SECRETARY’S REPORT NO. 2
May 18, 2005
REPORT OF ACTIONS TAKEN AT THE MEETING OF THE USG SENATE

The Student Senate met in Regular Session on May 18, 2005 at 6:30 in the Ohio Union, Grey Suite K. Speaker of the Senate Nick Benson presided.

Present: 39    Absent: 4    Alternates: 6

Ahern (A)    Anderson    Babcock (A)    Baker    Benson
Bhatt    Brin    Bullard    Capone    Chi
Cropcho    Denning    Dodovich    Evangelista    Friedman
Fuquen    Glauberman    Hinzey    Hoque    Howell
Innes    King    Klempay    Knoepfler (A)    Krock (A)
Lawson (A)    Leland    Lockshin (A)    Luby    Marconi
McCrone    Noon    Nystrom    Pineiro    Pittman
Reed    Samuels    Seger    Singla    Sprinkle
Steel    Valentine    Wallace    Wireko    Surovjak
Yeh    Fogt    Miller    Surovjak

Alternates:

The meeting is called to order at 6:30

6:33, SWEARING IN OF ALTERNATES performed by Speaker Benson

6:34, EXECUTIVE REPORT, Mr. Kreiner
-Cabinet Applications were due today and interviews will be set for next week.
-University Senate Appointments will be worked on in near future.
-The President and Provosts Forum was this evening so that’s where President Scharer is.

6:35, COMMITTEE REPORTS
-Mr. Howell, Policy and Governance met on Friday. 38-R-1 was passed, 38-R-2 was passed with some grammatical change, 38-R-3 passed, and 38-R-4 also passed with some grammatical changes.
-Mr. Brin, Student Affairs met on Monday. They’re going to be working on OIT issues. Their Vice Chair is Ms. Chi and Secretary is Ms. Pineiro
-Mr. Luby, Budget and Finance met twice to pass bylaws and elect officers. Mr. Marconi is Vice Chair and Mr. Friedman is Secretary
-Ms. Yeh, Academic Affairs met and ratified bylaws. Ms. Amanda Ransburgh, former Chair, will be speaking next week.

6:38, 38-R-11, A Resolution to Fill the Vacant SBS Seat
-Steering Committee met and considered two candidates for SBS Senator. The committee approved Mr. Scott Surovjak to fill the seat.

QUESTIONS
-Mr. Dodovich: How would you represent non-Political Science majors?

DISCUSSION
-Ms. Singla-If we don’t approve this candidate, then what’s the continuing process? Mr. Benson says that there’s no established process to fill seats.
-Mr. Dodovich-Did Steering actively seek out this candidate? Senators let people know that there was a vacant seat.
-Mr. Capone-Why did we seek out a new person when there was another candidate who actually lost in the election? The procedure in the bylaws is that the Senate has to elect somebody, so it’s not an automatic process.
-Mr. Marconi-Mr. Surovjak came out of Steering over the other candidate who had actually run for SBS Senator.
-Mr. Miller-Mr. Surovjak filled in at University Senate last week and was very enthusiastic about it.
-Mr. Brin-He was the better candidate.
-Ms. Singla-What made him a better candidate? Parliamentarian Reed lets us know that that’s not parliamentary.
-Ms. Innes-Mr. Surovjak will represent SBS very well.
-Mr. Marconi-He felt that Mr. Surovjak was more qualified.
-Ms. Singla-She doesn’t feel that he represented him well enough at this meeting.
-Mr. Capone-He knew the person who lost in Steering last night and feels that he was a better candidate.
-Ms Innes-Mr. Surovjak was caught off guard this evening and was not aware that he had to say something tonight. He’ll be a very good addition to Senate.
-Mr. Brin-Mr. Surovjak was a leader of DECA in high school but he also showed great potential to be an excellent Senator.
-Mr. Rothacker-Call to question is seconded. Motion to bring to the floor is made and the roll is called.

THE MOTION PASSES AND MR. SUROVJAK IS APPROVED AS SBS SENATOR

6:51, SWEARING IN OF MR. SUROVJAK AS SBS SENATOR, Mr. Benson

6:52, 38-R-12, A Resolution to Fill the Vacant Lima Campus Senate Seat
-Mr. Aaron Byersock intended to be here this evening but had some family concerns. He will, however, be here in the future.

