**Charleston Southern University**

**Student Government Association**

October 12th, 2020 Meeting Minutes

4:30; WCCL Room 103

**ATTENDANCE**

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Matthew Pettersen

Brenna Bourgeois

Matthew Fortner

Marisa Thomas

Becca Edwards

Brandon Diehl

Bailey Dingler

Rachel Metzger

Nataysuan Taylor

Jaynae Jefferson

Jeremy Thomas

Brooke Murray

Elaine Luzarondo

Busola Oseni

Braxton Cranmer

Chandiben Patel

Student Body President

Student Body Vice President

Student Body Secretary/Tres.

Senior Senator

Senior Senator

Junior Senator

Junior Senator

Junior Senator

Junior Senator

Junior Senator

Sophomore Senator

Sophomore Senator

Sophomore Senator

Freshman Senator

Freshman Senator

Freshman Senator

Others Present:

Abigail Barnett

Joie’ Pinckney

Zach Dietz

Freshman Senator

Freshman Senator

Chaplain

**Minutes**

Vice President Brenna Bourgois called the meeting to order at 4:30 PM

*Zachary Dietz led us in an invocation.*

1. **Treasurer’s Report/Approval of Minute**

The minutes were approved, and the budget has a balance of 5,917 dollars.

1. **President Report:**

Matthew Pettersen: Hello everyone, I missed being here in-person last week since I was quarantined, and I am excited to be present with you all today. I am enthusiastic as we are now in our second week of revamping the Student Government Association. In these times of adjustment, we need to make sure that we are more adaptive and open to incremental innovation. I had an email conversation with CSU Marketing this week, and we are going to make our SGA Instagram active and put to full use. They will be promoting our page so that we can get more feedback from the students on campus. I also wanted to announce in this report that I have given my nomination for the position of Attorney General, and I believe that the person I selected will do an exceptional job in this position! I want to encourage all of you, as the Student Government Association, to not allow tradition, preconceptions, or red tape to prohibit us from best serving our student body. Our school is in a time where it really needs for us to step up and express our voices. In these meetings let us not just leave an impression of what we want our fellow senators to think of us, but let us instead come to these meetings with servant hearts and integrity so that we can then attract people to join in our efforts to do good and have a positive influence on the student body. Thanks.

**Old Business**

There was no old business to discuss.

**New Business**

Braxton Cranmer: Good afternoon. It is an honor to be here today, and it is an honor to be appointed as a possible candidate for the position of attorney general. I will do everything in my power to fulfill the entirety of my duties, including that of: conduct, statutory revision, review and revise forms within internal affairs within the senate body, the review of past bills by the senate body, and as an acting public servant to the senate body to act as a figure of guidance and counsel to the disciplinary committee to ensure the best relationship between the student and the University.

*Period of question and answer:*

Bailey Dingler: Given that this is your first year in SGA what qualifications do you hold that qualify you for the position of Student Advocate?

Braxton Cranmer: Although I am new to Charleston Southern’s Student Government, I am not new to student government. In high school I served as Junior representative and then senior as Vice President, and not only assuming roles in Student Government, but also in HOSA I served as Vice President Junior year and President Senior year. Also in regard to Beta club I served as President senior year. I do believe that those are the qualifications that meet to the standard of this position.

Bailey Dingler: Are you aware of the duties of Student Advocate as outlined in our constitution? Because Freshman have yet to officially receive a copy of our constitution yet.

Braxton Cranmer: The overall duties outlined are things that I have pulled from other Student Government constitutions, but I would imagine that they fall in close alignment to those in ours. And I am willing to be adaptable in a certain event of anything that might be special or specific to our constitution and our Student Government Association overall.

Bailey Dingler: Has anyone that has been previewed to formal meetings or have you contacted anyone that has been previewed to formal meetings about how the process work for them? Because you are supposed to be available as a representative to any student who calls for you for a formal disciplinary hearing.

Braxton Cranmer: No, I have not yet, that being said, I believe that the best way for someone to learn the responsibilities within an organization is to take the parts and roles within an organization that require them to adapt to fulfill their duties.

