

## **July 23rd, 2-4pm, 5 Metrotech (Poly Campus), room LC400**

Facilitator: Seana Lymer

Notetaker: Anne Pasek

Timekeeper: Corianna Sichel

Stewards Present: Chris Nickell, Corianna Sichel, Anne Pasek, Seana Lymer, Rachel Xu, Ziad Dallal, Ella Wind, Sean Larson, Anna Eva Hallin, Scott Barton, Claudia Carrera, Rory Solomon

Non-members: Patrick Gallagher, Scott Sommer

[There was no quorum at this meeting]

**Action items specific to individuals or committees are noted in the text in red.**

### **Approval of June Minutes (1 min)**

<http://www.makingabetternyu.org/gsocuaw/wp-content/uploads/AoS-June-10.pdf>

- *No vote is taken, as it would be non-binding without quorum*

### **Impromptu discussion re: who can come to the meeting**

Patrick objected to the policy whereby he can only attend the parts of the meetings to which he is invited. Some stewards (Sean, Corianna, Anna) find the policy to be unintuitive.

*Ella motions that we bring this forward as a topic of discussion next meeting.*

- *The topic is tabled for discussion next meeting*

### **Robert's Rules Training and Discussion (20 min)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fD3uP4sellc>

- *Given the number of stewards in the room, the subject is tabled, to be sent out online for individual review.*

### **Approval of Interim Steward (5 min)**

Rachel/Ruijiao Xu (Poly)

*Rachel works as a GA in the Center for Faculty Innovation in Teaching and Learning and is a first year graduate Mechanical Engineering student. She is also a graphic artist and volunteers her talents to the cause*

- *There is a vote to provisionally approve her in the role. It is unanimously passed.*

### **Announcement of Steward changes and call for steward recruitment (5 min)**

Outgoing: Anna Eva Hallin, Corianna Sichel, Romeo Alexander

*Members are encouraged to put themselves forward for the open seats (1 GSAS STEM, 2-3 Steinhardt et al., many at Poly). Rachel suggests that we follow up with Poly's student government. Anna and Corianna expressed their regrets at not being able to commit themselves to the extent that they'd like, but affirmed that they'll still be quite involved on (at least) the departmental level.*

## **Standing Committee Reports (10 min)**

Including: Brief highlights of pre-circulated reports, specific motions/resolutions for debate and approval, committee recommendations.

*Bylaws: The BLC wants to draft a resolution on absentee voting (strawpoll to come via email) and to delay the timeline for draft bylaws by a few weeks to allow for more member feedback. Members are encouraged to share their input with the committee.*

*- **Bylaws will solicit feedback on its proposals via email***

*Communications: Will hopefully be switching over to Mailchimp next week (our unit will be finally sending its own emails!).*

*Political Solidarity: Has met twice, focused on setting up permanent, reciprocal relations with organizing groups (labor, social justice, at NYU or NYC). It hopes to be “on call” to these groups (providing members for mobilizations, solidarity statements, testimony). GSOC members are encouraged to contact the committee to join the “on call” list. The committee’s priorities for the coming year include Black Lives Matter, BDS in NYC, city-wide labor solidarity with Fightfor15, and more. It also raised class sizes, the job security of undocumented student workers, and gender-neutral bathrooms as examples of issues that don’t fall under the contract, but that it believes should be central to the AoS’ mobilization work and efforts. It expressed its hopes that the Organizing Committee and Unit Reps will bottom line and work with Political Solidarity to wage effective campaigns against NYU on these issues (a sentiment affirmed by Ella on behalf of Organizing).*

*Contract Enforcement: Appreciation was expressed Patrick’s handling of a few canceled language courses (now a Step 2 grievance due to non-response) & a canceled Poly course (likely a bigger fight to come re: legality of language regarding contingent enrollment). Patrick stated that the amended bonus list will be sent to NYU later today (with more names surely to follow after).*

## **Discussion: How to coordinate contract enforcement information? (10m)**

We need to find a way to archive and share current and former information about student worker troubles + grievances. We need to find a balance between access and privacy for this important, but often sensitive, information. Options include googledrive folders, & closed listervs or googlegroups (but open to whom?)

