

University Centers Advisory Board
Meeting Minutes – APPROVED
Winter 2019, Week #7
February 19, 2019

Opening

The regular meeting of the University Centers Advisory Board was called to order at 2:03 pm on February 19, 2019 by Alex Morrow in the Warren College Room.

Attendees

1. Alex Morrow (UCAB Chair)
2. Joey Mendoza (UCAB Vice Chair)
3. Jesús Fernández (Student at Large Representative)
4. Daniel Howanec (Student at Large Representative)
5. Liora Kian Gutierrez (Staff Association Representative)
6. Reilly Cannon (Revelle Representative)
7. Achol Chowdhury (Muir Representative)
8. Harrison Oliphant (Marshall Representative)
9. Aditya Arora (Warren Representative Shadow)
10. Katya Garcia (Sixth Representative)
11. Sharon Van Bruggen (Director) – ad hoc, non-voting
12. Elijah Garcia (UCAB Secretary) – non-voting

Public Input

- None

Approval of Minutes

- Correction from Alex: Change “budget” committee and retreat discussion to “space needs” committee and retreat
- Correction from Sharon: Clarify “patio construction” in the Space 1420 discussion
- Correction from Sharon: Change Sharon’s response in Tech Fee Subsidy discussion from “UCAB mistake” to “University Centers mistake”
- Correction from Joey: Capitalize “Achol” in Blue Pepper discussion
- Motion to approve the minutes from Week 6 of Winter 2019 as amended: David
 - Second: Achol

Special Presentation

- None.

Chair Report

- Alex asked the board if they had any potential project ideas
 - Katya received constituent input, wants to consider making a transfer student space with visible signage, so transfer students don’t feel left out
 - Katya inquired about a napping/resting space in the works, and referred to an article in The Guardian from a year ago
 - Alex: A company came last year to do a trial for the nap pods, but there was concern the amount they would charge would be too much for students
- Alex will be sending out a When2meet to plan Space Needs Committee meetings

Vice Chair Report

- Space Allocation Committee
 - Joey's email is ucabvicechair@ucsd.edu
 - Space allocation projects have begun, including pilot programs
 - If you want to be part of the Space Allocation Committee, email your interest
 - The main goal is to have student orgs apply, and based on criteria, determine who is allocated space and in what order; there will be an entirely new rulebook for this year
 - First meeting time is on Friday, let Joey know if you have any questions

Director Report

- Space management during rains
 - Spaces get a lot of water intrusion when people coming into buildings, especially with dripping umbrellas at doorways
 - This is mitigated with periodic dry mops
 - The PC East side slider doors do not function properly in the rain, and let in tons of water during hard rains
 - This is why these doors close during the rainy season
 - They ensure to staff the centers with custodians to assist in drying
 - Sharon thinks the custodial team did a great job earlier in the week with a substantial storm
- Reminder about Black History Month brunch
 - Let Sharon or Sophia know if you want to attend, so they can save seats at the table and buy more tables if necessary
 - The event is Saturday, February 23rd from 10am-1pm
 - There will be great speakers, meals, and entertainment
 - Let Sharon know if you have any questions
- Sharon also encouraged everyone to join the Space Allocation Committee, since there are a lot of great things coming to campus that will need support to get done
- Start thinking about the University Centers brand
 - Amanda Marples (Assistant Director of Marketing) will be doing a special presentation with the board sometime soon
 - Think about what words/concepts you use to describe University Centers now, and what words/concepts you would like people to use in the future
- Joey: Have you heard anything from campus planning?
 - Sharon: Robert Clossin (Director of Physical and Community Planning) is excited to meet with the board, and is hoping to schedule a special presentation date soon

New Business

Tech Fee Subsidies

- none

Old Business

Blue Pepper (BP)

- Vote will take place today to consider BP's lease renewal, or to consider other vendors

