WELCOME & DINNER

**VP Lucas Stevens:** Thank you everyone for being here. Thank you for your preparation and responsiveness to emails and cooperation. Thank you throughout this whole process, thank you. I want to make one note on our agenda: please make a mental note that we will take a vote on the technology fee decrease following the discussion on the technology fee. As well, I would ask that we all refrain from looking at our phones during the meeting and concentrate and be present. Moving forward, please return your student fee binders to the SILC Office on the third floor. I will send out an email to remind you about that. Please return your binders. As well, I wanted to say that a letter will be drafted summarizing our discussions, our votes, the process of this year’s student fee board and delivered to President Cockett with our decision in the form of a recommendation. I wanted to ask Sami to speak for a moment on some possible changes to fees and tuition.

**President Ahmed:** Thank you. So, the Utah System of Higher Education, we call them USHE, is looking at potentially changing how fees currently are constituted and they have asked each institution to review their current fees and look at making college more affordable and overall looking more into each fee and scrutinizing it more. So, that is something the University, President Cockett, and myself have been looking at and closely examining. In the next year or two you might see some policy change pertaining to fees. There have been things like reviewing fees every five years and seeing if there is still a need for them. Some fees start with one type of history and we forget why they are still there after ten years, but they are still being collected. We are just looking at overall affordability and also looking at things that students need that are currently supported by fees that could potentially be transitioned to tuition. Like if you are fully funding the library through a fee, you might want to put that onto tuition. There has been several of those changes coming. So be aware of that and some of the things we look at on fees might look different in a year or two.

**VP Lucas Stevens:** Now we will hear from Dr. Morales about the University executive’s recommendation.

**VP James Morales:** Thank you Lucas for some time to talk about my discussion with the University Executive Committee about the proposed fee changes that the Student Fee Board discussed last week. For those of you are not aware of the makeup of the Executive Committee of the University, this is the most senior administrative board at the University. It is chaired by President Cockett, so it is the President’s board if you will, and sitting on that executive committee are the deans of the eight colleges, as well as all the vice presidents that oversee divisions at the university, we also have other executive officers including the chief information officer, the chief audit officer, and the vice president and general counsel for legal affairs all sit on that committee. As you know per fee board policy, I am required to bring any recommended changes to the executive committee, not for them to vote but there are actually two expectations that we have of the executive committee. One is that they provide this board with their
input regarding each of the proposed changes to fees or new fees if that happens to be the case. The reason that input is important from this body is so they can see other areas of the University, in particular their areas of responsibility, they can see in those areas to see if there is something that could impact one of those proposed changes that this board is considering. For example, in years passed we were proposing an increase to one fee and a particular dean said ‘I’ve got a better way to address that.’ He had been thinking about that particular issue and he said ‘Let’s do it this way.’ He had some money set aside so, in the end, this board didn’t have to push that increase forward but were able to address it in that other fashion. So that is why it is important for that executive committee to have input to review these proposed changes and give some input. The other thing they do is if in a given year, there are multiple fee increases, decreases, new fees, what have you, we have asked the executive committee to provide us with a nonprioritized list of what fees they might support. Again, this is not to influence the decision you make, but just so we have an idea as a fee board where the senior administration sits with respect to the proposed changes. So, as per student fee board policy, I’ve made that presentation this morning at the executive committee, and presented the two proposed changes. First of all, I started with the ARC fee increase. At the last meeting, of course I took notes so that I can represent as accurately as possible the conversation that happened here. I also take a record of the straw poll that we took and I share that information with the executive committee members after which I seek their input. This year, of course, since there weren’t multiple requests that needed to be ranked in any way, they didn’t do that part. In respect to the ARC fee, there were no comments, there was no input, and there were no questions to me about that particular recommendation. So, I gave them adequate time to give me some feedback and there was none. It seemed like they were pleased or at least understood the rational behind that particular increase. By the way, I also made sure to share with them that there were concerns expressed about the $0.99 portion of the request and that some of those concerns had to with why there weren’t other alternative revenue streams being explored or have we looked closely enough at insuring there were optimal efficiency with respect to the current funding that is being used. So, I did voice those concerns that were raised by us at our first meeting. Again, having raised those concerns, there was no comments or input from them about that particular fee. Then I presented about the technology fee decrease and laid out to them why this board felt this was an important reduction to make. I did receive two questions about that particularly fee decrease. One question came from the Dean of the College of Engineering and then it was followed by Dean Cole, Dean of the Library. Their question was, will reducing the fee by the $1.60 impact funding for any of the other labs on campus. I said to them, the way I understand it, that $1.60 amount in the annual revenue of $57,600 was a direct calculation from taking the Old Main computer lab offline and that it would not affect the revenue stream for any of the other labs. Having said that, I opened the floor and asked them if they had any other questions, comments, or inputs that they wanted to share. I shared with them the straw poll vote outcome and there were no other comments, no other questions, no other input from that committee. That is my report from the university executive committee.

