

Minutes
Annual Board of Director's Meeting
October 5th, 2020
Via WebEx Call

Attendees:	Steve Deutsch	Brian Obach
	Melinda Cirillo	Kevin Saunders
	Michele Halstead	Fred Destefano
	Stephanie Blaisdell	Matthew Kreuz
	Corinna Caracci	Jessica Jewell
	L. David Eaton	Haley Hershenson
	Niza Cardona	Kevin Dicey

Others Present: Lisa Mitten, Tevin Green

Recording Secretary: Jacqueline Pascar

Call to order: 1:33 pm

Introductions

Steve welcomed members to the first meeting of the year, noting that meetings would continue to be held virtually until further notice. **Steve** reminded the board that the purpose of the annual meeting was to establish the corporation and elect officers/committees. All members introduced themselves and their role on campus.

Officers

According to the corporation's bylaws, the majority of the officers are made up by Ex Officio. **Steve** listed **Michele Halstead** (VP of Finance/Administration) as the Chair, **Stephanie Blaisdell** (VP of Student Affairs) as the Vice Chair, and himself (Executive Director) as the Secretary/Treasurer. **Steve** announced the Parliamentarian as the one elected position available, explaining that the officer used Robert's Rules of Order to guide the meeting when needed. **Matthew** volunteered. **Steve** asked if anyone was interested. There were no additional volunteers. **Steve** congratulated **Matt** as Parliamentarian.

Committees

Budget Committee:

Steve asked for 3 board members to work with **Melinda** and him to craft the budget for next year. The budgeting process would begin in February or March and presented to the board in April. **Steve** asked for at least one student to join the committee. **Niza, Michele, and Matt** volunteered.

Jim Fredericks Scholarship:

Scholarships of \$1,000 are awarded to CAS student workers each spring for the following academic year. **Steve** explained that the committee meets once to review applications and determine recipients. **Steve** asked for 3 board members to work with **Melinda, Jaca** and him to run the Jim Fredericks Scholarship. **Niza, Stephanie, and Michele** volunteered.

Meal Plan Committee:

The committee had typically met to review issues that were unable to be resolved operationally between **Kevin, Melinda, and Steve**. Though this would still be a part of the committee, **Steve**

announced that the scope would expand to create a new meal plan for the 2021 spring semester. After noting that a meal plan had never been changed mid-academic year, **Steve** expressed that with data now collected from the current semester, the committee would be able to adjust the meal plan to work better for students in the current environment. **Steve** asked for a few people to work with **Melinda, Tim Dilger, Kevin** and **himself** to re-craft meal plans for the spring semester. **Niza, Matt, Jessica** and **Haley** volunteered.

Programming Funds:

Each year the corporation had awarded over \$300,000 worth of programming funds to the campus. Due to economic reasons, **Steve** explained that there was a current freeze on the funding, hoping that funding would resume next year. **Steve** asked for a few members to help review the process. **Stephanie** and **Melinda** volunteered.

Service Evaluation:

The committee meets to review the quality of dining services and give direct feedback to Sodexo about their provided services. **Steve** noted that he was unsure if the committee should meet monthly or on an ad hoc basis. **Matt** and **Jessica** volunteered.

Review of Handbook & Conflict of Interest Policy

Steve explained that the handbook gave an overview of the corporation's staffing, offices and services as well as board member responsibilities. **Steve** emphasized the duty of loyalty to the corporation by explaining the difference between being an elected member of a governmental body and being a board member of a corporation. **Steve** stated, "if you were an elected representative to a political body, you are representing your constituency and you're advocating for your constituency within that space. With a board, your duty is first to the corporation... Each of you is representing the areas that you are coming from, but we ask you to think of the health and services of the corporation first." **Steve** reminded all members that this information was provided in the handbook and asked if there were any questions. No questions were asked.

Steve announced that if no one had any objections, the annual meeting would be adjourned. **Jaca** stated that an Executive Committee was skipped over.

