

Elections Committee Meeting Minutes of April 6, 2020

I CALL TO ORDER at **12:03 PM**

II ROLL CALL

Present: Abhay Bilapatte, Kenneth Lefin, James Carroll, Marguerite Hinrichs, Sia Saquee, Antonio Orejel

III ACTION ITEM – **Approval of the agenda**

Motion to approve the agenda by **A. Bilapatte**, second by **K. Lefin**, motion CARRIES.

IV ACTION ITEM – **Approval of minutes March 27, 2020**

Motion to approve the minutes by **A. Bilapatte**, second by **K. Lefin**.

J. Carroll states that there is an area of correction for the March 27th minutes. At the bottom of page 5, where you motioned to extend the meeting by 20 minutes, it lists that I seconded it. I am not sure if Sneh Sharma meant to type Kenneth seconded it. It looks like A. Bilapatte made the motion and K. Lefin seconded it. **A. Orejel** asks if anything else needs to be changed before moving on. **J. Carroll** says that the minutes will not be approved. We will have to stand on that correction and it will be given to Sneh Sharma. Once the changes are made, we will have to approve it in the next meeting.

4:56

V. PUBLIC COMMENT – **Public Comment is intended as a time for any member of the Public to address the committee on any issue’s affection ASI and/or the California State University, East Bay.**

No Public Comment.

VI. UNFINISHED ITEMS

A. DISCUSSION ITEM – **Run-Off Elections**

a. April 13th – April 15th

A. Bilapatte states that three students had concerns regarding the run-off elections. The conclusion is that run-off elections are done when there is no majority vote for a candidate. We try to have a run-off election where the first two candidates re-run for elections. This is not mentioned in the bylaws or elections codes and that is what the



candidates' concerns were. But according to James Carroll, there are certain things that are already mentioned and there have been run-off elections in the previous years. Going forward, we can add this in a bold font on the code of conduct and bylaws. **J. Carroll** says that on the agenda, it says Run-Off April 13th to the 15th, but it should just be two days. It should be from April 13th to the 14th. We need to change and correct the bylaws to reflect what a Run-off would be based on. When you look at history, we have to weigh out the vagueness of the language in the bylaws versus what our practice has been for more than ten or more years. We must consider not doing more harm by not being consistent to our process versus staying consistent with our process. If we move forward with some of the concerns the candidates brought forward, we will then get the opposite concern from candidates that would have been in second place and would have moved forward for the run-off. Since we want to take the bylaws clarity to the Board to review so that we can make the recommendation, we may want to look at the other CSUs, in terms of their run-off elections. This can be done in the summer and a recommendation can be made in the fall. **A. Orejel** asks if anyone would like to speak on the run-off elections. **J. Carroll** mentions that the run-off ballot has been done and is ready to go. We are going to check and upload the updated voter's guide that K. Lefin completed. We included language on the top of the ballot that reminds students that they have to be enrolled. We need to work on the emails that M. Hinrichs will be able to send out to all of campus and we will continue with social media. **M. Hinrichs** asks how many emails should be sent out. Should it be twice a day or each day? **A. Orejel** asks if the question is directed towards **J. Carroll** or the entire committee. **M. Hinrichs** states that she wants to know from the entire committee. **S. Saquee** states that two for the first day, one in the morning and another in the late afternoon. James Carroll, can you send email to the CSUEB Instagram admin so that they can repost what has been posted on our Instagram as well? **J. Carroll** replies that he can do that. **K. Lefin** states that for the voter's guide, it just needs to be downloaded. **J. Carroll** says that he will have to download it and then do the link to the ballot. **S. Saquee** adds that she began to post on Instagram during the weekend. I will be doing something different for the run-offs. I already emailed Kris Disharoon and his staff. We will have three different flyers for the candidates, instead of having different posts. **A. Orejel** mentions that he and K. Lefin were speaking on it. The best idea is to have them side to side to save up space. Sia, are you planning to use the same design? **S. Saquee** states that she plans on using the same concept as the previous one. This time, we are going to have each candidate for each position on one flyer with their names and picture. There will be three different flyers. **A. Bilapatte** says that students raised concerns about this, and James Carroll sent an email, but I am not sure if everything is clear to them, as of now. **J. Carroll** states that he does not know if it is



