

[In these minutes: LRT Update, Elections]

STUDENT SENATE CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE (SSCC) MINUTES

MAY 9, 2013

[These minutes reflect discussion and debate at a committee of the University of Minnesota Senate; none of the comments, conclusions, or actions reported in these minutes represent the views of, nor are they binding on, the Senate, the Administration, or the Board of Regents.]

PRESENT: Adam Matula (chair), Ben Baglio, Prahith Chakka, Nicole Conti, Karl Freese, Joe Inhofer, Andrew McNally, Ryan Olson, Evan Vogel, and Moshe Volovik.

ABSENT: Brandon Breuer, Gyaltsa Gurung, Vivek Nagaraj.

GUESTS: Sandy Cullen.

1. LRT UPDATE

Sandy Cullen, Assistant Director for Parking and Transportation Services (PTS), joined the meeting to provide an update on the light rail transit (LRT) project. The train is anticipated to begin running in the summer of 2014. Construction is finishing now with road and sidewalk fixes being made and electrical and signaling installation which does not involve much surface work. Testing will begin in late summer and will be more in-depth due to two changes around the University. First is the floating slab that was necessary to prevent any vibrations into surrounding buildings that could disrupt research. The second is a double split power supply, not used anywhere else in the world, that is meant to cancel electromagnetic interference from the LRT.

As for biking on campus, bikes will ride along most of Washington Avenue, sharing the lanes with emergency management vehicles and some buses. As bikes will not be allowed on the lower-level of the bridge, there will be two crossovers on the South end of the mall to permit bicycles to travel across the mall and then reach the upper bridge deck. Striping will be done this summer to accommodate bicycles on the mall.

Regarding buses, the Campus Connectors will have the same route and will again stop at Coffman Union, but the next stop will be at Oak Street, not outside the PTS building. The Blegen Hall stop will remain on the West Bank. The Washington Avenue Bridge Circulator will also be back, but there is no start date set for either route. Metro Transit originally wanted the buses to permanently use the same lanes as bicycles, but there are too many bikers in this area to make it safe. Therefore Metro Transit will reduce some of their buses in this area and all buses will share the light rail lane except when the trains are at a stop. Then the buses will drive around on the bike lane.

Q: Is there anyway to put the bicycles crossovers somewhere besides the South end of the mall?

A: No, there is no way to avoid this area or to have less than the two crossovers.

Q: What is the possibility of a fare free zone?

A: A University zone has been discussed where service would be free to faculty, staff, and students or to everyone in a set area on campus. Logistics still need to be determined as everyone needs to be provided with a ticket to count passenger usage. It is possible that Metro Transit might want the University to pay for this option, but nothing has been determined yet.

Q: What percentage of students have a U-Pass?

A: Before LRT construction began, it was 44 percent, but 3600 riders were lost when the routes were less convenient. The hope is that these numbers will rise again once the LRT is complete.

Q: What is the status of bicycle lanes under 35W?

A: There is no status update on this project. There is also City of Minneapolis project to add bicycles lanes from bridge 9 to the transitway, which will open this summer. Access to this trail has been provided by the University but it is a shared service drive.

2. CHAIR'S REPORT

Adam Matula noted that his only update was that the May Student Advisory Committee (SAC) meeting might be cancelled.

3. STUDENT ASSOCIATE/ASSEMBLY UPDATES

Ben Baglio noted that Morris is organized for the next year.

Joe Inhofer reported that RSA held its first meeting and elections took place for the Student Senate and SSCC representatives.

Ryan Olson said that the final MSA forum was held on Tuesday. They have been collecting ideas from students on the topic of what to fix at the University but now they need to decide how to address these concerns.

Nicole Conti said that the new GAPSA constitution and bylaws were approved. Andrew McNally was elected as the COGS president and SSCC representative.

4. DISCUSSION OF PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE REGENTS POLICY ON TUITION AND FEES

Adam Matula stated that these amendments are before SSCC as it is one of the Senate committees that is listed to review changes to this policy.

Members made the following comments:

- Changes are straight forward
- Regular review process prompted these changes
- Policy should note that students should have direct input into this process

There were no objections or concerns regarding the proposed amendments.

5. 2013-14 ELECTIONS

- Ben Baglio was elected as the 2012-13 Student Senate/SSCC Vice Chair
- Ben Baglio, Andrew McNally, and Karl Freese were elected as the SSCC representatives to the Committee on Committees
- Ryan Olson was elected as the SSCC representative on the Student Senate Nominating Subcommittee

6. OTHER BUSINESS

With no further business, Adam Matula thanked all members for their service this year and adjourned the meeting.

Becky Hippert
University Senate