Executive Committee:

The committee meets when the full board is unable to meet over winter or summer breaks. **Steve** explained that the committee convened in September while student positions had not yet been elected. **Steve** asked for 2 directors to work with **Michele** and him. **Stephanie** and **Matt** volunteered. **Stephanie** pointed out that **Kevin** also raised his hand if another member was needed on the committee. **Steve** was uncertain whether or not an alternate would be able to serve on the committee, offering to review the bylaws. **Kevin** withdrew his request. **Steve** thanked **Kevin**.

Steve announced that **Jaca** would send a copy of the Conflict of Interest Policy after the meeting and asked that it would be signed and returned in a week. **Steve** reminded the board that the policy disclosed any connection to the corporation's vendors.

Meeting adjourned: 1:51pm

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Unanimous approval of agenda and May 8, 2020 minutes.

ED Report

Steve announced that a photo slideshow had been prepared and asked **Jaca** to present the current state of operations. **Jaca** gave an overview of safety precautions that had been implemented across the service locations. The Central Service Office began using their service window to limit visitors from entering the office. Plexiglass was installed at the front desks in both the Central Service Office and Office of Auxiliary Support (OAS). OAS had taken an extra precaution of asking people to call before visiting the office, since a majority of their services could be completed remotely.

The campus bookstore reopened for in-person shopping. Social distancing floor clings were installed throughout the walkways and plexiglass was installed at all registers. Dining services began using GrubHub for all retail orders in spring 2019 and continued to do so this semester. Retail items could be preordered through the GrubHub app and then picked up in person. A kiosk was added in the SUB as another way to preorder from dining retail locations. Throughout the SUB and other dining locations, stanchions and directional signage were setup to guide a one-way traffic flow. Nesters and Starbucks also blocked off areas for only staff members to further enforce one-way traffic. Plexiglass was installed at all pickup location counters and hand sanitizer was also available.

Peregrine Dining Hall reduced contact upon entry by having guests swipe in themselves. After paying, diners were directed to walk through the service line in one direction and exit through the doors of the ramp. Lastly, a new sign and machine cover were installed at the Snack Shack over the summer. This vending machine also had hand sanitizer available and continued to operate 24/7. **Steve** thanked **Jaca** for the great overview.

Moving onto the rest of his report, **Steve** summarized that the corporation was doing well in terms of the levels of service and safety given the current environment. However, the corporation was hurting financially from the lack of students on campus. **Steve** noted that all CAS services derive from students living in the residence halls and explained that "It's probably even more expensive to stay open and operating than it would be to be completely shut down, but that's what we're here to do." **Steve** stated

that there was enough money in the reserves to cover all costs of operations for the academic year, hoping that it would not continue into 2021-2022.

Steve continued to highlight some key points included in the report: The bookstore lost about 42% of revenue which would cost the corporation about \$100,000 in commissions this year. The loss in sales resulted from students not staying on campus. **Steve** explained that typical ad hoc sales had been lost since visitation weekends and events had been cancelled or held virtually. Students not living on campus have also been looking elsewhere to purchase course materials.

Steve said that campus dining had a “really painful spring semester”. The corporation refunded \$2.6 million in meal plans. After negotiations, Sodexo reduced the corporation’s liability from \$1.7 million to \$450,000. **Steve** noted that the reduction just covered Sodexo’s costs of operating the business and acknowledged the great business partnership.

In the Executive Committee minutes, a vote was passed to extend the contract with Sodexo for another 2 years. **Steve** stated that the contract originally ended in 2025 with 5 1-year extensions to 2030. Sodexo asked to extend for another 2 years with 3 1-year contracts extending to 2030, “in exchange for a break in the daily rate they charge us for food service”. **Steve** explained that this “allows them to amortize the cost of their costs over a longer period of time and allows them to offer us a lower rate.” This would save the corporation \$400,000 for the year. **Steve** noted that the contract included a clause for a 60-day out if there was dissatisfaction with their services.

As for concerns in Dining Services, **Steve** emphasized the low participation in meal plans. Peregrine Dining Hall typically serves 60-70% of the available meals. Currently only 25-30% of the available meals were being served. **Steve** noted that the number of campus residents was reconfirmed, however the participation remains “really low”. **Steve** questioned, “Are students getting enough food? Are they able to eat? Are they getting their value for what they’re paying for?” **Steve** further noted that “towards the end of the semester there may be dissatisfaction from students paying for something that they’re simply not availing themselves of.” **Steve** concluded that the concerns had resulted in a plan to redesign meal plans for the spring semester.

