Meeting called to order at 6:04pm

Roll Call:

Review Previous Meeting’s Minutes:

Wheeler-Move to approve.
Seconded by Wheeler
13/0/0

Public Comment:

Andrew Beck- March 18th in Helena- MUS Rotunda Day, it’s during Spring Break and we hope to have as many students as possible still though.

Presentations:

Jim Rimpau- NCAA Athletics Certification

I’m on several committees on campus that is preparing to write a report to NCAA. It’s once every ten years, and it’s the third time MSU will participate. It sets standards, and sanctions. It increases self-awareness of the athletics at MSU.

There is a peer review time, scheduled in September, about five people and chaired by a university president. They will be here for two days, and they will talk to groups and students. They want opinions of the students.

First section is commitment to rules and governance to make sure the university runs the athletics, the second section is about academic integrity and how the athletes are treated as students, and the third section is about gender, diversity and wellness.

The outcomes are that we could be certified, and the next outcome could be under conditions where we need to fix some things, and the last outcome is not being certified. This will not happen to MSU.

I am going around the community, and I’m letting people know that if they want to read the report they may online (hyperlink provided), and they can ask questions about the report and give comments on the report. I would really appreciate it if you would let your constituents know and tell them to read it and give comments.

Bjornson- who is the ASMSU representative of the USC?

Jim- Adel Nehmeh

Mark Eggensperger- Rail Jam Report
Rail Jam, we have sponsored for the past three years. We get discounted tickets for students 2200 attended; about 80% were in the student range of 18-25 years of age. We also get product placement at this event. We had two banners. Our original contract said we would be sponsors of the video screens. This got changed, but we still had banners up. Even though we weren’t sponsors of the concert, they still put a banner up for us. We do lots of advertising. We were approved to hang posters and banners in front of sub entrances. We are also approved now to do that for other events. There was an ad in the Exponent as well.

Stevens-How many tickets that ASMSU had were actually sold?

Bjornson- all of them.

Stevens- I had an unsolicited opinion of a student, and he asked why ASMSU sponsored the event. Other students also said it might have been negative advertising for ASMSU because of the event, and members were seen with VIP passes. As this might be a questionable event sponsored with students’ dollars.

Smith- What were the concerns in the past? And what were the recommendations?

Mark- They approved it three years ago. This was because at the time it was free for students, and then they moved it because of the explosion downtown, and then they wanted to charge students. From then on we kept sponsoring it for three years.

Smith- My understanding was that each year, we have sponsored it but said we wouldn’t continue to sponsor the next year because the event and group putting on the event is questionable.

Mark- I was not aware of this or those concerns.

Smith- As far as VIP tickets, did you receive perks or anything really extra?

Mark- Well some were given away, and I had one, but I was doing some deejaying.

Smith- Is it appropriate?

Mark- It’s a moral issue, but I don’t think we are stuck on the fact of having them. We wouldn’t care in anyway.

Smith- If we’ve had concerns of this, then I don’t understand why we continue this sponsorship. Not all students are able to have the benefits that chairs with stipends

Nehmeh- Why is the sponsorship of this event coming out of PR budget and not the Campus Entertainment budget?

Mark- Well it’s PR for ASMSU so it makes sense, its promotion for ASMSU. And since we don’t set up or do anything except minor sound equipment, that’s why it’s PR.

PT Dawson- There’s money budgeted in PR for things like this also.
Pres. Fisher- Three years ago, in the first Rail Jam, it came as a supplemental. The next it came out of PR, and last year they left it in the PR. We decided this year that those sponsorships should be supplementals.

Smith- Have you collected a transition bonus for the past three years?

Mark- Yes.

Smith- Why?

Mark- It’s an assurance check for ASMSU for people to update their transitional binders after they are rehired.

Smith- When someone is done with their position, the transition bonus is for committee heads to transition the new committee head. Why are committee heads being paid more when they already know their job? It strikes me as something we shouldn’t be using our money on if they are not transitioning people.

Mark- If you go back and look up transition papers, and there is a lot of paperwork to fill out to prove this person has been doing their job and keeping a complete record of their job for the next person.

Smith- Do you feel you would have done this either way whether you were paid or not?

Mark- I would have done this anyway, but it was an incentive to do it also completely online.

