I. CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Rackham Student Government General Board Meeting was held on Wednesday, October 6, 2010, at 7:00 p.m. at the Rackham Graduate Building.

RSG President Michael Benson called the meeting order at 7:05 p.m.

Members Present: Michael Benson, Mayela Montenegro, Cherisse Loucks, Anna Kroth, Ethan Eagle, Phil Esposito, Robert Nyambati, Amit Patel, Katherine Fisher, Lily Mancour, Chen Li

Guest Speaker: Christopher Taylor, Ann Arbor City Councilmember, Ward 3

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND PREVIOUS MINUTES

Cherisse motioned to approve the agenda and previous minutes (September 22 and September 29). Lily seconded the motion.

AYES: Unanimous
NOES: 0
ABSTAIN: 0
Motion passed.

III. OFFICER REPORTS

MICHAEL:
Welcomes guest speaker City Councilmember Christopher Taylor.

For future guest speakers, RSG will have the University's Legal Counsel and Ann Arbor Mayor in the next several weeks. Dean of Rackham and the Provost will also be speaking.

CHERISSE:
The Budget Committee just approved its first student group event for the amount of $250. Is waiting for another application from another student organization. Is working with the Budget Committee to update the funding application.

MAYELA:
None.

IV. GUEST SPEAKER/DISCUSSION

Cherisse introduced the guest speaker.
RSG members introduced themselves.
Councilmember Taylor had no speech prepared, preferring instead to take questions.

COUNCILMEMBER TAYLOR:
- Discussed the city's couch ban
This is a proposal that has already come up in the past. Fire service professionals were advocating for the ban. There was a rationale, but they couldn't prove it. Taylor was elected in 2008 and became more aware and active, then learned of this issue. A recent fire was the cause of death of a student, which heightened the awareness of the issue.

Taylor inquired to the fire department to provide more information on the role of outdoor couches in fires. The rationale for why outdoor couches are dangerous—upholstered inside couches that are placed outdoors degrade because of weather, making them dangerous as a fuel hazard, though the couch isn't an ignition hazard.

Since 2003, 20% of fires in multi-residence housing have involved outdoor fires.

The fire marshal has associated couches as having a significant effect on the origin or development of fires.

5 injuries have been associated with fires involving couches, and only 1 death.

There is concern on implementing the couch ban on multi-family housing. More likely the property owner will receive a notice.

People will be getting a notice before getting a ticket.

There is no provision in the ordinance for a review process follow-up.

- Rental inspections
  - Inspections should take place every 30 months, instead it happens every 36 months.

- Public transportation
  - There is a long-term goal for a major transportation hub.

- North-south transportation
  - Not yet sure.

- Areas he focuses on
  - Any constituent concern
  - Property development, zoning issues, clean community ordinance, neighborhood-type maintenance issues

- Parking in downtown
  - In the future, a library lot will provide more parking space.
  - DDA (Downtown Development Agency) is moving from an enforcement regime to a compliance regime, using technology to self-regulate.

Michael mentioned the housing survey, asking the Councilmember to think about a question for the survey.

RSG thanked the Councilmember for speaking. The Councilmember departed.

V. COMMITTEE UPDATES

A) ADMINISTRATION

MAYELA:
The Newsletter has been re-formatted and will be emailed next week. All committee chairs should be providing content for the newsletter.

B) ELECTIONS COMMITTEE

MAYELA:
The Elections Committee still needs to be formed.

With strong encouragement from Michael, a committee was nominated:
Div I: Mindy
Div II: Vacant
Div III: Robert
Div IV: Katherine
Thanks for volunteering!

The Committee’s first item is to hire an elections director. There are several students who have expressed interest.

C) LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

MICHAEL:
There has been new restructuring with SAGE leadership. Michael is the new Vice Chair for SAGE.

D) STUDENT LIFE

LILY:
Will meet with Natalie next week to discuss events.

VI. RSG LIAISONS

MICHAEL:
Thanks to Phil for volunteering to be liaison for Medicine, and to Ethan for Engineering.

Mayela motioned to approve Phil and Ethan as RSG liaisons. Amit seconded the motion.
AYES: Unanimous
NOES: 0
ABSTAIN: 0
Motion passed.

VII. OPEN DISCUSSION

All RSG members gave positive feedback on the meeting, particularly on having Councilmember Taylor as guest speaker.

VIII. ADJOURN

The Rackham Student Government General Board Meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.