

Minutes*

Senate Committee on Finance and Planning
Tuesday, April 17, 2001
2:15 – 4:00
238A Morrill Hall

Present: Charles Speaks (chair), Brittney McCarthy Barnes, Jean Bauer, Stanley Bonnema, Charles Campbell, David Chapman, Daniel Feeney, Stephen Gudeman, Wendell Johnson, Michael Korth, Elo Charity Oju, Richard Pfutzenreuter, Jane Phillips, Terry Roe, Rose Samuel, Susan Carlson Weinberg

Regrets: Joseph Konstan, Cory Stingl

Absent: Eric Kruse, Michael Volna, J. Peter Zetterberg

Guests: Professor Emeritus Warren Ibele; Mr. Jason Reed (Student Senate Consultative Committee); Vice President Christine Maziar; Executive Vice President Robert Bruininks

Other: Associate Vice President Clinton Hewitt; Amelious Whyte (Office of the Board of Regents); Florence Funk (Office of the Executive Vice President)

[In these minutes: (1) football stadium and resolutions thereon; (2) funding for Graduate Assistants (with Vice President Maziar); (3) tuition charges; (4) parking; (5) tuition and retrenchment]

1. Football Stadium

Professor Speaks convened the meeting at 2:20 and welcomed Professor Emeritus Warren Ibele. He noted that Professor Ibele is a former chair of the Faculty Consultative Committee and former Dean of the Graduate School; he said he had asked Professor Ibele to share his views on the stadium because he has ideas about a joint Vikings/Gophers stadium.

Professor Ibele began by saying that the stadium issue needs to be put in an appropriate, broad context if it is to be examined profitably; that context is Campus Master Planning. The Board of Regents, in 1993, called for campus master plans to be developed for all University campuses; in 1994 a Toronto firm was retained to assist in the development of the Twin Cities Master Plan. The plan was adopted in 1996. In 1998 a Campus Master Plan Advisory Committee was appointed, as required by the campus master plan, in accord with the last of four principles adopted by the Board of Regents: "The principle of an inclusive, accountable, and timely process for creating and implementing the Master Plan/Vision."

[The language approved by the Board of Regents in 1996 to implement the Master Plan included the following: "The primary responsibility for the Master Plan should rest with an implementation committee, called the Master Plan Implementation Committee (MPIC). This

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

committee has the time and the understanding to carefully consider Master Plan matters and to ensure that there is an opportunity for participation, discussion and input when considering changes to the Master Plan. The composition of the MPIC is to include senior academics, senior financial and administrative officers, students, and key individuals from outside with a strong interest in the University or in the surrounding community. The MPIC would report through the Committee of the President and Senior Officers to the Board of Regents."]

The plan recognizes the urban nature of the Twin Cities campus: compact, hemmed in on all sides, with restricted opportunities for growth in campus acreage. It recognizes the few special areas on the campus, such as the Mall and the Knoll in Minneapolis and the Lawn in St. Paul, and the need to create more.

The Dean of the College of Architecture and Landscape Architecture, Tom Fisher, chairs the Campus Master Planning Advisory Committee. It is a large committee, of 18 members, with faculty and student representation, administrators, and "key individuals from outside with a strong interest in the University or from the surrounding community." It IS an advisory committee; its advice can be accepted, or rejected or ignored. Planning is a PROCESS, Professor Ibele said, that is as or more important than the plan (at a given time). The advisory committee was to be the steward of the Campus Master Plan and bear primary responsibility for its implementation.

The advisory committee met about once a month until about a year ago; it has since ceased to meet. The committee gave advice on a number of projects, provided commentary on campus access, pedestrian spaces and livability, and open space and the necessity of keeping it open (some view open space as a place waiting for a building but the campuses most admired are those with open, green spaces). It advised on the importance of recreational space for students. Beginning with President Hasselmo's tenure, the University has sought to improve undergraduate education; many students wish to live on campus. An implicit part of the contract is that the students will have adequate recreational space on campus.

The members of the advisory committee have heard nothing for a year but have not been discharged. This inactivity comes despite the Regents' enunciated principle about inclusive, open, accountable planning. If the committee is abandoned, there will be no faculty, student, or community voice on significant campus planning issues. It is in this context that the stadium issue should be considered, Professor Ibele told the Committee.