**VP Lucas Stevens:** Thank you Dr. Morales. So, our university student fees were recently audited and I had a chance to review that audit in the summer. It was pretty clear that we already have so many avenues in place for students to learn about student fees, access the resources that student fees provide, and we do an incredible job of being transparent. There were a few recommendations that were made to improve and those have already been taken into account this year.

**President Sami Ahmed:** I just want to add with what Dr. Morales said, Utah State University is probably the clear example within the state of how to be good stewards over fees and we both had a chance to review the audit and we were exemplary. Us and another institution was audited and we were by far stellar. We just can just thank the administration for giving us the opportunity and also for keeping an accountable record with what’s going on. It is good to get input.

**ARC FEE DISCUSSION/VOTE**

**VP Lucas Stevens:** We will move into the discussion on the ARC fee increase. As was recommended at our
last meeting if you had any questions you were to do your own research or reach out to Daniel. Before opening up I wanted to ask, were any of you able to meet with Daniel individually between now and our last meeting? Thank you. Let’s open up the discussion on the ARC fee increase. Please state your name and your title at the beginning of your comments. Speak clearly as well. I will also that you begin your comment with stating your position on the fee increase, “so I support this because” or “I’m in opposition because”.

**Senator Olivia Hoge:** I support the fee increase. I had the opportunity to talk to my council. They agreed unanimously that they should raise it to make sure renovations can keep going. We support it.

**VP Porter Casdorph:** I am in support of this fee with the stipulation that if there are any other shutdowns because of COVID that students will have a say on whether the ARC will be able to stay open as well as its hours and such.

**VP Lucas Stevens:** Those attending virtually via Zoom just need to type it in the chat and Sami will read it. We do have one coming through Zoom currently.

**President Sami Ahmed:** Chad Withers, a Student at Large is a Grad student in the College of Engineering. He would like to state that he opposes the fee increase. No other explanation.

**VP Jenn Ha:** I oppose the fee. I personally have talked to some of my neighbors and students that aren’t with involvement. It is unfair to put this deficit on students for a mistake and a promise that the leaders in 2015 couldn’t keep up with. We should find other ways to make up for that deficit before putting it on students that didn’t really have a say in 2015.

**VP Lucas Stevens:** I will make a comment to that. When I met with Daniel I asked him to explain that more. He explained that all budgets are really allocated and created based on projections. The student fee, the way I understand it, the student fee or the ARC student fee was created before construction on the ARC began. So, it has stayed the same number and that fee number was based off of projections for the bond payment. For upkeep and how much that would cost. Those projections were short and that’s what that deficit is coming to. Each student fee dollar comes up to about $33,000. Times that by 6.5 and I am in support of this fee in that I don’t know if fundraising efforts will cover that deficit or should be expected to.

**President Sami Ahmed:** We have another comment from Chad Withers. His statement with the fee is “less people are using the ARC for COVID and Logan Canyon is a great place for recreation. We also have Blacksmith Fork Canyon.” That is his statement on that.

**Senator Elizabeth Drake:** I am in support of this fee. I did contact Daniel and I asked him if he had those projections for the future and how his budget would change with that $6.50 increase. I was disappointed to not receive that in return. It didn’t change my stance on it, I would just like to see that worked on in the future and see that they can produce those projections. I work with the bus fee and they have 10-15-year projections that are really neat to look at and help you understand why they charge what they do. If students could see an image like that for the ARC it would be really helpful. The way I see that with the fee is we could continue to charge students the same thing and if we try to find alternate funding, we limit how much they can use the ARC. They’re being charged the same thing and they’re getting less out of it. They cut hours, students lose jobs and what they get out of their fee is not the same. Or we raise the fee and continue to serve them in the same we have been and that seems like the better option.
President Sami Ahmed: Motion to exhaust speakers list.