Card and Conference Services lost the ability to hold both indoor and outdoor conferences on campus, which resulted in a revenue loss of \$400,000. **Steve** hoped that conferences would be able to return by next summer since the Appalachian Trail Conservancy was still interested to host on campus. **Steve** highlighted the Snack Shack’s redesign with a new sign and machine wrap designed by **Jaca**. Sales had shown that the service remained popular and the machine had been working well without breaking down.

Steve announced that after 40 years of employment, Lisa Montgomery retired in September. The decision to not refill her position, and with another employee going out for 6 months of disability, would reduce labor costs by about \$70,000 this year.

Laundry services had become another major concern. As a typical “pass through service”, **Steve** explained that the corporation billed the college for each student in the residence halls. The money received historically covers all of the expenses incurred by CAS to provide the service. This includes rent, utilities and an allocation to agency accounts for each resident hall which facilities programming for the students. With expenses remaining the same as last year, but half of the revenue coming in, about \$90,000 would be lost in laundry services. On a positive note, **Steve** stated that the investment portfolio

ended 2019-2020 with a net profit. Though a lot of the money would be lost this year, **Steve** hoped to get some more help from the investment accounts. The corporation was expected to lose at least \$1 million for the year. **Steve** noted that there were enough reserves to cover the year and asked if there were any questions or comments.

Brian stated that there must be a lot of savings with participation in meal plans decreasing from 70% to 25% and asked where that money goes. **Steve** responded, "It's less than you would think...", noting that though there were some food cost savings, labor costs remained the same. **Steve** asked **Kevin** to elaborate. **Kevin** explained that labor costs were "extremely high" since the labor costs and staffing levels were designed to meet the needs of 1600 students. In regard to layoffs, **Kevin** stated that "We're making very hard decisions on a bi-weekly basis." **Steve** shared that it was considered to move resident dining from Peregrine to the MPR however 2 reasons halted the idea: extensive layoffs and the system developed in Peregrine had been working well.

Niza asked if a change in meal plan would lower the price or stay the same. **Steve** responded that "We would be unique in the SUNY System if we reduced our meal plan cost. I think what I would rather do is try to find students more value." **Steve** further discussed the uncertainty of whether the decrease in meal plan usage was due to the pandemic or the dining services being offered.

Michele clarified that "it's not just that students aren't using it. There are some students that haven't touched their meal plan since the beginning." The last report showed that 300 students had never used meal swipes or dining dollars. **Michele** concluded that students were not eating on campus at all, asking the student board members if they had any insights. **Stephanie** asked if there was "any sense that students might be avoiding using their meal plan because they're not intending to pay that bill?" **Michele** agreed. **Niza** stated that with about 300 students' accounts not processed, whether it be from lack of payment or not accepting financial aid, she was unsure if those were the same students not eating on campus. **Steve** asked if the college was taking any action on the students who still hadn't accepted their charges. **Niza** explained that bills were sent out late with a due date of September 20th, which pushed late billings to begin after 30 days of the due date. Students who haven't processed had been receiving emails weekly.

Corinna said that Residence Life called 300 students last week asking them to accept their charges or pay before penalties were given. **Corinna** asked **Niza** if she had gotten anymore. **Niza** said that the outreach had been working because the number decreased to 173. Remaining students were notified that holds would be placed on accounts on Thursday which would prevent the ability to register, receive transcripts, etc. **Steve** commented that "We may find out the fact that it's just students who are not intending to pay their bills," and reiterated the scope of the meal plan committee for this year. The committee would review meal plan results by the end of the semester and help determine a better plan. **Steve** mentioned one idea had been to switch to all declining balance and eliminate meal swipes. **Steve** noted his disapproval of only offering declining balance in the past, because "it's the worst possible value. If you spend all of your money in retail your money is going to go really quickly." **Steve** concluded that he was unsure what the solution would be for the spring semester and asked if there were any more questions about the ED report.

