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Resolution requests Chief Justice Nigro resign from position

By Betsy Miller

A resolution requesting that UNL Student Court Chief Justice Joe Nigro resign his position immediately was passed by the ASUN Senate Wednesday night.

The senators went into closed session for about an hour and debated the issue. The resolution states that court actions earlier this year were questionable.

Last week the senate created a committee to investigate the court's actions in a case involving the ASUN Electoral Commission and its director, Jennifer Fager.

The senate said actions of Nigro and the court had been inconsistent with the Judicial Code. The investigative committee submitted a report to the senate Wednesday stating that several procedural errors occurred in court deliberations this year.

By a vote of 19-9-1, the senate passed the resolution introduced by Sens. Jim Willett, Kathy Roth and Mike Barnhill.

Nigro said his plan to serve as chief justice hasn't changed for next year.

He said he was speaking for himself, not the court.

"I think that what's gone on is just a joke. It makes ASUN look just as silly as it ever has," he said.

He described the senate committee's actions as a witch hunt and said the fact the senate went into closed session both last week and this week shows it has "no guts."

Nigro said his comments were not meant for ASUN President Dan Wedekind or Marlene Beyke, ASUN's director of development.

The senate does not have the authority to force Nigro to resign, ASUN Second Vice President Bob Fitzgerald said. It can merely request that he do so.

Roth told the senators that the request should be made now because if the senate waited until the summer was over senators might not remember enough of the case to want to take action.

But Sen. Merrill Warkentin said the resolution "sounds like an indictment," and he urged the senate to delay action until Nigro has a chance to explain his views.

The investigative committee reported that Nigro and other court members did not talk to the committee because they were still deliberating the Fager case.

Earlier Wednesday the court ruled that Fager was guilty of giving false statements during court hearings and requested that she resign her appointed post as a court justice for next year.



Photo by Dave Bentz

Bob Kerrey and Stan DeBoer spoke at a gubernatorial candidates forum Wednesday afternoon in the Nebraska Union.

Gubernatorial hopefuls talk of ideas

By Pat Higgins

Bob Kerrey, candidate for the Democratic gubernatorial nomination, said he plans to vote for the Lincoln gay rights amendment in the May 11 primary election. He spoke at a candidates' forum in the Nebraska Union Wednesday afternoon, which was sponsored by the Students for Political Awareness.

All four gubernatorial candidates were invited to the forum, but State Sen. Bill Burrows of Adams, a Democratic candidate, and Gov. Charles Thone, a Republican, were not present.

As a member of the Lincoln Human Rights Committee, Kerrey said housing or employment rights are not special treatment for gays. Kerrey said he doesn't believe that gay teachers would necessarily be a problem.

"I sometimes wonder about a lot of heterosexuals that we have teaching," Kerrey said.

The Norden Dam should not be built, but it is up to Congress to stop the project, he said.

Kerrey said he favors some form of a nuclear freeze.

Nuclear weapons are the biggest threat of our time, he said.

Kerrey, a Lincoln businessman, said government should not just be reduced but should be run more efficiently.

"I don't like to hear people say that 5 percent unemployment is full employment," Kerrey said. "We need a real form of full employment."

Kerrey said that as governor he would consider making state funds available for student loans.

Stan DeBoer, a farmer from Bertrand running for the Republican nomination for governor, said students should be politically concerned because their loans are being cut. He said the university needs more funds, but the money available for education depends on the state's economy. DeBoer blamed the state of the economy on poor leadership. He said Nebraska's economy depends on agriculture, but agriculture is in trouble because of the 1981 Farm Bill passed by Congress.

DeBoer said the entire economy has declined in the last year though.

"I want people to ask themselves whether they are better off today than they were a year ago," DeBoer said.

Director Fager found guilty; court asks that she resign

By Betsy Miller

The UNL Student Court has requested that Jennifer Fager, ASUN Electoral Commission director, resign her position on the court for next year.

The court ruled that Fager was guilty of giving false statements during hearings in February and March and that she should not accept her appointment as an associate justice. She was appointed by the ASUN Senate Feb. 17, before allegations of misleading testimony appeared.

However, Fager said she has no intention of resigning her court position.

The court does not have the power to force Fager to resign her position: all it can do is request it, Fager said.

"It's kind of frivolous to ask me to resign — it's sort of like asking me to impose a sanction on myself," she said.

Fager said the court has violated several provisions of the judicial code while processing her case.

She claims the court did not give her an expedient trial, that it could not initiate a separate hearing on her alleged testimony offenses and rule on the case because of conflict of interest, and that the court did not even swear in all of its witnesses during the hearings.

The original case against Fager began when two UNL students filed a complaint

with the commission charging it had allowed some candidates in the ASUN election to post campaign signs before others.

March 1, the court ruled that the commission failed to rule clearly on the poster issue and that Fager had given misleading testimony during two appearances before the court.