- Achol went back to her constituents, and brought up the Torrey Pines Living and Learning Community (TPLLC)
 - Constituents were concerned that there is already a lot of construction going on throughout the campus, and by the time construction for other vendors is done, construction will have barely begun for a potential BP replacement
 - 15 people voted to keep BP with this new perspective
- Sharon commented that it's important to consider whether or not BP can withstand the competition coming to campus; BP is up against a growing and changing dynamic
- Joey: If we look at the campus as a whole, just about all of the food establishments outside Price Center are operated by HDH
 - TPLLC will be a deviation regarding food, since outside vendors will be contracted
 - Price Center will no longer be the exclusive provider of non-HDH vendors
 - As of this point, University Centers hasn't had much vendor competition
 - With regards to construction concerns, it's important to reframe issues for the constituents
 - UCSD is a great research institution that is always growing and changing
 - The question is not so much if there will be construction, but what kind of construction the students are willing to deal with, and what will benefit future students
- Achol: The main reason people don't want BP gone is that they don't want an Asian restaurant going away
 - Panda Express and Lemongrass aren't very homey in comparison
- David: A beneficial part of waiting is that we don't know who our competitors will be, plus Soda & Swine should reactivate the Old Student Center
 - In 2 years we'll have a better idea of what BP will be competing with
- Reilly: A lot of the constituents I talked to liked the idea of a short lease renewal, and to see how BP will fare in 2 years; this allows us to make a more informed decision
 - Liora asked how the board plans to leverage the decision between a 2-3 year lease extension and a 1-1.5 year extension
 - Joey added that the board doesn't know the phase schedule for TPLLC
 - Liora: We don't want an empty space, especially because Soda & Swine hasn't opened up yet
 - Hypothetically, if BP's lease were extended by 2-3 years, then the other vendors come in and decimate BP, then the board is stuck with BP because the lease would have already been signed
 - Joey: We have a really good example in Shogun, because they reached out to us and have been making improvements
- Aditya: How long would it take to get a new vendor?
 - Sharon explained that the time to secure a new vendor varies, and that starting the conversation early will only be beneficial for research and planning
 - Lease signing can take 2-4 months depending on the vendor's experience
 - The buildout process for a potential replacement would be faster since the new vendor would be working with a 2nd generation restaurant
- Daniel: Some students can't even tell that BP is a restaurant, since the only real signage for BP is on the doors
 - This might be the reason for the lack of traffic
 - Daniel noticed a sign that still said "Hi Thai" on it around the building

- Sharon brought up the fact that if the board wants a food court style restaurant, that would be a reason to keep BP, but if they want something different, it would be more difficult to get a vendor to commit
- Aditya: Warren students are indifferent to BP, most either don't know it exists or don't think it's worth the trip
- Jesús made a point that the UCAB members can only relate so much of the information they have to their constituents, but the constituents don't always get to see the big picture
 - The UCAB members were chosen to make decisions on behalf and for the benefit of the community
- Joey brought up two things that stuck out to him based on the BP feedback he received
 1. Comments about the space itself
 - The space itself will be refreshed, but students don't understand the disconnect between the space and BP
 2. Comments about the affordability and quality of the food
 - Gathered opinions on food emphasize affordability, with lackluster quality
- Joey: Vegans and vegetarians don't have a lot of options on campus
 - The fact that BP has actual fake shrimp, chicken, pork, etc. is very important
 - Joey proposed seeking out a vegan/vegetarian vendor for the BP space, because it would fit the aesthetic of the Original Student Center
 - Becoming the exclusive non-HDH vegan/vegetarian vendor would be a major plus
- Katya wanted to point out that her constituents spoke well of BP's food quality
 - Recommends considering finding an Asian cuisine vendor with a vegetarian menu
 - However, in that time frame, there won't be many options for students looking for what BP has to offer now
 - Achol: That makes me feel we like we need a new vendor now instead of waiting 2 years, especially since Soda & Swine and Dirty Birds are both meat-based vendors
- Joey brought up the lack of menu variability and food quality at Roots, as one of the only vegan options on campus
- Daniel asked if any of the incoming vendors are vegan/vegetarian, since they could compete with these vendor plans for BP
 - Alex: There are definite possible options
- Katya emphasized that any new vendor should be affordable, since the price point is one of BP's strengths
- Harrison commented that many of his constituents are tired of the constant construction around campus
 - Joey replied that these concerns are valid, and it's important to differentiate between the different construction projects around campus; not all campus construction is under the University Centers domain
 - TPLLC, Triton Pavilion, and the MTS Trolley are UCSD
 - Dirty Birds, Soda & Swine are University Centers
 - University Centers wants to keep construction to a minimum, but they don't have many projects going on right now
- Motion to vote put forward by Alex
 - In favor of lease renewal: 6
 - Opposing lease renewal: 3
 - Abstain: 1
- With 6 in favor, Blue Pepper will be considered for renewal.