Brian asked for clarification about students now being required to rent a refrigerator. **Michele** stated that beginning this year MicroFridges were added to each dorm room. The college rented the fridges, so students weren't required to do so, and the charges were passed through room rent bills. **Brian** asked why the decision was made. **Michele** explained that there were a variety of reasons including building

maintenance, accident prevention and convenience. **Stephanie** shared her support for the addition, noting that there was also student input through the budget committee last year. **Stephanie** explained that “Particularly this year, it was really helpful in that students couldn't have any help moving into their room. So, having the MicroFridge already there helped them not have to manage that process on their own.” **Stephanie** also pointed out that having the vendor deliver MicroFridges as they had in the past would have proposed health issues this year. After speaking with the company’s representative, **Steve** emphasized that “this is absolutely the trend in higher education” since the MicroFridge company was completely out of product.

Brian expressed his concerns for students being forced to pay for the service and the ecological issue of refrigerators altogether. **Michele** referenced the popular trend of students purchasing a refrigerator for a year or two before moving it to storage once they decided to move off-campus. With the current MicroFridges having a useful life of 5-7 years, **Michele** said “My hope is that we maintain these well enough so that we're not putting more and more back into the ecosystem as students move in and out our residence halls.” **Lisa** asked whose responsibility it was to dispose of the refrigerators. **Steve** answered that it was the refrigerator company’s responsibility. **Steve** asked if there were any more questions regarding the executive director’s report. The answer was no.

Coke Contract

Steve asked **Jaca** to share the Coke proposal approved in the May 2020 board meeting. **Steve** reminded the board that the approved contract included bottles with can substitutions. The proposal showed a potential 25% decrease in net revenues, but the board favored single-use aluminum cans over plastic bottles.

Steve explained that negotiations with Coke to finalize the contract around the approved parameters took a turn for the worse when Coke presented “a very unfair contract with all of the risk on our part and all of the reward on theirs.” **Steve** noted that a law firm was hired to help discuss different positions to take as a corporation. An offer was invited from Pepsi. **Steve** explained that “If things got litigious with Coke, we would have Pepsi come in and perhaps the amount of money that they would give us would be enough to sustain a legal battle in whatever penalties we would have to get out of the Coke contract.” **Steve** concluded that although Pepsi’s proposal was more lucrative than Coke’s, “it was not nearly enough to cover the penalties that it would've cost us to get out of the Coke situation.”

After negotiating again with Coke, a more acceptable deal was produced. **Steve** noted that “We've got a lot of the contract provisions that we were looking for.” Overall contributions to the college decreased by \$18,000, but guaranteed commissions were added. The contract also required a lower threshold for fulfilling case commitment. **Steve** reminded the board that the main reason the corporation signed with Coke was because “we had not fulfilled the prior contracts volume commitment which equated to a \$1 million worth of product..., The only way to negate that was to re-sign with them.”

Steve emphasized that **Melinda’s** and his goal with this contract negotiation was to not face restrictions after the 5-year contract, and to be able to bid out to the best vendor. **Steve** offered to send out the proposal slides to anyone interested.

Brian asked if **Steve** could further elaborate on how the corporation ended the previous contract owing Coke money, and what was changed in the current contract to prevent it from happening again. **Steve** responded that 5 years ago Pepsi proposed a higher financial bid than Coke, but the board strongly wanted to sign with Coke. After requiring Coke to match Pepsi’s better financial proposal, Coke “pulled

the numbers that they were able to pull out from our existing contract with Pepsi to give a purchase minimum.” **Melinda** noted that the purchase minimum was about 68,000 cases. **Steve** explained that the case numbers were derived from Sodexo when Oscar’s was still operating on campus. Located in the dining hall, Oscar’s was a convenience store that sold a lot of bottled beverages, including water at the time. Pepsi was not obligated to share bottle counts in their contract. **Steve** further explained that Coke changed companies from Coke National to a regional owner (Liberty Coke) mid-stream in the previous contract. The process caused sold bottle amounts to lack accuracy. After discussing with the lawyers if the missing data could help the corporation get out of the contract, it was determined that the corporation was still liable for the 68,000 cases of product. Having sold around 42,000 cases over the 5 years, 25,000 cases were still required to be purchased from Coke.

