

Committee of Democratic Civic Engagement

Senate of the Associated Students 90th Session
Minutes for November 7, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.

JCSU Room 324, 3rd Floor of the Joe Crowley Student Union & Zoom Meeting
Email Senate Secretary at senatesecretary@asun.unr.edu for more information

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Senator Claussen called the Committee of Democratic Civic Engagement meeting to order on November 7, 2023, at 7:01 p.m, Room 324 on the 3rd Floor at the Joe Crowley Student Union. Presiding Secretary Ally Chavez.

2. ROLL CALL

Present: Senator Claussen, Senator Jojan, Senator Ngo, Senator Cano-Sanchez, Senator Noble, Senator Smith, Senator McCulley, Senator Zheleznyakova

A quorum was present.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment at the time.

4. MINUTES

There were no minutes to approve at this time.

5. REPORT OF DIRECTOR

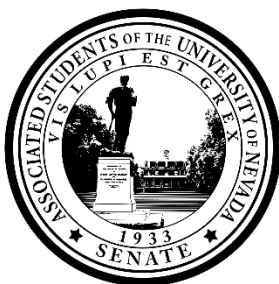
a. Director of Government Affairs Amanda Vaskov

- Director Vaskov discussed the upcoming election and the events that are planned in relation to this, such as Stick With it After Election Day and Nacho Average Election. She encouraged the committee to go vote.

6. OLD BUSINESS

a. **Rural Nevada Civic Engagement Tour**

- **Comment from Senator Claussen:** Stated that she wanted to work with President Stanfill to engage with rural communities in Nevada to increase civic engagement and discuss the project with the committee to see if they wish to be involved.
- **Question from Senator Ngo:** Asked what the timeline for planning and executing this event will look like.
 - **Response from Senator Claussen:** Stated that she will send out emails during the week with the committees consent however she cannot predict response time of the constituents she will be emailing.
- **Comment from Senator Ngo:** Stated that this project should be done as a collaboration with other groups on campus that focus on rural outreach. She also stated that this project should be done before the legislative session begins in Nevada, as it will allow for more time to be spent on the tour.
- **Comment from President Stanfill:** Noted that Senator Claussen did reach out to on-campus organizations that do reach out to rural communities, however the extent to which they help these communities with civic engagement specifically is limited.



Posted online at
www.nevadaasun.com.

If you would like a copy of any of the agenda items listed, please contact Senate Secretary at senatesecretary@asun.unr.edu

She also clarified that this tour is not meant for advertising the university, it is meant to get them involved in civics. She stated that since the University of Nevada. Reno is the original land grant institution, then focusing on rural communities specifically in Nevada is part of the school's job. She also clarified that the ideal time for the tour would be during spring break in March.

- **Comment from Senator Noble:** Expressed gratitude for the project and agreed that it should occur before the legislative session.
- **Comment from Senator McCulley:** Stated that this project should not be rushed as it will diminish the impact, thus having the tour before the legislative session begins would be unrealistic.
- **Comment from Senator Noble:** Restated that this project should start before the legislative session.
- **Senator Claussen:** Clarified that this project will take place over multiple days and thus committee members that are interested in being a part of this project will most likely can.
- **Question from Senator Noble:** Asked what the language of the email will be.
 - **Response from Senator Claussen:** Stated that she has not yet written it but will share it with the committee members.
- **Question from Senator Cano-Sanchez:** Asked for clarification on whether this is a recruitment effort on behalf of the university.
 - **Response from President Stanfill:** Stated that this tour is to discuss civic engagement for young people and discuss the resources that are available to rural Nevadans. The committee could also register students to vote on this tour, like what they do at high schools in Reno.
- **Question for Senator Ngo:** Asked what the approach for getting the information to student will be.
 - **Response from Senator Claussen:** Stated that Plan A would be an assembly for Seniors, but if this is not possible, they would target government classes.
- **Comment from Senator Noble:** Stated that he likes the idea overall, but it does not completely align with the mission of the committee since it does not directly impact enrolled undergraduate students.
- **Question from Senator Zheleznyakova:** Asked whether they would be going to Elko as students from that area are closer to Great Basin College.
 - **Response from President Stanfill:** Clarified that most students from rural Nevada do not go to college in general. As the original land grant institution, the university has the job of serving all Nevadans first. She also clarified that Great Basin College is mostly online and thus talking to students in Elko would not be taking away from the school. She also discussed her meeting with Provost Thompson on the benefits of attending this school and how this message should be spread to rural communities. She stated that he, along with other administrators, supported this project. She concluded that this project is going forward, she is discussing it with the committee because she would like for them to be involved.
- **Comment from Senator Noble:** Stated that this project sounds like it is more recruitment based than civic engagement based. He also questioned why areas like

Gerlach, Gardnerville, Dayton, and Verdi when they are closer and easier to test this initiative on.