Fager had asked for a dismissal of the case against her, but the court turned down that appeal and released its statement requesting her to resign.

Fager said she thinks Chief Justice Joe Nigro hasn't done a good job.

"I personally think that Nigro should resign, because I feel he's unfit to serve," she said.

She said she could appeal the court's ruling to the Administrative Appeals Board, but she is not sure whether she will.

Nigro said it's important that Fager realize the ruling came not just from him, but from the court as a whole.

"I think it's important that people sit and look at the hard, cold facts, and the facts are that false testimony was given," Nigro said.

He said the court made its request hoping that Fager would realize she should not be a court justice. He said he hoped she would appeal the ruling if she is not satisfied and that she won't simply disobey the request and be a justice next year.

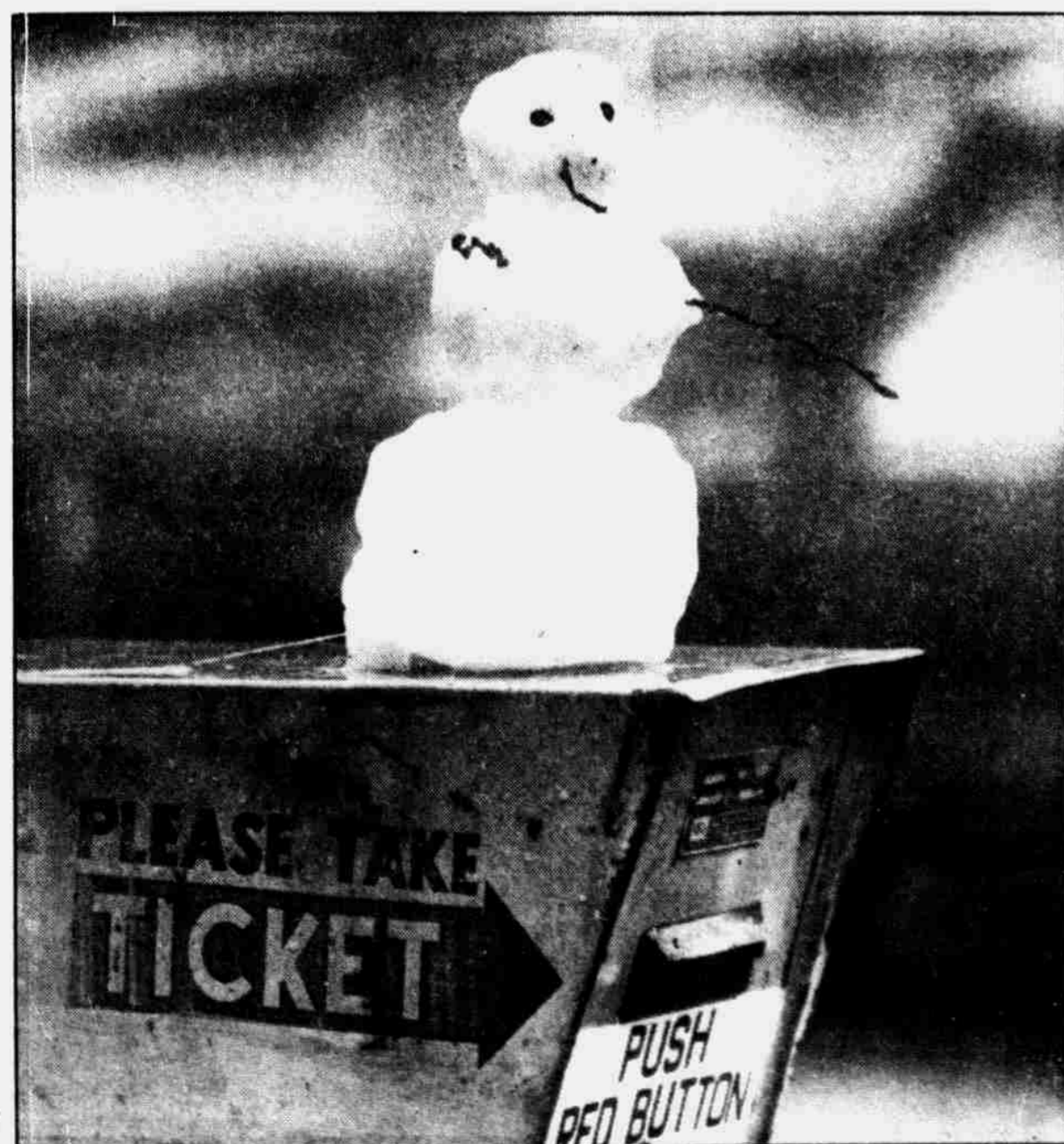


Photo by D. Eric Kircher

A late-season snowman guards the ticket dispenser of the parking lot at 12th and Q streets.