ASOSU Mediation Committee
January 30th, 2025 | 4:00pm
SEC 354
Zoom: https://oregonstate.zoom.us/j/93577674659?pwd=6scPXxEc9bAiQlYjLniQT5YoxLLZd4.1
Mediation Committee Chair
Zachary Kowash
SEC 288

I. **Roll Call/Quorum**
a. Senate (2) – Mercedez Allen, Ryan Becquer
b. Student Fee Committee (2) – Connor Chen, Madison Wusstig
c. Student Fee Committee Chair – Sophia Nowers
d. Student Advisory Board Chairs
    i. FRC Student Advisory Board Chair – Zoe Eberle
e. **Gallery Comment**
    i. **Dylan Perfect:** I wanted to speak a little today as a member of the previous mediation committees in support of advancing the wage packages. For the FRC this would be $13,783 or $0.20 per student per term. This was approved by the previous two units and would be the most equitable that workers in all units receive these funds. This is something that we have done before and is possible. I know there has been some conversation about operational decisions, but I would note that this body is not without means of accountability to make sure that the Decision packages are used for their intended purpose. Any money allocated to student payroll means more money in students' pockets.
    ii. **Dawson Yang:** I am not a student worker, but I wanted to voice my support for raising the wages. It is important to note that the cost of living is rising, and it will continue to, and to not increase wages along those lines is an effective decrease. I have been coming to the last couple of meetings and have been happy to see that a lot of effort has been made towards helping student workers. It is good to know that vast majority of students on this campus do support this.
    iii. **Angelo Arredondo:** I am speaking now in my capacity as an individual and not as the liaison, and I am here on behalf of two other members of the SFC SAB as well. The FRC has been nothing but respectful and kind to us, so my comments are not going towards them as people. The three of us, in our own individual capacities, are in support of the wage increase. We believe that especially as parents we should be helping each other as students. We did not have a chance to vote on this as a board, so this is not

an official board statement, however, the three of us represent a majority of the board. We think we should be helping students who are struggling and to help in any way that we can. Thank you.

II. **New Business**

a. Mediation on SB 84.21 – "FRC Incidental Fee Allocation Bill" ~ **4:00pm**

i. Vote: Ayes – 6, Nays – 10, Abstentions – 1

ii. **Connor Chen**: This is more of a question for Erika. In the vent that this goes through, can you guarantee that this money would go straight to student payroll?

1 **Erika Woosley**: I can't say exactly where that would go, but it could likely go toward wages. However, it wouldn't necessarily raise the minimum to $17.10. That's a broader conversation we'd need to have with our unit, and I can't fully speak to that right now.

iii. **Madison Wusstig**: You said that you cannot promise this, would the $0.20 increase be accurate at what you as a unit would want?

1 **Erika Woosley**: The 20 cents would bring us to the $17.10 as requested by the SFC. We could consider extending OLV operations and paying students for more hours, which could go toward wages, but I can't guarantee it would go directly to the $17.10 right now.

2 **Mercedez Allen**: If it is not going towards that, going towards?

3 **Erika Woosley**: Once again I cannot say for sure, but it could increase the number of hours that we provide to student employees. These are just ideas; we cannot yet speak to what we are going to do.

iv. **Connor Chen**: In the Senate meeting where the FRC budget was voted down, your colleague mentioned asking why you pay the rate you do. It'd be great if you could restate that in your own words?

1 **Erika Woosley**: Caregivers at OLV are part of Oregon's Early Care and Education (ECE) system, which uses an online registry to track experience and education. Wages are based on these factors. For student employees at Little Village, they start at 1 or 2, depending on their experience and education. While it's a minimum wage job in the state, we pay above that, as we believe minimum wage doesn't reflect the value of their work. The wage system is rooted in education and experience

v. **Ryan Becquer**: Funds for student wages depend on the amount available. Extra money may go elsewhere after raising wages to $17.10, and if there's not enough, wages won't reach that amount. Is that an accurate description of what the plan is?