*Anne reviewed that we are getting a lot of (potential) grievance requests, and need to find a way to centralize and share information. She proposed a pan-Steward & staff google drive folder with an ongoing archive of incident reports, organized by School. Corianna added that a singular spreadsheet with every incident cataloged together could provide an important supplement, provided that all names were anonymized for privacy concerns. Scott Sommer noted the value in being able to cross reference incidents across NYU by subject (via metadata). Michelle suggested that the proposal should be delegated to Contract Enforcement, who should clearly articulate a proposed system. Chris proposed a separate googlegroup for distributing news about grievances, in which GSOC stewards and UAW staff would be members. Anna noted that Contract Enforcement is about to lose 3 of its members, but can bottomline coming up with a suggestion to streamlining grievance info-sharing/archiving.*

- *Delegated to Contract Enforcement, who will integrate this feedback into a comprehensive proposed system.*

### **Card Campaign Discussion (15m)**

Following the meeting of Organizing, Contract Enforcement, and Communications, there's been a desire to review the timeline and list of responsibilities for all committees and stewards-at-large for the current card campaign.

*Anne summarized the recent email thread in which stewards were asked to sign up for particular departments as areas of responsibility for the card drive/bonuses follow up/building the squad system. She expressed disappointment that many stewards did not participate, and asked for feedback on how such asks could be better articulated in the future. Claudia stated that she appreciated receiving email drafts to modify and send along, as it makes the job a bit easier. Claudia, Michelle and Sean said that, even though they did not respond to the request within the timeline, they've flagged it for follow up and fully intend to do so. Scott Barton expressed discomfort at jumping into a role he didn't feel confident in advising, and Chris invited stewards in that position to feel free to forward follow-ups to the unit reps or stewards who have done the union training. Patrick said that long-form emails aren't a 1-size fits all solution, and could be supplemented with physical conversations (like tabling). Anna affirmed the value of the squad structure, and the need to cultivate departmental relationships for the peer sharing of information. Claudia added that departmental administrators can be good contacts for getting information on recent workers (& that they tend to be on the student's side of things).*

*There was a brief overview of potential tabling sites for student and worker orientations in the Fall. It was noted that Steinhardt and Poly have new student orientations.*

*We expressed a desire to create some posters. Rachel volunteered to create some (digital and otherwise).*

- *Anne will send out squad sign up again.*
- *Rachel will make some posters*

### **Resolution to Approve Organizational Chart (15 min)**

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/10ORRjTQcZ8hLgI988P09GnLtcDMCU5iKk\\_w86T1YsKY/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/document/d/10ORRjTQcZ8hLgI988P09GnLtcDMCU5iKk_w86T1YsKY/edit?usp=sharing)

*Presented by Anne:*

WHEREAS, Members have expressed confusion regarding the responsibilities, priorities, and authorities of the unit's committee structure (item 7, June Minutes); and

WHEREAS, The Bylaws Committee seeks greater input on the organizational structures of GSOC's administration and a means to pilot organizational initiatives prior to their codification in our bylaws; and

WHEREAS, An organizational chart has been drafted and reviewed by the GSOC committee chairs and unit representatives for the purposes of framing expectations for each standing body that will serve as a dynamic, frequently updated companion to both the current Articles of Representation and Elections and future fully executed Bylaws,

with language to be written into those bylaws affirming this relationship between the two documents, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Assembly of Stewards approve the organizational chart for this purpose.

*Discussion:* Corianna raised the point that RSVPs should go to the Unit Reps (not the Coms Committee). Michelle stated that there's a few small content changes that can be suggested, but that the core structure is effectively stated and valued. Anna stated that the unit rep content should be updated every semester (with the turning of people through the position and possibly changing duties for unit reps).