Brian commented, “the whole canned water thing is essentially, in my view anyway, like a concession to them, right? They weren't able to sell water at all before and now they're able to sell water.” **Brian** asked how canned water played out in negotiations. **Steve** clarified that canned water wasn’t a part of negotiations, but the corporation was eager to provide the product, even on a “temporary basis”, to help with campus satisfaction of dining services as well as the volume commitment. **Steve** noted that “the other advantage to us is we get commissions on everything that we sell. For every can of water that we sell, we will realize the benefit from it.” **Brian** asked if canned water could be removed at any point during the contract. **Steve** confirmed, explaining that the corporation controls which products are sold on campus. **Brian** stated his support for single-use cans over bottles but hoped for a continuous movement toward reusable items once we get through the “COVID madness”.

Steve agreed and asked for an approval to move forward with the most recent Coke proposal. **David moved to accept the current proposal. Michele seconded. Steve** asked if there was any discussion about the current proposal. **Stephanie** asked if the contract included canned water. **Steve** reiterated that the product was not included in the contract, but instead Coke would be given permission to sell canned water. **The motion passed with an 8 to 1 vote.**

WasteWatch REUSE

Steve explained that over the summer, it was clear the fall dining program would not allow indoor dining and all food would be taken to-go. There were two options: either purchase a lot of paper and plastic products or expand the reusable clamshell container program that had already been implemented in Peregrine. The choice was made to invest in a completely reusable dining-ware program. After **Kevin** researched different vendors, **Steve** noted that \$45,000 from Sodexo’s Better Tomorrow Fund was spent on 3,000 meal kits which included: a clamshell container, utensils, a mug and a bowl. **Steve** mentioned that Marist College had already spent \$1 million in paper goods this academic year, and commented that, “we have not only I think taken the ecological right approach, but I think we've taken the financial correct approach.”

Residence Halls were also considered within the scope of the WasteWatch REUSE program as students were expected to bring food back into their dorms and hall lounges. With the concern of residence hall cleanliness in mind, cleaning stations were created in hall kitchens. **Steve** stated that about \$2,000 was spent on waste receptacles, and **Jaca** designed the station signage. **Steve** asked **Corinna** how she felt the program was running. **Corinna** said that the program had been going well, but a majority of students had still been eating outside with the nice weather. **Corinna** explained “I think we're going to be optimistic that they're going to continue to clean up their clamshells.”

Steve welcomed **Tevin** to share his perspective with the board as a student and sustainability ambassador involved in the WasteWatch REUSE program. **Tevin** explained that the idea began with the sustainability team discussing what could be changed on campus. Ideas included composting in Residence Life, the beverage contract, aluminum containers, etc. **Tevin** said that the team came to a conclusion on plastic containers but did not initially plan to implement the change at Peregrine Dining Hall. **Tevin** explained that “What we saw was every time that we ate at one of the private vendors, such as Tokyo Sushi or Pomodoro's, we always had plastic containers and had to toss them out.”

The sustainability ambassadors spoke with the director of Ozzi to better learn about the reusable washing program. From there, the ambassadors met with **Steve** and **Kevin** on a regular basis. **Tevin** also discussed the implementation, specifically the financial impacts, of Ozzi in his Managing Sustainability class. His classmates were able to give new perspectives on the initiative. Although the program was originally intended for retail dining, **Tevin** shared that “because of COVID, it worked perfectly with the dining services like Pere's.”

Tevin noted that the only thing lacking were the machines which would have cost too much money. **Steve** clarified that the vendor, Ozzi, also provides machines that collect the used dining-ware and issues a token that is redeemable for a clean meal kit. **Steve** explained that “It's not quite the process that we use, but it is something that we could look into especially if we plan to expand this into retail.” **Tevin** suggested that the token could also be added to the student ID.