Senator Cooper Karras: To encourage the ARC to be more efficient and plan a little bit for the future I would be interested in instead of giving them $6.50, and if I’m not mistaken, the $5.50 was for the bond payment and the $1 was to cover future projection expenses to create a fund. I would like to say maybe instead of a $1 in student fees to maybe 50 cents and give the ARC the opportunity to look for other ways to come up with that expense and being more efficient in how they operate. I would like to make a proposal to alter the student fee increase to $6.00 flat.

Senator Olivia Hoge: Seconded

VP Lucas Stevens: The motion is to vote on that? Further discussion on that proposal?

Senator Olivia Hoge: I think that is a good idea. Like Senator Drake said I worked on the transportation committee last year and saw their projections and this is a good compromise because we are giving them the money but still trying to see what they can do for themselves and where they can pull funds from.

President Sami Ahmed: I would oppose going to $6.00 flat. I think we should keep the $6.50. This extra amount needs to be significant enough that any expenses moving forward should totally be covered by that instead of them having to come back in the future and ask for more. We should give enough room for extra repairs or other projections that might come and give them wiggle room instead of cutting that in half.

Senator Cooper Karras: Rebuttal to President Ahmed, if there is not a projection on why there was 99 cents, I would be more confident if they had projections as to why it’s a dollar. The 50 cents gives them an opportunity to create a fund and get that other 50 cents per student in other ways. Ergo being more efficient in how they are with their fees. There were comments brought up about how the student fee is being used currently. This way the bond payment would be met so they wouldn’t have to look at major changes, but maybe there are ways that they could come up with that 50 cents. Especially if this is a hypothetical where they haven’t given us projections on why they are the way they are.

Senator Austin Flitton: I am tempted to agree with Sami. I have full confidence in our checks and balances system. What we talked about in the beginning of the meeting is the university has proven that our administration is making sure our funds our being allocated to the right places and for the right reasons with the students in mind. I agree with the increase because if there is an excess in the future I have full confidence that they will shut that fee down if it is an excess fund. I have full confidence in the increase and the administration.

VP Lucas Stevens: When I met with Daniel the 99 cents in debate right now. Well first I would add to Austin’s comment that there is a student policy board in place, and while our faith is in administration, students would also have a say as well. Going over with Daniel the unforeseen costs and how big those really are, how much it would really cost to replace a broken window pane or an outdoor bathroom or broken equipment. That 99 cents wasn’t arrived on without a lot of thought. I think we can also assume that measures are going to be taken to cut costs with personnel changes and other measures.

Director Rachel Arner: I’m finding myself agreeing with Senator Karras on the fact that I have stressed this in the past meeting, but due to the apparent inefficiency I have seen in the last 3 years. I was hesitant to agree because I want to see the ARC function to the benefit of the students. I agree with Senator Karras
that the 50 cents taken off makes a lot of sense to me.

**President Sami Ahmed:** I’m keeping a speaker’s list so if you guys can raise your hands, I did want to make a comment to the 99 cents. The initial increase was supposed to be $3 more than it is. We felt that $3 would be way too much, but a $1 increase for unforeseen costs would be an appropriate projection. There was a compromise there. There has been some give and take and compromise.

**Senator Cooper Karras:** To Senator Flitton’s remarks, I too have a tremendous amount of trust in administration. My reactions with Gary Egbert show that with the technology fee decreasing. But looking at your binders it is hard to see other administrators lowering that budget. The effort of the body decreasing the fee if we have to is a more worthwhile cause than increasing it now when we didn’t have to. Until we have a clearer reason as to why that fund is being created, then I think we can look into more reasoning and hypotheticals about amounts. This is a good compromise to give the opportunity to be more efficient. And if we need to increase this by 50 cents next year, to me, that’s not a bad thing. But if we extend it now we have the concern we won’t get that money back. I think Gary Egbert is the exception to the rule when it comes to student fees.

**VP Porter Casdorph:** We have $283,000 roughly for the total operating expenses. That is about 15% increase towards his total operating expense. Being the 50 cents would obviously be half that. I don’t know what any increasing annual costs are going to bring, and I don’t feel like they are going to be more than 7.5% alone 15%.

**Senator Brock Hardcastle:** I am the representative for the ARC fee, I can assure you I went through these funds with Daniel. I have confidence in the numbers and his intent. I wanted to solidify that. I asked him those questions so if there were further concerns you could contact me. I might be opposed to seeing if the 99 cents could be reduced I disagree with coming up with an arbitrary projection of 50 cents. If we decide to reduce it, I would rather it be a more thought out projection than just a number we come up with in this room.

