Senate Agrees to Partially Fund Professional TLGC Co-ordinator

Approved PIRG, Rejects ASCE Playground Request

by CHRIS BALL

Following an appeal by the Tufts Lesbian and Gay Community, the Tufts community Senate meeting on Monday night allocated $4,500 toward the creation of a part-time, professional coordinator for TLGC, urging the administration to assume full responsibility for hiring a coordinator.

The Senate also approved an allocations board recommendation of $28,476 for the Tufts chapter of Massachusetts Public Interest Research Group (Mass-PIRG), rejecting an effort by Senator Joel Sunshine to eliminate a $5,450 line item going into Mass-PIRG’s state fund.

In addition, the Senate rejected an appeal to grant the Tufts chapter of the American Society of Civil Engineers $750 toward the construction of a playground.

In the case of the TLGC, its allocation was $1,500 less than the $6,000 figure TLGC had requested in its appeal. However, TLGC Student Coordinator John Orcutt said following the meeting that he was pleased with the result, adding that he was optimistic about getting the additional $1,500 from the administration.

Last month, ALBO had rejected TLGC’s total request of $9,000 for a part-time, full-year coordinator, maintaining that it was the administration’s responsibility to fund the coordinator and that the Senate had inadequate funds to pay for one. ALBO members said last night.

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ALBO Members Reverse Positions

In what was regarded by several senators as an unusual move, many ALBO members at Monday’s meeting reversed their positions and voted for a substitute motion made by Representative Jeff Ganzi to allocate $4,500 toward the creation of the coordinator’s post.

“I’ve heard a lot of good intentions...I think the Senate should do something now,” Ganzi said.

Ganzi said that the $4,500 could be used as leverage in lobbying the administration to fund the coordinator.

Ganzi preceded his remarks by saying that he was uncomfortable about opposing an ALBO recommendation, but felt that it was necessary under the circumstances.

Senator Vice President Alex Schwartz, an ALBO member, proposed a motion stating the original ALBO position.

“This was a very difficult topic when it came up because we had in the past funded the ASB, the ASB, the ASB, the ASB,” Schwartz said in his initial remarks.

Ganzi said that the Senate administration were to make a partial commitment toward the coordinator, the Senate could supply the rest through buffer funding.

Schwartz then gave the floor to Orcutt, who requested that the Senate fund the coordinator for TLGC as it had done for other minority groups on campus.

“We’re asking for something that every other minority on campus has,” Orcutt said to the Senate and over 30 TLGC members and supporters gathered in the large conference room in the Campus Center.

Orcutt listed several of TLGC’s accomplishments in its 16-year history. He cited increased visibility on campus and a four-fold increase in attendance. He also noted that TLGC participated in the alumni reception at Homecoming this year.

Orcutt said that Dean of Students Bobbie Knable had agreed to work closely with a possible TLGC coordinator.

Responding to a question by Senator Robin Rosenzweig, Morva McDonald, a former TLGC student coordinator, said that Knable had said that the administration was unlikely to fund the coordinator.

It has been up to the Senate to support and fund student organization coordinators before they became part of the administration budget, Orcutt said.

“We need your help and we need it now,” he added, later saying, “We’ll be sitting here until hell freezes over if we wait for the administration to find our funds.”

Senator Treasurer Megan McCaffrey, who was chairing the session, said that if the administration failed to provide the funding there might be money available from the Senate surplus and buffer funding.

The floor was given to Biology Professor Saul Slapikoff, the chair of the Equal Educational Opportunity Committee and the Institutional Policy Committee, who spoke in support of the TLGC appeal.

“It’s going to take a considerable amount of pressure for anything to happen in the administration,” he said.

Senator Parliamentary Myra Frazier, an ALBO member, also lobbied for the appeal.

Frazier said that as a black student on campus she realized the need for an advocate. She said that TLGC, like the other minority groups, needed someone “on the inside to go out and fight for them.”

Senators Oppose Appeal

Eric J. Labs, former Senate historian, opposed the appeal, arguing that TLGC did not have a “unique cultural heritage” like an organization such as the African-American Center.

He added that because of the lack of a cultural heritage there was not a “legitimate pedagogical and educational basis” for the proposal.

Senate President Tracy Hahn, while pledging her support for TLGC, spoke against the appeal.

“I’m sure that sounds contradictory but I don’t see it as possible for the Senate to fund a coordinator at this particular time,” she said, adding that it was an administrative responsibility.

Senator Joel Sunshine spoke against the substitute motion, saying that the administration would probably not grant TLGC the additional $1,500, leaving the Senate alone to fund the position.

Sunshine is Council VIII Chair, the council to which TLGC belons.

After defeating an amendment to the motion calling for the full $9,000 to be allocated, the Senate passed the substitute motion 17-4-2.

The amendment was defeated on the grounds that it would be too costly and would undermine the Senate’s and TLGC’s lobbying efforts.

Orcutt was critical of Sunshine’s role as council chair, a position which had been voiced earlier on the Senate floor by the Mass-PIRG chapter chair.

“As council chair for Council VIII, I find it extremely strange that he should be so adamant and so steadfast against two of the groups that he is in charge of,” Orcutt said.