1 **Erika Woosley**: We don't have a plan yet. We're waiting for your decision on the funds, then we'll create the plan. What I mentioned

earlier is just one example; it might not go toward the $17.10 minimum wage

vi. **Madison Wusstig**: What is your highest paid position for student workers?

1 **Erika Woosley**: $17.38

vii. **Connor Chen**: On the point brought up on the passing of the DP for other units. If we apply the same approach used for the other budgets to all future decision packages, does that seem like a violation of the guidelines we've been trained on, considering none of us are lawyers?

1 **Sophia Nowers**: No it does not.

viii. **Madison Wusstig**: We've heard from other units that many can't promise the money will go to student wages. They might raise student wages, or they could allocate it to another position entirely. FRC has said they're willing to use it for student wages, but I think the money would be useful wherever it goes. When we compare this to other units, none can guarantee that the funds will go toward wages, and some have even said the money will be used elsewhere. This is something important to keep in mind.

ix. **Sophia Nowers**: I'm concerned about how quickly this number was increased since it came from a January 4th meeting. It feels like we're rushing a decision we could've discussed earlier. I think it would be easier for units to meet us by tying wages to the Portland Metro rate, especially since many units are already there. Instead of mandating it now, we could make it a future conversation. I also have concerns about charging students for something that's not going toward the student government's stated purpose. It feels like poor management of student funds. Throwing more money at a problem without a clear purpose isn't a solution.

x. **Ryan Becquer**: It's okay if you don't have a specific plan, but if we give you the money, will it go toward raising wages to the stated amount first?

1 **Erika Woosley**: I can't give you a guarantee. One option is to use the 20 cents to increase the student childcare assistance fund by 20 cents per student per term. If we stick with raising wages, it might go as I described earlier, but I can't confirm where the money will go right now.

2 **Ryan Becquer**: Just to be clear, that is a no then?

3 **Erika Woosley**: Right, I can't tell you where it is going.

xi. **Madison Wusstig**: Do you need this money, or is it just a compromise to move forward in mediation?

1 **Erika Woosley**: We requested a 3.5% increase for student wages, bringing it to $16.95. This extra money wasn't something we asked for, but based on recent discussions, we'll find a way to use it. I can't say how right now.

xii. **Connor Chen**: You mentioned that there's a strong system for setting wages in early childhood education. Could you talk about how important it is to maintain solidarity with other ECE operations? I noticed that you cut ties with a for-profit ECE vendor, which seemed like a strong stance.

1 **Erika Woosley**: We're working to raise wages across all ECE positions since they're underfunded. We're focused on this, regardless of the $17.10, because it's a core value. We're also working with SEIU to raise wages for classified positions on campus and have created a new faculty position to pay for experience and education. We're committed to raising wages across ECE, both locally and statewide, while supporting our own staff.

xiii. **Mercedez Allen**: You said you don't necessarily need this money, but you're willing to take it since that's the direction we're going. In your opinion, do you think there's a better use for these funds?

1 **Erika Woosley**: It's tricky. We'll always take more money because there's always something we can do, like increasing childcare assistance or adding more hours for OLV, which students and employees often ask for. But we only asked for what we needed, and this is extra. We went through a process to determine our needs for next year, so I'm unsure where this extra money will go.

xiv. **Ryan Becquer**: You're raising it 3.5%, which is more than inflation, right? The $17.10 is based on inflation, but last year's raise was less than that.

1 **Sophia Nowers**: Maybe I can clarify. The 3.5% is from the budget office, which Lily and I added to the budget template. Does this reflect the overall increase in student pay, and is it also tied to your wage increase, since those two aren't the same?