Marissa Thomas: I am not asking for a specific number because I cannot do that, but would you be able to provide me with a specific number for your GPA if it be necessary to confirm your institution?

Braxton Cranmer: Yes.

Marissa Thomas: How so? Are you a Freshman?

Braxton Cranmer: I am a freshman

Marissa Thomas: How do you have a GPA?

Braxton Cranmer: I took AP courses in high school. I do have at least one credit hour.

*Period for Question and Answer has elapsed.*

*By a vote of 10 no’s to 4 abstentions*

**Approval of disciplinary representative**

Marissa Thomas: Hello everyone, my name is Marissa Thomas, and this is my fourth year in the SGA. This position is not new to the SGA, it has been in the constitution for about as long as I can remember, but it is relatively new to being implemented. This position is primarily to sit in on the committee for disciplinary hearings for students. I have experience on different committees, I have been on the diversity council since my freshman year. I have had the privilege of sitting in on various other committees, including the NCAA Financial Appeals committee, so this would not be my first rodeo. Being a political science major, I have experience in critical thinking, and If any of you all know me then you know that objective reasoning is my strong suit.

*Period of question and answer.*

Bailey Dingler: Given that this position has been inactive in the SGA for quite awhile, can you give us a rundown of the process that you go through with other senators and other students, and what your specific role is in the disciplinary hearings?

Marissa Thomas: This position is technically appointed by the Dean of Students, so being confirmed by the SGA is sort of a formality. So basically, we go through the committee and are presented with the facts from the hearing, and being the student on the panel gives me the opportunity, and the student of whoever’s case is being heard to have a fair trial. So that it is not just faculty and staff that is hearing their trial, but there is another student. If they were to say, “I work a full-time job, and this, this, and that.” I can basically say, “Okay, that is reasonable.” Or say, “That is not reasonable.” It does give empathy to their case, and I can give a different viewpoint to the committee.

Marissa Thomas: I have enjoyed being on previous committees like this before, and I hope that you can confirm my nomination for this position.

*Period of question and answer has elapsed*

*By a vote of 13 yeses to 1 no she is approved.*

**Committee Reports:**

Jeremy Thomas (Judiciary Committee): I have not been assigned a committee yet, but after I do, we can meet to talk after.

Brooke Murray (Student Affairs Committee): Just as Brenna said, we have been assigned committees but they have not been announced yet, so we are going to meet after the meeting, and exchange contacts and numbers so that we can get everyone on the GroupMe.

Elaine Lizarando (Commuter Committee): There is a commuter cookout that I am planning. Later today I will pick the date, and I will let Secretary Fortner know. After I get a list of the people in my committee I will make a GroupMe for us to communicate on.

Brenna Bourgeois: I will quickly announce now who is in what committee. Just to let you all know, most of you did not get your first pick. We really try to spread out our committees, especially since right now we have a very small number. In the Judiciary Committee we have, “Brandon, Caitlin, Braxton, and Marissa”. In the Student Affairs Committee we have, “Busola, Rachel, Becca, and Jaynae.” For Commuter Committee we have, “Joei, Abigail, Patel, and Tay.”

**BSO Reports:**

There is a new mentorship program called Buccaneer buddies with upper and underclassmen that will be starting this week. Psychology Club-will be hosting walks every Wednesday at 11-12 to fight COVID with camaraderie’s well as to bring attention to things like mental health. We would love collaboration with other clubs on that. International Club-Masks n Crafts event from 21st Oct-28th October. Zoom game night on Wednesday. The African American Society is holding a 90s Trivia Night with Sigma Gamma Rho. The date is to be determined. Details will be posted on BUC Nation. As well, they have a virtual museum tour with facts and history planned. Meetings have been held virtually Monday nights at 7pm. Make sure to download Buc Nation and make sure to sign up for Densonville

There is a blood drive Oct 16 Buc Nation 11am-5pm $1000 gift card and free COVID antibody

