I. CALL TO ORDER: 7:16pm
   a. Present: Representatives Pier Davis, Adam Duran, Dave Malewski, David Barton, Michael Benson, Malcom Tariq, Chris Tom, Sidney Ellington, President Saccone, Treasurer Mbagwu, Julian Bahr, David W.
   b. Absent:
   c. Excused: Erin Sullivan, Ryne Peterson, Alex Gutierrez

II. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA
Motion to approve by Julian, seconded by Chris. Approved unanimously.

III. APPROVAL OF THE PREVIOUS MINUTES
Motion by Adam to approve, seconded by Julian. Approved unanimously.

IV. OFFICER REPORTS
   a. President Phil Saccone

   Phil: We'll begin with our guests this evening, and then open it up to questions.

   Guests Jill McDonough discusses Rackham Graduate School campaigns for fund-raising, etc. The main priority in the campaign is for graduate student support. The applications range from fellowships to travel grants, professional development, diversity initiatives, everything across the board. Who is considered for the Rackham funding? Masters, PhD. Most of the donors are older, in the 60s and 70s which is typical among alumni donor stats. We do have younger donors, but the majority are in the higher age brackets. We are somewhat worried that that may decrease, based on the landscape of how philanthropy is changing. Younger donors are giving less to campaigns and more to individual initiatives, and is just the trend that has been seen over the years.

   The fund-raising focuses on the 3 why's of giving to Rackham (detailed in the presented slides). Sheila has joined the team with a communications background to better support the fundraising initiatives. Would like to do a better job communicating 'What is Rackham' and 'Why is it important to support'. They would like to do that accounts of personal experiences and anecdotes, as well as tangible impacts of research funding in the lives of students, summer stipends, etc. They want to provide a range of options for smaller donation amounts (travel grants, etc) to larger, recurring, or gifts in individual's will. Sharing the value of Rackham as a wholistic support platform with our alumni and donors. These stories are shared through social media and other means to reach the most alumni and provide a snapshot of fund-raising and the impact of their
dollars. What stories would like to be told? We want to current students with the alumni and create connections through the similarities and differences of their stories and experiences on campus.

We also want to create an opportunity for alumni to network with each other as well as current students and better provide those resources across the board. We have a huge alumni support network to tap into!

On average, it takes about 13 years to reach the $1000 donation mark from alumni. We believe a better way to engage alumni with students will improve funding, donations, as well as professional connections. Rackham strives to be collaborators for support of the student body, and we do this by interacting with our constituents and informing them of who Rackham is, and how they are supporting them.

There are 90,000 alumni, but only have contact emails for 55,000. We are making efforts to have emails opened and read. However, we would also like to make a print-version of a newsletter that can be accessed by the remaining 35,000. Social media (specifically Facebook) is a new frontier that we are seeking to connect, but we do not see much alumni engagement there. LinkedIn seems to be the avenue to which they are getting the most response. We want to involve them more and more, and target younger demographics there.

We would also like to engage with our international alumni, which has vast potential. Current Rackham students are also a target audience such that they can take a sense of community, brand, and engagement and carry that on as they become alumni.

Student philanthropy is also a sector that we would like to emphasize and focus on. A few blog posts have gone out on Rackham website with good information regarded philanthropic opportunities at the University. We really want to engage in this area and provide a desire to give back.

Goals of $30 Million by ~2019. This is all part of a long term cultivation effort and goal for giving and involvement in the University as alumni.

Now open to discussion and questions by the Board:

Phil: I believe that RSG can be of most service in terms of developing donor base within current Rackham students to carry that forward. Office of Graduate Student Success puts together many social events/gatherings for graduate students. One idea was a 'graduate student gala' was a great initiative that didn't come to fruition. I think that things like this will help create and develop the Rackham brand. Secondly, professional development is a huge area and is a great motivator down the road for the desire to give back to those that helped you get where you are. The Student Life component cannot be over-emphasized, and the social events we provide and access to the student body emails, we can share that effort with you guys.

David W.: Adding to that, having events in the Rackham Building brings the focus of Rackham to the forefront and impossible to ignore.

