Rackham Student Government
Board Meeting: October 25, 2012

Agenda

I. Call To Order

II. Approval of Agenda

III. Approval of Previous Minutes
   a. October 18, 2012 * (p. 2)

IV. Officer Reports
   a. Graduate Student Body President, Michael
   b. Graduate Student Body Vice President, Kaitlin
   c. Graduate Student Body Treasurer, Alex

V. Election Forum – November 1, 2012
   a. Advertising
   b. Logistics (Board member expectations)

VI. RSG Election – November 28 & 29th

VII. Board Policy Discussion: Limited invitation events

VIII. Town Halls / Lunches with the Deans

IX. Committee Updates
   a. Academic Affairs
   b. Budgetary
   c. Community Outreach & Social Action
   d. Legislative Affairs* (p. 5)
   e. Student Life Committee
   f. Graduate & Professional Student Assembly
   g. Steering Committee

X. Individual Projects – Update

XI. Open Discussion

XII. Adjournment

* - Item included in packet
** - Item will be provided on Day of Meeting or at Meeting
*** - Item was included in a previous packet
RACKHAM STUDENT GOVERNMENT  
BOARD MEETING  
10/18/12  
RACKHAM GRADUATE BUILDING  
2ND FLOOR WEST CONFERENCE ROOM, NORTH ALCOVE  
6:36 P.M.

a. CALL TO ORDER: 6:36pm

b. Present: Chris Tom, Matt Filter, Matt Waugh, Eli Benchell Eisman, Kaitlin Flynn, Michael Benson, Alex Toulouse, Alex Gutierrez, Anna Belak, Haven Allen, Dan Trubman, Phil Saccone, Evan Arthur

c. Absent:

d. Excused: Alex Emly,

II. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

a. Motion by Matt W, seconded by Chris. Approved with one abstention.

III. APPROVAL OF THE PREVIOUS MINUTES

a. Minutes from 10/4/12- no quorum last week so approval moved to this week. Alex T motions to approve, seconded by Chris. Approved unanimously.

b. Minutes from 10/18/12-Motion by Haven, seconded by Brandon. Changes: to attendance. Kaitlin and Michael will fix this. Approved with one abstention.

IV. OFFICER REPORTS

a. President Michael Benson. Michael thanks the DPC for the great debate watching party hosting. Michael met with the school of Public Health student organization and they are interested in getting involved with RSG and AAC. GPSASC will be meeting soon to discuss the separation from the undergrads but scheduling has been an issue. MSU COGS have asked if we’d like to participate in the Graduate Academic Conference. MSU is also interested in hosting a joint social event to see an early Tigers game in mid April. Asking the AAC and SLC respectively to make recommendations regarding these items. Michael appoints: Phil Saccone has been nominated to fill the Division I seat on the board. Motion by Kaitlin and seconded by Matt Filter.

b. Vice President Kaitlin Flynn. Newsletter went out last week and we’re trying not to spam people with email so if board members could spread the word on important topics, like Rackham being open late, etc, that would be great. Elections are coming up and as Elections Director Kaitlin will begin working on planning elections.

c. Treasurer Alex Toulouse. $22,000 in the account and the University has finished it’s transition from SOAS to Maize pages, so there are some glitches being worked out.
V. **Accessibility of Technology Resolution—Preliminary Discussion**
   
   a. **Heidi** introduces the history of this issue and summarizes Laura’s visit last week at our meeting. One issue that was brought up at the meeting with Laura was that office hours could be held only on Google Chat and that would be a serious issue for students who have accessibility issues. Heidi and Michael are considering a resolution to ban electronic-only office hours and communication of that sort. As this is an important resolution, it’s ideal that the board would give input to draft a solid resolution. Matt Filter asks about specifics. Michael says that it would ban the use of Google products specifically and exclusively until the accessibility issues have been worked out (including Google docs, etc). Dan asks to what extent of our graduate student population/ the student population in general would be affected by such resolutions. Heidi responds that it’s hard to tell exactly how many students identify as having disabilities/accessibility issues because many of them do not register with the Disability office. Much discussion ensues to catch board members up on what the issues are and how we could move forward.

VI. **Election Forum—November 1 2012**

   a. Survey for questions for the 6 debates will be going online soon; The Michigan Daily will be advertising that as well.

   b. Confirmation and commitments from proponents and opponents for many of the ballot issues. Mayoral and other city councilmen candidates will be present as well.

