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Appropriations and Audits Committee Meeting Minutes 09-09-13

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University of South Florida
Student Government Fifty-Fourth Student Senate

Committee on Appropriations and Audits
FALL SESSION
September 9, 2013

Call to Order by Chairwoman Kattih at 12:07 PM.

First Roll Call

Present: Abraha, Kattih, Lopez, Myers, Romero, F. Fernandez, Devivo, Larkins

Absent:

Chairwoman Kattih: We do have quorum. In the gallery, we have Mr. Gary Manka and Ms. Katherine Burkhard from SGATO. We also have Masha Galchenko from the ASBO. We also have Stacy, our secretary. That is everybody.

Additions/Deletions and/or Clarifications to the Orders of the Day:

Chairwoman Kattih: Moving right along, we have additions deletions or changes to the agenda. The agenda is presented before you. Are there any motions?

Senator Abraha - *Motion to approve the agenda, accepted.*

Chairwoman Kattih: Are there any objections? Seeing none, the agenda is now approved. Next, we have approval of the minutes. Two sets of minutes were sent out, from July 15th and July 8th. There has been one change requested to the minutes from July 8th. On page eight, Senator Abraha says instead of “rest” it will be changed to “first”. Are there any other changes? Are there any motions to accept the minutes?

Senator Lopez - *Motion to approve the minutes, accepted.*

Chairwoman Kattih: Are there any objections? Seeing none the minutes have been accepted.

Open Forum

Chairwoman Kattih: Next, we have open forum. Does anyone have anything to say?

Pro Tempore Aldridge: A couple of things. First, as was sent over the weekend, the Castor Beach unveiling is this Thursday from 11:30 to 1:30. Student Government will be holding a table to give out snow cones, so if you would like to volunteer for positive points that would be great. If you are not able to volunteer, if you run by in between classes to celebrate the occasion, that would be great as well. That should be it for now.

Obviously, Senate tomorrow and there will be some upcoming things throughout the month of September, so we'll let you know when those things start coming up, but there will be a lot of things coming up. Be prepared.

Chairwoman Kattih: Thank you, Mr. Aldridge. Anyone have anything else to say for open forum? I do have something to say. I want to welcome you all to the Appropriations and Audits committee. I know this semester is going to be filled with a lot of stuff, and it's going to be a lot of fun, so be prepared.

New Business

1. SGATO Viewpoint Neutrality Presentation

Chairwoman Kattih: We can move right along to new business. First item on the new business list is the SGATO viewpoint neutrality presentation. We do have Mr. Gary Manka and Ms. Katherine Burkhard from SGATO presenting. Thank you for that. Without further ado, we can go ahead and start.

Mr. Manka: May I ask a trick question? Is this something we could go to an unmoderated caucus, so we don't have Stacy type this? Or is it because of the importance of viewpoint neutrality, we do have her type it? Sorry, Stacy. It's up to you.

Chairwoman Kattih: I think we can go ahead and leave it on the minutes for now. In the summer, we didn't do viewpoint neutrality on the record. Let the record state that Ms. Devivo walked in at 12:11.

Mr. Manka: How many of you know what viewpoint neutrality is? How many of you have ever heard of it? Two, three? Adam, I know you know. Masha probably knows. There are basically two Supreme Court cases that have led to the development of the process of viewpoint neutrality. The first was *Southworth v. the Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System*. Basically, what happens is universities and Student Government were sued because they broke the freedom of speech issues when it came to funding. These cases went to the court, and as a result of case law, these now are the foundation for viewpoint neutrality. Basically, the main question of the *Southworth* case was can mandatory A&S fees contribute opposing viewpoints in which the student does not agree? Viewpoint neutrality is just like it sounds. It is about a neutral viewpoint. The court ruled that it is within the scope of the institution to collect and allocate mandatory fees. At USF, do you have to pay your A&S fee, or can you opt out? You have to pay it. The fees can fund student groups that address any issue or activity. Student organizations cannot be denied funding based on their viewpoint. Regardless of the viewpoint that they come in to ask for funding, we as a group cannot look at that viewpoint as a basis for funding. We have to look at other issues. Court also said it makes no difference if the activities supported by the fee are conducted on or off campus. We can construct rules about that. Right now, do we allow groups to go off campus very often? We don't but there are exceptions. Again, we say that on or off campus, but we set our own funding rules. So the second case was *Rosenberger v. University of Virginia*. This was the religious groups and the university, freedom of speech. Can an educational institution not fund a religious based publication and thereby fund a secular student publication? Can you not fund religious and then fund secular? Court found that it's a direct violation of student's rights if you did that. The court noted that no matter how scarce university publication funding may be, it must be used to promote any type of speech at all and promote all forms of it equally. Viewpoint neutrality is about every point of view or message is important, but irrelevant in the scheme of funding. University must also provide a financial subsidy to a religious organization on the same basis as any other publication. So, whether it be religious journal, whether it be the Oracle, College Republicans, free speech publication, Democrats, atheist group, have to fund it all. Court concluded that it could not stop all funding of a religious group while continuing to fund an atheistic perspective. What I want you to remember about both of those cases is these

two points. When distributing mandatory student activity fees, student Government must use a neutral process and must avoid unbridled discretion of funding body. What is unbridled discretion? Anyone know what that means? How many of you are familiar with horses? When you ride a horse, you put a bridle on it. They have a bit in their mouth. We're the horse that has a bridle and a bit. We have to go certain ways depending on what the law says. We are not unbridled like the horse that runs free on the range and can do anything it darn well pleases. That's the best way I can describe unbridled discretion. It means we have parameters we have to work in. We are obligated by law to do so. What the courts identified were some key factors in determining what type of discretion they had and what ways it was limited. These are things we must establish. So specific funding standards. Do we have those, and if so, where?