**VP Trevor Wilkey:** I stand for the original fee increase. In rebuttal to Director Arner, we need to look at the long-term mitigation of the risk we are about to face. If we were to project this over 10 years that’s about $350,000. That’s for risk and any money that can be poured into that quasi-account which we do need to replenish for the legacy fields when they need to be renewed again. I agree with President Ahmed that if there was the higher fund that would keep that open to students longer. We also have to account for money lost from that quasi-account to make bond payments. There is a lot of factors that go into this. So, for an increase of 99 cents to provide those services like the field and replenish for everything else that we are doing is a small factor for students to pay.

**President Sami Ahmed:** Chad Withers has added further comments through Zoom. Campuses in other parts of the country would be astounded to have a tenth of the outdoor recreation opportunities we have out our back door. The ARC doesn’t do much for off-campus students. I can’t support the ARC until parking is improved. We can’t keep spending money like this and then passing it on to students, many of who are in a financial pickle. If it was up to me I would sell the ARC.

**Senator Olivia Hoge:** I have a couple questions for President Ahmed. How did you go about discussing the increase? How did you come up with that projection to bring the increase from $3.00 to $1.00?

**President Sami Ahmed:** initially before Daniel did projections we were assuming the increase would only
be around $3 and we had a similar idea on going up to $6 to cover additional expenses. Heating could be
$40,000 or so, but once Daniel went back and did the calculations it ended up being $5.50, and the initial
ask was to go up to $3.00. An appropriate one might be to go $36,000 seems like a lot to us when we are
in college but giant systemic things that go on at the school that’s nothing. That’s where we came from.
When I explained to Daniel that $3 would be too much he asked me where the idea should be and I asked
him to come up with realistic expectations. He said 99 cents and I went higher than he suggested.

VP James Morales: I have a couple points of information. First of all, to piggyback on what President
Ahmed said about expenses for specific systems, about 5 years ago a chiller went out in this building. This
building is not connected to the rest of the system on campus because of its age. But a chiller went out
and we were thinking oh maybe $50,000 or so. When we got the price tag it was $250,000 to replace one
of the three chillers. These are pretty significant costs. Now the ARC is a new building so you shouldn’t
expect those expenses too soon, but it will come. These expenses are not easy to come up with without
building those reserves. The second point of information gets back to Chad’s point about parking for the
ARC. We built it specifically without parking. That building is all about wellness. The last thing you need to
do to get to that building is to drive to it: ride your bikes, ride your scooters, don’t drive. If we had put
more parking in the middle of campus, what would that have done to our congestion problem or our air
quality problem. The ARC isn’t supposed to contribute to those problems. We specifically did not build it
with parking for those reasons.

VP Lucas Stevens: Seeing no further comments we will vote on Senator Karras’ motion to vote on a new
proposal for $6.00. All in favor of voting on this proposal?

Yes: 11

VP Lucas Stevens: There were 11 votes yes, so this motion fails. We will now move back to the original
proposal. I would entertain a motion to vote on this proposal.

Senator Cooper Karras: Point of information, if someone is not in attendance do they count as an
abstention?

VP Lucas Stevens: Yes. All in favor of voting on the original proposal raise your hand. The motion passes.

Yes: 18

No: 4

VP Lucas Stevens: All in favor of the $6.50 increase to the ARC Fee, please raise your hand.

Yes: 18

No: 6

VP Lucas Stevens: The motion passes. We will now move on to the technology fee increase.

TECHNOLOGY FEE DISCUSSION/VOTE

VP Lucas Stevens: I will entertain a motion to vote on the fee decrease.
Yes: Unanimous

**VP Lucas Stevens:** The motion passes. Thank you for your time. I feel like we’ve had some great discussion. This concluded our fee board meeting.

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Linda Zimmerman, James Morales, Whitney Pugh, Sophia May

Officers: VP Lucas Stevens, President Sami Ahmed, Senator Alex Braeger, VP Jenn Ha, Director Rachel Arner, Senator Cooper Karras, VP Porter Casdorph, VP Trevor Wilkey, Senator Ryker Marble, Senator Maria Catalano, Senator Elizabeth Drake, Senator Olivia Hoge, Senator Noah Braeger, VP Oscar Diaz, Senator Brock Hardcastle, Senator Austin Flitton

Jonathan Ashdown, Niyonta Chowdhury-Magana, Hailey Darrow, Braden Morrill, Andrea Cumming, Clark Rawson, Chad Withers