

Elections Committee Meeting Minutes of March 18, 2021

- I. CALL TO ORDER at **12:05 PM**
- II. ROLL CALL
Present: Abhay Bilapatte, Julia Nkansah, James Carroll, Anjelica Gurrola, Erik Pinlac, Marguerite Hinrichs, Kenneth Lefin, Miriam Okekenta

Absent: Mary Katreeb
- III. ACTION ITEM – **Approval of the agenda**
Motion to approve the agenda by **K. Lefin**, second by **J. Nkansah**, agenda **APPROVED**.
- IV. ACTION ITEM – **Approval of minutes March 04th, 2021**
Motion to approve the minutes of March 4, 2021 by **K. Lefin**, second by M. Okekenta, minutes **APPROVED**.
- 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
No unfinished items.
- VII. NEW BUSINESS ITEM
 - A. DISCUSSION ITEM – **Candidate forums**
The ASI Elections committee will discuss and review the updates regarding the candidate forums.
K. Lefin states that he posted the forms and linked them to the social media accounts.

10:46

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B. DISCUSSION ITEM – ASI Elections Voters Guide

The ASI Elections committee will discuss and review the ASI elections voters' guide. (Kenneth & Miriam)

K. Lefin states that he and M. Okekenta completed the voter's guide. We kept the same format and made it simple. While I was changing the pictures and the biographies, M. Okekenta was reading to ensure that everything were no spelling errors. I sent it out to the entire committee and there was no negative feedback. M. Hinrichs sent it out. **J. Carroll** states that historically, the guide was created as a pdf to share it in advance and have the link in election format. If we had done things in BaySync and place each picture and biography individually, it would look long. It would be hard to read that way. With Big Pulse, we did not need to put the link in there. There is a difference in format, and it seems as though there was an extra step. **E. Pinlac** states that there has been bad feedback with the new Bay Sync, which is the reason why it was not used this year. With Big Pulse and the way, it is set up, I just upload the files, and everything is done through the software. The voter's guide, in the future, can be a redundancy. Hopefully, things will be in person and we can have a poling station. It is better for people to read about the candidates in advance. **A. Bilapatte** states that as J. Carroll mentioned, it would be great to find a way to upload the candidate information in the best way possible. As E. Pinlac mentioned, Big Pulse was a success, and it was easy for students to vote.

15:02

C. DISCUSSION ITEM – Elections voting updates

The ASI elections committee will discuss the updates related to ASI elections voting. (James & Erik)

E. Pinlac states that the results are ready, but the timeline states that it will be posted on Friday. All of the verification happens on the front end and we provide the list from our campus to Big Pulse. In the past, it took us a couple of days to verify everything and do everything manually. Big Pulse has an auto-verification process. We do have over seven-hundred votes, which is less than what we usually have. There were less candidates and only two contested races. There will not be a run-off. The position with four candidates running the top candidate received fifty-one percent of the votes. This makes the elections this year much easier. I will put everything together today and K. Lefin can post in on our social media page. We need to decide whether the results will be emailed out. J. Carroll sent me the template and I will fill it out for distribution. The election was straightforward and many of the positions were unopposed. There were some issues with the software, which was expected. I still have some confidence in it. **J. Carroll** states that they will need to do some comparisons between Big Pulse and BaySync. Like any software program, I do not think there is

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one that is perfect. It is a matter of figuring things out for our needs. Any student, former student, or non-matriculated student can log into BaySync. There is usually a check done by the Registrar to ensure that the people that voted are students. In Big Pulse, a list of students is provided and if someone is not a registered student, they cannot vote. Again, we need to determine what works best and weight out the pros and cons. **A. Bilapatte** states that it saves the committee and students a lot of time when the results are provided on time. There is no reverification process with Big Pulse. It has its pros and cons, but overall, it was a good experience.