Chairwoman Kattih: Anyone know?

Senator Romero: I'm sure we definitely do.

Mr. Manka: I think if I'm not mistaken it's in Title VIII chapter 804. That is the funding standards. Title VIII has a lot of funding standards, but that is the specific one about what you can or cannot allocate money based on certain standards. We also have policies based on viewpoint discrimination. We cannot discriminate on viewpoints. We cannot fund one viewpoint versus another. That's not a part of the equation. We also have to have procedures for (inaudible) discrimination. If you on this committee break viewpoint neutrality, then we have an obligation by law to remove you from this committee. Also, specific procedural requirements for funding hearings, what is that? I think in ASRC, what you do when you listen to student organizations come to you for funding? Do you know? Adam does. How do you work with student groups? How do you hear the request? What do you do? Adam, why don't you explain? Wait, do you know?

Senator Romero: I don't know for sure, but don't you meet with either the financial officer or some of their executive members to see what they would like to spend their money and then bring that back and present it to see if that aligns with the rules of the funding proviso?

Mr. Manka: Correct. That is one the procedures we used. Specific deadlines for funding decisions to be made. We have third Friday in December for Student Affairs departments and Student Government, and councils and student organization in January. That's all written in our statutes. We have a mock appeals process. I don't consider that comprehensive, but we have something. So I just want to give you viewpoint neutrality is and what it is not. Funding cannot be denied based on the views of the student organization or the intent of an event. Regardless of the student or viewpoint there is, regarding their intent unless it breaks the law, you should not deny their funding. Also cannot deny funding based on another organization. Similar events, similar groups should all be treated differently. You have ten Christian groups, you have four or five Muslim groups, and you have so many of this group and so many of that group. Just because they are of similar nature, as long as they are not the exact same group you look at them each individually as a budget request. You never say, "Oh, they are so similar. Don't fund them." That would be breaking the law. It's also for the events. Two groups are bringing two different rap artists, you have to fund them both equally based on the criteria for funding. However, the one time there would be an exception there is if the groups wanted to bring the same rap artist. Then you would get them to work together, or if the event already happened, you could deny the second group's funding since they already came to campus. Finally, you don't fund based on the size of the student organization, but how many students they actually reach. You could have a group of five hundred person with a thirty person event, and you could have a thirty people group with five hundred people event, you would fund the thirty group than you would fund the bigger group with the smaller anticipated attendance. Make sense? Also, just because you fund one organization a certain dollar amount

doesn't mean you have to fund another organization. A lot of times you may look at similar organizations, well, we funded Campus Crusade this so we should fund Navigators that. That's not the case. You look at them individually. It's based on the event itself. Also doesn't mean just because you fund one side of point of view, let's say you fund pro-life, doesn't mean you have to fund pro-choice. Each one must be reviewed individually when looking at the budget request. That's what you shouldn't do. What you should do is use viewpoint neutrality when making your funding decisions. I know we've done that in ASRC, but I know in the past we haven't done it in this committee and we haven't done it in the Special Funding group. I muddle up my mind sometimes, you know? So, second point is we have to do that. We have done a good job as advisors in getting you to do that. I'll say that on the record. Student Government has done a good job in getting us to do that either. Right now we're on the same page which is great. Second part, the method of allocating funds protects students' free speech rights by ensuring that all viewpoints including those who are controversial have an equal chance to receive funding. An organization cannot be denied funding based on their particular opinion, no matter how unpopular or unusual. I shared this with some of the senators. It's a little dicey, but at Miami Ohio, where I was working with Student Government up there, they had a group come in before Student Government for funding that was called MUMS. The university said they cannot be funded. We had to tell the administration that, by law, they had to be funded in order to be a viewpoint neutral process. The name of the group MUMS stood for Miami University Masturbation Society. That was their mission. I want to tell you that no matter what view comes before you, unless it's against the law, you have to fund them. Third part, when determining allocations, only objective criteria should direct the funding decision, not the viewpoint. Last and most important thing to remember is that it's not about the outcome of the process used. As you fund groups, there's a different process you have to use, and you go through the steps of that process. Hey, come on in.

Chairwoman Kattih: Let the record state that Ms. Aspen walked in at 12:22.