- **Comment from Senator Jojan:** Clarified that the University of Nevada, Las Vegas is also a public school that is representing the state. He said he does think it is important to engage with rural communities but is confused on the goals of the tour.
- **Comment from Senator McCulley:** Stated that recruiting is the secondary aspect of this tour. Since the students will be receiving a presentation on civic engagement from University of Nevada students, then they will learn about the university as a result. She also clarified that going to Elko, despite it being far away, is still valuable as they are less likely to be able to come visit the university.
- **Comment from President Stanfill:** Clarified that she was not trying to diminish the impact of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. She stated the two schools are more involved with each other than ever, she chose to mention that the University of Nevada was the original land grant institution to support the fact that the university has had the job of serving Nevadans since its inception. She stated that she wanted to go to Elko because the students there have less access to visiting the University than students from Verdi or Fernley. Since she is from Spring Creek, she would not have to spend student fees on board accommodations for this tour. She also clarified that this tour will be happening, she is coming before the committee because she thought they would be interested. She concluded by restating that the main message is civic engagement, the secondary message is recruitment.
- **Comment from Senator Cano-Sanchez:** He stated that he is still confused on the message of the tour.
- **Comment from Senator Noble:** Clarified that people in near-by rural communities like the ones he mentioned previously are not targeted for civic engagement by the University. He also stated that he believed that this is mostly a recruitment effort by the university. He stated that he thinks the message of this tour should be clarified before it is executed.
- **Comment from President Stanfill:** Clarified that this tour's message is still civic engagement and that just because near-by rural areas are also lacking university outreach, that does not mean the tour should not take place in Elko. She also stated that no member of the committee will be forced to be a part of this project.
- **Comment from Senator McCulley:** Stated that if members of the committee want to go to other rural areas in the state of Nevada, they should format their own tours that target those communities. She also said that data showing civic engagement disparities between urban and rural areas in Nevada would be beneficial developing future tours.
- **Question from Senator Claussen:** Asked if members would be comfortable with her putting the language of the emails in the shared box for them to see before she sends them out.
 - **Response for Senator Ngo:** Stated she would be, but said she is still concerned with how this tour will look in practice.
- **Comment from Senator Noble:** Restated that he would like to see a clearer mission statement.

b. **Legislative Priority Drafting Session**

- **Comment from Senator Claussen:** Directed committee members to look at the box that contained notes from Director Vaskov regarding their legislative priorities.
- **Comment from Director Vaskov:** She discussed that these bills relate to student life and all of them have momentum behind them and are supported by legislators. She

discussed a bill on borrower's rights that would require lenders in the state to avoid predatory loan practices in the Nevada as well as compliance measures for notifications of payments. She says to expect minor pushback on the company-employee loan repayment aspect on the bill. She says she is collecting information of default rates as well as education on loans. Another bill she discussed was on protections for victims of sexual assault on college campuses, which comes with a fiscal note, which she said would be harder, but possible to pass. The third bill, which does not have a sponsor yet, is to add a temporary, non-voting member to the NSHE Board of Regents, and eventually get a ballot question approved for a permanent, voting student member. The fourth bill she discussed would appropriate funds for a new building for the College of Agriculture, Biotechnology and Natural Resources. The fifth bill she discussed was a catch-all bill that is yet to be defined but would help to prevent legislation that is harmful to students from being passed.

- **Comment from Senator Jojan:** Stated he was glad to hear that legislators were writing bills on behalf of students and reminded the committee that not all of these bills will be written exactly how they are envisioned. He then questioned if the borrowers' loans bill will only applied to lenders from Nevada and how this will apply to federal student loans.
 - **Response from Director Vaskov:** Stated that this would only apply to lender in Nevada, as the state government cannot deal with interstate commerce. She also clarified that this bill would not conflict with federal loans.
- **Question from Senator Jojan:** Asked how many loan servicers are from Nevada.
 - **Response from Director Vaskov:** Stated she talked with the banker's association and said there are two in the state and the abatement aspect of the bill would be more limited than other aspects of the bill.
- **Question from Senator Jojan:** Asked about the measures on controlled interest rates for student loans.
 - **Response from Director Vaskov:** Clarified that this is not yet a solidified part of the bill as she is waiting to hear more information.
- **Question from Senator Jojan:** Asked how much of this bill would only apply to servicing companies based in Nevada vs out of state loan servicers. How many people benefit?
 - **Response from Director Vaskov:** Stated that she does not have that information yet but could get it from legislators. She stated the pool is smaller, as many people take out federal student loans.
- **Comment from Senator Noble:** Stated that he was concerned with the enforcement measures for the policy aspects of the sexual assault protections bill.
 - **Response from Director Vaskov:** Stated that it is unclear for right now as she is still working with legislators on the wording of the enforcement provisions.
- **Comment from Senator Noble:** He stated that he is confused as to how there could be no listed impact on local government for S.B 347, The sexual misconduct bill. He clarified that his question as to why there is no listed local government impact comes from the fact that the city would have to change its policy to comply with the bill if it were to pass.
 - **Response from Director Vaskov:** She clarified that the impact section of these bills generally references financial impact, and with this bill there is no significant