- provisional vote: unanimously in favour

### **Unit Representatives Report (5 mins)**

Including: Brief summary of meetings attended and forthcoming, comments on the state of unit relations with NYU and the Local

Anne asked Patrick and Scott to leave, expressing the value in being able to have a conversation just as a unit. Patrick and Scott objected. Chris stated that neither party was invited to this part of the meeting (further to the resolution passed in the June meeting). Scott responded by sharing his view that that union is one organization, and voicing alarm that there isn't a precedent for this request in his experiences with UAW thus far. Michelle responded by stating that this different view of union structure follows in part from four years of unit/Local history, which has undermined her trust in the orientation with the Local and Regional leadership. She further added that there's no animosity on a personal level in these proceedings, but that contrary to Scott's statement, internal conflict within the union is valid, ongoing, and should be acknowledged. Scott did not acknowledge this point as such and declined to comment on the history Michelle raised of internal conflict in the UAW. Claudia added that the union is not a univocal structure, but that in and amongst its many shared values, it is also full of parties with differing interests (particularly in the context of an amalgamated local), and as such it makes sense to have opportunities for internal strategic discussion. Sean emphasized that this setting seems entirely appropriate for a discussion concerning unit autonomy. Corianna read a statement from Anna expressing her strong disapproval concerning the ideas of unit financial and communications autonomy. Corianna further expressed her disapproval at bringing the issue to a vote.

- Anne moved to close discussion on whether or not Scott and Patrick should be in the room. It passes with 1 vote against and 1 abstention. Scott and Patrick leave.

Discussion resumed among the membership. Because of the lack of quorum, and in light of the difficulty of the previous conversation, discussion was broadly oriented, without explicit regard for the motions on the agenda (see below):

Motion to Register Protest re: Communications Access and Unit Autonomy

WHEREAS On June 23, Communications Committee declared intent to switch over control of social media and email accounts in the unit's name to unit control per the Articles of Representation and Election, opening a period of eight (8) days for comment and content migration; and

WHEREAS On June 30, Sub-Region director Scott Sommer responded by changing passwords of previously jointly-managed Twitter and email accounts and deleting personal accounts created on the website, pending "resolution" in an in-person meeting two weeks later; and

WHEREAS This action, executed without warning or dialog, significantly impeded the communications committee from performing its work; and

WHEREAS On June 12 at this in-person meeting, Sommer offered to restore access to Twitter and Facebook, and significantly limited access to the website, with no changes to email access pending switch-over to a unit- and local-managed email client; and

BE IT RESOLVED THAT The Assembly of Stewards registers continued protest against this gate-keeping practice and property- or "asset-" based mentality with which the Local and International view the media accounts bearing the unit's name; therefore

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Local and International's refusal to heed stipulations in the member-approved Articles of Representation and Election infringes on unit autonomy and will not stand as a precedent going forward.

#### **Motion to Create a Finance Committee and Draft a Budget**

WHEREAS, Article 35, sections 3c and 3d of the UAW International Constitution guarantee unit autonomy in unit matters and that a percentage of a unit's dues dollars may be set aside for the unit's discretionary use; and

WHEREAS, The lack of unit budget significantly impedes the efficient work of organization and mobilization efforts on campus; and

WHEREAS, This assembly rejects the practice and logic of clientalism/paternalism that undergirds Local 2110's current orientation towards GSOC; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Assembly of Stewards form a Finance Committee with the purpose of drafting a proposed budget for the unit's autonomous operations in 2015-2016 academic year; therefore

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT This budget be put to a vote in the August Assembly of Stewards and subsequently presented to Local 2110; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT The Assembly of Stewards, its Unit Representatives, and its Allies call upon Local 2110 to approve the budget and create a bank account for the use of the GSOC Finance Committee; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Finance Committee's role shall continue as a permanent standing committee with responsibilities to be drafted by the Bylaws Committee this summer.