Chris Tom: Are there efforts to move into other spaces such as Kickstarter, making a fund-raising push for something targeted, but this would be a great area to look into.

Jill (response): The School fo Information has done something similar for their 'alternative spring break' event. It had a bit of traction getting started, but I believe that patience is the key for a space like Kickstarter.

Shiela (response): I haven't seen much success of that on campus yet, I think it could be a good thing to experiment with, but also would need to figure out where the target audience would be and if it would be alumni.
Julian/Phil: How about project specific ideas/initiatives for donors and donations. We think we could match projects and ideas with shared interests.

Jill: M-cubed, there is the opportunity to people to provide money for specific initiatives that a few graduates students could take advantage of, etc. Donors are becoming much more thoughtful and directed in where they would like their money applied to.

Sheila: I've seen a social program like Kickstarter that offers students an opportunity to raise money. It would be funding a students creativity, ideas, projects, and has a great chance to support shared ideas and connect donors to their recipients. It's really nice for students to meet and connect with their donors, and is deeply beneficial for both parties.

Benson: I want to focus on Division 2 at the moment. Engineering and Physical Sciences tend to make more money in the earlier portion of their career. I'm concerned that the CoE might be harming our ability to connect with these donors. For example, the CoE student government was given money to assist students (both undergrad and grad), but the stud gov focuses mainly on undergrads. Rackham is not necessarily as visible such that it is specified for grad students. Need to push the brand of Rackham a bit better. There are many things that Rackham students have access to, but there isn't enough awareness.

Jill and Sheila: Agreed, and it's something that we are working on and want to improve. To be honest, I'm not sure that Rackham will ever be in a position to displace that primary affiliation/relationship with the faculty/department/CoE. What Rackham is providing is the wholistic support platform and funding. That notion of all the University groups playing well together is what is strived for, but the colleagues realize that the primary relationship/affiliation will be exploited. Rackham is not the primary, and it is our job and goal to create space in their (donors) mind for where Rackham fit in in their graduate experience.

David W: Sometimes there has been a communication breakdown in terms of the luncheons and other events where students can actually meet the donors.

Jill (response): As our fund-raising efforts have been increasing and we've been able to get more donors, we are needed to get larger spaces for the luncheons and make sure to get more of the students that have received those awards/donations, etc. involved.

Phil: We could also include potential donors for those events. I think RSG can support you in terms of bringing students in to discuss why what they are working on is important.

Phil: I can tell you right now that we can commit to partnering with you on the Gala (which only did not happen for minor technical issues), as well as other future initiatives.

Benson: We can easily solicit students as well for speaking to the donors at luncheon events and the like, or to make a video or be featured to potential donors. Creating all these changes will not be immediate, but we can break it down into short, medium, and long term goals. We would like to work on development themed events and the like for the short term. Medium term would be to reach out the departments and faculty and pushing the Rackham Brand, and potentially creating partnerships. If Rackham can also support the faculty in the context where they engage with the students.

Sheila: Presenting those ideas in the right light will definitely be appealing for the faculty, supporting the graduate students so they can focus on their research and faculty-student relationship.

Phil: Rackham 5K run. Rackham golf outing. These type of ideas I think we should pursue and can share jointly with you.

Jill: We do a good job of putting students in front of our current/major donors, but we could do
better at presenting them to prospective donors. The best thing we can do is create the environment for those interactions to take place, but not doctor them. It could be in-person or virtual, or a variety of ways. We want to connect them on the basis and context that the students and alumni are connect by Rackham.

Sheila: In terms of the brand on campus, we're trying to work with our partners across the university to share our graduate students' stories. Grad students are not in the forefront of university advertising and outreach, and we want to make them and their contribution more visible.

Jill: Dean Janet Weiss gave a great presentation to the Regents regarding graduate student support and we have been forwarding that to the donors. It would also be a good thing to share something like that with the student body.

Phil: I have not seen it yet, but we definitely think that is important to get the word out.

Jill and Sheila: We thank you for your support and your energy, and we appreciate the opportunity to come and discuss some of these initiatives with you.