VII. **Potential Event Co-sponsorship with the Michigan Graduate Consulting Club:**

   a. Consulting club and Rackham are co-sponsoring an event to help students who are interested in consulting. They’re asking for a co-sponsorship that will not require anything monetarily from RSG. Motion by Haven and seconded by Pete to co-sponsor. Approved unanimously.

VIII. **Committee Updates**

   a. **Academic Affairs:** Rackham is now open late for studying! Also working on planning Lunch with the Deans. Conflict resolution and the bill of rights are long-standing items. Chris motions to approve the minutes and Haven seconds. Approved unanimously.

   b. **Budgetary:** been busy the last few weeks and minutes will be coming next week.

   c. **Community Outreach and Social Action:** H4H event this weekend that is totally full. Heidi is also working on a long term framework for people to volunteer at the Humane Society. Pete is also planning a few more Focus:HOPE events for the rest of the semester.

   d. **Legislative Affairs:** SAGE Fall summit email went out today for registration. Many great sessions are being planned. Alex T is going to be officially leading the Michigan delegation as Michael will be chairing. Also we will be sending a joint delegation to Lansing to testify on the education budget in early February.

   e. **Student Life Committee:** A few bar nights and happy hours being planned in the next couple months as well as a Pistons game. Motion to approve the minutes by Matt Waugh and seconded by Alex T. Approved with one abstention.

   f. **Grad&Professional Student Assembly Steering Committee:** postponed to next week.
IX. **Individual Projects—Update:** Evan is working on getting students better airfare discounts and will get back to us soon. Chris is also contacting the Human Rights commission of Ann Arbor to pursue his non-discrimination policy at the University.

X. **Open Discussion—**

XI. **Adjournment—** Motion by Pete at 740pm.
I.** CALL TO ORDER** 8:13 pm

II. **ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS**
   a. Present: Representatives Lauren Knapp, Anna Belak, Vanessa Cruz, Brandon Erickson, Representative Phillip Saccone, Student at-large David Barton, President & Chair Michael Benson
   b. Absent (excused): Representatives Chris Tom, Brandon Erickson, Treasurer Alexis Toulouse, & Law Student Liz Gary
   c. Absent (unexcused): Representatives Dan Trubman, Matthew Filter, Haven Allen

III. **Appointment of Secretary for 9/26/12 Meeting**
   a. Representative Lauren Knapp was appointed to serve as the committee’s secretary for the 10/26 meeting.

IV. **Update on Election Forum:**
   a. Flyer – people will have a QR code. We’re going to send Michael our edits for the forum flyer. (updated version attached to these minutes). We’re getting the flyer out and will have an ad on the Daily website, flyers will be printed, and ask partner organizations to do so as well. Chronicle will also advertise to the community.
   b. Supreme Court Candidate and MLaw professor Mc Cormick won’t be able to attend. Someone from CRC will hopefully talk generally about importance of voting down the ballot. Mayor has been asked to speak as well. We’ll also be distributing the CRC overview of each proposal.
   c. Speakers confirmed
      i. Prop 1: proponent confirmed, opponent not confirmed
      ii. Prop 2: neither confirmed
      iii. Prop 3: proponent confirmed, opponent semi confirmed
      iv. Prop 4: proponent confirmed, opponent not confirmed yet
      v. Prop 5: opponent confirmed, pro is being difficult
      vi. Prop 6: proponent confirmed, opponent confirmed assuming that Tigers don’t go to game 7 in the World Series.
   d. 7 confirmed people for ushers from SCOR. Members of the RSG will be ushers as well.
   e. Thomas Partridge is a gentleman that lives in Ann Arbor and is a self-described advocate for a number of folks is running as a write-in candidate to serve as a state representative. He asked Michael to be given table space
at the forum. Michael declined his request noting that due to limited space, we are only offering table space to candidates on the ballot.

f. The auditorium can hold up to 1,200 people. Michael is buying food for a portion of that capacity. He is shopping for snacks this weekend at Sam’s club.

g. Everyone needs to send Michael who we have confirmed tomorrow etc.

h. Time: 7-8:30 the presentation component. 8:30 or so we’ll have the tables set up for people to chat until 10pm.

V. SAGE Fall Summit
   a. We will be delving into this in two weeks.
   b. Campuses have been assigned topics to prepare for the fall summit, including Michigan.
   c. Date: Nov 29 – Dec 2nd.