2 **Erika Woosley**: Yeah, so our base wage for next year will be $16.95.

xv. ***Ryan Becquer*** *ceded 2-minutes to* ***Dylan Perfect***

1 **Dylan Perfect:** Regarding inflation, there are different inflation measures for various contexts. The CPIU tracks the general purchasing power across the U.S., while the budget uses the CPIW for the Pacific region, which is more localized. For Corvallis, the cost of living is higher, but the budget committee chose a middle ground, adjusting for the $15 wage increase in fiscal year 2023. This aligns with about 92% of the MIT living wage estimate, serving as a rough approximation.

xvi. **Sophia Nowers:** FSS doesn't apply a standard inflationary increase to every line in the budget. Different categories, like construction, have their own rates, construction increased by 7% a couple of years ago, but that

could change. Wages specifically saw a 3.5% increase. The budget committee voted on the $17.10 increase on January 4th, but I received three numbers in mid-October, though they hadn't made a decision yet.

xvii. ***Connor Chen*** *ceded 1.5 minutes to* ***Adison Rowe****.*

1 **Adison Rowe**: The liaisons of this unit says that the majority of the board already supports the change, it sounds like they support this need. I wanted to make sure that point was re-iterated. The budgets committee recommended numbers in October, and $17.10 was the lowest, and that was sent to the SFC Chair.

xviii. **Madison Wusstig:** Do you remember if the budget proposals were under or over compared to last year?

1 **Erika Woosley:** I don't know off the top of my head. Wages usually go over, but last year we were under with childcare assistance spending. So, it mostly evened out, but I don't have the exact details right now.

2 **Sophia Nowers**: They're required to keep 30% of the operating budget in reserve because it's an auxiliary self-support, meaning they fund themselves through this fee. They're about $72,000 under the recommended amount.

xix. ***Madison Wusstig*** *ceded 1.5 minutes to* ***Angelo Arredondo***

1 **Angelo Arredondo**: Although we didn't vote as a board, three members, including myself, Ariana, and Jess, support this. That represents three of the five board members, which is a majority. This isn't the official stance of the board since we didn't vote, but we support this in our individual capacities as guardians and parents. Just wanted to make that clear.

xx. **Connor Chen**: We're about halfway through now. Let's get a feel from everyone on where we're at and what points are sticking out, so we can start moving forward sooner rather than later.

xxi. **Madison Wusstig**: The budget was underspent last year, and FRC can't guarantee the money will go to student wages. It feels like an empty promise to students. We're charging more without a clear guarantee of where the money is going, which is unfair.

xxii. **Sophia Nowers**: We can charge students more in hopes it happens, but I won't pay this fee next year. It feels wrong to charge more for something that might not happen. We could allocate funds to student hours or positions, but if the work doesn't exist, it's hard to use it. FRC can create the work, but how are we sure students will actually work all those hours? It feels like we're adding more pressure without certainty.

xxiii. **Mercedez Allen**: I agree. This feels more like a hope. If we better communicate to students that the money could go toward other aspects of

student employment, like more hours or opportunities, it would be more equitable than just saying we're raising wages when it might not happen.

xxiv. **Connor Chen**: I like the idea of raising wages, I wish I was making more in my other job too. But without a guarantee that the money will go where it's needed, I'm not comfortable taking it. There's a lot beyond our control, and I can see it causing chaos down the line.

xxv. **Sophia Nowers**: Since you're the senator, do you feel comfortable bringing this back to the Senate? What are you comfortable presenting to them?

1 **Ryan Becquer**: It seems there's majority support in the Senate for this issue. The vote probably could have been closer after hearing FRC's arguments. I personally had doubts about how I voted, especially since they can't guarantee it'll go to the students. That said, the Senate generally supports it, with a 10-6 vote, and we just need one more person to flip. Many senators campaigned on this.

2 **Mercedez Allen**: From another perspective, I've spoken with several senators, and as long as there's an inflationary increase to wages, they're amenable. It seems FRC has done their part to ensure wages are increasing next year, so I'd feel comfortable bringing it back.

