Senate will critically examine the need for this position. If the need is there then it makes sense to approve said position. I do agree with Brian's assessment that his office has been overworked and he presents a compelling argument on behalf of the position. However, a great deal of that work is due to the fact that Brian has been coordinating the work that is normally associated with the Chief of Staff, a position that is still vacant in the Executive Branch. Is this new proposal intended as a short term remedy for this year to make up for the current shortages in staffing that exist or is it intended as a long term structural change? If there is a short term need then fill the void with a short term decision. If the long term need isn't there or if there is a question of a definite need over the long haul, then I recommend Senate ask the Executive Branch to initiate an actual research study on the need for said position over the long haul as it relates to the Executive Branch as a whole. We need to look at the environmental context as a whole and not just from a departmental perspective. For instance, if a Chief of Staff would have been hired at the beginning of the term would this need have even arisen in the Office of the Attorney General? SG just created the solicitor general's position this year and doesn't even know how much legitimate work there is for that position much less an additional deputy. I'm just asking that we all use our critical thinking skills, that we

do our research accordingly, and that the Executive Branch map out each position's job duties to see if there is need for such a job. If work is increasing in one area then doesn't it make sense that work should be decreasing in another area especially if the work in question is coming from that area? If this is the case, shouldn't the work load and associated positions be adjusted accordingly?

There are many ways to come to a solution of an issue – some better than others. Please take my stream of questions not as an approval or disapproval of the proposal at hand, but rather as a request to thoroughly examine the question and decide appropriately. FYI. Sorry guys, I'm about to die. Any questions? Any motions to go into discussion?

Aziz- Are we allowed to question the audience person, like Brian?

Gao- Limit to a few questions if it is relevant.

Aziz- Brian can you explain your rationale to the committee?

Goff- So, what is it in particular?

Aziz-Workload mainly. You see like in the future the need of the increase in heavy workload is going to happen in the future.

Goff- I'll start off with terms of hiring. But regardless of whether the attorney general has 26 positions within exec that the attorney general can be appointed to sit in on but regardless of whether Mr. Manka has something that is part of everyone in exec's job. In terms of work load, the need for it is currently myself and the solicitor general we are working over our hours and we looked at the clock and the workload and how it was distributed and with the amount of and we anticipate Ms. Belmont will work over allotted. And bring us back down to the hours that we were budgeted for.

Aziz- And also if you go to the job description there is also minutes.

Goff- We didn't actually write a job class description for it yet. But regardless if it is SLT at the bottom of the job class description, it is a requirement to fulfill the goals of the...

Gao- You are kind of repeating what the memo says. Any other questions concerning this memo? Any motions to discuss?

Motion to discuss by Senator Brinkworth.

Gao- What kind of discussion would you like to do?

Brinkworth- I don't know.

Gao- My recommendation is a moderated caucus. I need a motion? Any objections? None. Okay. Who would like to be the person to speak?

Brinkworth- Okay, I'm just this is a brand new position. Gary must have read my mind, I don't understand how there is a workload. This is a solution; a symptom of a problem that doesn't need to be addressed in this way. We can't let alone...do we have the need for a deputy. I'm just not comfortable.

Hughes- I'm going to have to agree with Ms. Brinkworth on this one. My only other reservation from reading through President Diaz's statement. I only think this position should be considered if there is more stuff coming in. I think it is created for a job to do someone else's job.

Sloane- My reservation is the duration of the position not just continuing on for next year. Would it be something to renew or something that would continue on in bureaucracy like in the email.

Gao- Point of information only, please?

Hebda- Mr. Warmke has been working over his hours. He has been working on student cases, helping in legal aid. It is my personal opinion that the amount of hours going over is 10 or more.

Gavel

Aziz- Agreeing with what Christy is saying, it would be more appropriate for next year for the work load. We should see how it goes next year instead of right now.

Hughes- Considering that we do not have a chief of staff it is hard to give my judgment on this. If we don't have a chief of staff now, wouldn't having a chief of staff now eliminate the problem? It's not something that we need to do. That's my understanding.

Brown- My concern here honestly, how many of you read the memo? Honestly. So the rest of you, why didn't you have the memo read out loud or explained to you? You are about to make a decision uninformed. You should really go back and read what the position does. There is a severe lack of thinking.

Gao- Ms. Brown...please. You're yelling at my committee. They are competent. Thank you. Now we have a minute and a half left in the caucus. You can end it or B) Discussion. We can go look at the memo.
Christina Hughes?

Motion to end the moderated caucus and motions to open the floor back up for questioning for the position by Senator Hughes.

Gao- Any objections? None. Caucus ended. Questions?

Hughes- I would like to direct this question to Ms. Brown. If you see anything that we should...could you give us more insight? Is there something I'm misreading? Because from what I see, why do we need to have a deputy solicitor general when we don't have a chief of staff?

Brown- That's really a question for Mr. Goff. As senators, it is your job to make decisions. I am in complete support of you guys failing and passing this. So, if you want to know what Mr. Goff is just other than chief of staff. That's a question for him.

Gao- Who hasn't read this memo? Okay. How about this? Can you motion for a five minute recess for everyone to read the memo.

Motion for a five minute recess by Senator Brinkworth.

Gao- Any objections?

Reconvened at 2:40

Gao- Now we will go back to questions. Who has a questions?

Brinkworth- This is for Mr. Goff. I am confused about the workload. I am just curious why they are the duty of the officer. Why is the burden falling directly to you as it is written here?