Length of Blue Pepper's Renewed Lease

- Joey commented that since Shogun's lease was renewed 1.5 years, it would only be fair to do the same for BP
 - Sharon: To put previous decisions in context, Shogun's renewal was 1.5 years due to project schedules, and they had over a year left on their lease
 - A 1.5 year lease renewal is odd for the campus and restaurants in general
 - Daniel commented that 2 years is generally the minimum allowed
 - Allows time for TPLLC and the other new restaurants to be completed and open, so BP can be compared to them
 - Jesús agreed
- Joey asked for clarification regarding Sharon's comment that the Shogun lease had to fit within an administrative calendar
 - Sharon: At last year's retail retreat, UCAB and University Centers went through a strategic planning process regarding retail for the next 5 years in terms of buildout projects and space activation
 - UCAB considered 5 restaurants for renewal in context of when those buildouts would happen
 - The 1.5 year renewal for Shogun was scheduled right when University Centers was planning a renovation for the space
- Joey recommending tabling the lease length discussion until a timeline of all the vendor openings can be provided
 - Sharon will provide an updated schedule
- Aditya asked when the TPLLC vendors would be made public
 - Alex will reach out for information
- Reilly commented that a 2 year lease would be beneficial, since TPLLC should open 2021, and BP's lease would be up for evaluation a year after TPLLC opens
- Motion to table the Blue Pepper renewal lease discussion until next week: Jesús
 - Second: Joey

Member Reports

- None.

Open Forum

- Joey commented that the 2nd floor Price Center East atrium, outside of the Cross Cultural Center, seems ripe for a project
 - Sharon: These spaces have remained lounges largely because the Cross Cultural Center has a number of student orgs who utilize their space on Wednesday nights
 - This activity often overflows into the lounges
- Joey inquired about the study carrels moving around frequently, and Sharon have clarified that they move around based on adequate electrical access
- Joey also asked about any changes coming to the Old Student Center regarding buildouts and programmable spaces, since this could bring more activity to the area
 - Sharon: The management team has determined that the courtyard space is ripe for renovation

- Robert Clossin will be sharing an update on the Ridge Walk improvement plan when he comes
- Alex inquired about the student art budget allocated last year
 - Sharon asked the marketing team to work on developing a program, but it needs a champion from UCAB to get the project moving
- Alex also inquired about a planned amphitheatre next to the Old Student Center
 - Sharon: It's still in the renderings for Ridge Walk, whether it's been finalized or funded is still unclear
 - This will be an outdoor space for reservation and walk-up student use
 - Will not be funded by University Centers
- Achol inquired about rumors that Sunshine Market will be turned into a Target
 - Sharon clarified that the campus is in talks to install a small Target Express on the 2nd level of the Bookstore
 - Sunshine Market will remain
 - This is not a University Centers space
- Alex wanted to clarify that Perks and Sunshine Market are not under the control of University Centers

Announcements

- None.

Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 3:01 pm by Alex Morrow. The next general meeting will be at 2:00 pm on February 26th, 2019 in the Warren College Room.