At a time when the University tries desperately to obtain public funding for academic programs, it is a mistake to be involved, however tentatively, in an effort to bring a large common-use stadium to the campus. A stadium is not on the list of University priorities. Currently there is no need for one. Emphasis has properly been on obtaining support for teaching and research. But that message is less convincing if the University simultaneously appears, however low-key and guarded, to engage in a process toward the "fun and games" aspect of campus life, represented by the stadium discussions.

As an aside, Professor Ibele observed that he personally objected to the use of public funds to subsidize a multi-millionaire who cannot control his payroll. Further, the University should not allow itself to be used as a "fig leaf" to disguise such a subsidy. The use of University land for a joint-use football facility is a ruse which will deceive few and only compromise the University's primary mission.

There is also an aesthetic issue and the symbolism of the joint-use stadium, Professor Ibele said. Because of subsurface water, much of the stadium must be above grade; it will be as high as the Phillips-Wangensteen building and dwarf the surroundings. As one approaches the University from the east the overwhelming message would be that the primary business of the institution is "fun and games."

There is a better use for that land, Professor Ibele maintained. The Minnesota Supercomputer Center, on Washington Avenue, was intended as the anchor for a technology corridor. It never happened. The City of Minneapolis has an interest in the use of the land north of the Minneapolis campus as a technology transfer center, but the development moves slowly. The University is criticized for the inadequate flow of research results from the laboratory to the marketplace; if there is land to spare, a good use would be for start-up companies that could work cooperatively with University faculty and research centers.

Because the advisory committee has not met for a year, the essential faculty voice has been silent in the planning process for the Twin Cities campus.

Professor Roe said he agreed with most of what Professor Ibele had to say. He asked if the University is to share in the stadium revenues (e.g., concessions) or if there are other revenue-generating possibilities for the University. Professor Ibele said he could not answer the question since the Master Plan Advisory Committee has never discussed the stadium issue. As a member of the sports precinct planning committee he was present at a recent meeting when Vice President Kruse gave a status report on the stadium but could not recall issues associated with generating revenue.

The University is not in an easy position, Professor Ibele said. Should it remain at the Metrodome and the Vikings leave, it could be faced with high operating expenses. If, however, a large new stadium facility built on campus (and there is no guarantee that professional football would stay for long), the University could end up with even larger expenses. It is for these reasons that the issues need to be aired fully with the University community and the public.

Professor Speaks recalled that the Committee had had a discussion with Mr. Pfutzenreuter at its last meeting, especially with respect to parking. The map showed that a number of lots now used by students would be lost; the stadium plan, however, includes new parking ramps that would presumably replace all the lost parking, perhaps even increase the number of spaces--but there would not be sufficient parking for the 16,000 to 20,000 cars that come to each Vikings game. Unless all those people park off campus and bus to the game, other University lots and garages will be filled, generating revenue. Professor Speaks said, however, that he knew of no other potential revenue source for the University. The Committee was also told that the University would have use of the ramps during the periods when there was no Vikings game and that there would not be increased charges to faculty, staff, and students as a result of the replacement of the lots with the stadium ramps. That assurance, he said, should be engraved somewhere in the records.

Professor Campbell recalled that it has been said the University would have the profits from concessions at its games and that it hoped for a better deal than what it currently has at the Metrodome. But those hopes, he said, are worthless.

This Committee, he urged, should take a strong stand on the stadium and on the campus master planning process. It should also be mindful that in the depression of the 1890s, the University sold

property east of the Minneapolis campus in order to get through the depression; maybe the University should look at the value of the land on which the stadium would sit and consider selling it. The University would then at least get value for the land, rather than get nothing for it except a home for the football team and a large liability after professional football leaves.

In addition, Professor Campbell said, the Metrodome has a large number of events each year. They have been told that such events would not be held at the new stadium but there will certainly be pressure for full use of the facility, which will stretch the crowd problem to nights other than Monday Night Football and the occasional Thursday night game (and to Saturdays after the college football season is done).

There is an asset the University has not capitalized fully on, Professor Ibele said: the transitway between Minneapolis and St. Paul. If the University or the legislature has money to spare, land could be purchased along the transitway for locating start-up companies. This would facilitate the transfer of technology from the University to the public and be a far better investment of \$150 million than in a stadium.

