

SOCIAL CONCERNS COMMITTEE

Thursday, December 4, 1997

East Wing Campus Club

1:00 PM

In these minutes:

Focus Groups, Energy & Environment Conservation Resolution, and Investments

MINUTES

Present: Eric Bauer (Chair), Lori Clark, Frank Wood, Jean Niemiec, Stephanie Lieberman, Robert Brown, Arthur Geffen, Friedrich Srienc, Mike Davey, Thomas Haakenson, Mark Ott, Sheila Warness

Regrets: Clint Hewitt, Lisa Albrecht, George French, Joel Nelson, Amy Mertl

Absent: Carla Maxwell-Monacelli, Ellen Stewart, Claudia Wallace-Gardner, James Kroger, Neta Jo Scarpari, John Felipe

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 reflect the views of, nor are they binding on, the Senate or Assembly, the Administration, or the Board of Regents.

The Social Concerns Committee met at 1:00 PM on Thursday, December 4, 1997 in the East Wing of the Campus Club on the East Bank of the University of Minnesota.

MINUTES.

The meeting minutes from October 1, 1997 were approved as written, with the following change recommended: Change the name Sue Warness to Sheila Warness.

FOCUS GROUPS.

A handout which categorized the following committee focus groups was distributed and approved at the meeting: Cultural Diversity - Claudia Wallace-Gardner, George French, Robert Brown, Joel Nelson; Energy & Environment - Friedrich Srienc, Eric Bauer, Amy Mertl, Robert Brown, Jean Niemiec, Lori Clark; Gender/GBLT Issues - Art Geffen, Robert Brown, Lori Clark, Joel Nelson, Neta Jo Scarpari; Finance & Management - Claudia Wallace-Gardner, Sheila Warness, Jean Niemiec, Robert Brown; National Issues - Art Geffen.

ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT.

The committee reviewed two Regents policies titled "Pollution Prevention and Waste Abatement" and "Buildings and Grounds," as well as the "University Senate Resolution Recommending an Energy/Environment Conservation Policy," all distributed to committee member prior to the meeting. Professor Bauer provided a brief history on the development of the senate resolution and how it was passed. He stated that the committee now has two options: 1) to revise one of the Regents policies by incorporating the senate resolution; or 2) to draft a separate Regents policy with the senate

resolution as the foundation. The committee agreed that the difference between policies and procedures are that policies seem to state a philosophy or mission statement, while procedures provide concrete examples of how the mission statement, or policy, will be implemented. It was recommended that if the committee agrees to add to a Regents policy, it should state who is responsible for the implementation of the policy and where the guidelines for implementing the policy can be found. Concern was raised about whether a mechanism was in place for auditing such policies and some wondered how the Social Concerns Committee monitors the implementation of the senate resolution. It was noted that an administrative policy manual does exist which contains information on specific implementation practices; there is also a department on policy development and auditing with officers who oversee the compliance of university policies and procedures. The committee agreed that the energy and environment resolution should be compared to the existing administrative policies to gather more information before making a final decision.

The committee considered its charge in the senate constitution which states one of the committee's duties and responsibilities as, "To annually provide a process that carefully reviews the documentation available on one or more issues of overriding concern to the University and the broader social community." Committee members agreed to identify issues of concern, starting with a review of President Yudof's architectural initiatives, changes to the Northrop/Coffman mall, policy initiatives of higher administration, and the report from Clint Hewitt's office. They will review the relevant documentation, and make recommendations where necessary. The report from Clint Hewitt's office (Master Planning & Real Estate) which provides valuable information on energy and environment issues, as well as architectural preservation at the university, will be distributed to members prior to the next meeting.

INVESTMENTS.

A handout titled, "Senate Committee on Social Concerns Recommendation Regarding Investments in Developing Countries" was circulated among committee members. A list of University investments provided by Sheila Warness was distributed to committee members prior to the meeting; the Domini Index was also circulated among committee members at the meeting. Concern was raised as to whether the university condones the actions of a company it invests in, such as Mitsubishi. It was noted, however, that the Mitsubishi boycott was related only to the purchasing policy, not the investment policy. Another concern was raised that answering all of the proxy resolutions may not be worth the committee's time since our votes are discounted much of the time. It was suggested that the committee should choose only important proxy resolutions each year and concentrate its efforts on them.

The meeting adjourned at 2:30 PM.