**Advisor Report:**

Dean Carter: Busola, you wore me out, that is a lot of stuff going on in the BSO. That is good stuff! We did a trustees report, and people didn’t think that there was much going on, and I turned in 16 pages of stuff so far this semester. So there is a lot of stuff going on that most of us even realize. I want to encourage you all to fillout the COVID Task Force Survey. The deadline is Wednesday, October 14th. I cannot emphasize the importance of letting your voices being heard by the Pandemic Task Force. I need you to respond to the questions on the survey honestly. I had a great meeting with our executives last week, we are working on updating some of the stuff on the CSU website in regards to the SGA, a list of all the senators, and a list of the different positions. I had a parent reach out asking about how they can get in contact with our Student Government Association, and I gave them the name and email of our President, Matthew Pettersen so that they could get in contact with him. In the future, I want for the website to be set up so that people of different classes can reach out to their different class senators, so that they can figure out how to get involved in the SGA. Again, one of our primary goals is to really let you be the voice of our students. We need you to help us with that by getting students engaged. Thank you for being a part of SGA. We are working with our group here to get ready for SCSL for this weekend. We will figure out our room situation today or tomorrow. We are in the process of Phase 1 in our new Student Center. We will have a short order grill up there in the Student Center that will be open until after midnight, we should have that completed by the end of this month or by the first week of next month. We are working hard on that for you! You have seen the progress that has been made in the new campus store, this has been long awaited and overdue. Do you all have any questions for me?

Bailey Dingler: A lot of students have been asking me about what happened to the food trucks that were on campus on Tuesdays, and they have not been on Tuesdays recently. A lot of people have been asking me about what happened to them.

Dean Carter: That is a great question. I will ask for Ben from Aramark to come in to speak to SGA next week or the week after, he brings in the food trucks and has said that he would be glad to meet with the SGA. Let’s bring him in so that you can ask him that question directly. The Board of Senior Officers made a document that I want for you all to be able to read titled “The 10 most asked questions on finances at CSU.” We won’t be publishing it online, but I want for you all to be able to read it so that we can give full transparency. I will be happy to read it to see you next week. One thing cool about being at a smaller school is that we don’t have anything to hide, we will be happy to tell you all of that information. We are working on Densonville, we have been working through some logistical challenges. We have two great movies for that, ‘Aladdin’ and ‘Hook’. We also will have lots of great shirts. Our biggest challenge is how many people we can have there, and hopefully that number is large, but we might be capped at 250, we don’t know yet. We will do whatever is best to keep the campus safe.

Bailey Dingler: Will it be a sign-up process or a first come first serve?

Dean Carter: It should a sign-up process on Buc Nation right now. We have cool t-shirts for Densonville, and we also have Buctober in two weeks! We are trying to plan some good and meaningful sweet 16 events. Our desire for sweet 16 events are to average 600, we want to have events that are memory making, and that build community here at CSU. COVID has made this very challenging. We want to offer these events as safe and as large as possible on campus. We have approval from the state to have as many as 1000 people at these events, but the state is not the one responsible for your health and well-being on our campus, that is the University. We have a questioneer sent out to all of the SCiCU to see what events they are aloud to do, and what they are doing. My hope and prayer is that we will get to do more than 250 at some of these events. If not, the 250 that get to go will have your socks blessed off. We may have events back to back, we are still trying to figure out the logistics of that. Just know that there are many people working many hours trying to deliver the best events possible. Operation Christmas child we are going to set the nation’s record again for number of shoeboxes. Last year, we packed over 5,000, and this year we are on track to be packing over 7,000. We had more boxes last year collected for Operation Christmas Child than any other school in the United States, which is pretty powerful. 7,000 boxes might sound unreachable, but Pets Mart is 1,000 stuffed kids toys every week from this week, until our OCC packing party. Operation Christmas Child has also sent us 7,000 boxes to fold and load up. They have given us two semi-trailers to fill-up, and we are going to fill both of those. We are getting 10,000 shirts donated from the Charleston Bridge Run that did not happen this year for the OCC boxes. CSU is going to tell the world that even in the midst of a pandemic, we will smash the national record to bless kids around the world. You will hear more about this in the days ahead. God is doing some cool things.

Jeremy Thomas: I got an update on BucNation that there are limited slots for Densonville, do you know how many are left?