Mr. Manka: The funding is based on the needs of the group and how they serve your constituency, which is the students. What matters most is that there are no discrepancies, that you don't fund on pint of view and that you're not unbridled in your decision making. This is something we're going to talk about a little bit later, funding decisions organization budgets should be based on neutral criteria, such as how many students will be affected by the events—not the size of the group or membership of the group—it's how many people are coming to the event and who is going to be affected by it. Budgets, fiscal soundness and responsibility. If the budget is well-articulated, it's planned out, they crossed their I's and dotted their T's versus someone who just gives you a lump sum of nothing, that does make a difference in how you fund them. Clubs events, I know we try to audit groups. I know that this is the Appropriations and Audits group, and we try to do audits. We do that because we can use that information to fund that group using the viewpoint neutrality process. However, if we don't the audits, we don't have any other information other than hearsay to use to make those funding decisions. It's important when we get a chance to do audits, that can be used in the viewpoint neutrality process. If someone says "We expect five hundred people for this event" and thirty show up, you can think about that and reduce their funding because what happened the year before. Relevance to the event of the group's mission, so if they are having an event that has no relevance to their mission, you can choose not to fund them, if it's just totally out there in left field. Last, the budget's appearance will be determined by guidelines, which is 804 in proviso. So there's two examples up there of property use. Student Government is going to fund an information rally on the American political system. So if you look at that, the allocation committee will issue funds not based political leanings, but instead of the fiscal strength of their proposal. Here's what they submitted on this rally. Was it good? They can give you the information you need to make a good decision. Another one to look at is three religious organizations, all with similar members; want to fund

three different concerts. What you need to look at is that they are all different concerts. They may be similar groups, but you have to look at them individually. Only the fiscal criteria should be looked at, not their intent. This is what you all need to know. Why is viewpoint neutrality important to Senate? Make accurate viewpoint neutral decisions as student leaders and allocate your fellow student's monies fairly. Students have elected you to represent them and make sound decisions based on the money they paid for their A&S fee. It's really important that you do that well. Another importance to Senate is you're going to encounter many different types of student organizations with many different points of view. You cannot show bias in your funding of those groups. Even though we may have biases in the groups we belong to, we cannot show bias in funding other groups. Third point, you need to be able to put an opinion of a student organization aside and look at what they are contributing to their overall mission of the student group and the overall mission of the university. You also need to be able to distinguish an organization that deserves funding based on the equality and reach of event, not for any other reason. The event they are doing is written out well and are they reaching the student body? How are they reaching the student body? It's a quantitative number. Last, to know when to abstain due to a conflict of interest in allocation. If you are sitting in this group and a group comes before this group, and you are a member of this group or you have a strong opinion you can't put aside, you need to recuse yourself, it's imperative that you do that. Examples. This is where you all get to talk a bit. The committee on Appropriations and Audits allocates \$200 for one club and \$200 for a political rally event for another club. Both expected to reach the same number of people. Was this viewpoint neutral or was it not? What do you all think?

Senator Romero: I believe it was.

Mr. Manka: Anybody else? Next slide, we'll see. Of course it was. Why did you say that?

Senator Romero: Although they had different missions, the amount of people or students they were reaching was the same. That's what is important at the end of the day.

Mr. Manka: Perfect. Answered it perfectly. Example two, student organizations of two different political parties have asked for funding. Both have similar events. One organization has five hundred members and the other organization has two hundred members, they both received the exact same amount of funds. The organization with two hundred students is also planning a larger event with the organization with five hundred students. Was this a viewpoint neutral decision or not?

Senator Romero: No.

Chairwoman Kattih: I see heads shaking. Why not?

Senator Fernandez: Because the two hundred student organization is going to have a larger event. It's going to reach more people. So they might need more funds.

Mr. Manka: So it's not about the five hundred people getting less money, it's about two hundred people having a larger outreach. Perfect. There you go, it's always based on objectivity, and for both clubs to get the same amount of funding to reach a different amount of people is an injustice to the club that gets less money per person for the larger event. A lot of time people say "Why can't we give more people money for the five hundred person group?" Five hundred people may show. They didn't put that in their budget request. If they would have, that would have been five hundred people, plus maybe more. The budget requests are very important. It's important to look at the number of people they submit. It is about people, but it's about the reach. Example three, an atheist student organization is allocated \$400 for a social event expected to reach

three hundred people, while a Christian organization was allocated \$150 for concert expected to reach four hundred people. \$150 was given with the note given that there were similar organizations holding a concert in the same week. The Christian organization has 130 members while the atheist organization has 85 members. Both organizations had requested \$1,000. Was this decision viewpoint neutral? Why or why not? What do you think? A little extra gray in this one.

Senator Romero: No.

Senator Devivo: No.

Mr. Manka: Is everybody saying no?

Senator Devivo: Because one got more money, but they are holding similar events. You're not supposed to look at it like that.

Mr. Manka: That is correct. Let's see. No. You're right. Why not? Simply because an organization is holding a similar event as another does not mean they should be denied possible allocations for events, as each organization should be treated as an individual entity. It is not viewpoint neutral to compare organizations based on any aspect, or in particular, any viewpoint aspect. You're here to allocate funds, not to determine the validity of their intent or viewpoint. That's it. This is where I throw it up to questions.

Senator Romero: Is there any way we could get this emailed to us?

Chairwoman Kattih: I'll email it to you guys.

Ms. Burkhard: I actually have a sheet to pass out to you guys later that can help. You can review it as well.

Mr. Manka: Want to do that now? We can pass it out and talk about it. Do you have any issues that you're not sure about, that you want to talk about, that kind of thing?

