



GW LAW STUDENT BAR ASSOCIATION

**Mike Omboni, Executive Vice President**  
**Christine Coogle, Secretary of the Senate**

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### **Senate Meeting Agenda**

Wednesday, March 15, 2017

9:15pm in LLC006

**I. Call to Order: 9:15pm**

**II. Public & Old Business**

a. Community Comment

**Piscitelli:** Nota bene coming out soon. Tomorrow will start posting in other FB groups. It's fun but trying to have some serious articles, and want student articles submitted, so if you know anyone interested in writing about the law or DC, refer them to me. We've had a slow start but we're looking forward to revitalizing the podcast. For background, it was started as the advocate newspaper a long time ago, then was changed to a magazine in the early 2000s until last year, when it wasn't published. Now it will be more of a multimedia thing, posting articles on our website (only accessible with GW login) and doing audio and maybe visual content as well, including video and artwork and cartoons. It is hosted on the SBA website, but the executive branch as an entity has no control over it, so there's no conflict of interest. We're hoping for robust community involvement and a good transition of powers.

b. Approval of Minutes

Move to approve by unanimous consent. Seconded. Approved.

**III. Executive Reports**

a. **President: Adam Weiss**

Finance reform has finally been completed. Form vetted and uploaded, which has basic info and identifiable factors. In terms of electronic submissions, we've gotten good feedback. There's a backup version, everything's time stamped, and organizations receive a copy. We've gotten really positive feedback from organizations that the system is simpler than before. The exec welcomes any further feedback. I recommend getting that before I leave since I'm the one who programmed it.

Second, HPPS policy that we've been working on has been officially vetted by Dean of Students and Center for Engagement. Tomorrow we're presenting to Office of Student Rights and Responsibility, which is responsible for enforcement. Joint resolution will allow me to move forward with your support. Exam policy—I am speaking at the faculty meeting this Friday, then at meeting in April we will present the finalized version of this.

I will be calling on faculty to ask Dean Morant to form a joint committee between the academic and curriculum committees to look over the summer and have their finalized report and recommendation by the fall. So this will not impact 3Ls but should have a drastic impact for 1Ls and 2Ls so that you won't have to take two exams in one day. That is my hope.

Final two things. Over spring break, white supremacist posters posted throughout camps and law school. Almost immediately taken down on Sunday. Administration has been involved; school itself has stated it is not in support of it. I also reached out to executive branch this week. It is assumed that those who posted them are outside the university, but if you do see them please take them down or contact me immediately. This stands in contrast to what our school and this profession stands for.

b. **Vice President of Finance: Matthew Piscitelli**

First, I've been working on a spreadsheet, almost done, showing how much each org has spent out of their C-fund so far this year. Once I give to Mary we'll talk about it and talk to some groups that haven't spent it. So we'll try to classify organizations based on how they've been spending by percentages, then talk to them and ask them about it. Last year almost half of it didn't go spend, so if we have an opportunity to avoid that we should take advantage it. So that's our next audit quest, and it's underway.

**Sen. Khan:** I've been getting some emails about this, like an organization that decided not to do an event. Sometimes I'm not sure if they've CC'd you on it, so I just want to double check. Someone asked to reallocate money for equipment and use them for uniforms instead. Sometimes I don't know the answer, so I want to make sure it's going through you, too.

**VP Piscitelli:** Second, we got paid! After months and months of lobbying, the SBA finally got the money from the student association. We ended up with \$30,000 more than we thought we would have, so the ad hoc fund gets another \$15K and SBA fund gets another \$15K. The ad hoc fund now has a lot of money in it, and I think SBA will be making some requests on spending it. We're going to try to put our grad week money through the ad hoc fund, so we'll be sending stuff the finance committee's way.

**Pres. Weiss:** There is also a push to increase the quality of the small- and medium-sized law fair, so that will probably be coming. Two weeks from tomorrow.

c. **Chief of Staff: John McGeehan**

One, we've been working to get every sub-org with a law email address, which will auto-populate and be easier in transition. All but two organizations now should have those emails. Grad school mixer is the 23<sup>rd</sup> with Elliot and business schools. There will be color-coded leis. That's in place of law review. Basketball game is the next day, still tickets. Finally Barrister's is this Saturday. Remind your constituents, especially the 1Ls since they are hard copy tickets you have to come pick up. If you have alcohol tickets, you will

get four drink tickets. Sales end Thursday, and probably Friday morning pickup because of the snow day. Prices are down this year and one more drink ticket, and they will keep the bar open basically until close.