VI. Schedule of Future Meetings
   a. The Committee will hold a special meeting on Wednesday October 31st.
   b. The Committee’s next regularly scheduled meeting will be held on November 7th.

VII. Open Discussion
   a. None

VIII. ADJOURNMENT: 8:55 pm

Respectfully Submitted by Lauren Knapp
2012 Election Forum!

Join us for our Election Forum!
Speakers to include:
• State and local representatives
• Official proponents and opponents of the six state ballot initiatives

Date: Thursday Nov. 1st
Time: 7:00 – 10:00 PM
Place: Rackham Auditorium
915 E. Washington St.

Visit http://bitly.com/XhZ3ld to submit your questions!

For more information about upcoming events, like us on facebook, follow us on twitter @RackhamStudGovt or our website at http://rsg.umich.edu
This paper summarizes the six proposals that will appear on Michigan’s statewide ballot at the November 6, 2012 general election. An in depth analysis of each proposal and corresponding webinars are available at no cost on the Citizens Research Council's website, election.crcmich.org. The CRC does not endorse candidates for office or take positions on ballot issues. In analyzing these ballot issues, CRC hopes to provide more information so that voters can make better informed decisions in formulating their vote.

Initial considerations: Several of the proposed amendments to the Michigan Constitution contain enough detail to raise the question of whether the Constitution is the appropriate place for such detailed and often complex provisions, regardless of their public policy merits. A review of the proposed amendments reveals that several are quite lengthy, go into substantial technical detail, and deal with issues that would be found in statutory law, not in the constitutions, of most states. Voters should evaluate the public policy merits of each proposal as well as the appropriateness of each amendment in regards to its inclusion in the state’s Constitution.

For more information, read CRC Memorandum 1115, Inserting Legal Code into the Michigan Constitution

Proposal 2012-01— A referendum on Public Act 4 of 2011— the emergency financial manager law

Public Act 4 of 2011 (PA 4) is the Local Government and School District Fiscal Accountability Act. It is the third iteration of Michigan laws that allow the state to appoint an emergency manager who has authority over the financial decisions of a financially distressed local government or school district, and it extends the authority of the appointed emergency manager to the non-financial operations of the local government or school district. This act allows state appointed managers to assume the responsibility of locally elected officials, and grants those appointed managers more powers than locally elected officials have. Among the expanded powers granted to emergency managers under PA 4 are the authority to reject, modify, or terminate one or more of the terms of an existing contract and, under specified conditions, to reject, modify, or terminate one or more of the terms and conditions of a collective bargaining agreement. Under PA 4, collective bargaining is suspended if an emergency manager is appointed.

On August 8, when the state Board of Canvassers placed the issue repealing PA 4 of 2011 on the November 6, 2012 ballot, PA 4 was suspended in accordance with Article II Section 9 of Michigan’s Constitution.

If Proposal 2012-01 passes, PA 4 of 2011, the Local Government and School District Fiscal Accountability Act, will be reinstated.

If Proposal 2012-01 is rejected, the preceding iteration of the law, PA 72 of 1990 will remain in effect; when PA 4 was suspended, PA 72 was revived.¹ PA 72 does not allow emergency financial managers to abrogate contracts or collective bargaining agreements, nor does it provide certain other powers contained in PA 4. The legislature will have the power to introduce new legislation to handle financial emergencies should PA 72 still be deemed insufficient.

Major Issues to Consider: At the time PA 4 was adopted, supporters claimed the intent of the law was to encourage locally elected officials and union leaders to make hard budget decisions in a time of economic difficulties and provide emergency managers with more tools to guide a local government out of fiscal distress. Opponents worry that parts of the law are undemocratic and unfair to residents, local government employees and retirees, bondholders, vendors, and others.

¹ PA 72 was revived pursuant to Attorney General Opinion No. 7267. This opinion has been challenged and is currently the subject of litigation.
Proposal 2012-02 — A Proposal to amend the State Constitution regarding collective bargaining

The Great Recession has greatly affected state and local government budgets, resulting in decreased public sector employment. At the same time, policymakers in Michigan and other states have enacted a number of laws that are perceived to adversely affect public sector unions. Among those is the move by Indiana to become the first Great Lakes state, and 23rd in the nation, to enact a right to work law.