DISCUSSION
-Mr. Dodovich-Are we sure that it’s a Lima seat? Mr. Benson says that it is.
Motion to table is made by Ms. Wiseman and seconded. THE MOTION IS TABLED.

6:54, 38-R-10, A Resolution to Approve University Senate Appointment
-Steering Committee selected Mr. Larry King to serve in this seat.

QUESTIONS FOR MR. KING
-Mr. Marconi-Please explain your capacity and potential to work with people in University Senate?
-Mr. Dodovich-Are you sure that you do not have any scheduling conflict next year that would conflict with University Senate?
-Mr. Steele-Do you have any things personally that you would like to take to University Senate?

DISCUSSION

-Mr. Marconi-This was a very hard vote but Mr. King has the contacts in Fisher and was very excited about the opportunity.

MOTION FOR UNANIMOUS CONSENT IS MADE and SECONDED. Mr. King is appointed to University Senate

7:00, 38-R-1, A Resolution to Ensure Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Accountability

-Mr. Marconi makes a motion to go through the other three resolutions first and then go to Resolution #1 at the end.
-Mr. Baker-Outgoing Treasurer has to leave at 7:20
-Mr. Marconi rescinds his motion.
-Mr. Benson yields the gavel to Mr. Reed as Mr. Benson is the sponsor of the resolution.

MR. BENSON: This is an incredibly important piece of legislation. Last year, as a Senator, he felt that the way that the budget was dealt was inadequate. In the past, the USG Senate has not overseen the flow of money. This legislation will oversee the allocation of appropriations. What this would require that is if any appropriations greater than $500 to be used by a cabinet committee must be overseen and approved by the USG Senate. Anything that’s a project or program that is going to cost over $500 will have to be approved by Senate. This will require for cabinet to come to Senate with a plan and rough budget of what they want to do.

QUESTIONS FOR THE SPONSOR or ABILITY FOR ANY OTHER SPONSOR TO SPEAK:

-Mr. Marconi-This came out of the USG Interns’ “Huge Freakin’ Party” idea because they were going to spend so much money on a list of programs. However, without Senate’s consent, the program reverted back to something that many senators are not comfortable with. We also spend our money on a lot of things that are unnecessary. We need a mechanism to oversee the cabinet.
-Mr. Brin-He supports this resolution because the President has the right to veto any legislation that Senate passes. This legislation ensures checks and balances for the Senate.
-Mr. Klempay-During the last two years, most of the time was spent on theoretical goals and then the last two weeks before an event were used to throw something together hastily. This will ensure that this will not happen.
-Ms. Singla-What is the timeline for committees to get Senate approval? It could occur within one week or two week due to how we want to handle it. Something could be brought to the floor without committee approval with a 2/3s vote. In addition, there would be one or two weeks to handle this money through CSA.
-Mr. Noon-He needs clarification on an issue.
-Mr. Marconi—Could cabinet committees use multiple $499 entries to get around this? NO
-Ms. Singla—Is there any plan to enforce checks and balances for Senate funding?
-Mr. King—Can the President veto any resolution that comes to the floor? The President can veto any piece of legislation. If it is vetoed, it could come back to Senate and be approved with a 2/3rds vote.
-Mr. Samuels—If Senate and Cabinet are going to work well together this year, then is this necessary.