**Sen. Fleischer:** Ticket sales will be open until midnight on Thursday and available to pick up between 10 and 12 on Friday.

**Sen. Weistein:** Halloween was all online. Wasn't that a success?

**McGeehan:** The woman who helped is no longer here, and she was excellent, so we had a lack of technical expertise. There wasn't as much of a fee, but some people had issues with scanning their tickets and there was a long line, and there shouldn't be an issue with that this time.

**Sen. Vaynshteyn:** Would you recommend online for future or just paper?

**McGeehan:** We looked at it for this one. It was a nice change in the fall, but you run into little hiccups and we didn't have that person.

**Sen. Weiss:** Biggest problem with anything IT is who you have to do it and what software they have to use. So the recommendation would be to look at your programming staff, defer to their preferences, and see if you have someone who can make it happen.

**McGeehan:** Advantage was we didn't have to table. With hard copies, it puts more of an onus on programming because you have to table.

#### **IV. Committee Reports**

##### **Agenda amendments**

**Sen. Pierce:** I'd like to add Adam's Joint Resolution 7 to the agenda.

**VP Omboni:** Is there a second on the motion. Second. No objections. It's put on the agenda under Rules.

**Sen. Block:** Can we put student orgs first?

Motion to vote. Seconded. Unanimous.

a. **Appointments: Caleb Raymond**

Nothing.

b. **Academic Policy: Megan Steffl**

Nothing to report.

c. **Audit: Mary Khan**

Matt and I are going to meet to figure out a better way to monitor organizations for future audit committees, and he proposed this spreadsheet to see how much of the C-fund organizations actually use, so in future budgeting we can see what orgs spent in previous years.

**Sen Gardner:** There was discussion about potential audit of the executive branch.

**Sen Khan:** At this time, I don't think we're going to have one. That may change but probably not.

d. **Wellness and Programming: Sean Winker**

Nothing to report.

e. **Facilities and Technology: Gil Landau**

**McGeehan:** There haven't been a lot of facilities complaints in the last two weeks. Continue to send complaints.

f. **Rules & Constitution: Kevin Wiatrak**

**Sen Fleischer:** Placing Joint Resolution 7 on the agenda. It sounds like a good idea.

**Pres Weiss:** Whenever one violates alcohol policy, it falls on their heads and SBA as a whole. Wanting to avoid past issues, we've been working to draft policy that reflects that the inter-fraternity council currently uses, which allows for self-regulation. The way it's written out is that anyone can submit an anonymous report on SBA website, which would go to SBA Chief Justice. She would make a recommendation to the supreme court to take it up or dismiss it. From there, the supreme court would decide; either way, they notify dean of students office and Office of Student Rights & Responsibilities. There are deadlines along the way to make sure it doesn't extend the entire semester, and eventually they would give a verdict and recommended sanctions in like with the current SRR university policy. That would be given to dean of students, which acts as court of appeals. If appealed to them, they have the right to accept it or not and to affirm or pass down their own recommendation, and the Senate would then be bound to implement those sanctions.

**Omboni:** Chief justice was unable to be here, but she is willing to answer any questions that may arise. Just email her and she'll answer them for you.

**Pres Weiss:** This has been scored and vetted by the dean of students office, the Center for Student Engagement, and our supreme court.

**Sen Gardner:** Is there any increased liability for SBA and law school?

**Pres Weiss:** It goes to staff and faculty and then comes down to us, so they are supervising and we're taking care of the detailed stuff. In case of severe violations or death/injury, it is out of our hands; we do not deal with those things. It also reserves their right to intervene at any point in the process.

**Sen Gardner:** Is there worry about increasing the burden on the supreme court?

**Pres Weiss:** There is no concern.

**Sen Fleischer:** How soon could we see implementation?

**Pres Weiss:** This resolution says you support me to take this to SRR tomorrow. It would still need to be approved by the university. It would be adopted by the university and then we would have to implement it. My recommendation would be to implement it at the beginning of next year.

**Sen Sanford:** You mentioned it was scored by dean of students and center...they support?

**Pres Weiss:** Very gung-ho support. This has been a mission and an issue for the past

three years.

**Sen Marvisi:** Move to approve Joint Resolution 7.

Seconded. Unanimous. Passed.

g. **Student Organization: Samantha Block**

i. J. Res. 5 - NLG Charter Approval Act (*Discussion Only*)

National Lawyers Guild. Constitution and statement of interest on the Google drive.