If Proposal 2012-02 passes, the right of public and private sector employees to organize for the purpose of collective bargaining will be enshrined in Michigan’s Constitution. The Michigan legislature would not be able to enact right-to-work legislation. The collective bargaining rights of private sector employees are established in federal law, so public employees of local governments, school districts, and the state would see the most significant changes from this amendment. Under this proposal, the legislature would lose the ability to set limits on the terms and conditions of employment that are subject to collective bargaining but it would retain the ability to prohibit strikes by public sector employees.

If Proposal 2012-02 is rejected, current laws will continue to set parameters within which collective bargaining exists for local governments, school districts, institutions of higher education, and other political subdivisions of the state. The state’s civil service commission would continue to create the work rules and conditions of employment for state employees and employee organizations would continue to negotiate with the state employer on matters not covered by civil service rules. Michigan’s legislature would retain the ability to enact right-to-work legislation in the future.

Major Issues to Consider: The amendment would impact private sector employees by prohibiting “right-to-work” legislation and has the potential to dramatically alter laws affecting public sector workers. Most notably, public sector employees and employers could bring any issue up for negotiation including those that the legislature has previously deemed a management matter rather than a labor matter. The fundamental question of this proposal is whether the state legislature should have some say over the ability of public sector workers to organize and the scope of issues that can be bargained, or whether the right of public sector workers to organize and bargain on all issues is fundamental and should be enshrined in the constitution.

For more information, read CRC’s Memorandum 1116, Statewide Ballot Issues: Proposal 2012-01

Proposal 2012-03 — A Proposal to amend the State Constitution to establish a standard for renewable energy

Michigan’s current renewable energy standard, created by Public Act 295 of 2008, calls for investor-owned utilities, alternative retail suppliers, electric cooperatives, and municipal electric utilities to generate 10 percent of their retail electricity sales from renewable energy resources by 2015.

If Proposal 2012-03 passes, Public Act 295 of 2008 would be amended to require that 25 percent of each electricity provider’s annual retail electricity sales in Michigan be derived from renewable electric energy sources, namely, wind, solar, biomass, and hydropower. The implementing legislation would create a phase-in period to put each utility on a path to reach this goal by 2025.

If Proposal 2012-03 is rejected, policymakers could still revisit the issue of renewable energy in the future and make legislative changes to require that a higher percent of total energy be generated.
from renewable sources, alter the types of renewable technologies that qualify under the act, and/or amend the manner in which compliance is monitored and credits are rewarded.

**Major Issues to Consider:** In addition to reducing the amount of greenhouse gases and other pollutants produced in the state, this amendment would reduce the amount of coal Michigan buys from other states, and keep more of those dollars in the state; coal is Michigan’s main source of electricity generation. However, the 25 percent standard may pose challenges in balancing the production and transmission of electricity, leading to redundant infrastructure to ensure reliable electricity transmission. The sources of renewable energy would be spelled out in the Constitution and may not be easily altered if the most cost effective or reliable source of energy changes before 2025.

For more information, read CRC’s Memorandum 1118, *Statewide Ballot Issues: Proposal 2012-03*

**Proposal 2012-04 — A Proposal to amend the State Constitution to establish the Michigan Quality Home Care Council and provide collective bargaining for in-home care workers**

The Medicaid-funded Home Help Services Program provides in-home support to people who need assistance with personal care and household chores. The eligible individuals hire and fire home care aides who are paid by the state, with state and federal funds. The purpose of the program is to allow disabled and elderly people to stay in their own homes and out of nursing homes, which is often preferred by participants while saving money for the state.

**If Proposal 2012-04 passes,** the limited collective bargaining rights of approximately 42,000 home care aides would be guaranteed (currently, only state police troopers and sergeants have collective bargaining rights enshrined in the state constitution), but aides would not be considered state employees for any other purpose, and would not be authorized to strike. The Michigan Quality Home Care Council would be established in the state constitution and would serve as the “public employer” of home care aides for purposes of collective bargaining. The Council would create a statewide registry of home care aides and provide training opportunities to aides and patients.

**If Proposal 2012-04 is rejected,** home care aides will continue to be employed subject to the same conditions as they were prior to the election. The legislature may choose to enact legislation to provide collective bargaining rights for home care workers.

**Major Issues to Consider:** The Medicaid-funded Home Help Services Program will remain in effect regardless of the outcome of the proposal: this proposal focuses on the unionization of home care workers and the establishment of the Michigan Quality Home Care Council, not on the services available to the disabled and elderly.