DISCUSSION
-Mr. Rothacker—He was reading the Constitution and it says that “funds appropriated may be spent on anything.” Mr. Rothacker is pretty okay with that because the executive is out there to do good programming. Students already voted a great President in and we’ll put the faith in them to plan great programming. He feels that there is no need for this resolution.
-Mr. Benson—in a budget, you can have certain projects that are line-items in the budget. But the allocations in the budget can be looked at by us.
-Mr. Pittman—it seems like we’re working against each other. It would also be extremely difficult to plan programs so far in advance and it would reduce the number of programs that USG could put on. Furthermore, the Constitution already suggests that the President submit quarterly budgets.
-Mr. Steele—he feels that we’re better served to not put on a poor program. If there is a poor program put on, then it’s our responsibility to be accountable.
-Ms. Wiseman—This is the responsibility that we take when we approve Cabinet Directors. We’re senators not to baby-sit cabinet directors. It’s not possible to plan a program with $500. It’s not possible to plan, no matter how far in advance it is. We’re only going to be here for a year. We shouldn’t have to be here every week for hours babysitting cabinet. How can we improve relations with Cabinet instead of inhibiting their actions?
-Mr. Kreiner—he yields time to Treasurer Jacob Morvay. Treasurer Morvay comes to us tonight as an Independent Officer of USG. He was very disappointed that this bill was not discussed with Mr. Morvay, with Mr. Rashaun Geter, or with Mr. Matt Couch. There is a standard procedure of allocating funding. His suggestion is that there should be a budget for each quarter approved by Senate, every line item in Senate should have a short description of what the money will be used for, have Senate the ability to approve programming that will cost over $2500, two weeks is enough to handle the money process, and all Cabinet requests are already approved by the advisor, Treasurer, and Cabinet Director, and this legislation seems like an insult to people that we appoint. Nobody came to talk to him about this.
-Mr. Marconi—the intern program did not have any purpose. We do need to have the ability to oversee programming. We should have a programming budget for each program. The option needs to be available.
-Mr. Baker—he yields his time to Rashaun Geter. In terms of the spending process that USG has to follow, Mr. Geter executes all the payments. That being said, when the payment request leaves the Treasurer’s hands and comes to him, he interfaces with the university and their convoluted process that has to follow state law. His concern is
substantial as he hardly comes to Senate or Cabinet meetings. He’s very concerned because there could be major delays in the funding allocation process. The Advisor sees all expenses and makes sure that the program is valid and will be safe. The university has a process that could add an additional week or two weeks above the current long process. He understands the need for oversight, but he doesn’t feel that we should micromanage.

-Mr. Valentine-He yields his time back to Mr. Geter. His concern is in terms of billing. His concern is that this legislation will further delay the process. Our process could take a week or two and then it could take a few weeks to actually get the money from the university. Furthermore, some things cannot be planned out in advance that may come up. When we pass a budget, it’s assumed that we trust the committees to spend the money. If we necessitate oversight, it will be a good idea to raise the limit to maybe $2500 as Treasurer Morvay suggested. Please do not micromanage cabinet. If we see that something is excessive, then we should step in and try to manage the issue but we should have assumed trust that things will be carried out.

-MR. BRIN-By allowing Senate to approve bills over $500 then it would give cabinet the ability to be more interactive with us. He suggests that we increase this value by perhaps, double. Furthermore, allow for a $500 emergency clause.

-MR. BENSON-Nobody’s trust is being called into question here. If an executive committee wants funding, they can start planning it now. In real government, the Congress just does not assume that the heads of the departments should do whatever they want. A fair, open, and democratic process is needed. In addition, for emergency issues, we could bring an emergency spending issue to the floor with a 2/3rds vote. Furthermore, the President can use her Executive Miscellaneous fund.

-PRESIDENT SCHARER-Matt and she were elected for a reason, because of what they’re going to do. They’re going to put into office Cabinet Directors who will do an amazing job. Right now, this is a trust issue. We’re saying that we do not trust people that have not even been appointed yet. The things that Senate has called into question right now are very minute issues and Cabinet has had a ton of successes. There are 4 independent people who sign off on our checks, it goes through CSA and the university. Four weeks is not enough time. Things come up at the last minute that we need. The biggest thing is communication. They’re going to be meeting every week with Speaker Benson. Cabinet Directors and Senators will be working much more closely this past year. Please talk to Rashaun, Jake, and Matt Couch before passing this legislation. Please do the research. She asks us to please do what will help this organization.

-MS. LAWSON-She does not feel that trust is an issue here. When we’re talking about money issues, we should be very careful.

-MR. BHATT-Why did people not do anything about the Intern Committee Party?

-MR. MARCONI-Senate did try to oversee the program. We saw a program agenda for what the program would be about. For this reason, it was approved. But after its approval, the program was scrapped.

-MR. BULLARD-As an intern himself, all of this stuff is a bit offensive. However, his intern process was about learning. Right now, everything has been written down and money has been appropriated for good programming. This is a trust issue.