Smith- It seems like we are pinching pennies for sponsorships. But we should be not handing out these perks, when it should be in the job requirement. I think this is something that needs to end. We should quit doing this when it is a conflict of interest.

Pres. Fisher- Historical reference, part of the reason for that bonus is that pay structure, and they were paid until they were done. There was no transition period once they quit getting paid and the new chair was instated. With returning committee heads, we decided it was unfair, along with Phyllis, that a new committee head could get this when a returning committee head could not. Also, in the procrastinator senators are allowed to see a show for free.

Smith- I am aware of that. Also, were there free drinks at Rail Jam?

Mark- Yes for of age. Also energy drinks and water.

Smith- I would encourage the senate to reevaluate this decision.

Pres. Fisher- How is this a difference between free procrastinator tickets and tickets to rail jam? When both use the money?

Mark- Paying people that are rehired. It’s a rehiring bonus; it’s to encourage staying in the position and not having to transition.
Unfinished Business:

Bill 2011-B-03 ASMSU Representation Enhancement

Bjornson- There is an amendment, to change to an election in spring and fall, with Sen. Capp.

Nehmeh- I think we should not table this any further. We need to decide on it tonight, because the new senate will not understand as well.

Bjornson- This is a point to decide to have one election in the fall. This is a benefit because if there are bills that take longer then the same senate can do budgeting.

Nehmeh- Sen. Mohr was elected last spring election. How long did it take you to learn and transition into the position?

Mohr- It probably took the rest of the year and into fall to really understand it all.

Nehmeh- and same for Sen. Kolar, in the fall?

Kolar- Yes, it took me about the same time period.

Nehmeh- If half the senate each time takes a full semester.

Stevens- I think I will vote for one election in the fall, but Colleen has expressed that she would like two elections because she said it would be very difficult and hectic to deal with one election.

Kolar- just to clarify, what happens when less than 21 people run in one election?

Bjornson- Those seats will be reopened for a week or two week, if they still aren’t filled, then it goes to at large. If still not filled, then it would be an appointed seat.

Vollmer- I like one election a year, but I’m concerned about freshman students not knowing enough people yet.

Bjornson- There is still that issue with two elections, and in the spring then those freshman seats become sophomores within a month.

PT Dawson- It’s a hard thing, but the problem can be faced with RHA and such.

Pres. Fisher- With two elections, or one election, there is still the possibility of turnover. With one election it is greater and puts a lot of pressure on our staff and a greater transition period.

Steffens- Turnout is very important to me, fall is traditionally higher except with the recent spring election. I feel that the election in the fall makes presidential elections possibly will have more candidates in the spring because it will be more focused. Call to previous question.

Bjornson- Point of clarification: this vote will be for my amendment, seconded by Sen. Nehmeh, on one fall election.
Voting to vote 14/1/0 (Spoklie votes against)

Vote for Bjornson’s amendment for one fall election 13/2/0

Bjornson- the most complicated part is the transition to this new process. Each senator voted this spring will only serve until this fall.

Thiel- it seems like this is perfectly allowed to do this in a year and a half. I think although it would be an abbreviated term, it’s the best way to go about this.

Stevens- overall its increasing the oversight that the voters have for elections. It affects the newly elected senators, but I feel that’s a lesser concern than to get this going.

Nehmeh- I feel that this is the most efficient way to go about this, but I feel its unfair and worries be as to what we say to these senators.

Public comment- I think this will help me in my platform when running in the fall again.

Rogala- I think if we are proactive about it and make it a clear process it will be fine. When are PT and APT reappointed?

PT Dawson- It’s typically in the late spring after elections.

Rogala- When would it make sense to appoint them?

Bjornson- In the fall after elections.

Stevens- Call to previous question.

Seconded by Smith

Voting to vote 15/0/0

Vote for the bill as a whole 12/3/0

Nehmeh- Point out that section 159, that it doesn’t say anything that PT and APT should be appointed in the fall.

Smith- why Sen. Spoklie did you oppose the bill?

Spoklie- I wanted spring and fall elections.

New Business:

Smith- Is there any additional discussion on the transitional bonuses or conflicts of interests? It seems there is a misunderstanding.

Mohr- I don’t understand the bonus, possibly we need to change the name or change the bonus. It seems that either way we have to advertise for new positions, and have to pay the bonus anyway.
PT Dawson- It’s under admin budget, if we move to the new pay period, we possibly might not have to
do that anymore.