Proponents of the proposal argue that the registry and training opportunities provided by the proposal will improve the quality of care available to the disabled and elderly program participants, while opponents have countered that home health workers are not required to avail themselves of the training opportunities and Home Help Service participants are not required to select service providers from the registry.

For more information, read CRC’s Memorandum 1119, *Statewide Ballot Issues: Proposal 2012-04*

**Proposal 2012-05 — A Proposal to amend the state constitution to limit the enactment of new taxes by state government**

In general, nearly all legislative actions require a simple majority vote (affirmative vote of more than one-half of the members elected to a legislative body). However, the Michigan Constitution currently imposes a supermajority requirement (either three-fourths or two-thirds of the members serving in the Senate and in the House of Representatives) in certain instances, such as to raise school operating ad valorem property tax rates or give a law immediate effect.

**If Proposal 2012-05 passes,** the Constitution would be amended to prohibit the imposition of new or additional taxes or expansion of the base of taxa-
tion by the State of Michigan unless approved by a 2/3 majority of members in each chamber of the legislature or by a statewide vote of the people. The new requirement would apply to any new state taxes, raising the rates of any existing state taxes, and expanding the base of any existing state taxes. The two-thirds vote requirement would not apply when the legislature desires to eliminate a tax, to reduce tax rates, to reduce the tax base, or to authorize local taxes. In these instances, a simple majority vote would be required.

**If Proposal 2012-05 is rejected**, any existing tax limitations or supermajority vote requirements will remain in place. In all other cases, to change the tax rate, add or remove taxes, or change the tax base, a simple majority vote of the legislature is required.

**Major Issues to Consider:** The rationale for the adoption of supermajority requirements is to restrict legislative powers to make it more difficult to enact tax increases or adopt new taxes. But the evidence in the literature and from other states is mixed. The growth in total state revenues in states with supermajority vote requirements have been similar to that experienced in the nation as a whole. To make up for reduced tax collections arising from supermajority vote requirements and to keep state budgets balanced states often increase other taxes, fees, and charges or decrease the amounts distributed to local governments, school districts, universities, and other entities dependent on state revenues. This can result in local property tax increases or tuition increases to balance the budgets of those entities.

For more information, read [CRC’s Memorandum 1120, Statewide Ballot Issues: Proposal 2012-05](#).

**Proposal 2012-06 — A Proposal to amend the State Constitution regarding construction of international bridges and tunnels**

Canadian trade is very important to Michigan’s economic health, contributing directly and indirectly to Michigan jobs and income. For more than a decade, representatives from Michigan, the U.S. Federal Highway Administration, Transport Canada, and Ontario Ministry of Transportation have been pursuing construction of an additional international crossing of the Detroit River.

**If Proposal 2012-06 passes**, a statewide vote would be required before the State of Michigan could construct or finance a new international bridge or tunnel for motor vehicles (“new” being defined as a bridge or tunnel opened after January 1, 2012). For the question to appear on the statewide ballot, proponents (parties outside of the Michigan state government) would have to gather signatures of registered voters equal to eight percent of the total vote cast for all candidates for governor at the previous general election. The majority of voters in both the entire state and each municipality in which a bridge/tunnel would be situated must approve the proposal.

**If Proposal 2012-06 is rejected**, the legislature retains the right to approve capital projects, make state appropriations to this purpose if necessary, and use all other constitutional and legal avenues to approve or disapprove the construction of any new international bridges or tunnels.

**Major Issues to Consider:** Proposal 2012-02 is intended to block, or stall construction of the proposed New International Trade Crossing south of the existing Ambassador Bridge in Detroit. It is not a referendum on the proposed bridge, but a constitutional amendment that would require a statewide vote before the state government constructs or finances a new international bridge or tunnel. While it is clear that this proposal would require a statewide vote on proposed crossings going forward, there is disagreement on the effect of this proposal on the interlocal agreement already in place with Canada. Additionally, an unintended outcome of some ambiguous language in the proposal may result in a statewide vote being required for the construction or financing of any bridge or tunnel in the state, international or otherwise. Michigan’s courts will have to decide the ultimate impact of this proposal on the New International Trade Crossing.

For more information, read [CRC’s Memorandum 1121, Statewide Ballot Issues: Proposal 2012-06](#).