

COLLEGE STUDENT COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES (Friday, November 5, 2021)



**COLLEGE STUDENT COMMISSION
MINUTES**

**REGULAR MEETING
(Friday, November 5, 2021)**

The College Student Commission convened in a regular meeting on *Friday, November 5, 2021* at City Hall in Austin, Texas.

Chair *Jeffrey* called the Board Meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

Board Members in Attendance:

Jeffrey Clemmons, Lira Ramirez, Edwin Bautista, Pete Cervantes, Todd Clayton, Esther Heymans, Tatum Owens, Isaiah Smith, and Ethan Tobias

Staff in Attendance: Staff Liaison David Alcorta

1. NEW BUSINESS

a. Announcements

- Staff liaison *David* stated that we are still in the process of nominating more members.

b. Campus Reports

- UT Austin: Crime this week and student safety as a priority for our commission. *Jeffrey* recommended giving the commission's gun culture statement from May a read. UT commissioners reached out to SafeHorns and UT Outpost this week to see what they can do for student safety. Question for the commission: what are your respective food pantries if any available?
 - St. Edward's: Yes.
 - ACC: working on the implementation or expansion of a food pantry.
 - Huston-Tillotson: No, not present.
- St. Edwards: November 14th-19th: there will be a challenge week that uplifts sustainable and accessible transportation options.
- ACC: Shelters in Austin providing services to homeless college students. There are no shelters that work with homeless college students.

c. Election of Secretary

- Recommendation to nominate *Tatum* as secretary was approved on *Tatum's* motion, *Pete* seconded on a 9-0 vote.

d. Working Group – Housing

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- Commissioners discussed the affordable housing crisis and the lack of Austin's goals that have been met regarding that agenda. We want to focus on affordable and adequate housing, in terms of the quality for certain costs of housing options. *Edwin* referenced his plans to rebuild the West Campus Neighborhood Association. He wants this to be a model for giving students a collective voice in what is built around them, how the buildings are used, and how much they cost.
- **Working group for housing:**
 - Recommendation to create a working group around the subject of housing in Austin was approved on *Jeffrey's* motion, *Edwin* second on a 9-0 vote.
 - Members of the group will be: *Edwin, Todd, Isaiah,* and *Jeffrey* as working group members for now.

e. Working Group – Transportation

- Huston–Tillotson representative *Todd* spoke about the contrast between UT's tuition included free public transport with CapMetro and the lack of free public transport for their university. They previously had free bicycles at hand. *Todd* wanted to know more about the free bus rides and whether other campuses have similar options.
- ACC representative *Isaiah* discussed ACC's access to free bus passes and suggested that we put pressure on City Council to reduce contact with CapMetro due to their issues with their management, such as the dealing with the labor shortage as well as the safety of riders and drivers.
 - Huston–Tillotson representative *Todd* was curious about other alternatives to CapMetro. *Isaiah* will bring alternatives to the next meeting.
- **Working group for transportation** ○ Recommendation to create a working group around the subject of transportation in Austin was approved on *Jeffrey's* motion, *Esther* second on a 9-0 vote.
 - *Esther, Todd, Ethan, Isaiah, Pete, and Lira* will be the members of this group.

f. Discussion and Possible Action on LGBTQ+ Rights

- ACC representative *Isaiah* discussed how HB 25 bans transgender individuals from participating in sports, he does not agree with that. In May of 2016, the Texas department of Education released a statement on discrimination, we want to get that put back into place after Trump rescinded it.
 - He later added that ACC has an equity committee that focuses on LGBTQ+ issues. He wanted to include that this should be a cause we work toward.
- UT representative *Edwin* suggested that we could ask for the Gender and Sexuality center to give a presentation at a future meeting.
- St. Edward's representative *Pete* mentioned the ally trainings present to combat the homophobic stigma as a Catholic university. They are trying to implement a zero-tolerance policy.
- Co-chair *Lira* asked about whether the city includes X gender markers on city documents.
- **Working group for LGBTQ+ rights:**

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- **There was no motion to create a group due to no suggested recommendations as of present.**

g. Discussion and Possible Action on Campus Civic Life

- Chair *Jeffrey* is working on getting more administrators to be VDRs as an initial step. He posed the question: do we have capable student government entities, polling places, and places for civic engagement?
- Co-chair *Lira* advocated for the online trainings to become VDRs this week.
- The commissioners could hold town halls at their respective campus to engage civic discussion.
- **There should be a recommendation over civic life, possibly related to VDR resources and access on each campus. We will be working on keeping student government accountable and engaged fully with the student body in this area should be an interest as well.**
- **Working Group for Action on Campus Civic Life:**
 - Recommendation to create a working group around the subject of campus civic life in Austin was approved on *Lira's* motion, *Tatum* second on a 9-0 vote.
 - Members of group: *Tatum, Ethan, Pete, Lira, and Jeffrey*

h. Community and Municipal Involvement

- For the working group we will move this to the next meeting to research this area.
- **For outreach, we should invite other commissioners to social events and to get to know our communities as well.**
- ACC representative *Isaiah* would like to reiterate the uniqueness of our commission, and to reach out to other commissions and try to get us in contact with Washington DC people as a form of outreach.
- St. Edward's representative *Ethan* alerted everyone to a Climate related meeting on November 18th, at 6:30pm at Carter auditorium.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- November 19th will be our last meeting for the year unless we decide otherwise.
- Discussion and possible action on working groups. We can work on apps; however, it is advised to stick to email communications. Collaboration internally and externally is advised as well.
- Discussion and possible action on creating a working group for LGBTQ+ issues.
- Discussion on the state of accessibility across each campus, and what actions we can take.
- Student safety in general is a concern.
- Discussion and possible action on nominating a chair after Jeffrey's graduation and departure.

7. ADJOURN

Chair *Jeffrey* adjourned the meeting at 4:55 p.m. without objection.