Dean Carter: Our magic number is 250 for full capacity. We should have around 130 more spots left today. There is an 80 percent rule of capacity for facilities around the state, but we do not know if we will be able to hold that number for this event. Elevate when we opened back up only allowed 140 to attend in a chapel that can hold 300. Laurie Diel and I had a conversation with Dr. Costin last week, and he said that he does not care what it costs, he wants to make sure that every student that shows up to Densonville gets a great experience. We are not going to cutback because we can’t get 600 people there. I would argue though that the experience is always better with more people.

Brook Murray: I have been asked a lot about midnight breakfast, is that still a thing during finals or is that just through Aramark?

Dean Carter: It is still happening! I had a conversation with Ben from Aramark the other day. In the past it has been a Sweet 16 event, but Ben this year said this year that they would pay for it. They are blessing the student body by covering the cost of putting on The Midnight Breakfast. If you see Ben say thank you. I touched base with him last week, and he said we are still on for that. There will be a lot of free food given that night for sure.

Bailey Dingler: I know that last year it was a big hit that you offered a chapel credit for students who turned in Operation Christmas Child boxes, will that be happening again this year with changes in contact and everything?

Dean Carter: Probably not, there have been some major changes in regard to chapel credits. What we are trying to do is slowly moving away from alternate chapel to going to chapel every week. The good news is that we are going to have regular chapel credits offered. I don’t think they are offering chapel credits for this year.

Bailey Dingler: Even without the chapel credit can there still be an opportunity for students to donate boxes?

Dean Carter: Absolutely! Often times when students have to work-off discipline fines, they are helping us put together boxes. It is no small task to put together 7,000 boxes. We have a lot of people who want to volunteer and help us to assemble these boxes. This year we will probably be starting the OCC packing day early, and we will be packing all day long so that we can go through rotations of people. We will be starting at like 8 or 9 am in the morning and packing until 11 pm at night. We will have lots of fun stuff going on. First the first time ever we will be doing something called Christmas at CSU. We are going to be lighting the trees around the reflection pond right before thanksgiving, and it will be beautiful around the reflection pond with white lights around the trees, and in the future years we will have a sign made like the ones at James Island County Park that says, “Christmas at CSU”.

Jeremy Thomas: Can CSU/SGA get a light display out at James Island this year?

Dean Carter: We can ask about that and see. At James Island you have to pay to sponsor it, but I think the sign is a little over a thousand dollars, so it would probably cost a few thousand dollars every year to do that. That would be something good to ask marketing or enrollment services.

Bailey Dingler: Again with OCC, will they send out approved packing items? I know every year it changes.

Dean Carter: Yes, if you go to the OCC website they will tell you what you can and can’t put in the boxes. You can’t put anything in the boxes that is perishable, but you can do toys, clothes, school supplies. I will say this for the guys in the room, the boxes that there is the least amount of are the older boy boxes. Often times these boxes will have stuff that are a stretch for 13-14-year-old boys. A boy would love a hammer, a screwdriver, or something that he can make something with. They give you those suggestions on the website. I think that is about all. If you all have any questions feel free to come see me by my office.

**Questions, Comments, and Concerns:**

Brenna Bourgeois: I just want to start us out by reiterating from last week that you are sick to not come to the meetings, and also that if you are unable to come to the meetings in-person that you should attend Zoom. You are required to attend at least 75 percent of the meetings for the semester. If you cannot be here, please join us on Zoom.

Also, on the group message the polos won the vote. Dean Carter will be sending us the design soon so that we can get those out to you.

We will have our fall retreat, we will send out to the group message asking where you all want to eat. We have two options, and we will ask you for your input so that we can come up with a third option to vote on. Hopefully we will do this in the next two weeks.

Brandon Diel: Earlier we had a concern about a lack of constitution available to new senators. When should those be available?

Brenna Bourgeois: Those should be out this week. We are going to be sending those out this week. They will probably be digital, but we are trying to figure out the best way to get those out to you. There is a not updated copy on the CSU website on the SGA page for reference.

Braxton Cranmer: Bills need to be turned in before Friday, correct?

Brenna Bourgeois: Yes, but typically we might take it until Sunday night, but I would not make it a habit.

**Benediction**