Phil: Thank you for coming in and speaking with us! Please let us know if you are trying to put things together for graduate students, and need things in the advertising space – we would really like to work with you on that!

Adam: When I got admitted, I did not receive any communication from Rackham – are there any initiative to improve communicating with admitted students?

Jill and Sheila: That is actually something that we recently had a discussion and meeting about improving and we are definitely making an effort in that space. We have work to do there. And that also has a lot do with marketing.

Phil: Thanks all for the input and questions. We have Vice President Harper coming to speak with next week, and we are looking forward to that. Myself and a couple other reps met with university president-elect Schlissel. It was a productive discussion and all the right things were said. Eager to see how things will play out in the coming months. Regarding VAWA, we are being proactive and looking into what happens and what is the course of action for a student or faculty that fails to go through with the VAWA training. SAGE is just around the corner, and more will be said when we get to LAC. Michigan has taken the lead on the taxation white paper and it is in draft form. Elections are currently on-going, please encourage your constituents to vote! If you have people that you think should write-in, inform and encourage them, etc.

Please send me any outstanding minutes that you have.

b. **Vice President (Vacant)**

c. **Treasurer Chuky Mbagwu**

$26,000 in the account. We have paid a few student organizations upon receiving event reports.

V. **COMMITTEE UPDATES**

a. **Elections Committee**
Chris Tom: Polls are open! Go and vote. Chris provided an update regarding numbers of candidates for open executive committee and representative positions. Minimum number of votes to be elected is 2. For the winners of the election prizes, will be done via random generator.

b. **Academic Affairs Committee**

Chris: Town halls coming up next Monday and Thurs. Everyone is required to come to one of these two events, so please come to the one on your campus. Encourage others to attend and register through the email! We want to get an email out tomorrow.

Motion by Chris to approve minutes, seconded by MB. Approved unanimously.

c. **Budgetary Committee**

Chuky: We have 1 application under deliberation at the moment, waiting to hear back from the student org. 1 other application pending, will get that out to the committee meanwhile.

Benson: What happened to the appeal?

Phil: I've communicated with them, and they don't seem to be following up with that.

d. **Bylaw Review Committee**

e. **Communications Committee**

f. **Elections Committee**

g. **Legislative Affairs Committee**

Benson: SAGE is coming up very soon. There are opportunities for virtual participation during the conference, so we will be sending out that information as it becomes available. No minutes this week, will get them to the Board next week.

Phil: Reads off a list of the individuals we will be meeting with on the Hill, as well as some itinerary details.

Julian: Do the white papers that have been written represent RSG and/or Michigan, and do we get to vote on it?

Benson: Yes, there is an opportunity to vote on it. The committee will review it first, and it will be presented to the Board. However, the actual coalition SAGE directs the approval of the papers. That said, each campus does have veto powers. Per the bylaws, the university president (Phil) has those powers.

Phil: There's no reason for the Board to vote on it, however the members should definitely be engaged and provide feedback on the papers, etc.

h. **Student Life Committee**

Ben: We had a meeting today. Further events: planning a trivia night at Pizza House, poker night at Heidelberg, and maybe bar/happy hour at Dominic's.

Benson: Ongoing is the RSG bracket challenge. We have 490 participants, record numbers. We
have prize money set aside for the top 3 winners. Good work all.

VI. OPEN DISCUSSION

Benson: Since there is no VP, and there are a number of reps that are leaving the Board, someone needs to organize the end of year RSG banquet. Not mandatory but encouraged!

Benson: Last night CSG held a long meeting. They heard a resolution that they had initially postponed indefinitely. They voted down the resolution. I bring this up because RSG has not dealt with as heated an issue as this in some time. They chose to conduct the vote as a secret ballot, via provisions in their bylaws. I would like to inform the Board that we also have similar provisions to protect the Board members, and that we shouldn’t shy away from the tough/controversial issues.

Motion to adjourn by Ben, seconded by David. Meeting adjourned.

VII. ADJOURNMENT at 9:30PM.