Ms. Burkhard: There are two pieces. I'll send the back one now.

Chairwoman Kattih: So do you guys think you can make viewpoint neutral decisions based on this presentation? Are you guys all confident? Thank you so much Gary.

Bur: If you would be so kind, the second page, it's actually a sheet if you can sign it for me if you're comfortable doing that. It's ensuring that you're stating that you will be utilizing a viewpoint neutral process in your decision making. Also, if you're comfortable listing all the organizations you are a part of us, for all of us to know in the future if an organization comes up and they are requesting something, then that's a time for you to abstain.

Chairwoman Kattih: You guys can hand this into me later if you want to think about it. If you want to talk about it, read over it a little bit more, I'll pass them onto SGATO.

Senator Romero: Do I need to write them down if they are not A&S funded, but they are still school organizations?

Mr. Manka: I would say yes, reason being it could be part of--

Senator Romero: It could be a part of another organization.

Mr. Manka: What's the multiple grants with different groups?

Pro Tempore Aldridge: Signature events?

Mr. Manka: Signature events, because that could be a part of signature event groups, but one group coming before us could be A&S funding. There would still be a conflict.

Senator Romero: Can I come back and add to this list?

Senator Abraha: Are you signing the advisor...?

Mr. Manka: I'll have Katherine do it.

Chairwoman Kattih: Any other questions? Everyone feel comfortable with this?

Mr. Manka: As you hear funding requests as they come into you, it seems a little easier now because I give you some specific examples, there's going to be more difficult ones that come your way. It's going to be a lot more gray. Just go back to the handout we gave you, that's a good point to refresh. Adam is a great resource as well as Zein, so don't forget to confide in your leaders and ask questions.

2. Election Rules Commission Interim Budget

Chairwoman Kattih: So if everybody is good with viewpoint neutrality, we can move onto the next item on the agenda, which is the off-campus requests. I wanted you guys to get a taste of what off-campus requests look like. The off-campus request we have—actually, Ms. Abraha, you have a motion?

Senator Abraha – *Motion to move the ERC request before the off-campus requests, accepted.*

Chairwoman Kattih: Why?

Senator Abraha: Time. I believe our ERC has a class.

Chairwoman Kattih: Okay. Are there any objections to that motion? Seeing none, the ERC interim budget request will be seen next. That is our next item. The ERC, which is the Election Rules Commission, is the entity that is responsible for elections, for senators, for the presidential ticket and the important things. They have requested a total of \$3,057 worth of additional payroll. We do have Mr. Sayf Hassounch who will talk about it. Mr. Sayf?

Mr. Hassounch: Hello guys. I'm with the ERC Supervisor of Elections. The reason for this request is, I'm not sure how many of you guys were here last year, but you know about Senate. I recognize a couple of you faces. The Activity and Service Recommendation Committee, known as ASRC—last year, they made very drastic cuts to the Election Rules Commission. We originally had three deputy positions, as you can—actually, you can't see that here. They reduced it to one—two. They reduced it by one. Our previous deputies had fifteen hours a week and they reduced that as well, to ten hours a week, effectively cutting twenty five hours of productivity for ERC. What I'm asking for here is an increase of five hours each to the Supervisor of Elections and Associate Supervisor of Elections. With this lack of productivity, we need a way to compensate for it. The most cost-effective way I saw was adding ten hours to the two higher up positions instead of adding fifteen hours to lower positions. My original intent was, of course, to do away with the deputy position but add five hours to the Supervisor of Elections, but still keep the deputies at fifteen hours instead of the ten hour pay rate. The associate gets an extra five hours and myself, the Supervisor of Elections, can make up for

the additional twenty hours that they cut away in ASRC by adding five hours to mine. Actually, right there. Perfect. So, quick synopsis of what I said.

Chairwoman Kattih: So if you want to step out, we can go into—we'll open the floor for questions.

Senator Abraha: The deputies get how many hours?

Mr. Hassounch: Originally, it was fifteen. It was reduced to ten hours.

Senator Abraha: Ten hours each. So you have two deputies? How many hours do you and the Associate get?

Mr. Hassounch: I get twenty five. The associate gets fifteen.

Senator Romero: And you're trying to increase the Associates to twenty and yours to thirty? Can I ask another question as well? What is it exactly that—because they cut the hours for a reason. I don't know, because I wasn't there, why the hours were cut, but there had to have been a reason for which they were cut. It might be financial or it might be because they didn't feel that those hours were necessary. What exactly do you feel either you or the associate—because I guess you two are the ones you are getting the hours added onto—need more hours to do that you're bringing this request in today?

Mr. Hassounch: I was in the ERC last year. We definitely needed a twenty-five hour productivity cut. That was just because ASRC, in my opinion, had overfunded and they needed a way to solve that. So they went ahead and cut our funding. Our Vice Chair of ASRC here, I'm not sure he was there for the final meeting, but Mr. Adam Aldridge might be able to elucidate a little on my situation.

Chairwoman Kattih: Mr. Aldridge, do you want to say something?