-MR. BENSON-The intern program issue is not the issue here. This is an issue of expenditures. 100% of the student body voted for Senate. We need to have a collective process. We need to bring trust to USG and there needs to be planning ahead of time.
-MS. INNES-She does not feel that this is an issue of trust. We’re working together as a
government and to work together as a government, we need to be proactive, not reactive.
-MR. WALLACE-He does feel that the USG Intern Program is the purpose of this
legislation. This is all about communication. $500 is the cost of shirts at some times. In
reality, USG is a totally different world and $500 just will not work.
-MR. ROTHACKER-He feels that there will be many problems with delays. He feels
that making the executive branch come before us with the idea for a project that could be
rejected, could even cause more delays. Who says that a social event is not a good idea?
-MS. PINEIRO-How is it that somebody could present something, have it rejected, and
then revert back to something else?
-MR. BRIN-Senator Benson did write a resolution about the Intern Party. He yields time
to Mr. Morvay. Legislation has to be approved two weeks before the money can be spent
according to CSA guidelines. In the 33rd Senate, the money came out of USG’s own
checking account so the Treasurer could cut a check within a day. That is not how things
could work right now.
-MR. KLEMPAY-His intentions are not accurately represented in this bill. He feels that
we should reconsider, especially with the recommendations made by Treasurer Morvay.
-MR. WIREKO-He doesn’t see how this bill will prohibit committees from saying one
thing and doing another. Furthermore, there are 10 cabinet committees that do a lot of
programming. HE MOTIONS TO TABLE THE MOTION AND IT IS SECONDED.
He then withdraws the motion.
-MR. PITTMAN-The executive side is responsible for what they do and students will
find out what’s done. The President is the only one who has to debate his or her ideas.
She has a platform and knows what she’s doing. Concerning the Intern Program, the bill
was made due to a communication between two senators. President Pureval did not even
know about it and would not have approved it.
-MR. KLEMPAY-Motion is made to send it back to committee and is seconded.
Discussion?
-Mr. Marconi-He supports sending it back to committee.
-Ms. Wiseman-Are all executive members going to be able to attend the
committee? You can attend if you express interest to the chair of the committee.
-Mr. Dodovich-Would like to know why Policy and Governance Meetings are not
open? The chairman can have people be ratified to speak at the meeting.
-Ms. Scharer-How do we know that the Policy and Governance Committee will
allow for debate like we’ve seen this evening during committee because the
committee already had the opportunity to debate this resolution?
-Mr. Rothacker-If we send this back to committee, we should send it to more than
one committee. As a point of information, this would violate our bylaws.
-Ms. Seger-As a member of Policy and Governance, there was a lot of debate in
committee but they did not think of the ideas that were brought to the floor this
evening. It should, then, be referred back to committee.
-Mr. Dodovich-Please trust the Policy and Governance Committee?
-Mr. Miller-Policy and Governance does try to refrain from demagoguery.
VOICE VOTE IS MADE FOR REFERRAL BACK TO COMMITTEE. RESOLUTION
IS REFERRED BACK TO COMMITTEE.
8:10, 38-R-2, A Resolution to Ensure Transparency and Accountability Through Public Disclosure of USG Records

MR. BENSON-In the past, records were not kept very well. It is important that we should have records of what occurred during meetings and throughout the year. The executive branch is not opposed to this resolution.

DISCUSSION
-PRESIDENT SCHARER-What was changed by the committee?
-MS. INNES-She has the amended resolution if anyone would like to see it?
-MR. ROTHACHKER-So the resolution in the agenda packet this evening is incorrect?
-MR. STEELE-Is there any reason whatsoever to oppose this resolution?
-MR. PITTMAN-How often would these reports be filed? The intention is that a report be given after every meeting. You can have minutes, which are more like a transcript, and then a report, which is a “cliff notes guide” to the meeting.
-MS. WISEMAN-When would this start? It would be enacted once it is passed.

MR. KING: MOTION TO END DISCUSSION, WHICH IS SECONDED. MOTION IS ALSO MADE TO PASS IT WITH UNANIMOUS CONSENT AND IT IS SECONDED AND PASSED!!

8:17, 38-R-3, A Resolution to Ensure Greater Accountability in Executive Committees

MR BENSON: The purpose of this resolution would mandate that each cabinet committee only have one chair. They could have deputies that they could delegate responsibilities to. In the past, there’s never been a person in charge and there’s been indecision and internal squabbling. It will give incentive for people to manage programs well and cabinet committees well. This will streamline the process without burdening them.

QUESTIONS or ABILITY FOR CO-SPONSORS
-MS. SINGLA-Is this resolution supported by the executive branch?

