

SUBCOMMITTEE ON TWIN CITIES FACILITIES AND SUPPORT SERVICES  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
FEBRUARY 20, 2003

[In these minutes: Approval of 1/23/03 Minutes, Update on SCFP Business, Construction Shortfalls Presentation, University Environmental and Energy Issues]

[These minutes reflect discussion and debate at a meeting of a committee of the University of Minnesota Senate or Twin Cities 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.]

PRESENT: Gary Jahn, Chair, Sharon Folk, Edward Kosciolek, Kent Rees, Steve Fitzgerald, Laurie Scheich, Steve Spehn, John Adams, Calvin Alexander, Patrice Morrow, Jane Phillips, George Wilcox

REGRETS:

ABSENT: Linda Jorn, B. David Galt, Donald Kelsey, Lorelee Wederstrom, Cynthia Jara

I). Professor Jahn called the meeting to order and welcomed all present.

II). The Committee unanimously approved the January 23, 2003 amended minutes.

III). Professor Jahn provided members with a brief report on activities of the Senate Committee on Finance and Planning (SCFP). The Senate Committee on Finance and Planning is currently consumed with business related to the shortcomings of the University budget. The University is grappling with a permanent reduction in State funding of \$185 million. Additionally, Professor Jahn noted the issue of construction shortfalls uncovered by STCFSS will be brought before the SCFP on March 4, 2003.

**IV). Construction Shortfalls Draft Presentation to SCFP by Professor Calvin Alexander:**

Prior to today's meeting, Professor Jahn had circulated a draft introductory statement on the construction shortfall issue via email requesting member's input. He noted the purpose of the statement is to ensure that MLAC/Andersen Library is not used as a pillory or object of ridicule but rather one of several examples of construction shortfalls on campus. Professor Jahn noted a substantive suggestion that had been received via email and thus incorporated into the draft statement. In addition, another member posed the question whether campus construction project estimates are the result of cost overruns or underbids. The wording in the last paragraph of the draft statement was amended to reflect this concern. Professor Jahn proposed the sentence read: "...have significant implications—the large overruns or perhaps underestimations in cost in the rebuilding of Coffman Union..." Professor Jahn gave members an open invitation to attend the March 4<sup>th</sup> SCFP meeting. Hearing no further suggestions to amend the draft statement,

Professor Jahn stated he would read the statement to SCFP at its March 4<sup>th</sup> meeting and have it submitted to the committee for its records.

Professor Alexander began by requesting member feedback on his proposed draft shortfalls presentation to SCFP. He informed members that he would be using MLAC/Andersen Library as his primary example of an on campus construction shortfall because he is most familiar with this scenario. Member input concerning other examples that could be referenced in his presentation was solicited and received.

Committee discussion highlights included:

- Professor Alexander acknowledged being most familiar with the MLAC/Andersen Library scenario as opposed to other construction shortfalls on campus, the Committee recommended he preface his presentation to SCFP with this information.
- Members agreed it would not be a wise idea to drown SCFP members with too much data. A member suggested that the humidity and other relevant data are powerful but the information about gaps in the records or how the data was acquired is not as valuable. Therefore, the important thing to stress is that humidity is out of control and it is causing damage.
- Professor Alexander's major concern is that this data is being collected but no one at the University is monitoring it. Members agreed that this is a particularly alarming and important point to stress.
- Members recommended that in addition to the selected visual aids Professor Alexander simply state that the MLAC/Andersen Library system does not work by a factor of three when dealing with humidity issues.
- A member suggested that Professor Alexander clearly state to SCFP what outcome he is looking for as a result of this presentation.
- Professor Alexander believes it is important to bring forward the shotcrete problem in MLAC/Andersen Library. He believes this represents a prime example of no University entity taking responsibility for inspecting contractors' work.

Based on the committee's discussion, Professor Jahn concluded that Professor Alexander's presentation to SCFP should focus on shortfalls in design and inspection as well as the fact that although data is being collected no one at the University is monitoring it.

To the contrary, Steve Spehn, University Services, clarified that the data is being reviewed. However, he did acknowledge there is no formal process in place to assemble long term trending data. The committee felt strongly that Facilities Management be accountable for collecting and reviewing this information.

V). University Environmental and Energy Issues: Steve Spehn distributed information to the committee on:

- The Board of Regent's Pollution Prevention and Waste Abatement Policy.
- The 1997 University Senate Resolution recommending an energy and environment conservation policy for the University of Minnesota.

Mr. Spehn shared with the committee information on what Facilities Management is doing related to these issues. Highlights from his presentation included:

- All of the University's buildings are metered for energy use, both electrical and steam. A new initiative will allow the University to do remote metering, thus allowing greater flexibility. Building usage is tracked on a monthly basis and responded should a buildings energy usage increase.
- Facilities Management has an energy conservation program in place funded as a loan through central finance. With this program, FM can borrow up to \$6 million for any projects that have a 6-year pay back or less. The loan is paid back through reductions in energy costs.
- The University has Xcel Energy inspect every new building that is built and make recommendations on how to enhance energy performance. The University's current construction standards have numerous requirements regarding energy conservation. For example, every large construction project on campus has a 1% set aside within the project's budget to enhance energy conservation above the University's construction standards.
- During the pre-design process buildings are evaluated for energy and environmental costs of renovation versus rebuilding.
- Small clusters of cooling systems have been set up across campus to increase operating efficiencies and economies of scale. Facilities Management is in the process of installing a central chiller plant on the St. Paul campus.
- The University continues to reduce its energy use through investment and purchasing decisions.
- The University also continues to promote its solid waste reduction and recycling programs. Examples include the "quad systems", a reuse program for office furniture and some computers.
- The University strongly encourages use of natural gas in addition to coal and oil in its steam plant operations. Natural gas is expensive and prices are expected to continue to rise. Mr. Spehn noted with the new steam plant the University is now able to burn coal as cleanly as natural gas. Wood is also burned at the steam plant, however, a decent source of wood is a problem. The new steam plant has a state of the art boiler that is able to burn multiple fuels. The University will start burning oat hulls next week. Oat hulls are a by-product from General Mill's Cheerios. The University went to great lengths to obtain a test burn permit from the Pollution Control Agency. Emissions from the oat hulls test burn will be monitored closely. If the University is allowed to burn oat hulls on an on-going basis the University is expected to save \$2 million per year.
- Cogeneration of electricity is a capability at the new steam plant that allows the University to maximize its steam plant efficiency. Because electricity is relatively cheap in Minnesota compared to other states, it does not make sense for the University to produce electricity at its steam plants.

- Due to a cost issue the University has not done a lot with wind power as an energy source. The University is able to purchase electricity from Xcel for approximately 3.5 cents per kilowatt whereas wind power costs almost three times as much to produce. Morris is doing a lot with wind power and the Twin Cities campus hopes to benefit from their
- Mr. Spehn distributed a handbook to members with information on the University's sustainability efforts. Jane Phillips recommended, in an effort to conserve paper, the handbook not be printed on paper but rather reproduced on a digital basis only. Mr. Spehn explained that University Relations has requested hard copies so it can distribute them to the legislature.
- Lastly, Mr. Spehn handed out a fact sheet outlining Facilities Management awards and accomplishments as they relate to the 1997 University Senate Resolution recommending an energy and environment conservation policy for the University of Minnesota. Jane Phillips asked that a list of awards received by the Department of Environmental Health and Safety should be added to this list as well.

VI). Hearing no further business, Professor Jahn adjourned the meeting.

Renee Dempsey  
University Services