Ms. Phillips noted that the University already has an outside agency that tells it when classes will start: the State Fair. She said she worries that a joint-use stadium will be one more thing that puts binders on the University. Ms. Barnes added that there will be a tension between the need to invite people on campus in order to generate revenue and the impact such events will have on classes, parking, and so on.

Professor Speaks said that he does not speak against football or against an on-campus stadium. But major concerns are that this issue could not arise at a worse time for the University even passively to be seeking planning money from the legislature, that the amateur-professional relationship is troubling, that there would be such a large structure adjoining the campus, and that there would be other problems as well, such as tailgating Sunday mornings and games at times that will conflict with classes.

Is there any strong support for the stadium on campus, Professor Chapman inquired? Aside from those in men's intercollegiate athletics, he said he has not encountered any support for it. Why is it moving forward? Professor Speaks recalled that he and Professor Campbell were members of a focus group discussion of the stadium; the students want football on campus but do not want to see any student money go into the facility.

Mr. Reed said that different people have different perspectives. He said he has testified before the Board of Regents that education must be the University's first priority, that there could be negative impacts on the University from the stadium, and that the top priority must be the University's biennial request.

Ms. Samuel said that if there were no football team, there would be no problem. If there is to be a football team, the best option would be for the University to have its own stadium and not have to deal with anyone else. If education is the University's top priority, however, and if there is a problem with football, then it should be cut. If the University cannot afford it, it should not field a team.

How often will the retractable roof be closed because of noise, Ms. Phillips asked? When she worked at the University of Wisconsin, she could hear the noise from the stadium four blocks away. Ms. Samuel added that she lives in Middlebrook Hall and can hear the crowd noise from the Metrodome.

Professor Johnson noted that a benefactor at the University of North Dakota, who contributed a large amount of money for a new stadium, has had a significant effect on UND policies (including on what the mascot will be)--and that that situation will continue. There are a number of lessons in that situation for the University, he suggested.

Ms. Barnes said that the voices of the people concerned about the stadium need to be heard. If things get too far down the road, the University's only option will be to work with the Vikings, which would be scary. The serious concerns about the impact on the University must be heard. And there are students, faculty, and staff who would like football back on campus because of the sense of community and fun it can provide. If the University shares a stadium with the Vikings, Ms. Samuel said, there will be the same complaints as there are now about the Metrodome: it is a sterile place that is not the team's own stadium. Why would the University do that again?

Does the campus master plan contain any provision for the return of football to the campus, Mr. Bonnema inquired? Professor Ibele said the plan is silent on the issue. Mr. Hewitt commented that when the plan was prepared a stadium was not an issue, but there were a number of issues related to Recreational Sports that needed consideration. The plan is dynamic and allows for amendments to accommodate unforeseen events; the process should engage those events.

It is time someone asked whether the revenue sports are really revenue sports, Professor Feeney declared; one can always play with the books. There is a concern about how money is spent within the University; is it allocating money to units that should be generating money, not spending it. One can be concerned that costs (e.g., lawsuits) are not being allocated to athletics; what will be the practice when there is a giant stadium? He said he would guess that policing and clean-up costs are being understated and that the entire effort is being driven by men's athletics and the Vikings. Is anyone asking where the money in athletics is going? This Committee should find out or should request a formal audit; are the revenue sports really revenue sports? Professor Feeney said he did not know but that the question should be asked. He said he would not take the position that no money should go into intercollegiate athletics but that he wants to be sure of the University's priorities and does not want the tail wagging the dog.

The Committee spent some time considering its role in the consultative process.

Professor Campbell said that it would be advisable for the Committee to request a University impact statement for the stadium, including the financial impact. There should be a charge to an independent group to develop such a report. In addition, when Professor Ibele says the master planning advisory committee system has failed, this Committee must act; it is the Senate Committee on Finance and PLANNING and if it does not complain, no one will.

Professor Campbell then moved two motions:

1. The Senate Committee on Finance and Planning expresses its concern about the campus master planning process and wishes to know (1) why the Campus Master Planning Advisory Committee is not being used for consultation on the stadium and on campus

planning issues generally, in accord with Regents' policy, and (2) if the advisory committee is not to be used, what group will replace it in order to provide faculty, staff, and student advice on the campus master plan?