Tevin continued to explain some issues regarding the new program. At the beginning of the semester when many students ate outside, reusable utensils were left everywhere. **Tevin** stated that “I think it stopped when people realized they were getting charged and that they needed the utensils.” Other issues included the smell of the containers, broken utensils and holes in the reusable mug. **Tevin** noted that items are sanitized twice, explaining that “I think we have some ways to go, but it falls more on student participation if anything.” **Tevin** pointed out that students should not return broken utensils and items should be rinsed out or returned in a timely manner to maintain the quality of the items. **Tevin** concluded that the addition of the machines would give students more options to return used meal kits, which should increase participation and reduce the amount of complaints. **Steve** thanked **Tevin** and asked **Kevin** to share his thoughts on the program.

After **Lisa Mitten** presented him with the project in the spring, **Kevin** worked with the student ambassadors on their final project which focused on implementing reusable meal kits in Element 93. Once the pandemic began and dining services was required to create an alternative dining system, **Kevin** thought it was “the ideal chance for us to try to change the culture here at SUNY New Paltz and put in the choose to reuse program.” **Kevin** described the sanitation process being done to ensure meal kits were clean and not broken. Containers are hand scrubbed if the dishwasher missed any food and each utensil is checked before being redistributed. Though there were some concerns about the mug and flatware, **Kevin** noted that there are mixed complaints about the mug leaking or the lid being too tight. **Kevin** explained “That's probably the biggest slowdown in our system that we have setup here. We ask the students to clean out their containers into the compostable trash receptacle, and we ask them to pop the lid off of the mug so that it can get washed properly, and some of those lids are on so tight that it's hard to pop them off.”

Kevin announced that the sustainability ambassadors and he are planning to create a video for social media which documents the process of a reusable container being returned, cleaned and redistributed.

Kevin concluded that he had been addressing dining concerns with parents on Facebook Live and is willing to do it again. **Steve** thanked **Kevin** for his input.

Currently meeting on a bi-weekly basis with **Lisa** and **Kevin**, **Steve** said he plans to discuss program adjustments for the spring semester. The program's extension into retail is unlikely to happen by the spring, but the goal is to expand the program by next year. **Steve** explained, "This is great on so many levels: It's great in terms of an educational moment in showing people how to contribute to a community-based reusable effort, it's great financially because we're not paying for paper and plastic that go into landfills. I really believe that this program is working and it's the right thing for us to be doing."

Though the meal plan committee would be addressing this program, **Steve** invited other board members that were interested to give input on the program to contact **Jaca** to be included in the meetings.

Investment Policy

Steve asked **Melinda** to discuss why the investment policy was updated. **Melinda** explained that the auditor found references to a finance committee in the old policy under the sections: "Responsibility and Authority" and "Procedures". **Melinda** stated that the finance committee did not exist. The committee that governed the policy was the investment committee. **Melinda** confirmed that those were the two changes and the rest of the policy remained the same. **Steve** asked if a board member would like to introduce a motion to pass the new investment policy. **Michele motioned. Brian seconded. Steve** asked if there was any discussion. The answer was no. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Steve thanked **Melinda** for presenting the policy and welcomed any other comments or questions before adjourning the meeting.

Stephanie asked **Steve** what food service was provided to students in quarantine. **Steve** explained that **Kevin** provided direct food services once a day. **Kevin** confirmed that food was delivered at 4pm for a hot dinner along with a cold breakfast and lunch for the following day. **Steve** stated that each student was charged a meal swipe and \$15 dining dollars, which resulted in about \$25 per day. **Steve** asked if there was anything else **Stephanie** wanted to discuss. **Stephanie** shared that her office and the Office of Res. Life had been delivering GrubHub orders to students in quarantine if orders were delivered to either office during business hours.

Michele asked how dietary restrictions were being managed for students in quarantine. **Kevin** responded that dining services had been working directly with Residence Life to meet medical or dietary restriction needs. **Kevin** clarified that personal preferences, however, were unable to be met at this time. **Corinna** mentioned that students were also given a case of water when they went into quarantine.

Steve asked to adjourn the meeting if there was no other discussion. **Steve** noted that **Rose Palmeri** would review last year's auditor financial statements in the November meeting, and thanked everyone for joining.

Meeting adjourned: 3:00pm