Pro Tempore Aldridge: I will just answer my best guess is and I will not speak for all the members of ASRC that were on the committee last semester, but what I would say is that there was a noticeable drop in the productivity of the ERC in this past election cycle and we felt while in the year before, there was a great movement forward in terms of production and the efforts to get as many votes and donations possible, there seemed to be lack of that in some areas of the ERC. It was noticeable enough to where the number of election votes went down, so we felt that it didn't make a lot of sense to fund so many hours if the productivity was not accompanying that. That was why the decision was made. Obviously, the productivity ranges from year to year. I understand where the current ERC Supervisor may think it might be a little bit too reactionary to it, but that's probably why the decision was made at that time.

Mr. Hassounch: The productivity that Adam is alluding to would be garnering votes. The reason we had such a big drop-off was because in the previous years, there was a runoff election. In the general election for the year before, before I was Deputy Supervisor, we had about 7,700 votes. 3,300 were from the runoff. My year, when I was the Deputy Supervisor, we had 4,500 votes. It's an estimate. It was like 4,450 or something like that. That's the biggest reason for the drop-off. It wasn't because we worked any less. It's just because we didn't have a runoff. We only had two candidates, so there was no possibility for a runoff. Someone had to get that 50% plus one for a simple majority. So I don't believe that's a fair conclusion to say that we worked any less or that we didn't do our job as well as we did the previous years.

Chairwoman Kattih: Are there any more questions for our representative?

Senator Abraha: In your opinion do you think it would be more efficient to fund the deputies five hours each that we would be giving to you, as opposed to the associate and your position? They would have to be more out there, especially as midterm elections are coming up. So do you think ten hours is enough for them?

Mr. Hassounch: We actually don't use the deputies until the general election. We don't have funding for that even with whatever we try to save up. The issue is that they are pretty much paid volunteers and they only work about six to eight week, no more than two months, during the general election period just to help us out with polling and voting locations. Myself and the associate will be around pretty much the entire year as you guys should be able to see, thirty nine and twenty-seven weeks for school. That's a majority, honestly, because there's a lot of break. For thirty nine weeks I work pretty much the whole year, until the summer and the new presidential term. The associate works, the first date would be mid-September. It would be around now. We just haven't hired anyone. We haven't started the interview process. We would be working for much longer. The associate definitely needs the extra five hours regardless, because they will be they will be overseeing all the deputies. The deputies, there's a hierarchy to it. We can't have the deputies having the same exact hours and sacrificing the associates that oversee them.

Chairwoman Kattih: Are there any other questions for our representative? If there are none, we can go into a discussion, if there are any motions.

Senator Abraha – *Motion to close questioning and enter discussion, accepted.*

Mr. Hassounch: Thank you guys. I appreciate you accommodating me on my tight schedule.

Chairwoman Kattih: How this works—I don't know if you guys are familiar with it—it is kind of how it's gone in Senate. Different committees do it differently. We start with the representatives, who states their case, questioning like we just did, then we go into discussion. At this discussion, you guys can discuss pros and cons. If you have a little bit—if you're not sure whether you say yes or no—ultimately, you will be the ones voting on this. You need to know how to vote. The way to know that is through what your peers think. Maybe you can sway opinion. Maybe you can sway theirs. So with that, does anyone have anything to say?

Senator Romero: We don't necessarily have to vote on what he's presented, correct? We can make amendments to... is that allowed?

Chairwoman Kattih: We can make amendments in most cases. Amendments are possible, yes. With this--

Pro Tempore Aldridge: It's a little more unfamiliar to us, because usually we don't with student organizations budgets, you can make edits to how much you think you should fund. But in this case, if you're talking about—some things like the pay rate can't change, but if you're talking about as was mentioned to put five hours in some other positions, stuff like that is more plausible. We'd have to do the math to figure that out. What you make sure to do is when you vote here, anything that is sent to Senate as an interim budget requests, it cannot be admitted on the Senate floor. So if you do think there should be changes, let us know in here, because it can't be changed on the Senate floor.

Chairwoman Kattih: What do you guys think? Yes, no?

Senator Larkins: I don't want to completely say no, but it's like, if there was little productivity last year, you don't want to say yes this year and it's the same thing.

Senator Abraha: Well, if the ERC director was completely different. Last year, it was Karim, this year it's Sayf. Not that anyone would do a better or less job. I wasn't here last year. I wouldn't know. But Sayf has already getting sponsors and talking to people. I know he can get the job done. That's why I was asking the deputy versus not. But seeing that is a volunteer position and they are going to be a lot longer, I think I would fund them, because he can do the job as well as his associate, whomever he hires.

Chairwoman Kattih: Anyone else? Ms. Devivo, what do you think?

Senator Devivo: I don't know. I was thinking how she was thinking, because usually I feel like they made good decisions to cut the hours because of the productivity, but then it was different people, like the point she made. So I don't really know.

Chairwoman Kattih: I want you guys to keep in mind the fact that ASRC is also composed of senators and members of the Student Government, so they are very much like us. People do make mistakes, people do make projections that may or may not be accurate. So that's just something to—Ms. Larkins they probably did it for a reason. Of course, they probably did, and the justification is there. However, keep that in mind just in case.

