

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

BOARD OF REGENTS

Public Forum on the University Budget

June 13, 2007

A meeting of the Board of Regents was held on Wednesday, June 13, 2007 at 1:00 p.m. in the Boardroom, 600 McNamara Alumni Center.

Regents present: Patricia Simmons, presiding; Dallas Bohnsack, Maureen Cisneros, Linda Cohen, Venora Hung, Steven Hunter, David Larson, and David Metzen. Clyde Allen, Anthony Baraga, and John Frobenius participated by telephone.

Staff present: President Robert Bruininks; Senior Vice President and Provost Thomas Sullivan; Vice President Kathryn Brown; and Acting Executive Director Carol Kraus.

Regent Patricia Simmons, Vice Chair of the Board of Regents, welcomed those in attendance to the Board of Regents Public Forum on the University Budget. She noted that the University of Minnesota Crookston, Duluth, Morris, and Rochester campuses were connected to the meeting via an interactive television connection. She reviewed the procedures to be followed for the meeting and stated that the Board of Regents intends to vote on the proposed budget at the June 27, 2007 Board meeting.

The following individuals were then called forward:

Gary Balas – Professor, Aerospace Engineering and Mechanics; Incoming Chair, Faculty Consultative Committee

Professor Balas spoke on behalf of the Faculty Consultative Committee and expressed support for the proposed FY08 operating budget. He observed that the budget presents good outcomes for students, especially those that are financially disadvantaged. Balas added that the proposed tuition changes will take the University in the right direction.

Galen O'Connor – Former University Employee

Ms. O'Connor urged the University to produce a smaller budget that focuses primarily on educational programs. She commented that the University puts too much funding into faculty salaries and facilities maintenance.

Matt Schmit – Vice President, Graduate and Professional Student Assembly

Mr. Schmit commended the University on the vision of strategic positioning and the overall budget plan, but expressed concern regarding the proposed tuition of some of the graduate and professional programs.

Judy Rheault – Parent of Student at University of Wisconsin

Ms. Rheault expressed support for the current reciprocity agreement with Wisconsin and encouraged the University to work out a revised agreement in which the tuition difference between the two states would go directly to the institution instead of the State of Minnesota general fund. She expressed frustration over the amount of money applied to athletic contracts in the past year and asked the University to focus greater attention on academic endeavors.

Phyllis Walker - AFSCME

Ms. Walker explained that AFSCME members would focus their remarks on a growing income disparity among employees at the University. She stated that the salaries of top administrators at the University have increased at a much greater rate than union employees in recent years.

Polly Peterson - AFSCME

Ms. Peterson reviewed a handout presented to the Board, as contained in the docket materials. She noted that AFSCME employee salaries have decreased 4.84 percent when adjusted for inflation between 1994 and 2006.

Barbara Bezat - AFSCME

Ms. Bezat reviewed a handout presented to the Board, as contained in the docket materials. She observed that among the employee groups statistically presented on the handout, AFSCME employees were the only group to show a negative trend in income when adjusted for inflation.

Denise Osterholm - AFSCME

Ms. Osterholm commented that AFSCME employees on the Duluth campus do not feel as though they have been treated fairly in terms of salary increases and urged the University to provide a greater salary increase to lower paid employees.

Greg Knoblauch - AFSCME

Mr. Knoblauch stated that the growing income disparity is not due to a lack of funding, but rather the priorities put forth by the University. He observed that the quality and quantity of union employees brings great value to the University and challenged the Board to demonstrate support for AFSCME workers.

Emma Olson - President, Minnesota Student Association

Ms. Olson identified low tuition increases, increased scholarship support, and priority funding for faculty retention as areas of great impact to students at the University. She expressed support for the focus on student safety and the related increase in the size of the University police force.

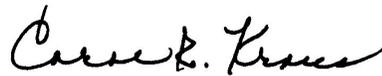
Toby Madden - Student; Parent of Incoming Student

Mr. Madden urged the University to continue the current reciprocity agreement with Wisconsin. He commented that the University has strayed from its primary academic mission and should explore improving business processes that will allow for more funding to flow into education.

Tom Fisher - Dean, College of Design; Incoming Chair, Twin Cities Deans Council

Dean Fisher spoke on behalf of the Twin Cities Deans Council and expressed support for the tuition and scholarship changes included in the budget. He observed that merit-based salary increases for high achieving faculty members will promote faculty retention.

The meeting adjourned at 1:35 p.m.



CAROL E. KRAUS
Acting Executive Director and
Corporate Secretary