unclear to any of them. I think people disagree with the way run-offs are being done. I have not heard anything. I think that everyone is entitled to their own opinion and they can file a complaint. At this point, we need to continue with run-offs. I do not think the issue was about clarity, but it was about the bylaws and the practice. We can respond to any concerns that arise, but at this point, it is not a debate situation. We provided our response. **A. Orejel** adds that K. Lefin made a caption that would go well with the pictures. **K. Lefin** states that the captions states that a certain person is running for run-offs and it is simple. Sia, I can send it to you if you would like to use it for the Instagram post. **S. Saquee** replies that K. Lefin can send it to her.

17:04

B. DISCUSSION ITEM – Grievance Hearing/Evaluation

A. Bilapatte states that last time, there were two and additional clarity was needed for a follow up with two candidates. One was about reaching out to the Alpha president. They have reached out to the candidates and an email was sent to them. Kabir had sent in an email after the grievance deadline was closed. **J. Carroll** states they have Amy Perez grievance related to the text message indicating that she knew it bothers and then responded with additional names; however, Kabir then sent his information. The issue right now is to evaluate whether or now they have enough evidence of a violation to set a grievance hearing. The challenge is that they have some allegations but if they don't have anything that brings in more details then it limits where they go. They can continue to investigate but at this point they have exhausted what the candidates have said. If we can get information, then we can move forward but no one is providing evidence that the information was obtain in an illegal way. **A. Bilapatte** states the allegations are that the numbers were taken from the University Housing. When they spoke to the Elevate slate, they said they received the numbers from their friends. Kabir's concern is whether the numbers were obtained from the Resident Housing President. Elevate slate mention that they got the numbers through their friends and they really can't question that. Mahdi also mentions in the email that he messaged the other person through Instagram. Messaging people through Instagram is not a problem if it is not overboard. For that grievance he does not believe that it shouldn't be going to the hearing part. **A. Orejel** states it looks like it was all through social media and one was a classmate. It looks like there is a mutual connection with the messages that were being brought up. It just seems like for the other slate who spoke with someone that received the message might have mixed the words a little bit to make it seem like an attack. **S. Saquee** states concerning that grievance she would like to get more information from Kabir. She would like to know why he thinks the other slate got the information from Housing. As well to ask if he has any concrete evidence that we can follow up with. **A. Bilapatte** states that Kabir sent the number of the Housing President. He is assuming that numbers were taken from them and the screen is



accessible to many people. Since this is an assumption, we need to ask him clearly if he has any proof if not, we can think of something else. **J. Carroll** states that it was shared with Mark Almeida the Director of Housing. There are two issues that would be part of that allegation. One being what they would need to do as an elections committee to investigate and determine if there were any violations to the code. Which if somebody used their position to access candidates for campaigning, like an RA role than that would be a violation. However, we need to be able to prove that. Separately, if Mark felt that he needs to follow up with a student employee regarding any behavior than that would be a personnel matter that they would need to follow up. They have let Mark know about what we have been doing as far as investigating and getting clarity. We will share that final information with him as well. If he felt that there is something that needed to be looked at from a personnel perspective than they would do that. They have asked Kabir why that assumption was made. It may be fair or unfair assumption, but the reality is that there needs to be more strength to that assumption. We need more proof and we don't really have that. They can continue to gather more information if it comes forward. However, he believes they don't have anything that they can act on officially. **K. Lefin** states that Kabir is not in the runoffs. Could it be him trying to extend to see if there is a chance, he can get back into the runoffs. **A. Orejel** states that it could be a possibility. **S. Saquee** states that the email came in before the results came out. **J. Carroll** states some people submit grievances because they see something that is of concern. They do tend to see grievances submitted from one candidate or friends of a candidate about another candidate or slate. The folks that are more involved in the election process are usually candidates and their friends. They often have more awareness and pay attention to things. They don't know if people do it for a reason. **A. Orejel** states especially if they are part of the same slate. **A. Bilapatte** states they did not come to a conclusion for the Concord meeting that took place and a candidate spoke in the meeting. Kabir raised a concern and attached the audio link. **S. Saquee** states after listening to the audio Arianna was asking people in the committee to help with the campaign for the candidates that are in the runoffs. They can send her a warning to not discuss elections during their meetings. **M. Hinrichs** states a warning should be sent right away. For the previous grievance will they be telling them that there will be no grievance or will they be brought in told that there will be no grievance. **A. Bilapatte** states they should email them letting them know that more clarity is needed. When they spoke to the other slate, they provided screenshot that they received numbers from their friends. Whether the concerning member has not provided concrete proof that the other slate got their numbers through housing without permission. He believes that they don't have to have a grievance. **J. Carroll** states they have a couple of follow up emails that will be sent out. They need to have the information ready to go so they can send it and keep the candidates up to date. From the looks of it we are not moving forward with the grievance hearing, but it does not mean that they have stopped the investigation. All the other ones are closed. The one regarding the text messages they are still gathering