Senator Romero: Although my first reaction is I don't personally like people presenting things that would hire their own pay, because that's a conflict of interest. That being said, I do believe that is a good decision. Whether or not—cutting the hours on something like student voting isn't going to help the students vote more. At the end of the day, whether he is able to do more or do less, us cutting those hours from him is only going to limit him from getting more votes, whereas if we give him the opportunity, it could allow him to get more students involved in such an essential process as voting.

Chairwoman Kattih: Ms. Myers, what do you think?

Senator Myers: I was initially thinking like you, that it increasing his hours is a little bit of a conflict. I still think the thirty hours is a lot for himself and the vice supervisor is only twenty hours. That's a little bit of a difference. Vice supervisor doesn't start for a while. So it does seem okay.

Senator Abraha: I wanted to clarify a couple of things. First, we're not giving them all the hours ASRC took away. It's just a partial. Secondly, I wanted to say that he doesn't have to clock in all those thirty, he will clock in what he needs to get done or his associate, so we can't really determine he's going to be working thirty every week. I'm sure he's going to school as well. Another point I mentioned earlier, we can see how the midterm elections are going. That's why we have different (inaudible), so we can make sure they get their job done. As senators, we are here to check on them. We do have other means, I guess for a lack of a better word, taking them off if they are not getting their job done.

Chairwoman Kattih: Are there any more points of discussion?

Senator Abraha – *Motion to end discussion and enter voting procedure, accepted.*

Chairwoman Kattih: Are there any objections? Seeing none, we are now in voting procedure. Voting is going to be done by roll call, so I'll call your name. "Yes" is to approve the \$3,057. The way it is presented here with an increase of five hours per week for the Supervisor of Elections and five hours per week for the Vice Supervisor of Elections, for the weeks: thirty nine weeks for the Supervisor, twenty seven for the Vice. "No" is to not approve this budget.

Senator Larkins: I just have a quick question about voting. If one person says no, the whole--?

Chairwoman Kattih: No, it is a majority. Thank you for that.

YES: Abraha, Devivo, Fernandez, Myers, Romero

NO: Larkins

5-1-1, ERC Budget has passed.

3. Off-Campus Requests

Cancer Biology Student Organization

Chairwoman Kattih: We can go on to look at the off-campus requests. As I was stating before, off-campus requests are where student organizations that want to use A&S money they think is relevant to their organization. However, it's not going to take place on USF campus or Riverfront Park. It's going to take place on an off-campus location. For that, they need to get special permission. In this case, the Cancer Biology Student Organization is requesting that their event take place at Lettuce Lake Park. They do provide some reasoning as to why this event can't take place at, for example, USF Riverfront Park, which is the location that we provide. This organization said that they surveyed their students and based on the response, it was found that Lettuce Lake Park would provide the organization with more interaction with their environment, the type of things they are looking for, rather than USF Riverfront Park. However, USF Riverfront Park is where they would take the event if this is not to get funded. So if the event is denied, it will still occur. They are going to use \$137.12 from A&S funding from this event. A lot of off-campus requests are usually irrelevant to the student organization's mission and goal. For that, there has been a precedent of denial. Again, it's up to you guys to determine whether or not you think this is relevant, whether or not they should have this event at this location. If there are any questions, any points of discussion? Ms. Larkins, anything?

Senator Larkins: I was going to look up their mission, because you said usually the event has nothing to do with their mission.

Senator Romero: Do we have to move into discussion, or are we...?

Chairwoman Kattih: All of the off-campus request is general discussion. The thing is, a lot of these—the mission, when you're considering the mission, it will be the mission of the student organization as well as the mission of the event in of itself. The event they are trying to—the welcome reception that they are having is, I'm assuming, they are searching for specific things in the wildlife that they cannot find at USF Riverfront Park. If you guys think that it's not necessary, then again, it's up to you.

Senator Abraha: While you are looking at the mission, I just think...

Chairwoman Kattih: Any points, any discussion points?

Senator Abraha: I would not mind them going off campus to have it, because like you said, the wildlife aspect that they wanted to have. It doesn't particularly go with their mission, per se, and minus the survey—I don't know if they should have provided that or not, but I feel like they know what it takes to have it off campus and they are willing to show us.

Senator Romero: I respectfully disagree. I feel like both the mission of the organization and the mission of this event don't relate. The mission of the event is to introduce them to wildlife, while the mission of their organization is to career develop, help people join philanthropies and scientific interaction. Going and having people see wildlife isn't necessarily scientific interaction. Although I do not see a reason for why they shouldn't go to a park, I do believe that the differences between whether they go to our park or a different part aren't enough. They stated there is a nice shady area and a central boardwalk as some of the main reasons to go to a different park. I don't think that's a correct allocation of students' funds to say that because they have shading, they should go to a different park.

Chairwoman Kattih: If you guys are unsure, the example I always give is a scuba diving organization wants to go to the Gulf of Mexico to scuba dive as an off-campus event request. That is something that is extremely relevant to the organization's mission, to their organization's purpose and goal. That is something that would automatically--you would know that's something I would fund. On the other hand, we have organizations; the Rocket Science Club wants to go bowling off campus. That is something that is not really relevant, it is a social. So you have two extreme examples that I've kind of given. This one kind of falls in between. It will be up to you guys to determine why or why not it's relevant or why or why not it's not. Both of your peers have given good examples and good reasons why or why not.

