## Elections Board Agenda

## ASsquare_logo.tifAssociated Students

10/18/18, 11:00AM

Nati Conference Room

**CALL TO ORDER by John Paul Renteria at 11:00 AM.**

**A. MEETING BUSINESS**

1. **Roll Call**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Note:**  absent (excused/not excused)  arrived late (time)  departed early (time)  proxy (full name) | **Name** | **Note:**  absent (excused/not excused)  arrived late (time)  departed early (time)  proxy (full name) |
| John Paul Renteria | **Present** | Ruth Garcia Guevara | **Present** |
| Davis Quan | **Present** | Diana Collins Puente | **Present** |
| Andrew Yan | **Present** | Zeina Safadi  (Attorney General) | **Present** |
| Emma Xing | **Absent (Excused)** |  |  |
| Hattie Grace | **Present** |  |  |
| Jennifer Pantoja | **Absent (Excused)** |  |  |
| Rachel Wiesenthal-Coffey | **Present** |  |  |

**B. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**B.1. Special Elections Voting**

John Paul: Our voter turnout rate is low right now – about 3.5%. Our advisors recommended that we increase the voting period for the special elections. Article X, section 1 of Elections Code says that General Elections shall be completed by the fifth week of Spring Quarter. Zeina (AS Attorney General), would you interpret this as the beginning or the end of the fifth week?

Zeina: The end of the fifth week. Is this the first time special elections has happened?

Davis: No, but each one has been slightly different so there’s not much to go off of.

Zeina: Because there’s no materials to follow off, you could start starting precedent now for future special elections. You could write that in the case that special elections occur, Elections should follow general elections rules. There’s nothing written in the code so you could essentially set the rules, because there is no special elections section in Legal Code. Is there a section in Elections Code?

John Paul: We found that the special elections section in Elections Code didn’t really fit the situation we’re in – like you said, every special elections is different.

Zeina: The quota is 16%, correct?

Davis: Yes, we could lower it if we want.

Zeina: 16% is a pretty huge number for a one-person special election and there’s not really much advertising for her like you would usually do during an election period. I think lowering the threshold would be the best option at this point.

John Paul: I agree.

Zeina: We really need an EVPSA, and I’ve seen that many parts of AS isn’t running at full efficiency because of all the vacancies.

Davis: If we reduce the threshold, what should we reduce it to?

Andrew: Halve it?

Hattie: That’s fair.

Rachel: I like 8 percent.

Davis: Let’s go with 8 percent. We should make the motion to extend the voting deadline first.

Zeina: Article 11, Section 3A of Legal Code says that if an exec office position is still vacant by the fifth meeting of Fall quarter, an election must be held by the fourth week of winter quarter.

Davis: We really don’t want another special election in the winter.

Diana: I suggest wording the motion language to say that when the threshold is hit, the elections ends, just so the elections doesn’t keep on going on.

Hattie: The threshold is there so we make sure our elected officials represent the student body. For those that didn’t vote, it’s their choice to not vote, but it’s frustrating that the student body isn’t enthused by the one candidate on the ballot. I feel like the 16% threshold is too high.

Zeina: In the case that there’s only one candidate, we could cut the threshold in half. The motion would say that if there’s only one individual, it’s 8%, if there’s more it’s still 16.

Diana: We should make sure that all voices are heard before we make a decision. Have we reached a consensus on reducing the voter threshold?

Hattie: I highly doubt we will reach 16.

Diana: If students aren’t coming to vote, does that mean we should we allow the office to be vacant?

Hattie: I think people are abstaining because it’s not their priority to vote right now. I feel like half the population knows an election is happening but they just aren’t clicking the link.

Diana: Because there’s only one candidate, it’s changed the pressure on Elections Board to do more of the outreach then what we’re usually done. There should be a bigger conversation on what the responsibility is on getting the vote out. Should Elections Board be taking on a bigger role as for advertising?

Hattie: I’ve spent the entire week talking to people about voting and that’s really frustrating to get. The 3% is less than the people I’ve handed off flyers to and less than the people I’ve talked to. I don’t feel like it’s an “us” issue, it’s an issue where people just aren’t taking the time to do it.

John Paul: It’s the candidate too who should also be reaching out.

Hattie: We shouldn’t be restricted to the precedent of past elections which are nothing like this one.

John Paul: It’s certainly a unique situation.

Zeina: Speaking as an outsider, I was not involved in AS my freshman year. Those who aren’t really in AS have no idea what’s going on right now, and they wouldn’t care if you were to tell them what is going on. They feel like nothing AS does affects my life, so they genuinely don’t care.

Diana: Yes, it’s very similar to people not voting during the local and national elections.

Ruth: We should be explicitly clear that we are extending elections because we have not hit voter threshold.

Hattie: We aren’t going to hit the 16% because we’re doing this special election just for one person. I don’t see how this election relates to any of the past precedents. There’s two options, they win or the seat’s just empty.

Diana: The 16% percentage was set before we knew who the candidates were, in Spring quarter.

Ruth: Have we had vacant exec positions in the past?

Diana: Not in this situation, but we had an office created and a special election to fill that position.

John Paul: I agree with what you’re saying. We don’t and we’ve never pushed a specific candidate to win, we just want to fill this vacancy.

Andrew: Something that hasn’t been brought up yet, the EVPSA office would still be able to function even if the position is vacant. The Senate has passed motions to split the duties of that office in the past.

Diana: During the summer, the Senate passed a motion where a commission was created to run the EVPSA office. There are mechanisms that allow the EVPSA office to continue if that position remains vacant.

Hattie: Even if we leave the quota at 16%, which sounds like it’s going to happen now, is there a way we can set it up for the future where if there’s only a single candidate, the threshold is lowered?

Ruth: We’re finding these holes that need to just patch up in Elections Code, and we need to fix these in future years, while keeping it fair for the current year.

Diana: Yes, even at 16% we could see a significant change in voter numbers over two weeks.

Ruth: It’s 12 PM, and before we wrap up the meeting, let’s change the motion to confirm the quota and say that if we extend the deadline, the elections ends if the quota is reached.

**Motion to extend the EVPSA voting deadline to Friday at 4PM of week 5 unless the quota, set at 16%, is reached.**

*First/Second: Grace/Quan*

*Vote: 4-0-1*

*Motion Passes.*

**Motion to allow students to vote at designated Elections Board computers and to request Pardall Center Staff to inform students that they can cast a vote at a designed computer located at the Pardall Center**

*First/Second: Yan/Quan*

*Vote: 3-0-2*

*Motion Passes.*

**Motion to send out a general statement regarding the extended voting period**

*First/Second: Yan/Quan*

*Vote: 3-0-2*

*Motion Passes.*

**Meeting adjourned at 12:00 PM by John Paul Renteria.**