

[In these minutes: Healthcare Quality Forum on November 14, Central Corridor Light Rail Transit (CCLRT) Update, Graduate and Professional Tuition Fixing]

## **ACADEMIC HEALTH CENTER STUDENT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE (AHC SCC) MINUTES**

**NOVEMBER 6, 2013**

**5:00 - 6:00 p.m.**

**488 CHILD REHAB CENTER**

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

**PRESENT:** Christine Myers (chair), Sandy Dong, JonPaul Dragseth, Renee Larson, Gina Gibson, Riley Hauschildt, Amanda Koethe, Susan Lee, Rose Lemke, Courtney Mason, Maeve Trick, Abby Sauer, Marissa Wagar, Andrew Weaver

**REGRETS:** Arnes Huskic, Alexandria Kahlert, Ian Reynolds, Chris Thomson

**GUESTS:** Tim Busse from University Services and Ashley Hall from GAPSA

**OTHERS ATTENDING:** Gina Kundan and George Sakkal from CHIP

I). Christine Myers convened the meeting, welcomed those present and called for a round of introductions.

II). Ms. Myers reminded members about the invitation they should have received from Associate Vice President Brandt, Office of Education, inviting them to attend a forum on healthcare quality on Thursday, November 14 at noon in Moos 2-650. The forum is being sponsored by the Medical School Alpha Omega Alpha (AOA), the Department of Medicine Grand Rounds and the AHC Deans. She encouraged members who are available to attend the event.

III). Next, Ms. Myers welcomed Tim Busse, communications director, University Services, who was invited to provide the committee with a Central Corridor Light Rail Transit (CCLRT) update. Mr. Busse began by distributing a handout containing information about the Green Line and highlighted the following:

- The Green Line is approximately 97% complete.
- When complete, the Green Line will connect downtown Minneapolis with downtown St. Paul (Target Field to Union Depot).
- The line will be unique to a college campus in terms of having a light rail line running through the middle of it.
- The line is scheduled to be operational next spring/summer. Full-scale testing will begin late spring, probably late March/April. The goal is to have the line running for the 2014 All Star Game, which is on July 17 at Target Field.
- From the onset of this project, the University had been concerned about the vibration and electro-magnetic interference from the LRT on the research facilities along Washington Avenue, but these concerns have been alleviated. The certification testing, which tested the floating slab and double split power supply, has been completed. Test results indicate the mitigation remedies (the floating slab and double split power supply) proved to be successful.

- Buses will return to Washington Avenue as of December 7, 2013. Driver training is currently underway. Buses and LRT will be sharing the tracks for a good portion of Washington Avenue. The bike lanes will also open on Washington Avenue on December 7. Buses will stop at Coffman and Oak Street.
- Research indicates that the busier an area, the safer it is. Safety on Washington Avenue will be a big issue. The University, in conjunction with Metro Transit, will rollout a comprehensive safety program at the start of spring semester.
- Regarding whether or not there will be a free fare zone, is still under discussion. Met Transit is not in favor of a free fare zone, and would like every student to be required to have a Go-To Card. Negotiations between the University and Met Transit around this issue are continuing.

Members' questions:

- Will only Metro Transit buses be running on Washington Avenue beginning December 7 or other buses as well, e.g., Campus Connectors? Mr. Busse clarified and stated that all buses that were removed from Washington Avenue will return to Washington Avenue on December 7.
- Will cars be allowed on Washington Avenue? Mr. Busse noted that car traffic will never again be allowed on Washington Avenue from the bridge to Walnut Street S.E. This portion of Washington Avenue has been designated for trains, buses, bicycles, pedestrians and emergency vehicles (police and ambulances) only.
- When the trains start running on Washington Avenue, will the buses be removed again? No, stated Mr. Busse, but the number of buses will be reduced significantly. He added that the 50 and 16 bus routes will officially end at TCF Bank Stadium, and riders will be expected to get on a train in order to get to downtown Minneapolis.

Ms. Myers thanked Mr. Busse for this update and he in turn thanked the committee for their time.

IV). Ms. Myers then welcomed Ashley Hall, an executive board member of GAPSA (Graduate and Professional Student Assembly) who had been invited to talk about tuition fixing for graduate and professional students and the issue of higher education sustainability. She began by providing members with background information on how she became interested in this issue and her proposal for remedying it. Members were also given a copy of a GAPSA resolution on this topic.

Approximately 10 years ago, noted Ms. Hall, the Medical School implemented a guaranteed tuition program. This program was adopted, in part, to incentivize non-traditional students to complete their program in six years. Offering such a program gives Medical School students the ability to do financial planning and also serves to reduce concerns and uncertainty they may have around the annual tuition setting process.

Although each program has very different financial needs and requirements, offering a guaranteed tuition program for all graduate and professional programs, in Ms. Hall's opinion, would increase the appeal of the University. She added that given the Medical School was able to implement a guaranteed tuition program, she questioned why other graduate and professional programs can't do the same. Ms. Hall rhetorically asked at what point will graduate and professional students decide they are paying too much.

Ms. Hall reported that she is currently in the research phase of addressing this issue. She solicited members' help in getting feedback from other professional students on their thoughts about tuition and also talking with their school's budget officer and other senior

leadership to learn about the program budget and discuss ideas for dealing with the escalating tuition issue. Ms. Hall stated that it is her goal to get graduate and professional students to get involved and really start thinking about this issue. She believes that if higher education is to be sustainable in the long run something needs to be done about the ever-increasing tuition rates, particularly for graduate and professional students. This issue also needs to be brought to the attention of the legislature, noted Ms. Hall, if any progress is to be made. A member thanked Ms. Hall for taking on this issue because it is on the minds of a number of graduate and professional students. Another member requested Ms. Hall provide them with a list of questions they should be asking senior administrators in each of the programs. Ms. Hall stated that she would be happy to do this and would send the questions to Renee Dempsey, Senate staff, for distribution to the committee.

Ms. Myers thanked Ms. Hall for her presentation. Ms. Hall thanked members for their time and stated that she would keep them updated on her progress.

V). Before adjourning, Ms. Myers asked members for any ideas they have for future agenda items. A member suggested inviting the new vice president/dean of the Medical School to a spring meeting. Ms. Dempsey asked Ms. Kundan and Mr. Sakkal if they would be willing to provide a CHIP update, and they agreed.

Mr. Sakkal reported that CHIP is going to be remodeled soon. The remodeling will likely take place in January and be completed by the start of spring semester. A member asked if the space was going to be expanded. Mr. Sakkal noted that the space will stay the same size but just be remodeled.

VI). Hearing no further business, Ms. Myers adjourned the meeting, and thanked members for attending.

Renee Dempsey  
University Senate