20:08

D. DISCUSSION ITEM – Elections Grievances

The ASI Elections Committee will discuss any elections-related grievances that have been submitted (Mary & James)

J. Carroll states that he sent everyone a reminder with a spreadsheet. As of 11:30 a.m., I went into the BaySync form to see if there were any additional grievances and there are a total of two. The deadline for grievances is at 11:59 p.m. tonight on March 18th. There is still time for grievances to come forward. I will check to see if there is anything new tonight and tomorrow. I will provide an update to the committee. The committee discussed the first grievance we received. It was submitted by Kabir Dhillon on March 1st in regard to candidate for Director of Wellness, Zandrae Chan. The person posted their picture and position on social media with the Cal State East Bay logo, which is a violation. As soon as we received the information, we did reach out to the candidate to remove the post immediately, which she had done. I wanted to bring the remaining piece and closure to this grievance. It violates election code Article XI, C-7 where it talks about the use of logos is prohibited.

A. Bilapatte states that M. Katreeb is not present, and it is up to the committee to determine if this is a violation and the action that needs to be taken. I know that this was discussed in the previous meeting and that this could be considered a violation. We sent an email to the concerned candidate. What are your thoughts on this? What is the necessary step of action? **M. Okekenta** states that since it was not a repeated offense, this should be a warning. In this situation, she confirmed that her actions were wrong and took the post down immediately. **A. Bilapatte** asks M. Okekenta if she is suggesting a reprimand. **M. Okekenta** states a yes. **J. Nkansah** states that she agrees with M. Okekenta. She should be given a warning. **K. Lefin** states that he agrees, and the post was removed quickly. The situation was not prolonged. **A. Bilapatte** states that he agrees that the candidate should be given a warning. She should be informed that this is violation and should not be repeated. **E. Pinlac** states since this is a discussion item, the committee needs to take note of this for the next

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meeting. It will need to be taken to a vote. Action will need to be formalized at the next meeting. **A. Bilapatte** states that it will be a discussion item. We need to discuss the second grievance. A second grievance was provided by Kabir Dhillon. It was regarding the candidate for the Director of Wellness, Zandrae Chan. A flyer was posted on the Student Health and Counseling Instagram page. It is a violation that is mentioned in Article XI, section C6. I would like to take the committees' understanding of this and how we can proceed. **J. Carroll** states that the report came in that the Student Health and Counseling Instagram page had encouraged people to vote for Zandrae Chan, who is a member of the Student Health Advisory Committee. This can fall into some gray area and that is why we need additional information for clarity. It is mentioned that people cannot post information to an official department website, however, the department will need to approve it. If the department decides to approve the posting, equal time must be given to all candidates running in that position. A department cannot further publicize one department. As soon as we received this, we reached out to both the candidate and Student Health and Counseling Services. The Student Health and Counseling Services have many people that manage their Instagram. It was the chair of the Student Health Advisory Committee that posted it. They were not aware that they were not allowed to publicize one candidate. The Student Health department gave them the choice of removing the post or publicize all four candidates. All four candidates were publicized, and people were encouraged to vote. The response that we got from candidate Chan was that she did not post it. She was not aware that the chair of SHAC was posting it publicly. Once we reached out to her, she reached out to the chair of SHAC to remove the post. The committee will have to decide and vote on it. **K. Lefin** ask if the chair mentioned that Zandrae reached out to post or did the chair do it on their own account? **J. Carroll** states I can ask to clarify. From what I understand the director of SHAC, Dr. Abayomi Jones, and the director of counseling Shauna Hong, were meeting with President Sandeen Cathy to discuss townhall opportunities. Due to Zandrae being a member of SHAC they were discussing general efforts, in which it was mentioned that someone from SHAC committee was running for the elections, to which the meeting then ended. Then Zandrae communicated she did not ask the chair to do it, I have not spoken to the chair directly this came from Zandrae. This looks like an action taken by the chair to try to help and support the candidate, this is not an excuse, but they were not aware that it would be problematic posting on a department site. **K. Lefin** states the violation would be if Zandrae reached out to the chair to post, however, it does not seem that it is her fault. **M. Hinrichs** states while it is a violation, candidates have to take accountability, this demonstrates that there is excitement around our new President. Due to showing our ways to the new President was probably one of the factors that led this to happen, we also must

