



## General Assembly Minutes

### First Fall Session

Tuesday, September 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2020

Time: 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM

Location: Zoom Meeting – Code: 999 1947 4624 (<https://uhd.zoom.us/j/99919474624>)

#### I. Call to Order

##### a. Roll Call

**PRESENT:** Chief of Staff Tatum, Executive Assistant Ortega-Calvillo, Director of External Affairs Sandoval-Serrano, Director of Student Engagement Herrera, Director of Community Outreach Aparicio, Chief Justice Rasheed, Pro-Tem Speaker of the House Torres, Senator Karra, Senator Ware, Attorney General Mosey, Senator at large Kanyabire.

##### b. Quorum Check from Chief Justice Rasheed

##### c. Approval of Previous General Assembly Minutes presented by Pro-Tem Speaker of the House Torres

- i. **Motion:** To approve Previous General Assembly Minutes. Motion seconded and approved.

##### d. Approval of General Assembly's Agenda presented by Pro-Tem Speaker of the House Torres

- i. **Motion:** To approve General Assembly's Agenda. Motion seconded and approved.

##### e. Explanation of General Assembly Structure

- i. Add your questions to ZOOM chat, Executive Secretary Ortega will address during Open Forum. Students will only be able to speak during open forum, during which we suspend Robert's Rules of Order.

#### II. Special New Business

##### a. SGA Budget Approval

- i. Senators will vote to approve the budget.

##### ii. Discussion:

1. Health and wellness budget of \$1,500.00 is too much and should be allocated to contingency funds if not needed. (Senator Ware)
2. Drive-ins are excessive. (Senator Ware)
3. Contingency funds are for all students, not only for Senate to use. (Chief of Staff Tatum)

- iii. **Motion:** To approve by Consensus. Motion not seconded; motion failed. (Senator Kanyabire)
- iv. **Point of Information:** We can vote by rollcall or by ballot. Also, we need to Reset quorum: Senator Merchant now present for a total of four senators. (Chief Justice Rasheed)
- v. **Motion:** To approve by Roll call. Motion seconded and approved.
  - 1. **Roll call votes:** Senator Karra: NO, Senator Ware: NO, Senator at Large Merchant: NO, Senator at large Kanyabire: YES. (3 NO, 1 YES)
- vi. **Motion Failed:** Budget is not approved. Next, budget is sent to committee next, for which a Treasurer is not currently available for. (Chief Justice Rasheed)
- b. Legislative Board – Nomination and Selection of Speaker of the House (Chief Justice Rasheed)
  - i. Senators will nominate and second nominations for Speaker of the House, followed by either confirmation or voting process.
    - 1. **Nomination:** Mario Torres nominated himself. Senator Kanyabire seconded.
    - 2. **Nomination:** Meghana Karra nominated by Senator Merchant. Senator Ware seconded.
    - 3. Nominees address Senate to ask for support in selection of Speaker of the House.
    - 4. **Motion:** To vote through vote call. Motion seconded and approved.
    - 5. **Roll call votes:**
      - a. Senator Karra: Vote for Senator Karra
      - b. Senator Ware: Vote for Senator Karra
      - c. Senator Torres: Vote for Senator Torres
      - d. Senator Merchant: Vote for Senator Karra
      - e. Senator Kanyabire. Vote for Senator Torres
      - f. **Results:** (3 votes for Senator Karra, 2 votes for Senator Torres)
  - ii. Swearing of New Speaker of the House (Chief Justice Rasheed)
    - 1. Senator Karra is sworn in.

### III. Unfinished Business

- a. Legislative Board – Confirmation of New Senators
  - \*Senators will vote for Prospective Members of the Legislative Branch\***
    - i. Chalsey Nelson – Senior Senator for the College of Humanities and Social Sciences
    - ii. Swearing of New Senators (Chief Justice Rasheed)
      - 1. **Motion:** To table confirmation to next General Assembly because she is not present. Motion seconded and approved.
- b. Executive Board – Confirmation of New Executive Branch Members
  - \*Senators will vote for Prospective Members of the Executive Branch by Confirmation\***
    - Point of Inquiry:** Health and Wellness Director will not get voted in; Can you elaborate on that? (SGA Vice President Chavez). This item brings up an issue with agenda but is resolved and requires no additional motions.
    - i. Miguel Gomez – Director of Public Relations and Marketing
      - 1. Brief Intro, questions from Senators and responses from Mr. Gomez.
      - 2. **Motion:** To vote by consensus. Motion seconded and approved.
    - ii. Swearing of New Executive Branch Members (Chief Justice Rasheed)
      - 1. Director of Public Relations and Marketing Gomez is sworn in.

- c. Welcome Week Recapitulation
  - i. Because of Tropical Storm Laura, we had to move Welcome Week to the following week and reschedule events.
  - ii. **Point of Inquiry:** Senator Karra, do you have any information to share? (Senator Torres)
    - 1. Response from Speaker Karra: No, I don't have any information to present.

#### IV. New Business

- a. Executive Branch – Nomination and Confirmation of New Executive Branch Officers
  - \*Senators will be allowed to ask questions to the candidates, but will not vote for Prospective Members of the Executive Branch\***
  - i. Taiya Youngs – Director of Health and Wellness
    - 1. Brief Intro, questions from Senators and responses from Taiya Youngs.
  - ii. Senate Nomination Interviews (Speaker of the House Karra)
    - 1. No nominations from Speaker Karra and requests assistance from Senator Torres.
    - 2. Update from Senator Torres: During Tenure as Pro-tem Speaker, I have found a couple of interested students. We currently have 42 people interested.