3 **Ryan Becquer**: I'd like to hear more from Dylan, as he explained how the value was a middle ground. Why wasn't the value closest to what students in Corvallis are experiencing chosen, even though it would be higher? For completeness, I'd like to understand the reasoning behind selecting the middle value between the 3.5% recommendation and what Corvallis students are facing.

xxvi. ***Ryan Becquer*** *ceded 1 minute to* ***Dylan Perfect***

1 **Dylan Perfect**: The earlier point I mentioned comes from clinical research by MIT economist Dr. Amy Glassmeyer, who developed a methodology specific to Corvallis. This determines the effective living wage for a place like Corvallis. It's important to note that many students, including some on the FRC board, work multiple jobs to reach 40 hours a week. The higher number comes from the CPIW for the Pacific region, while the lower figure is from the 3% increase. It seems contradictory to say we can't set a number while debating different ones.

xxvii. **Ryan Becquer**: To be clear, no one has said we can't set any number. We're either approving the budget with a 3.5% increase or the $17.10, which is whatever percentage that amounts to. It doesn't seem like that's been an argument made.

xxviii. **Sophia Nowers**: State law allows student government to make requests, but the university, as the employer, decides on wages. We can propose the

$17.10, but can't mandate it; we can only ensure the money goes toward funded services like FRC or SEE.

xxix. **Connor Chen**: I know you're not the full Senate, but you mentioned some senators would be open to passing this if we could just see the 3.5% base increase. Can you ask Erika if there's extra work on her side to confirm this? Could she come back to the next Senate meeting to clarify?

1 **Erika Woosley**: Yes, I intend to be there because you all will be voting on our budget again. I can confirm that our request for FY26 includes a $16.95 base wage. OLV leadership positions will increase by $1, and the media position will go up by 3.5%. I'm happy to reiterate this if needed.

xxx. **Madison Wusstig**: The budget proposal passed in SFC, but it's hard for me to support raising student wages when there's no record of where the money is going. I ran on transparency and against raising student fees without clear promises. A lot of us are passionate about transparency in SFC, and it's tough to raise fees when we can't guarantee the money will go where it's needed. It's a hope, but not all units are making the same promises, which doesn't seem equitable.

xxxi. ***Madison Wusstig*** *ceded 1.5 minutes to* ***Angelo Arredondo***

1 **Angelo Arredondo**: As Erika mentioned, FRC can't guarantee the money will go to wages, but it will likely support student-related issues, like raising student hours. Three parents on the board support this, even though we didn't vote officially, and we represent the majority. Please consider this when you vote.

xxxii. **Erika Woosley**: I appreciate Angelo bringing in the student parent perspectives. We didn't vote because additional information was missing during the Senate meeting. Angelo is speaking on behalf of others, but they haven't discussed with us what it would take to raise wages. This is similar to what the Senate did, voting before asking questions. I just wanted to clarify that, and I have to jump off now. Thank you all.

xxxiii. ***Sophia Nowers*** *motioned to enter into a vote to send SB-84.21"Family Resource Center Incidental Fee Allocation Bill" back to the Senate in its original form; seconded by* ***Madison Wusstig***.

1 (Senate) Mercedez Allen – **Aye**
2 (Senate) Ryan Becquer – **Nay**
3 (SFC) Madison Wusstig - **Aye**
4 (SFC) Connor Chen – **Aye**
5 (SFC Chair) Sophia Nowers – **Aye**

a *The motion* ***passed*** *with* ***4 ayes*** *and* ***1 nay***.
b *SB-84.21 "Family resource Center Incidental Fee Allocation Bill" will be sent to the Senate with no additional changes made in mediation*.

b. **Closing Comment**
    i. *There were no closing comments to be made.*
c. **Gallery Comment**
    i. **Dylan Perfect**: I just want to express that the purpose of mediation is to reach a compromise. However, I'd like to note the undemocratic nature of this process. The committee was somewhat arbitrarily chosen, and most members weren't elected by the student body. Sending it back to the Senate with no changes feels like a missed opportunity, but that's just my opinion.
    ii. **Adison Rowe**: I think it's unfortunate that we're allocating money to Rec Sports and Performing Arts but not raising some student wages. By doing this, we're saying some students deserve more for their work than others.

Adjournment ~ 4:51pm