2. The Senate Committee on Finance and Planning calls on the administration to prepare a stadium impact study. The Committee asks that the study be conducted by a group that has no involvement in the current discussions about a stadium.

Both motions were unanimously approved by the Committee.

Professor Ibele said the first motion was entirely in order. He said the Committee should know that if the Campus Master Planning Advisory Committee is to be abandoned, how will the University conform to the Regents' requirement for an inclusive, accountable, and timely process?

Professor Speaks said he would say again what has been said before, and it is his personal opinion, but he is mindful that the University was stuck with what it got at the Metrodome because it was not in the driver's seat--one does not want to see that happen again--and he is mindful of Vice President Kruse's "worst nightmare," inheriting the Metrodome and its \$7 million annual operating expense if the Vikings leave Minnesota. What he is troubled by is the leap to the "therefore. . . ." Whence the support for the marriage of two teams and a new stadium? Professor Feeney said he had asked this question of the Faculty Consultative Committee; no one knew. The campus is for students, faculty, and staff, not for pro sports, and the campus must be kept for faculty, students, and staff.

Professor Campbell observed that the administration has pointedly not provided support for the new stadium; every time President Yudof is quoted, he says it is not a priority for the University. From that position there is a jump to the University being tied to the Vikings and to the view that the University must get a better deal than it did in the Metrodome when it was NOT tied to the Vikings. No one in the University supports the stadium yet it is going forward; it is going forward only because of Red McCombs, who should not have that much influence.

Professor Speaks said one must also be aware that some legislators are dismayed that the University has lent itself to this enterprise.

Professor Speaks noted that the Committee will have an August retreat; between now and then, he said, he would like Committee members to identify questions and information the Committee needs in order to fulfill its role. He thanked Professor Ibele for joining the meeting.

Subsequent to the meeting, Professor Speaks directed that additional language be included in the minutes, as follows:

The University and its faculty do not denigrate the Vikings as a professional football team or as an organization; the faculty's interest simply lies in protecting the academic interests of the University, which may not coincide with the interests of a professional football team. This is not an issue about the Vikings as a team or as an organization. This is about 1) pushing--actively or passively--for a Viking/Gopher stadium at the same time the University is trying to get an acceptable appropriation for the academic side, and 2) a "marriage" between the Gophers and any

professional sports organization that results in a joint-use stadium/arena. The issues would be the same if the proposal involved the Wild, the Timberwolves, or the Twins.

2. Graduate Assistant Funding

Professor Speaks now welcomed Vice President Maziar to discuss funding for graduate assistants. He recalled that she had joined the Committee on October 31 and agreed to try to answer questions posed by the Committee; she added some questions of her own to the mix. All members of the Committee were provided with a spreadsheet of data and analysis by Associate Dean George Green.

Vice President Maziar said that at the heart of the questions was the idea of pro-rating tuition benefits for students who hold appointments of less than 25% time in an academic period. The Graduate School has long endorsed the Human Resources policy that tuition benefits would be provided only to students who had a 25%-time appointment or greater, in order to discourage appointments of less than 25% time. The Committee expressed concern that for a student who has less than a 25%-time appointment, the department still pays the tuition fringe benefit cost but the student does not receive the benefit.

The Graduate School examined the numbers. Looking at a snapshot of data taken mid-semester in fall of 2000, there were 74 students with a less-than-25%-time appointment. Of those, 26 had multiple appointments and 24 of those 26 put together half-time or greater appointments. There are, thus, a relatively small number of students who hold appointments of less than 25% time. The estimated impact on the tuition benefit pool of extending tuition benefits to those students is about \$20,000 per year, which is insignificant. So any argument that the benefit could not be extended to those students because of the cost would be unpersuasive, Dr. Maziar concluded--assuming there were no change in appointment behavior with a change in the policy.

The Graduate School still endorses the position that 25% should be the minimum appointment because it is concerned about programs trying to spread a limited number of dollars to as many students as possible. The Graduate School would prefer programs to support a smaller number of students adequately than a larger number of students poorly. The University has changed since the policy was introduced, she said; when it was first adopted, there were many more full-time graduate students at the University who received NO financial support as graduate assistants, so it was tempting to divide aid such that all could share it. In many programs (with full-time graduate students) now, however, there are TA and RA positions that go unfilled by program graduate students. Departments scramble to fill them at the start of a semester and now draw from less conventional sources (e.g., the Law School).