Senator Larkins: Doesn't Riverfront Park also have a boardwalk that you can walk on, and they both share the same lake? Riverfront is here, and Lettuce Lake is right here.

Chairwoman Kattih: While they do share the same river, Riverfront does not have a boardwalk.

Senator Devivo: I agree with what he said. Also, they did say if the request is denied, they will still hold the event. If we did deny it, the event would still be happening; it would be at a different location. I just feel like that wasn't a good enough reason to ask for money just to go to a different park.

Chairwoman Kattih: The thing with off-campus requests is—why they are asking for request, why it's not automatic, is because it's less accessible to students. USF Riverfront Park is, give or take, a little more accessible to the USF population than Lettuce Lake Park. They are using A&S funds, and because of that, we want to make sure as many students as possible can attend. That's the reasoning for the off campus request. Rather than location-wise, it's really that is there a difference between the accessibility of USF Riverfront Park versus Lettuce Lake Park.

Senator Abraha: I was going to say they have the money regardless, but one thing is I don't know if they've had this event at Riverfront Park before and maybe they wanted to change the avenue or anything like that. They do have the money, but they are not asking for a huge amount either, so I don't see something that would hinder me from funding them and from letting them have this event. I also wonder outside of this specific budget if after Mr. Manka just presented the off-campus requests, I'm thinking that we might be a little too strict when we typically don't approve the off-campus requests we've had in the past.

Chairwoman Kattih: Let's look at this off-campus request as its own entity and if there are any other issues, we may be able to discuss them later. Thank you for bringing that up. Are there any points of discussion? If there are none, I can take any motions.

Senator Devivo – *Motion to vote on off-campus request, accepted.*

Chairwoman Kattih: Any objections? Seeing none, we are now in voting procedure.

YES: Abraha, Myers

NO: Devivo, Fernandez, Larkins, Romero

2-4-1, Off-campus request is denied.

Chairwoman Kattih: Because we are running out of time, I can take any motions to table the remaining interim budget requests for next week, unless you guys want to stay.

Senator Devivo: I have class.

Chairwoman Kattih: You do? At?

Senator Devivo: Twenty minutes.

Chairwoman Kattih: Let's see. You can walk right out if it gets to class time. Maybe in five minutes.

Senator Devivo: Okay. It's on the other side of campus.

3. Interim Budget Requests

Chinese Students and Scholar Association

Chairwoman Kattih: The next item on the agenda is the interim budget request for the Chinese Students and Scholar Association. This is the first student organization budget bill request you see. This one is slightly—it's a lot of money they are requesting, so it's slightly different from the ones you usually see. This organization requested \$13,462 for the total. I recommended that they get allocated \$1,391.25 with a 25% deduction, that is, including the 25% deduction because they missed the annual deadline. They have six events. Chinese New Year Festival, they requested \$3,500 for food. I allocated them \$600 with—like I've stated before, we have certain standards that we apply. For example, for food, we usually allocate \$2 per head. However, when the attendance is so high, we think it's fiscally responsible to fund them less, because you can get cheaper food in bulk. Right here, I'm looking at three hundred people in attendance. Three hundred times two for a total of \$600. Materials, \$100. Second, you've got Mid-Autumn Festival Celebration; I allocated them \$400 for food and \$50 for materials. Table Tennis Competition, I allocated them \$100 for food and \$50 for materials. The Barbecue, \$100 for food, \$25 for materials. Exhibition of Chinese Culture, \$100 for food and \$100 for materials. Singing Contest, \$100 for food and \$25 for materials. I can go through a little bit of reasoning. How we've been doing it in the past in the summer semester is we give about \$100 for materials for the first event. This is usually cups, plates, a table cloth, and all that fun stuff for the food and stuff like that. Subsequent events, we give \$50, and the events afterward we give \$25 and then \$25 until the events are over. We restart that every semester. If the semester starts, or in this cases, it started at the end of the exhibition, I refunded them for \$100 and then we went to \$25. I think most of their events were in the fall as well. Anything else... a lot of the numbers of students you see here are inflated, one. The second thing is, for example, the gym may or may not hold this many people, so the numbers are slightly...we fund based on attendance, of course, but we fund based on attendance that will actually fill the building so that we're not in violation of any state laws. Do you guys have any questions? Do you want me to scroll through this slowly?

Senator Romero: Could I see the mission of the organization?

Senator Abraha: Most of their events were applicable to their mission. This is a cultural organization, so anything they do, even if it's a social within their members, it will be applicable regardless.

Senator Larkins: Isn't there another student organization that does Chinese New Year Festival? Oh, I forgot about that. Sorry.

Chairwoman Kattih: Thank you so much for bringing that up. This is an excellent example of viewpoint neutrality in action. If another organization Chinese New Year festival, this is completely applicable, unless those two organizations are having the same event. The same exact day at the same exact time with the same exact food, all of that. That is excellent. Any other questions? If you have any points of information or questions, please ask.