#### V. Open Forum

- i. Executive Secretary Ortega-Calvillo Questions from ZOOM chat:
  - 1. **Edwin Mendez:** When or how are students who won in welcome week be contacted?
  - 2. **Response:** No answer from SGA
- ii. **Point of inquiry:** Who offered the gift cards during Welcome Week?
  - 1. **Response:** No gift cards were offered; a prize was offered. Water bottles and prizes we already have for those students. (Director of Community Outreach Aparicio)
    - a. **Response to previous ZOOM chat question:** They can contact us through Instagram, or they could go to SGA office to pick up their prize. (Director of Community Outreach Aparicio)

#### VI. Legislative Report Time

- a. Marilyn Davies College of Business – Senator Carlos del Toro
  - i. Not present. No report.
- b. Marilyn Davies College of Business – Senator Torres
  - i. **Report:** In the past couple of weeks, we have been creating a database of all students interested in Senator positions in order to have a full senate board. I am asking Senators to join me in these interviews. Also, I have been working with Executive Branch to get this budget approved.
- c. College of Public Service – Open
- d. College of Science and Technology – Open
- e. University College – Senator Beth Ware
  - i. **Report:** Working with Dean Marzelli to get a collaboration with the college. I also created an Instagram page for incoming freshman to spotlight Class of 2024. I am also working on getting photos and getting students to post on that page.
- f. Senator at Large Merchant
  - i. No report
- g. Senator at Large Zizi Kanyabire

- i. **Report:** Working with Senator Torres to schedule and plan the interviews for open senator positions in SGA.
- h. College of Humanities and Social Sciences – Senator Meghana Karra
  - i. **Report:** On Wednesday, September 16<sup>th</sup>, I joined CHSS Virtual Lobby and met with their advisor Mr. Bill Davis. He has informed me, to have students check out Facebook and Instagram pages. By end of today, I will receive list of events regarding CHSS.

## VII. Judicial Report Time

- a. Chief Justice Ameena Rasheed Report:
  - i. **Point of Information:** Chief Justice serves as chairman for all SGA meetings and functions, especially during case decisions. I also serve as parliamentarian for all GA's to make sure there is order and we are following rules and regulations. I also have a final say on all interpretations of constitution going forward. In summary, along with attorney general, I am responsible for overseeing SGA functioning according to constitution. We are building it as we go, so we will do the best we can to make sure SGA is working properly.
  - ii. **Report Item #1:** Vote by Ballot used to be conducted by private group chat. We need to mimic in-person voting, virtually. We need to find a better anonymous electronic ballot so senators can vote for different things. Many issues can occur and delay voting, and GA minutes need to be completed within 3 days and Executive Secretary needs a way to track votes. In summary, I ask that you look for an alternative method aside from ZOOM.
  - iii. **Report Item #2:** During summer, General Assembly's established, "2 general assembly swearing process", a process where prospective officers are introduced to senate in one GA, if approved, sworn in during following GA. Officers aren't always available on campus. We need a better process for gaging the candidate's character and getting to know the prospective candidate. Effective immediately, we will nullify the custom.
  - iv. **Report Item #3:** The SGA Constitution is finalized. Next, it will need to be reviewed and approved for sign off. Then Executive Secretary can distribute to everyone.

## VIII. President Report Time

- a. President Alan Modrow
  - i. Not present. No report.

## IX. Executive Report Time

- a. Vice President Leboriah Chavez
  - i. **Report Item #1:** We have finalized all events for Fall 2020.
  - ii. **Report Item #2:** We are trying to keep students informed about voting. Today is National Voter Registration Day.
- b. Chief of Staff Shay Tatum
  - i. **Zoom chat:** This meeting was great and productive but to keep us timely I will forgo my report and make it available to Secretary Ortega.
- c. Executive Secretary Sheila Ortega-Calvillo
  - i. No report.
- d. Director of External Affairs Camila Sandoval
  - i. **Report Item #1:** I am working on the Houston Youth Voters Conference; I'm sending you all flyer and registration link. Please share with students on social media.

- ii. **Report Item #2:** I talked to Raj, who is recruiting 10 students to be part of internship. They get paired with professionals in the career field they are in. If you have anyone interested, send them to me.
- e. Director of Student Engagement Xiomara Herrera
  - i. **Report Item #1:** Event tomorrow 09/23: “Hispanic Heritage TikTok”
  - ii. **Report Item #2:** Future events: Walk to vote & Met the Candidates 10/28/2020, also we have two more Drive-in Movies before the end of semester.
- f. Director of Community Outreach Aparicio
  - i. **Report Item #1:** Working on finalizing events with VP Chavez
  - ii. **Report Item #2:** Working with Shay and Xiomara on Meet the Candidates event, we have met with Dr. Lawrence.
  - iii. **Report Item #3:** Hispanic Heritage Month big event, we are finalizing details and t-shirt designs. I will share with you and on social media.

**X. Open Forum**

- a. Executive Secretary Ortega-Calvillo Questions from ZOOM chat: No Questions

**XI. Exiting Role Call**

**PRESENT:** Chief of Staff Tatum, Executive Assistant Ortega-Calvillo, Director of External Affairs Sandoval-Serrano, Director of Community Outreach Aparicio, Director of Student Engagement Herrera, Director of Public Relations and Marketing Gomez, Chief Justice Rasheed, Speaker of the House Karra, Senator Torres, Senator Ware, Senator at large Kanyabire, Attorney General Mosey.

**XII. Adjournment** at 3:02 pm

University of Houston-Downtown