**Eleanor:** We've been working to charter a chapter, because it's a national organization. It's a bar association that inclusive to other legal professionals, like paralegals and jailhouse lawyers. NLG has student chapters at our peer institutions in DC, and we think the time is right to get it started here. There's a need for it, because there's no real general social justice or progressive organization at this store at this time. We hope to be something a little bit different from the networking groups, to get students engaged in things like legal observer training and days of action, as well as develop some skills to learn how to do their jobs as attorneys and also serve their communities in that capacity.

**Sen. Vaynshteyn:** What made you interested in this organization?

**Eleanor:** I am close and involved with the DC NLG chapter, and I think that it's really important that we have connections with the DC chapter, but I thought tailoring something to the student environment would be better. I found that it is always doing things for people who aren't traditionally served by the legal system as well as they could be.

**Sen Stase?:** How big or well respected is the NLG?

**Eleanor:** I think it's highly respected. I don't want to give you the wrong numbers but it's [5,000] across the country. It's also well known among attorneys. There are many NLG attorneys who don't work for NLG but are on the NLG list for pro bono and stuff when there's a need.

**Sen Falwar:** Is there a chapter fee?

**Eleanor:** There are no chapter dues to the national.

**Sen Marvisi:** We have over 60 organizations, many of which have national organizations. Why hasn't this one been established?

**Eleanor:** I'm not sure. A group of us found at least 30 other people who were interested, so it's hard to say why it wasn't established before. Not everybody here has heard of it, and I think that's because as an organization...I guess GW just has a different focus because of the region that we're in, but I don't think that means there aren't people who wouldn't want to be a part of it if they knew what it was.

**Sen Marvisi:** Can you differentiate from ALCU and [something else]?

**Eleanor:** NLG doesn't necessarily have a political focus, and I wouldn't say it's partisan but it is generally a progressive organization. The goal of NLG is to mobilize students to contribute to movement lawyering while they're in law school and provides a lot of experience. It's more focused on working with the local community than those others might be.

**Sen. Vaynshteyn:** I would assume that NLG has a large presence here in DC. Would you say that it would be very beneficial to have a chapter here to the organization as a whole?

**Eleanor:** Yes of course, I think so. And this is something students can benefit from as well.

**Sen Block:** Move for discussion.

Seconded.

**Sen Fleischer:** Under 601(c)(3), we can approve by unanimous consent tonight instead of waiting a week. But we should probably have a rollover.

**Pres. Weiss:** Charters are generally considered over a period of time because they go through Sam's committee for technical requirements. Then we have time to consider and speak with our constituents.

**Sen Fleischer:** Because this is a national organization, I think we should have had it by now, and I think we should approve this group.

**Sen Nastase:** Motion to move to closed session.

**Sen Block:** Often we do have closed sessions, so that people are more comfortable. I do think this is an organization we should charter.

Motion to vote on closed session. Seconded. Ayes have it, two nays.

**Sen Nastase:** I like it. I just thought it would be appropriate to have a closed session. I think it's a good idea. We have a huge budget, and it would be okay to bring in another organization, especially if it's a national organization. It sounds like they have a big network, and it's an area I know a lot of people are interested in.

**Sen Iver:** Second that. It would be good to have this organization. Has it ever come up before the Senate before?

**Sen Block:** Not that I'm aware of.

**Sen. Vaynshteyn:** I am probably going to vote to approve this; however, there are some concerns to talk about. We do have a lot of organizations here. Do we really need another one? We have so many people doing things all the time that it gets lost in the noise. So that is a concern, but I do believe in this organization.

**Sen Fleischer:** Since they're a national organization, they can get outside funding as well, and they can potentially do joint events. I have a question for

Adam—have you ever seen the organization try to get chartered?

**Pres Weiss:** No.

**Sen Fleischer:** I see no reason why we can't approve this tonight, absent any issues with the constitution.

**Sen Marvisi:** I've never seen any proof that it's been recognized as a national organization.

**Sen Block:** They actually already recognize that there's a chapter here, because they had to reach out to them first, so they already list GW as having a chapter here because someone tried to charter it last year and didn't have time to do it.

**Sen Gardner:** I think a lot of activist success for organizations is on marketing and getting individuals to participate. I know different orgs have done a lot of similar things, such as legal observatory, and in my opinion there seems to be a lack of good marketing and advertising. So would another competitor in this activism sphere increase student engagement or continue to crowd the space with similar organizations?