Ms. Galchenko: I agree with the point that you said. However, the Chinese New Year happens on a certain date, and if the organization is putting the event together, they usually put it all together. That could be a factor of how much you allocate. If you have already allocated organization X, you can't deny funding to either one, but you allocate an organization X certain funds for this event and you have a second organization putting on the same event because of a cooperation of the event, because they can't go through the signature event grant anymore, that is something to take a hold of. They are saying they are working with Confucius Institution on USF campus, and there might be another organization involved too that is not saying it here here. I'm not the one that met with them, either. You might want to ask them about it, too.

Chairwoman Kattih: That was something I was going to ask about. Do you know off the top of your head if any organizations in ASRC were funded for Chinese Festival?

Ms. Galchenko: I can go and check. I'm sure this is not the only Chinese or Asian--there's an organization called ESIA that would probably put on something similar to this. They might have gotten the same thing.

Chairwoman Kattih: My concern is they are on the same day, but do they make—it's all the same event? It's all one festival?

Ms. Galchenko: This one is a pretty large event. But again, I'm not the one who met with them. I didn't get a chance to ask those questions to the organization.

Chairwoman Kattih: Ms. Abraha is the one that met with them, so Ms. Abraha, can you answer some of those questions for us?

Senator Abraha: Yes. I was going to say, they do with Confucian Institute, so you're correct. She mentioned that—I think it was the President or the Vice President that I worked with. They do work with them, but I don't think we A&S funded them. But double check. They didn't say about working with any other organizations.

Ms. Galchenko: Confucian Institute is a department on campus.

Senator Abraha: Are they A&S funded?

Ms. Galchenko: No, but they are funded by the university.

Chairwoman Kattih: We can take into consideration that it's funded. Does that make you guys want to reconsider how much we allocate for this event? If you guys feel uncomfortable funding it, we can zero fund it. If you want to decrease the funds, that's possible too. If not, we can leave it the same.

Senator Romero: You said that what's typical for each person is \$2 per person for food, but if it's a larger event, that might decrease because of the numbers? Let's say for this first event, what did you really go with? \$2 is still \$1,600. You said that because it's larger that it might be less. Did you go with \$.25 a person?

Senator Abraha: I decreased the number of people, eight hundred. It's to \$200. I basically decreased it to \$200—

Chairwoman Kattih: The number of students attending was inflated. From meeting with them, she realized that the number of people who actually may or may not be equal to the members they've had this year, that they have presented. So going off of that in this instance, I said three hundred people, for \$2 a head for \$600, materials standard.

Senator Abraha: In the beginning or the end of the semester, instead of doing \$2 per head, you can do \$3 per head for a banquet. Since we're by ASRC, we are funded up to \$7, because we don't go that far because we don't have money right now.

Chairwoman Kattih: For this particular event, do you guys have any motions to change it? Any suggestions?

Senator Larkins: Would it go against viewpoint neutrality if they cover \$1 per head and the Confucian Institute covers the other portion of the food?

Chairwoman Kattih: It won't. I don't think so. Correct me if I'm wrong. However, it may have some effect on how much you want to fund them knowing they are collaborating with another organization or institution. Are we good with this allocation right here?

Senator Romero: I'm okay with that.

Chairwoman Kattih: In this event, I assumed about two hundred people would attend, for \$2 per head for a total of \$400, \$50 for materials. Table Tennis Competition, about fifty attendants, the barbecue for about fifty attendants, the Exhibition of Chinese Culture and the singing contest for about fifty attendants. If there are no more...

Senator Abraha – *Motion to vote on recommended allocations for Chinese Students and Scholar Association, accepted.*

Chairwoman Kattih: If there are no problems of quorum, there has been a motion to vote. Are there any objections? How this works is once we vote on it, it will go to Senate. In front of Senate, it can't be amended. It will either be approved, returned to committee to be updated, or it will be zero funded when they deny it. If you guys are comfortable with all of the funding the way it is, we can go ahead and vote on this. If there are no more issues, we are now in voting procedures for the Chinese Student for \$1,391.25.

YES: Abraha, Larkins, Myers, Romero

NO:

4-0-1, Chinese Students and Scholar Association Interim Budget has passed.

Chairwoman Kattih: With that, we have concluded our new business for the day.

Announcements

Chairwoman Kattih: We can move onto announcements. Are there any announcements? I wanted to thank all of you guys again for doing an excellent job the first day. It's a lot to take in and wrap your head around,

but you guys did an excellent job looking at both off-campus and interim budget requests I'll also be sending out a list of events taking place on campus and a link to the audit form. Our audit forms are now online. You can just take your phone with you, stay there for ten to fifteen minutes, audit as you go, submit it on your phone and keep on going. It's very simple. It's very easy. I'll walk you through it in the email. We can discuss it at future meetings. If there are no other announcements, are there any--?

Senator Larkins: A question to your announcement. Is there a certain amount of events that we have to audit?

Chairwoman Kattih: I will have to start setting that kind of standard for us. I'm looking at about two per week, barring this week, because it is your first week. The more the merrier, but at least two. That was a good question, thank you.

Senator Abraha – *Motion to adjourn, accepted.*

Chairwoman Kattih: Any objections? Seeing none.

Meeting adjourned at 1:14 PM.

Transcribed by Senate Committee Secretary, Stacy Dolan.