*Chris and Anne reviewed some of the history of the conflict between the unit and the larger UAW administration, including recent the lock out of the Coms committee from the unit's tools and the refusal on the part of the Local's president to discuss the possibility of a budget (even modest) for the unit based on a % of dues withholding or a yearly lump sum. The unit reps shared their frustration with the UAW staff's paternalistic attitude towards GSOC members, as well as the clientistic ethos that seems to undergird their thinking (clientalism is a form of governance in which a patron distributes resources in a discretionary way, without guiding policies or a great deal of democratic oversight, brokering favours and consolidating their power as a gatekeeper of resources). Seana added that, in recent conversations with the UAW regarding these issues, GSOC has in effect been "put on probation," with more resources and freedoms to follow after the establishment of friendlier (more compliant?) relations.*

*Discussion: Corianna contextualized some of the UAW's hostility by expressing her disapproval at somewhat hostile (& therefore ineffective) nature of the unit's recent communication to the UAW regarding communications. She emphasized the need to make the best relationship with the people that are we are working with. Michelle responded that this relationship often has high personal costs. She brought up the bullying and abuse suffered by bargaining committee members from the UAW and expressed her support & trust of the unit reps regarding their interests and tactics. She added that UAW elected leaders and staff from both the Local and International have treated us in a very patronizing way for years, long excluding students from meetings, and that there needs to be a change and a fight for autonomy and dignity. Claudia stated that while our interests as a unit overlap a lot with the larger UAW, and that there are pros and cons to approaching these issues through the motions on the table, as a growing unit we have to time our battles well. In her role as the head of Bylaws, Claudia pointed out that it behooves units to push on these issues to insist on our rights. Sean affirmed support for the unit reps, and objected to Scott and Patrick's framing of the unit's approach as divisive. He reframed the issue as one of basic, strategic access to tools and fundamental democratic rights which should be brought up now. Chris agreed of the tone of his initial Coms email was not ideal, but that the response on behalf of the Local and International (suddenly changing passwords without any warning or discussion) really compromised his trust in them. He emphasized that this is a structural issue, not a personal one, and that we need to be very careful to not allow these arguments to stay in emotional registers. Corianna affirmed the need to be strategic in tone, particularly given the proclivity towards the affective economy of our relationship with the UAW, and in action and that these motions might not be ideal to that end. She asked what we might need to regain trust in them (and vice versa) and how that conversation might come to pass. Claudia suggested that the UAW might begin by taking a more supportive and transparent (and less emotional and obstructionist) approach to protocols (such as Bylaws), even if it isn't their intent to produce such barriers.*

- *Going forward, we'll try and smooth the waters, while still standing firm (and even escalating) by our core values.*

*Anne reflected how we might stage these conversations in the future, noting the awkwardness of getting this conversation into place, and the desire of several stewards to not engage in this side of union debates. She raised the possibility of having other meetings, open to all stewards and members who would like to join, who want to keep having this conversation and talking tactics. Seana suggested that it was her sense that most stewards might like to largely exclude these matters from the assembly agenda (for time or personal interests). Corianna agreed. Rory suggested that we could consider dividing meetings into parts and Chris added that that's effectively what we tried to today. Scott suggested that we could use different names for different parts of the meeting. Claudia said that transparency and communication with our members are important and should be maintained. Corianna suggested that we maybe shouldn't air our dirty laundry to green members & make the Local feel excluded/antagonized. Claudia said that, as we establish this relationship, we need to establish strong ground rules, as you teach people how to treat you. Michelle suggested that we did just set a precedent, and that this was a very positive step. She added that we mustn't play the game of anticipating what possible repercussions/withholding actions might follow because of how we assert our boundaries. She affirmed the need to fight for space to have collectivities and mobilized political goals, and that this is contrary to the atomized model of UAW participation from steward-member rather than steward-member-AoS-allies.*

*The meeting ended with affirmations of fellow feeling in the room :)*