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note that staff, faculty, and the President cannot vote. **E. Pinlac** states this comes up every year regarding what the definition of a campaign worker is. Are you responsible for the campaign workers that you do not know exist? It seems that those folks were aware due to working with them but fails along the grey line. **A. Bilapatte** states as K. Lefin mentioned if the candidate was not aware of this issue happening on their behalf. Once we reached out to all parties, they did take the matter seriously and took down the post. I believe this falls under probable violation; however, the candidate did not ask to be posted and it was an unnecessary step that was taken by the published department. It could be a violation, but I do not want to be harsh, since the candidate did not know this issue can happen. It falls under the grey area. **J. Nkansah** states we can give them a warning, despite it being their responsibility overall and it would be unfair to them if we issue a harsher punishment. **M. Okekenta** states I agree with J. Nkansah regarding giving a warning similar to the last grievances. Zandrae did not force anyone to post anything, and it was posted without her consent. For future elections, we can have a specific set of rules for departments to follow. **A. Bilapatte** states next week we can vote on these grievances in order to be finalized and whether further action will be taken. **J. Carroll** states I would encourage everyone to look back in the elections codes in order to see the types of violations. Regarding what E. Pinlac stated, we have historically held candidates accountable for these actions. It is a grievance violation for the behavior of the people who campaign, and the candidate can argue that they were not aware of it taking place. Therefore, holding the fact of the department website piece falls into both categories of involving the department and the candidate. However, the other factor should be the level of impact, when we give candidates three warnings for smaller items. Once the number hits higher than three then the outcome of the violation will be higher. I do want everyone to take into account the type of violation and the impact. If a group was illegally campaigning for someone and violating campus policy, might look greater than one post that got resurrected by a department. **K. Lefin** asks if it was a story post that got posted? Zandrae was the first one to get posted and the other candidates got posted for about twenty-four hours as well, which equals it out. **A. Bilapatte** states we can consider the discussion from the committee members and advisors. In our next meeting, we will vote whether we issue a warning or a second grievance.

40:10

E. DISCUSSION ITEM - **Elections Timeline**

The ASI elections committee will be discussing and reviewing the Elections timeline.

A. Bilapatte states as mentioned by E. Pinlac, we need to wait until the timeline says the results will be posted, I think it is a good idea. We should be following the timeline since we have been following

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it from the beginning. We are on track.

40:51

VIII. ROUNDTABLE REMARKS

M. Hinrichs states great job facilitating today's meeting A. Bilapatte.

J. Carroll states thank you everyone for being in today's meeting. It seems as there is always more action towards the end of the elections, which is why we have this committee and at times can be a little more stressful. At this point, everyone can wrap up their committee work since it does not seem as if we will have any runoff elections. Hopefully, some of you are planning on returning back to the committee for next year. If you are moving on to something else, you can go into your folder and in the excel document you can make a list of what you want your successor to continue. I wish I could have mentioned this earlier and created it as a task for everyone. Thank you for all the virtual hard work you have given this semester.

E. Pinlac states I want to give a shoutout to all the advisors, especially J. Carroll for Tuesday, since I had to take a personal day. J. Carroll faced on some issues we were having with the software that day and was able to take care of it. I was not expecting to take a day off but as you know life happens. I appreciate everyone being here, this it our third elections together.

A. Bilapatte states I want to thank all committee members for being here. I know our last meeting got cancel due to not meeting quorum. I thought this would have changed the timeline, luckily it did not. I also want to thank all of our advisors for being here and supporting us throughout the elections.

K. Lefin states I am super proud of everyone's hard work and surprise that it went by quickly.

44:59

IX. ADJOURNMENT at **12:50 PM**

Minutes approved by:

Committee Chair

Name: Abhay Bilapatte



Abhay Satishroo Bilapatte (Mar 29, 2021 12:25 PDT)

Minutes approved on:

3-25-2021

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Final Audit Report

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