Professor Campbell asked how much of the scramble is driven by funds distributed after registration. Dr. Maziar said that departments are making decisions, in good conscience, to not admit as many graduate students as they might because of the desire to better support each student (both financially and academically) and in some cases because of their concern over limited employment opportunities after students obtain their degrees. In the past, Professor Campbell said, assistantships were not delivered until recruiting was completed. Dr. Maziar said it was her understanding that in CLA, where there is the largest number of graduate teaching assistants, Dean Rosenstone has tried to stabilize the TA budgets. Dean Davis in IT has done the same thing.

Some of the conditions that led the Graduate School to be adamant about a 25% minimum appointment for tuition benefits appear to have been reduced, Dr. Maziar said.

Ms. Phillips noted that the change to semesters had changed the number of TAs her department needs at one time; they need 50% more each semester because they have the same number of students but fewer classes per year. Asked where the funds for the TAs come from, Ms. Phillips said some are in her budget and some are extra funds from the dean. Graduate programs cannot keep up with the demand for TAs so they have hired (for biology courses) TAs from English and Sociology.

The size of a graduate program should be driven by the needs of opportunities for graduate students, not by a need for TAs, Dr. Maziar said. But often the size is limited by the number of TA positions that are available, Professor Campbell pointed out. She is not uncomfortable with that, Dr. Maziar said, but she would have a problem with departments admitting more graduate students to support undergraduate needs but who would not have faculty mentors and job opportunities. She said she believed graduate programs have begun to respond to complaints from graduate students nationally; it is a breach of an implied moral contract if students go through their education and training being prepared for positions and careers they are unlikely to secure.

Professor Speaks commented on several issues. In an ideal world, he said, he would like to see all graduate students have 50% funding so they would have a full tuition scholarship. That world does not exist, however, so the question of 25% funding must be addressed. He said he did not agree that 25% should be the threshold for the tuition benefit. It is incumbent on the chair and director of graduate studies to get as much money as they can. If they have a 25% assistantship and two students, why is it more noble to give one the assistantship and nothing to the other? Why not give them each part of the appointment so they don't have to work at a fast-food place? It appears now there would be no significant financial impact if appointments at 12.5% were provided tuition benefits. If that is not to occur, then departments should not be charged for the tuition benefit for students who do not receive it.

Dr. Maziar said that if the pattern of appointments do not change with a change in policy, she would not have a problem with it. If, however, the policy change led to a larger number of appointments at less than 25% time, that would not be in the interest of students. (Professor Speaks agreed.) If a relatively small number of students have these appointments, and it is a way to help get students involved in research, then she will not dig in her heels on the question. She asked that the record show that she would appreciate Committee concurrence that a 25% appointment should be the normal minimum appointment at the University.

Professor Speaks agreed and said he would like to see an alternative incentive plan rather than a rigid threshold, although he did not have an immediate suggestion for what that plan would be. There are circumstances that justify an appointment at less than 25%; given those circumstances, the employer should continue to be charged for the fringe benefit and the student should receive it; if not, Professor Speaks said, his second choice is that the employer is not charged if there is no benefit.

Dr. Maziar opposed the second alternative; that would create an incentive for "appointment pathologies" that she would not be comfortable with. What are the students' views, she asked the student members of the Committee?

Ms. Barnes wondered where all these unfilled positions were. She has an appointment, but outside her own college. Most GAs want more than 10 hours, she said. Dr. Maziar said that it is a relatively new phenomenon to have programs go outside their own graduate student population to meet their needs. Do many do so, Professor Speaks inquired? It is more common in colleges such as the College of Education and Human Development that have relatively small undergraduate programs, Dr. Maziar said. Outside program appointments are less common in "vertically integrated programs"--that is, graduate programs house in departments that also support undergraduate degree programs.

Not all TAs want 20 hours, Ms. Phillips said; some who work in her program have such tight schedules they cannot have more than a 25% appointment. In her experience, Professor Bauer responded, students with 25%-time appointments usually seek an additional 25%.