Goff- There has been so many legal complications and issues with hiring with the procedure and with HR. So, there's been a lot of work generated due to hiring practices and then rectifying situations in which there was confusion in making sure we were in compliance to statutes and with the agencies that had free reign in their hiring. This is the first year we hired all of exec and they were put in place by the 51st term.

Brinkworth- Okay, so then skipping down, that is going with the auditing.

Goff- Yeah, we had to audit them to make sure just because of the complications we didn't skip any steps and that the hiring process wasn't unfair to anybody because we wanted to make sure that we did everything in our power to make sure it was fair to everyone. That's was probably the biggest audit we had to do so far and that was the most lengthy one.

Brinkworth- Why is public record keeping, is that one of your job duties?

Goff-Yeah and I probably didn't explain it as well as I could have and should have. What we did this year is we switched from paper copies to electronic copies. In the past, the attorney general had to take them in boxes to a golf cart to the library. It is a lot of work. They are crazy unorganized. I tried to use it to see archives of the 48th and 49th term. It is going to be a burden to the library to put in scholar comments. It took 3 months to put up 7 documents. I will be directly responsible for putting up our public records. I have things from the 52nd term to now. It includes any joint task force an JuSenEx. Which I believe we are all caught up on.

Gao- Questions?

Sloane- It seems with the expansion of legal aids, it seems that this position would be permanent with this year.

Goff- No, I don't. In my own personal opinion, outside my capacity. I think it would...

Gao- Please don't do personal opinions.

Goff- It is a new position. So, on top of the cases will already has, he hasn't started marketing it. We anticipate that this workload...

Gao- That was already answered here. Thank you. State your questions slowly and clearly.

Cesar- When the chief of staff comes in, is there anything that he will take up?

Goff- Hiring on the majority is already done and we had a chief of staff over the summer and these problems already occurred. Hiring one would not alleviate any problems.

Marc- I guess like, I'm reading it and the problem is you're not able to give enough time to do the legal aid services like you wanted to.

Goff- The problem is Will is at and over his hours and that is prior to getting marketing rolling for his position. Come winter break there is a lot of marketing appeals. That is also going to hit in spring. We are anticipating grievances filed by senators and campaigns. We are concerned that his position is not going to be able to handle it come the next two weeks with our in depth with Ivan and Matt Gil.

Brinkworth- Wasn't the solicitor general created to alleviate some of the work. The solicitor general was created to help alleviate some of the work am I correct?

Goff- Office of attorney general is created to deal with the complications of Student Government, where the solicitor general deals with parking appeals, sort of that natures. Originally we weren't sure how much work there was going to be, so we wanted to...until there was their own workload, he's got more on his plate than we anticipated if that makes sense. No, he wasn't created to alleviate...

Gavel

Aziz-Will the new deputy position be doing audits as well?

Goff- No.

Gao- Any other questions?

Brinkworth- The job is not to alleviate your work per say. I'm confused I'm sorry.

Goff-If the solicitor is...the only thing that would be crossover would be legal aid because its more of for the students kind of things, so we wanted to make sure they have an active hand in that. So. That would be the only area where the two works would be crossed over.

Gao- Okay. Next question. Please, we're going down to one more question; that's it.

Aziz- Has your office discussed scaling back a little to perform his duties in his allotted hours.

Goff- What he is doing now is parking appeals and then legal aid which we just started and to cut back would to cut back his job.

Gavel

Gao- That's not pertaining to technically...

Goff- Can I answer that question?

Gao- Questions are done. Please refrain from...I have a motion for discussion.

Motion to discuss by Senator Sloane.

Gao- Should we do a pro con or a moderated caucus.

All- Moderated caucus.

Gao- Any objections to five minutes of 30 seconds speaking time? Who would be the first one to speak?

Brinkworth- I am wondering how this is going to effect the executive budget. Can I ask that to Mr. Hebda or would that be appropriate?

Gao- I can answer that question. They are physically unable to base on what I saw and how much they have worked,....

Hassounah- Point of information. What is in front of you is a request for funding from interim and if it were passed on the floor. Attached to it is a rider bill via memorandum. We would never create a position and not fund it. It would go in title 3 chapter 305. I can't remember if he requested a permanent position or a deputy position.

Brinkworth- It is not coming out of the budget; we are giving more money to compensate.

Hassounah- Point of information: you are in committee and you need a member to sponsor you.

Hebda- In efforts to save money on payroll, we decided to cut four positions. Those being one of the UCA associate directors, my director, and the deputy chief of staff once the chief of staff is hired.

Gao- Yield time to Mr. Goff by Sloane.

Goff- The executive branch has looked at this and the size of our branch and determined which one would be necessary to fill those positions. That way, we are not hiring unnecessarily to do work.

Gao- Anybody else like to speak?

Cesar- My main concern would be when the chief of staff alleviates the pressure. Mr. Goff said it wouldn't. I believe the position should be created.

Gao- We have ran a long time. My recommendation is to postpone it to next week and get down to the details. *Everyone knows what we're voting on. I'll take a motion to end the caucus.*

Motion to end the caucus by Senator Brinkworth.

Gao- Any objections? None. Brinkworth postpones.

Gao- Any objections?

Hughes- I object. I don't see why we should not vote today.

Gao- Yes is to postpone.

Ruby, Christina.

Gao- 5 to 3 to 1. The bill is postponed to next week. Next we have announcements. Everybody relax. This is business. This is what we do. Next time, please read over the memo. You have any questions, please send them to me. Now, any other announcements? Any motions to adjourn.

Motion to adjourn by Senator Marc.

Gao- Any objections. Seeing none.

Adjournment called by Chairman Jeff Gao at 2:58PM.

Transcribed by Senate Secretary, Theresa Rivera.