DISCUSSION
-MR. MILLER-He supports this resolution. There have been past instances where a Co-Director had to take over a whole committee while the other two Co-Chairs were apathetic towards their duties.
-MR. WIREKO-He’s afraid about what could happen if we appoint one director and that person drops the ball.
-PRESIDENT SCHARER-She’s very concerned about the structure of Cabinet. Cabinet is a team. Governmental Relations had some issues. In other instances with Co-Directors, there was amazing success. Maybe we should have a Senate Liaison to Cabinet to work with Cabinet. We’re already going to be communicating with Cabinet. Right now, President Scharer does not want to create more levels of bureaucracy. When you make more levels of bureaucracy, government does not work as well.
MR. PITTMAN-He does not see the power that we have to pass this bill. It concerns the
organization of the President’s cabinet. How can we say that we can approve the
structure when we haven’t done it in the past? POINT OF ORDER, Senate can approve
cabinet structure.
-PRESIDENT SCHARER: She’s asking not to have a Cabinet Director and a few
depuities. Then, we could also have Senate Liaisons to work with Senate.
-MR. MARCONI-Don’t we just want one person to know to go to when we have a
question?
-MR. STEELE-He thinks that the problem of infighting and squabbling is a big one. He
thinks that it is a good idea to have one person in charge. It should come back to one
person.
-MR. KLEMPAY-Being in committees, he never saw any infighting. If there was one
person with one idea and one direction, then it would be more organized and efficient.
-MR. BRIN-What we’re doing is trying to mandate how committees work.
-MS. CHI-As a member of a committee last year, what she experienced was that there
were times when not all of the directors were there and we didn’t know what the direction
would be. It made the committee less efficient. She does not see a problem with this
resolution.
-MS. INNES-It’s important that there’s one person to be held responsible and
accountable.
-PRESIDENT SCHARER-Blame President Scharer when blame needs to be made.
Cabinet committees do not come up with random events.
-MR. DODOVICH-It says that the Cabinet Director “may” appoint a deputy, but does not
have to.
-MR. MILLER-He supports the resolution.
-MS. WISEMAN-He thinks that it would be a good idea to have somebody to
communicate between Senate and Cabinet. We’re Senators, not babysitters, do we have
the experience to tell Cabinet how it should run? We’re already making meetings public.
-MS INNES-This goes hand in hand with the communication. We should have only one
person to go to.
-MR. BRIN-He does not feel that Executive Committees should operate differently from
Senate Committees. CALL TO QUESTION, SECOND

MOTION PASSES

8:37, 38-R-4, A Resolution to Establish Accountable Internal Communication
Standards

MR. BENSON-this is very similar to 38-R-2. This would just put all of the information
on the website. There were some minor changes made in committee.

QUESTIONS or OPPORTUNITY FOR SPONSORS
-Mr. Miller-makes a clarification concerning executive reports.
-Ms. Innes-this is just to put up the information that we already passed through 38-R-2 on
the website.
-Mr. Pittman-Is this feasible? YES, some changes will be made over the summer to the website. New things will be added to the website.

DISCUSSION
-PRESIDENT SCHARER-Mr. Benson and President Scharer agreed on something in the Policy & Governance Committee.
-MR. STEELE-Call to question, seconded.

MOTION FOR UNANIMOUS CONSENT IS MADE, SECONDED, AND THE MOTION IS PASSED.

8:41 NEW BUSINESS
- Two new resolutions were sent to Policy & Governance.

ANNOUNCEMENTS
- We had amazing turnout at University Senate. The faculty was really happy with our attendance.
- Parliamentary Procedure Clinic is tomorrow at 6:30 in Grey Suite K, which is where we currently are.
- This Friday is the USG Intern Program, “South Oval Mayhem.” There will be a “Meet the Senators Event.” It will be between 1 and 5 on the South Oval.
- When will the next Policy and Governance Committee be? It’ll probably be this Friday at 5:30 in the John Glenn Room of Baker East.
- There is a filibuster going right now.
- The Indian American Association is having their cultural show this Friday evening at 7:30pm at the Riffe Center.
- Mr. Marconi is proud of us all.
- Mr. Kreiner has spoken to somebody in the Union about decorating the room.
- Mr. Brin—we need to be a respectful legislative body and not swear at each other. We need to respect each other.
- Mr. Benson will be sending out a list of University Senate Committee assignments. If you’re on University Senate, send Mr. Benson you’re top three choices.
- GO DENMAN!!

8:46, MEETING IS ADJOURNED

MEETING MINUTES RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED BY
Eric A. Samuels
Secretary of the 38th USG Senate