information but are not moving forward. **A. Orejel** states it does seem safe to allow a committee member to say they are officially running for a position. He doesn't think that should be a penalty for anyone. However, is she is discussing it over and over in the meetings than it may become a problem. **S. Saquee** states they should not discuss that they are running for a position in any ASI events or meetings. If it is not allowed in the Hayward campus than it should not be allowed in the Concord campus. **M. Hinrichs** states they need to be consistent on both campuses.

35:42

VII. NEW BUSINESS ITEMS

A. Orejel states that there are no new business items listed but knows he submitted it. There might have been new business items for marketing communications. **A. Bilapatte** asks how they will campaign for the runoffs. Will we continue to boost through Instagram? **M. Hinrichs** would like to know what content she will receive to send and when she will receive it. **S. Saquee** states that it will be like what she has received in the past. But this time it will be specific to the runoffs. They will make slight changes to the email that was sent so that students know that runoffs are happening. It will also include a link to the new voters' guide. For Instagram they will boost the posts again. They will only boost the general post that is already on their page. **J. Carroll** states they can use it but will need to get all the receipts so he can submit it to ASI. **S. Saquee** states all the candidates who are running for the same position will be on one flyer. They might see issues on the comments, so they need to stay professional and not get involved in the drama. **A. Bilapatte** asks what are the voting numbers they expect to see for the runoffs? **J. Carroll** states that generally the runoff numbers are lower. It is important to keep promoting thorough emails and social media. The numbers decline maybe because some people lose interest or don't know the candidates. **A. Orejel** states they also must consider that the ones who aren't running any more might not be reaching out to people or posting on their social media anymore. So, people might not know that there is another election coming. This election is April 13, 2020 – April 14, 2020. **A. Bilapatte** suggest asking the ones who aren't running anymore to promote. **S. Saquee** states that they shouldn't ask them. It should be left up to them because campaigning can be draining.

41:55

VIII. ROUNDTABLE REMARKS

A. Orejel states it seems that a good amount of people will vote in runoffs. The ones who are running for the President position will probably reach out to their slate. They will have to watch out for any new unofficial votes. But after what happened he is sure that they won't get alumni that are voting



or anyone who isn't paying dues for campus. It should be an easier elimination when it comes to voters.

S. Saquee thanks everyone for making it to the meeting and for everyone's energy and passion. Thank you to all the advisors and the committee members.

M. Hinrichs states great job to everyone for adjusting to the virtual environment.

A. Orejel asks for those who already won or are going to win will they be getting a ceremony?

M. Hinrichs believes that it will be done virtually.

J. Carroll states that is something they can work out. The goal this year was to have a small party like a meet and greet the winners. We can look into it and maybe have an open zoom to meet everyone. It would be nice to do something in person but right now we are limited.

A. Orejel states it should be a discussion for them. They can incorporate the winning candidates and those who didn't win. We should thank them for running and to show they are willing to make a difference.

K. Lefin asks if is possible to have the party in the Fall.

A. Orejel states they can look into it. It would be nice to do something now.

J. Carroll states it would be a good idea to meet on Friday. It can be a check in and by then maybe we have come up with ideas for a celebration. If there is not a lot to discuss it will be a short meeting.

IX. ADJOURNMENT at **12:53 PM**

Minutes Reviewed By:

Committee Chair

Name: Antonio Orejel

Minutes Approved On:

Date:

