

Minutes of the Brown University Community Council (BUCC) Meeting
Wednesday, March 19, 2014
4:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Members: President Paxson, Provost Schlissel, Russell Carey, Margaret Klawunn, Marisa Quinn, Kim Roskiewicz, Richard Bungiro, Linford Fisher, Steven Lubar, Brad Marston, Don Operario Todd Harris, Kiera Peltz, Alexander Sherry, Jonathan Vu, Sveta Milusheva, Stephen Zins, Honora Burnett, Dawn Goodman, Julianne Hanavan, Beverly Larson, Brendan McNally, Jill Rossi, Dan DiPrete, and Emily Maranjian were in attendance. Paula McNamara, Cesario Bianchi, Catherine Kerr, Thomas Lewis, Vesna Mitrovic, Elizabeth Taylor, Alexander Krotow, Heather Bennett, Jane Zhang, Anita Louise Schell-Lambert, and Abbot Stranahan were unable to attend.

The minutes of the February 19, 2014 meeting were approved.

Members of the Student Labor Alliance presented for the Council's consideration and approval, a resolution on the Renaissance Hotel labor dispute. After much discussion among its members, the Council voted to approve the amended resolution below.

Brown University Community Council Resolution on the Renaissance Hotel Labor Dispute

WHEREAS The Brown University community flourishes best when the broadest range of participation in events is permitted and encouraged; and

WHEREAS the Brown University community is defined as students, faculty, and staff and alumni organizations thereof; and

WHEREAS labor disputes at hotels or convention centers serving Brown University events can restrict participation in the event or meetings because many potential participants may feel a moral duty to respect a picket line or labor dispute by refusing to attend the conference or event; and

WHEREAS a public community announcement of the labor dispute at the Renaissance Hotel in Providence was called on December 4, 2013; and

WHEREAS the BUCC approved a similar resolution on Tuesday, November 9, 2010, in support of the Westin, now Omni, Hotel labor dispute and should continue to uphold its moral duty to the Providence community as it has in the past; and

WHEREAS the dispute at the Renaissance Hotel is ongoing and other Brown University affiliated events are likely to be impacted by it; and

WHEREAS nationwide, many respected academic organizations have relocated events in respect of hotel labor disputes in the past, including the American Association of University Professors, the Organization of American Historians, the Linguistic Society of America, the American Sociological Association, the American Political Science Association, the American Educational Research Association, and the American Anthropological Association; and

WHEREAS union contracts at hotels and convention centers within the city of Providence and state of Rhode Island will be renegotiated regularly, possibly resulting in future labor disputes and consequently, requiring support of other labor disputes; and

WHEREAS, union representation tends to raise wages, supply benefits, and protect worker dignity, and can thereby benefit hotel workers, many of whom are otherwise disadvantaged by their socioeconomic status; and

WHEREAS, Brown's involvement in the 2010 Omni Hotel labor dispute led to the creation of a union and better working conditions; and

WHEREAS, the Brown University community relies upon the labor of hotel and other service workers; and

WHEREAS, the total economic value of Brown University conferences, meetings, and events gives the Brown University community significant leverage to influence the employment practices of hotels and the other service industries; and

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the BUCC recommends that the Brown University community has a responsibility to act so as to preserve our integrity, to promote full participation in meetings, conferences and events, and to ensure that those individuals whom it employs, both directly and indirectly, are treated fairly and equitably; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the BUCC encourages the Brown community to take all appropriate measures to avoid holding any events at the Renaissance Hotel in Providence during the current labor dispute and notify relevant university events planning bodies of the ongoing labor dispute at the Renaissance Hotel, and refrain from listing the Renaissance Hotel in any publications during the ongoing labor dispute; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the BUCC encourages the greater Brown Community to develop a vendor code of conduct that reflects the University's values relative to labor issues.

Council members heard presentations from the student government presidents. Honora Burnett MD'15, Medical Student Senate (MSS) President, gave an overview of the MSS which represents the Alpert Medical School (AMS) student body before University administration and committees. It also acts as a forum for issues important to AMS students and disburses funds to student groups. Graduate Student Council (GSC) President Steve Zins reviewed the GSC's overall objectives for 2014: to be involved in the implementation of the strategic plan where it meets graduate student needs; to increase institutional diversity on campus for graduate students; and to probe what makes Brown graduate students distinctive. Todd Harris '14.5, Undergraduate Council of Students (UCS), reported on the work of the UCS in 2013-14. During the year the UCS drafted a strategic plan feedback report and presented it to President Paxson and Corporation members. It helped coordinate the Community Forum following the Ray Kelly event. The UCS is working to connect students and alumni both on- and off-campus.

The next meeting of the Brown University Community Council will be held on Wednesday, April 23, 2014 from 4:00 – 5:30 pm at Brown RISD Hillel, 80 Brown St.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Pincince
Secretary of the Brown University Community Council