Thiel- There has been some side discussion on the bonus. For committee heads, the transitions take
place for two to three weeks at the end of the spring semester when no one really wants to be doing
that. This is why they are paid the bonus that I think is necessary. There has been an idea of paying the
bonus earlier. Or else training the new committee head earlier and it would be part of the job
description. We should look at it because the current system doesn’t work.

Smith- I think you are dead on Sen. Mohr, we need to rethink this and possibly change the name. it
seems now that we restructured payment, that it is now accounted for and it should be part of the job
description. We need to be more proactive in these assessments.

Nehmeh- Not only should transitioning be part of the job description for the current position but also
the new position. With the overlap of stipends, could help that.

Bjornson- We set the stipend for nine months, which includes the time in April for transition.

Nehmeh- It becomes part of the job description, to transition the new committee head, and for the next
committee head.

Bjornson- We did not budget for the bonuses.

Steffens- We did not propose anything what do we want to do with this?

Smith- I think we should look back at the history, but also we need to decide if we need to change this
just in what we think is correct. Should we ask the committee heads to give back the bonus or else forgo
their pay for the rest of the period?

Wheeler- I think incentivizing the transition is a good idea. They have the experience, and if they return
I don’t think it’s a bad thing.

Smith- I don’t think mark’s argument about keep records and getting paid for it, when its required
whether you actually transition someone else or not.

Smith- I think we should ask them not to collect their stipend unless they actually transition someone
and actually do it.

PT Dawson- I would like to know if there are transition bonuses for other committees as well.

Smith- You aren’t taking a job with ASMSU for competitiveness I feel we have all done this for
representing and helping our fellow students. We haven’t been holding ourselves up to our
commitment if we need a transition bonus to do our job in full.

Nehmeh- what defines a transitional bonus? I don’t like the idea to keep the stipend from the
committee head, but I am all for making it part of the job description. There are specific points to
measure in the description, and address the issue in that is better not to hold the money.
Bjornson- The definition is in the bylaws in Section 382. (Read this section in whole)

PT Dawson- So that includes all committee heads?

Bjornson- It does.

Nehmeh- As I look at that, I feel with that definition, I feel it’s not right to give a returning committee head that bonus.

Smith- Has the senate approved the bonuses?

Bjornson- Yes; I was in charge of that last year and we discussed and approved it in the senate.

Nehmeh- The senate should be doing a better job at reviewing this.

Mohr- There is definitely some confusion here and we need to rework this, we have a wrong interpretation of this bonus or it will continue to be used wrong. It has happened already, we can’t take back that money though, if it’s even legal. We just need to prevent it or find it unnecessary in the future.

PT Dawson- if you withdraw early and still get paid, you are legally bound to give it back.

Pres. Fisher- I don’t know if this was your point or not, but it is completely inappropriate to ask for that money back. Also this is only mark’s second transition bonus. Also they are not necessary anymore, with the new stipends and the new transition period we decide on. It was for a previous problem that is not apparent anymore. We made it an incentive because it wasn’t part of the job description. We don’t need these in place anymore. If you require it in the description, then it’s not necessary.

PT Dawson- We can reopen the budgets for the bonus?

BM Thrasher- They were not budgeted anywhere.

Thiel- I agree with Pres. Fisher. We need to rework the transition requirements because it is a problem we need to work on.

Nehmeh- For the new senators in the next senate, I would like to see this eliminated from the bylaws and we should work on that.

**Admin Reports:**

Pres. Fisher-

I met with Pres. Cruzado about the tobacco issue. We will be having a discussion with many of the boards and councils, and work through this to change this and put it into place to have a tobacco free campus.

VP Diehl-
I want to ask everyone to sign up for early registration.

Also for the Retreat, if you are attending please sign up. The date is April 16th.

I talked to Jenny this morning, that she has lots of information from other schools nationwide and state wide who have gone tobacco free. She is thankful this has finally passed, and it will be making national news. She has been getting calls from other schools nationwide.

West-I think it’s a great sign that students are getting excited about the new positions open in ASMSU.

Nehmeh-I think the posters look great and really stand out. Are applications available?

Diehl- yes online and in the office. The job descriptions are online.

BM Thrasher- No report

PT Dawson-

I have been working with Sen. Bjornson on recruiting. We are thinking of other places to recruit from. We’re looking across the board. There is a lot we can look at and possibly create teams for.

