

0

SHARES

[ShareTweet](#)

680 views

David Yarbrough

dyarbrough@radford.edu

I first heard about the flooding around 5:30 when I got a text message and phone call," said Radford freshman Shannon McMannus. "At first, my suite mate and I thought it couldn't be that bad, but once we got out to Lot Z, I was devastated."

"When I saw my car halfway underwater I couldn't help but cry," said McMannus. "That car was passed down to me and has been in our family for a long time so it really sucked when I realized I wasn't getting it back."

According to Joe Carpenter, the Vice President for University Relations and Chief Communications Officer, 142 vehicles, 108 of which were owned by students, were affected after the Claytor Lake Dam was forced to make a release shortly after midnight. Nearly three weeks later many questions still remain unanswered.

Last Wednesday, the Student Government Association organized a parking super committee chaired by SGA On-Campus Senator, Wendy Viana. The event was held in Heth Hall with about twenty five people in attendance.

The meeting started with students sharing their individual experiences during the flood. Everyone who spoke said they weren't notified until 5:30 a.m. when the RU Alert System sent out phone calls and text messages. There were other confirmed cases, though, where students in the same buildings were told by their RAs to move their vehicles hours earlier. Some students in the audience felt like they were being unfairly characterized by the media as dumb and lazy.

McManus, who only moved to Radford in August after leaving her home in northern Virginia. "Flooding was never an issue where I'm from."

During the meeting, three sign-up sheets were passed around to join different subcommittees.

The fundraising subcommittee, headed by Brooke Caldwell, SGA Off-Campus Senator, is focused on trying to recoup some of the lost money. Some of the different ideas were to have a fashion show, carnival, or basketball game where the money generated would be divided among the people who didn't have flood coverage. Another idea was to reach out to local businesses and see if they would be willing to donate 10 percent of their profits during a certain time period.

The investigative subcommittee is led by Lee Hicks, SGA At-Large Senator. Their goal is to

find out exactly what went wrong.

"I didn't personally lose anything but it just seems to me like someone who works at the school should be here to answer some questions," said freshman student Adam DeGennaro. Adam Kidd, Junior Class President of SGA, wanted to make it clear why the meeting was taking place. "We aren't here to demonize the university or President Kyle, we are here to come up with solutions and find answers so that this doesn't happen again."

While he couldn't speak on behalf of the university, Assistant Dean of Students David Horton was in attendance and shared his condolences for the hardships students are suffering.

One of the suggestions made was to try and organize a panel with President Kyle, representatives for Radford University Police Department, Office of Emergency Preparedness, Claytor Lake Dam, and a few other individuals to analyze how things could be managed better to ensure this doesn't happen again.

The third and final subcommittee formed was for parking facilities to try and find alternatives such as a parking garage.

"I was extremely happy with the amount of students that turned out as well as the great ideas they brought to the table," said Justin Blankenship, Vice President of SGA. "I encourage any students, whether they were affected or not, to come out to the next meeting or come to our office in Bonnie 209 anytime to speak with us about any concerns or comments they may have."

Many students are beginning to see the SGA as a good source of action when an incident occurs. The additions of possibly more parking on and nearby campus should help prevent students from having to park so far which can also prevent future damage to vehicles. More alternatives can be done such as maybe allowing students to be able to leave cars parked on campus longer during the academic day.