**Sen Block:** In their constitution, one issue I did have was that they don't have a hierarchy. That brings a little concern to me—something we want to bring to their attention. I think it's important to have a treasurer. But that's not a requirement; they just have to have positions, and they say all members are equal.

**Pres Weiss:** In considering the merits of this, I ask that you do this under the caveat that they have to designate who would fill the treasurer role every year. That is critical for us to help them. I know that's not a requirement, but in discerning the merits I urge you to have that caveat.

**Sen Talwar:** Is it the same structure as the national org?

**Sen Block:** I don't know. Also, with ACLUs and others, just a thought, maybe we can say if you don't have enough activity or something you don't get funding the next year. New organizations shouldn't be kept out just because some of our current organizations aren't great.

**Sen Nastase:** That's part of my concern. We have a ton of clubs, and they have events where no one shows up. I think there are a couple of clubs that really do well and a lot that just don't, so let's not just bring another club into the group. There should be some way of fixing the club situation at the school.

**Sen Fleischer:** To that point, where clubs are getting money for events no one is attending. Even just today, there were ten pizzas left over from an event in the kitchen.

**Sen Johnson:** I agree with what Theo was saying, and it seems like they've put more time and effort into this than a lot of others.

**Sen Block:** I would recommend passing it tonight if we can.

**Sen Fleischer:** We can do it by unanimous consent tonight. If it doesn't pass, then we would just vote at the next meeting.

**Sen Gardner:** I would rather wait and take this up next meeting.

Motion to end closed session. Seconded. Unanimous.

**Sen. Vaynshteyn:** During our discussion, it was raised that your constitution has equal membership. Is that right?

**Eleanor:** Yes.

**Sen. Vaynshteyn:** Our concern is that we need someone in the roles of president and especially treasurer. We need one person in charge of funds. Would you be amenable to addressing that concern?

**Eleanor:** Yeah. We listed that officers will perform their duties in accordance with any SBA rules. So we would designate people as required by the SBA.

**Sen. Vaynshteyn:** To clarify, you wouldn't have an officer but a committee to handle those traditional roles?

**Eleanor:** Yes.

**Sen Blcok:** I move to extend discussion five minutes. [Passed.] My only concern is that the SBA doesn't require those roles designated. So I would just add that you are going to have a designated treasurer.

**Pres Weiss:** And president. You need both.

**Eleanor:** Okay.

**Pres Weiss:** You can designate someone without giving them that title.

**Sen Gardner:** What the year distribution of interested students?

**Eleanor:** We're 2Ls, so that lead to the interest being primarily 2Ls. I think we'll have plenty of time to build up the organizational knowledge we'll need to keep it going.

**Sen Fleischer:** Motion to approve Joint Resolution 5 by unanimous consent. Seconded. One objection. Not approved by unanimous consent.

**Sen Gardner:** Motion to end discussion.

Seconded. Unanimous consent.

ii. J. Res. 6 - FAST Charter Approval Act (*Discussion Only*)

**Sen Block:** Fitness Athletic Sports and Training (FAST). No members currently here. From what I understand, they want to create a bunch of intramurals. Personally, I don't see the point of this organization. We do have a lot of organizations, and I wouldn't want to give money to an organization that couldn't even come answer questions to the SBA.

**Sen Gardner:** I have a constituent who is part of the process with this organization. He regrets that he was not able to be here tonight. He said there



was a lack of unity and trouble finding people to create intramurals teams. While he acknowledges that this would touch other organizations, such as softball and running, it would not encroach on those orgs.

**Sen Johnson:** I will fault them for not being here. It seems that if you're really passionate about founding an organization, this is a stark contrast. I do think there would probably be interest in this, I don't have anything against it, but maybe the trouble finding people to be interested maybe that speaks to a lack of interest in doing those sports. I'd like to hear from them about it.

**Sen Khan:** I have no idea what their mission is, so I think it's too vague. The organization before seemed they had a specific plan, so I think just talking about sports isn't enough.

**Sen. Vaynshteyn:** Question for Senator Gardner since you've been communicating with one of them. Do you know if they plan to work with the similar organizations or with the Wellness Committee? I just can't see a bunch of law students being that dedicated to an organization like this. On the other hand, I don't know how necessary it is to have a lot of dedication to this group, especially if we don't give them a lot of money.