In regards to VIP passes, we went to Kelly who wasn’t able to sell the VIP tickets, also some tickets for free. It was legally binding to the contract. He left the VIP tickets on the desks of the committee persons. The only perk was the open bar, which no one could use that anyway seeing how they card as it is.

Smith- I still think it is a conflict of interest which we are held to in the bylaws.

Nehmeh- I know Kelly had a proposal to use the tickets as a raffle, and possibly it was forgotten about this year. If it continues it is definitely a problem, but a raffle is a great idea.

PT Dawson- Something wouldn’t let him do that.

APT Krueger could not be here tonight. The appointments for the PT and APT positions is up soon, it’s very beneficial to shadow us and see if it’s something you want to do or talk about doing.

**Senate Reports:**

Bjornson- I sent an email to all of you with the recruiting document. I only had one response. I would really like your help. It starts with having a great staff; we need to find the right people for the job positions. I will send it out again tonight. It has stipends, descriptions, and where we would like to look for the job, also the boards to go through the applicants. We will also have a board for ASMSU as a whole, and their interested parties. We need to do great recruiting for great people.

Nehmeh- If you feel that someone is incompetent for the position, do you have to hire them?

Bjornson- No, I do not.
Smith- I sent an email, the Secretary of State in response to the letter we sent for HB 130, she sent us a letter thanking us for the input and getting it published. Regarding sustainability, there is a high school student in Belgrade, and he is putting on a program at Belgrade high, Gov. Schweitzer and other important persons will be lecturing. He expects many people to show up 200-300 students it happened today and is tomorrow. Core 2.0 is discussing the purpose of it still, and I will transition the new liaison for that committee because it is very important.

PT Dawson- I think that letter was very well written and a big thank you goes to Sen. Thiel, sen. Smith and Sen. Stevens. How did MESA go? Did anyone go?

Lawson- about 100 people? People were in and out of it.

Smith- many representatives for Montana and elected officials did attend it.

Nehmeh- I am sending around how the Endzone will look. Bobcats are leading in the presidential cup with has to do with GPA of the student athletes. I would also be more than willing to transition for my committees.

Smith- What is the football GPA average out of pure curiosity?

Pres. Fisher- 2.8 as of this fall.

Nehmeh- Please check your emails for the retreat.

Wheeler- The nursing council- their elections for their officers are coming up. The council comprises all student nursing programs in the state. I think it is a committee that should be liaised.

Rogala- we are working on bylaw changes for the stipends that are changed. There is a Table tomorrow, please be there if you can be there.

Nehmeh- can I have posters to advertise the positions that are open?

Rogala- We’ll discuss after the meeting.

Thiel- There is going to be a revamp of the admissions statement being proposed. They will want our input. There will be a survey put out very soon to all members of the university. If you have any input for the cores for the university come to me.

Bjornson- There was Montana 2030 today.

Thiel- it was an economic analysis of the state as a whole in all aspects for the future.

Bjornson-I went to the comedy event Tuesday night, it was very successful for 200 people.

Floerchinger- I don’t think it was a very appropriate event. If we want msu to sponsor it, then it should be appropriate and not make fun of certain students.
Nehmeh- Leadership institute was also a sponsor of that.

PT Dawson- Did many people vote afterwards?

Nehmeh- I don’t think it really increased voting much.

Stevens- It’s really hard to know what speakers are going to say, and to censor that. But we should look into that for the future.

Nehmeh- I wanted Alex to tell him to focus on voting, but he was stand up, and it was classic stand up although inappropriate.

**Announcements:**

Steffens- The tobacco free resolution- I think it is a very valuable lesson we learned as senators. I feel if we voted on this in the senate it wouldn’t have happened, this shows what the students want.

Pres. Fisher- due to Sen. Steffens becoming VP his seat will be appointed soon.

Thiel- I wanted to pass on that the honors program is looking for proposals on seminars. They would like suggestions.

Fraser- family and graduate housing will be doing a survey to see how people enjoy their houses. We are getting a lot of calls for ASMSU in the news, I am part of that. I am a part of staff senate, which is next week.

**Adjourn Meeting:**

Smith-Move to adjourn.

Seconded by Nehmeh

15/0/0

Meeting adjourned at 8:14pm