Bennington College
November 17, 1942

An extra meeting of the College Council was held in Mrs. Garrett's apartment on Monday, November 9, at 5:45 p.m. The following members were present: Eleanor Metcalf, Chairman, Mr. Brockway, Geraldine Babcock, Mrs. Garrett, Miss Grimwood, Miss Peplau, Marjorie Handwerk, Edith Stevens, Jeanne Gaudy. Absent: Phyllis Preston.

The purpose of the extra meeting of the College Council was to discuss a petition brought to the attention of the College Council and signed by ten percent of the student body to allow two dogs, belonging to students, to be brought on campus during the day. The petition was a request for the College Council to grant permission.

The problems raised by the petition were:

1. If the petition was refused, it would have to be brought to a Community Meeting for discussion and a vote of the whole College.

2. If the petition was accepted on the basis that it was an exception, the College Council would have to take into consideration all petitions of a like nature that would eventually arise.

Last year there was some difficulty with pets of students on campus. The Council formulated a policy whereby no student was allowed to have any pet at College. A vote of the student body was taken and the result was 149 for allowing pets, versus 103 against. Miss Shelley, however, claimed that 149 was not a plurality (on a two-thirds basis), and therefore the decision of the former Community Council should stand. As several students felt that the formation of this policy was unfair, the present petition was introduced in order to have a community vote taken once again to clarify the policy concerning pets.

The Council had certain very definite recommendations to make:

1. That the petition be turned down with a statement from the Council to explain its action. The decision of the Council and the explanation should be posted on the Bulletin Board in the Store.

2. That the petition be brought up in a Community meeting. There would be only two speakers, one for those who wanted pets, and the other for those who did not. The speakers would be allowed 7½ minutes apiece (15 minutes altogether) in which to present their cases. After the speakers were through, the Community would vote.

3. That this discussion be held at the Community meeting already planned for the 23rd of November.

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4. That the part of the Constitution be revised which defines a plurality. (See Section XII. H.) This revision, however, should be done after the meeting of November 23.

5. If the decision of the community was in favor of allowing pets on campus during the day, the girls in the houses in which the pets were to be introduced should be consulted in a house meeting and a written vote be taken as to whether or not they wanted the pets. It was suggested that the House Chairmen might ask that the girls who owned the pets under discussion absent themselves from the meeting in order to avoid too emotional a discussion. This, however, would be left to the discretion of the Chairmen.

Respectfully submitted,

Suzanne Sigourney, Secretary,
College Council