**Sen Gardner:** I apologize for my limited knowledge. My understanding is that they view the other organizations as solely law school, whereas they view themselves primarily as a center point for which intramural teams specifically can find members and create teams, either the GW intramural leagues or DC sports leagues that individuals might have trouble finding enough people for and this would give them a place to go for that.

**McGeehan:** Sports orgs we have: GW Law softball, running, squash. We had basketball, which is now defunct. The IM league's website has a place to go on and create teams. The law school also has students who play on IM basketball and soccer teams, volleyball, flag football, all facilitated through facebook groups. Any organization we have is listed on the SBA website and the GW Law website. Keep that in mind.

**Sen Fleischer:** There's already GW softball, running club, and from what they provided to us, as this isn't an academic thing and already is happening without our input, I don't think this is something we should be supporting. In mind that they were not here tonight and this is not academically relevant. So I do not support the chartering of this organization.

**Sen Marvisi:** I do think it's a good idea, but I don't think it's feasible for students to put it together as a whole. There are other organizations where you can sign up as a free agent, in GW as a whole and in DC. They wouldn't be able to get the number of members that they would want for this, and they could achieve that

by texts or facebook group or something.

**Sen Nastase:** Their goals and purpose are vague. Seconding what others said. I don't see the need for it.

**Sen Pierce:** They can do it on their own. I don't think it's necessary to fund it.

**Sen Johnson:** What would we even be funding?

**McGeehan:** For example, the IM leagues are free, but in a couple years they can use the budget to pay DC league dues, rather than getting a bar to sponsor or something.

**Sen Fleischer:** Motion to postpone this indefinitely, so we don't have to consider it next week. It's a waste of time and I don't want it on the agenda next week. Move to suspend the question of Joint Resolution 6 indefinitely.

**Sen. Vaynshteyn:** What kind of vote do we need?

**Omboni:** Two thirds.

Motion. Seconded. 9 ayes, 6 nays. Motion does not pass.

**Sen Fleischer:** Move to end discussion.

Seconded. Unanimous.

**h. Finance: Donald Crowell**

**i. Bill No. 43 - PSDS Social (Ad Hoc Request)**

**Sen Fleischer:** I've been in contact with the president of PSDS, and we discussed that the amount would be changed when they received the order for the event. So I suggest to friendly amend the bill to be \$103.40, what they actually spent. Motion to amend. Seconded. Amended.

**Sen Fleischer:** They had an event and they wanted funding. This was a second social, which had better attendance than the first. These are different events; they have activities and try to promote different skills in finance policy. We as finance committee support the bill. No appeals.

No discussion. Motion to approve by unanimous consent. Second. Passed.

**ii. Bill No. 44 - SLS Panel Event (Ad Hoc Request)**

Space Law Society had discussion on space debris, successful event with pizza. Finance committee recommends approval, no appeals on the bill.

No discussion. Motion to approve by unanimous consent. Second. Passed.

**iii. Bill No. 45 - LLSA Bluebook Workshop (Ad Hoc Request)**

This is an event they put on every year, very successful. They give event to students on how to go about the journal competition. I went last year and it was crowded. This year it was in a larger room and there were more people. It's within finance policy, no appeals.

No discussion. Motion to approve by unanimous consent. Second. Passed.

**V. Adjournment**

**McGeehan:** I forgot for my report—SA elections are coming up. The importance of SA elections (we get votes, law school generally votes in a block) is because the undergrads handle our money, so it's important that we vet a candidate who supports the opt-in or opt-out program where we don't abide by their stuff and take are money and are left to ourselves. So it's important that when we do vet them that you come and ask good questions because it actually does have a huge effect. Last year the candidate we supported did not win. We also want to get voter turnout.

**Sen Fleischer:** Finance committee welcomes Sen. Sanford to the committee as our newest member.

**Sen Gardner:** Chief of Staff McGeehan, do you know who the SA Senate candidates are?

**Pres Weiss:** They haven't been vetted and approved yet.

**VP Omboni:** Our next meeting will be next week, so we can bring in the SA candidates. If there's any other business on the agenda, we'd also like to bring it up on that time to get business out of the way. But this will at least be for asking questions of the SA candidates for president and vice president. This will be in addition to the usual meetings. We will probably meet the next three consecutive weeks. I'm looking to see if we can get enough business done next week so we don't have to come on the 29th, but no promises.

Last, rankings: We're all very upset with this. Continue to be the role models and the leaders that you are. Every day you continue to make this a better place.

Senator Fiescher moves to adjourn, Senator Nastase seconds, we are adjourned. 11:10 p.m.