financial impact. She stated she will imply that there is a local government impact since local police are involved.

- **Question from Senator Noble:** Asked what Director Vaskov's vision for the sexual assault task force will be.
 - **Response from Director Vaskov:** Stated that she is still discussing her vision for the task force with Representative Selena Torres. She told the committee to come to her with ideas she can share them with state representatives.
- **Question from Senator Ngo:** Asked if there is opposition expected for the NSA Chair as a non-voting member of the board of regents.
 - **Response from Director Vaskov:** Stated that she does not expect much opposition from the representatives but does expect pushback from businesses as they have been pushing for the board's size to be cut from 13 members to 7 as well as a push for the body to be appointed. She clarified that if the body were to be appointed instead of elected, it would be easier to have a voting student member.
- **Comment from Senator Claussen:** Stated that all input from the body on the above-mentioned bills should be sent to Director Vaskov before Friday so she can have the committee's input heard by the state representatives.

c. Board of Regents Collaboration and Discussion

- **Comment from Director Vaskov:** Stated that there is a resolution going through The Board of Regents to give the NSA president access to their agenda and be able to submit items to the board to further solidify student voice in higher education. She stated that she wanted to use an email campaign to get their point across to the board. She also stated that she wanted to host an event that would get students involved, such as giving out energy drinks as way of bringing awareness to this piece.
- **Question from Senator Ngo:** Asked whether the committee will be meeting to write the emails for the campaign together as a body.
 - **Response from Director Vaskov:** She stated that the body will be writing the emails together, and that students can be involved if they are interested.
- **Comment from Senator Claussen:** Stated for the next meeting, they will be discussing the language of the email campaign.

7. NEW BUSINESS

a. Veterans Luncheon Budget Approval.

- **Question from Senator Noble:** Wanted to verify that there was a quote on every item being used at the event.
 - **Response from Senator Claussen:** Clarified that everything being used at the event has been quoted.
- **Comment from Senator Ngo:** Stated that the banner is being printed by ink blot and thus the funds listed for it on the overall quote can be repurposed for miscellaneous uses for the event.
- **Motion from Senator Ngo:** Motion to approve the budget for the Veterans Luncheon.
Seconded by: Senator Noble
- **Vote:** Unanimous in favor.
- **Resolved:** Motion carried.

b. Veterans Luncheon Rules and Expectations

- **Comment from Senator Claussen:** Discussed the schedule for the luncheon, where the senators should meet, when they should pick up food, and when the different assigned speakers will be presenting. She also clarified that the banner that is going to be retired will be printed in time.
- **Question from Senator Ngo:** Asked if 11:30 was still the correct time for picking up Panda Express for the event.
 - **Response from Senator Claussen:** Responded most likely yes.
- **Comment from Senator Ngo:** States that the banner should be kept in the Center for Civic Engagement before the Luncheon so officers can sign it. She also stated that there should be Sharpies at the event for people to sign the poster there as well.
- **Comment from Senator Claussen:** Stated that the banner will be mentioned at Senate to encourage members to sign it, but if it does not get finished in time, she will encourage officers to come to the event and sign it. She also stated that a sign-up sheet has been sent out to the committee and encouraged them all to come to support student veterans.
- **Question from Senator Ngo:** Asked what the dress code for the event will be and if there should be an emphasis on red, white and blue.
 - **Response from Senator Claussen:** She said the dress code is business casual, there will be no required color palette for accessibility reasons.

8. MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS

There was no miscellaneous business at this time.

9. COMMENT AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a. **Senator Noble:** Encouraged people to go vote.
- b. **Senator Claussen:** Clarified that there will be no DCE meeting next week as it is election work.

10. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment at this time.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Senator Claussen adjourned the meeting at 8:10 via Room 324, 3rd Floor at the Joe Crowley Student Union.