How much does the Graduate School monitor the amount of time some actually works for a given percentage of time, Professor Campbell asked? There is anecdotal evidence that in CLA students on a 25%-time appointment must work much more than that. Dr. Maziar said that Human Resources monitors compliance with appointment standards, not the Graduate School, but that she would be receptive to having a task force named to look into such practices. That was the motivation for the TA union at Wisconsin, Ms. Phillips said. A related problem, Professor Speaks said, is that students expect to be paid even if they are not there during winter or spring breaks; it is a job, not a scholarship, he observed. If students are only there for 14 weeks but paid for four months, adjust the work, Professor Campbell suggested. They are seeing in recruiting students that a 50%-time appointment means working 15-17 hours per week; students pay attention to those numbers. (It is primarily the private institutions that make such offers, he said.) [Note added by Dr. Maziar: Clearly some programs, including those at the University, view graduate assistantships as a kind of financial support for graduate education rather than as payment for a job. Programs with this view may appointment students for more hours than are routinely worked.. Such appointments are offered almost exclusively to students in the program. When students receive assistantships outside of their degree programs, the view of the appointing program tends to have much more of an employment flavor. Assistantships are functioning with different purposes in different parts of campus.]

Dr. Maziar agreed that there is a need for better mechanisms with which to identify abusive patterns earlier. The best first step is to be sure that graduate students understand there is an office where they can raise concerns and the Graduate School can provide assistance. It is not an ombuds office per se but they do chase down problems. They want to deal with students fairly and to make the University a hospitable place for them.

Professor Speaks thanked Dr. Maziar for joining the meeting. He later said he would revise the resolution on graduate student tuition scholarships the Committee had considered earlier in the year and circulate it for review.

3. Tuition Charges

Professor Speaks said he would like to have the Committee consider the tuition plan for undergraduates; the existing plan (offering half-price tuition for the 13th and subsequent credits) is not working at all. There has been no effort to explain the discount to students or the opportunity cost they incur by NOT taking advantage of the plan. It is not highlighted in the bulletin and has no name.

Some students decide to take only 12 credits and no more, Ms. Samuel observed. Professor Speaks agreed that some students may make a considered decision to do so but he worries that they may not be receiving the information they need to make such a decision. One hopes there is something in the recruiting material, Professor Campbell said.

4. Parking

Professor Speaks recalled that the Committee had seen the parking rate proposal for 2001-02; is there any action the Committee wished to take?

Professor Campbell asked if any rationale had been provided for the increases. There had not, except that Parking had debt service it needed to pay. The capital plan is \$91 million.

The Committee discussed its role vis-à-vis parking and transportation. Ms. Phillips suggested it is more appropriately concerned with planning and transportation issues, not whether it sees proposed parking rate changes before they are adopted. It was also clear the Committee was not being asked to take a position on the rates, Professor Speaks observed. Ms. Phillips also pointed out that Mr. Baker does bring issues to the Subcommittee on Twin Cities Facilities and Support Services, so may legitimately believe that he has consulted. For example, she said the University will not be setting up its own van-pooling effort but will instead connect with a metro-wide effort; Mr. Baker consulted with the Subcommittee about what the University should do on this issue.

5. The Biennial Request, Tuition, and Retrenchment

Professor Speaks next welcomed Executive Vice President Bruininks for a "no minutes" discussion of the status of the biennial request and how the University will deal with an appropriation that is significantly smaller than what it requested.

Among the points touched on in the discussion were the proposed "commission on excellence" (which, if approved, would be brought to this Committee for ideas and strategy), the current House and Senate budget proposals, and the question of tuition increases versus retrenchment. Dr. Bruininks noted that the higher education share of the state budget has declined 25% since 1980 and that the University has lost about 400 tenured and tenure-track faculty positions since 1988-90--while enrollment has increased on all campuses, in some programs dramatically. What is happening is that higher education in the heartland is dying, when it used to be among the best in the world.

It was agreed that Mr. Pfutzenreuter or Dr. Bruininks would return to the Committee on May 1 or May 15 (or both) with updated information on the biennial request so that Committee members could weigh in on whatever decisions the University will have to make.

Professor Speaks thanked Dr. Bruininks for joining the Committee and adjourned the meeting at 5:00.

-- Gary Engstrand

University of Minnesota