

SCFP SUBCOMMITTEE ON TWIN CITIES FACILITIES AND SUPPORT  
SERVICES (STCFSS)  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
NOVEMBER 18, 2003

[In these minutes: Welcome to Jennifer Hannaford, Temporary De-Icing Plan for the East River Road Garage (ERRG)]

[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: Calvin Alexander, chair, Edward Kosciolk, Dan Allen, Laurie Scheich, Steve Spehn, Lorelee Wederstrom, John Adams, Gary A. Davis, Gordon Girtz, Patrice Morrow, George Wilcox, Jennifer Hannaford

REGRETS: Sharon Folk, Steve Fitzgerald, Brian Horgan, Gary Jahn

ABSENT: Donald Kelsey

GUESTS: Michael Perkins, Capital Planning/Project Management; Michael Denny, Capital Planning/Project Management; Bob Baker, Parking and Transportation Services, Paul Bergson, interim consultant, Department of Civil Engineering

I). Professor Alexander called the meeting to order.

II). Professor Alexander welcomed Jennifer Hannaford, a newly appointed student representative to the Committee.

III). Professor Alexander noted that the Committee will receive a report today on the temporary de-icing plan for the East River Road Garage (ERRG). The Committee is particularly interested in the cost and scope of this project as well as the planning that went into this project.

Mr. Denny presented an overview of the project. Along the river bluffs it is normal to see ice formations during the winter. During construction of the ERRG, the ramp was built up against a massive wall, which can be seen in the photos of the construction site prior to the ramp being built. This wall leaks water and during the winter it freezes. A major problem results when ice forms and spills out into the ramp.

Engineers and consultants that were involved in this project from its onset referenced numerous reports dealing with the ice formation issue. Professor Alexander requested copies of these reports, which Mr. Denny agreed to provide. Unfortunately, there may be reports that Mr. Denny does not have copies of due to the fact that the files for this project have been scattered throughout different departments at the University.

Consultants that have reviewed the files on the ERRG project agree there is no structural problem with the ramp. However, there continues to be a water seepage problem. Until a permanent solution can be determined, a temporary solution is being put in place. Plastic is being installed to seal off the area where the ice forms and then this space will be heated. The construction costs for this temporary fix will be \$100,000. Mr. Denny did not have the O&M costs on hand but agreed to provide this information to Professor Alexander who, in turn, will distribute it to the Committee. The winter of 2003 - 2004 will be a test case to see if this temporary solution solves the problem. Meanwhile, as the temporary solution is being evaluated, a permanent solution is being devised.

One member asked whether the real problem relates to the loss of parking spaces or whether there are concerns about structural damage that may occur in the future. Mr. Denny stated it is a little of both. The freeze/thaw cycle will affect the rock face and eventually weaken the rock structure. There is also a concern that ice could break off and clip a corner of the ramp or damage vehicles. Structurally, however, the ramp is solid and Mr. Denny does not foresee this being a structural problem in the future. With the temporary solution in place, all parking spaces will be open and the water will continue to flow naturally as it has for hundreds of thousands of years.

Gordon Girtz recommended Paul Bergson be retained to render his professional engineer's opinion on; 1) the appropriateness and design of the existing cyclone fence rock netting material installed on the north limestone rock face, 2) the number and placement of the currently installed rock bolts on the north limestone rock face, 3) the appropriateness of the current slope cutback of the north limestone rock face. Mr. Bergson was also to issue a statement regarding the current industry standards for each of these items. Professor Alexander requested the Committee receive copies of his findings. During the course of this assessment, Mr. Bergson observed the following:

- There is water flowing down the rock face primarily on the north and east walls.
- The water flows down the rock face and is collected in a concrete trough gutter system and from there it flows out to the storm sewer. There is also a second gutter system at the bottom level of the parking structure.
- Maintenance needs to be done on the rock face. Most of the small rock particles or rock baskets that have collected are a result of the freeze/thaw cycle and possibly construction.
- Whenever there is considerable water and an open bluff face the rock underneath e.g. sandstone and shale becomes very susceptible to erosion, which the contractor and the designer both made an effort to protect.
- There is no instability or structural problems with the bluff other than the small rock wedges that are forming that can be removed with proper maintenance and basketed rock that can also be removed.
- There are a couple areas that need to be looked at more closely in order to rule out future problems for the University e.g. a supporting footing for the roof structure; the rock around this footing needs to be examined more carefully.

Mr. Bergson noted his report includes options for long-term solutions that the University will need to evaluate. Mr. Denny added that the University has ruled out installing a de-watering system. Mr. Bergson believes a more substantial system other than a de-watering well is needed. A de-watering well will never collect 100% of the water. In Mr. Bergson's opinion a permanent solution would involve a removable panel system that would allow maintenance of the rock face. Also, such a system may not require heating

because the heat from the bluff itself may be adequate and if this is the case O&M costs would be relatively low. Mr. Bergson asked members to keep in mind that without the ability to remove all the water from the rock face, water will still seep in and if it freezes there will be freeze/thaw degradation of the rock, which is the biggest problem.

Mr. Denny noted that an engineering firm, Braun Intertec, over a 272-day period monitored movement of the rock. Aside from what they consider normal expansion of the rock there were no issues. Mr. Denny agreed to provide Professor Alexander with a copy of this report.

In light of the fact that Ramp B (the old name for the ERRG) dealt with the same issues (e.g. water seepage and rock baskets resulting from the freeze/thaw cycle), was any of this factored into the design phase of the ERRG? In initial pre-design meetings these issues were raised with the architects, engineers and contractors. It appears when the contracts were awarded there was a clause that released the architect, engineer and contractor from any liability for existing ground conditions.

Professor Alexander noted that it is STCFSS' role to review the operations of support service units on the Twin Cities campus. Of particular concern to Professor Alexander is how does the University repeatedly get itself into these difficult situations. Why were the concerns that were raised in the pre-design phase of the ERRG systematically not dealt with? How can the University prevent similar problems from occurring in the future?

Mr. Denny explained that he and Mr. Perkins were hired by the University to institute a paradigm change in how the University does business. He and Mr. Perkins did not create the problem with the ERRG but rather they inherited it. Mr. Denny stated that the River Bend Commons project would have never moved forward under his watch given its obvious problems that were remedied so poorly. This project left a lot of bad feelings about the use of Armlin North Associates. Professor Alexander asked if Armlin North Associates is currently involved in any projects at the University of Minnesota. Mr. Denny said no; he severed the University's working relationship with them. Mr. Denny stated that he spends a majority of his time dealing with clean-up issues e.g. lawsuits, claims, etc. and a large percentage of those are Armlin North Associates related.

Mr. Denny reiterated, regarding the ERRG situation, Capital Planning/Project Management is in the investigative phase by temporarily solving a problem so it can be better understood before a permanent solution is put in place. It is always more difficult to fix a problem someone else created. Mr. Denny asked for latitude in allowing Capital Planning/Project Management to determine the best solution. Professor Alexander reminded Mr. Denny that it is the role of STCFSS to assist his department with this process and the only way to provide assistance is to fully understand the problem. Mr. Denny stated he was unaware of the existence of STCFSS prior to being asked to attend today's meeting.

Professor Alexander asked how much money has been spent since the University accepted the ERRG to the present. It was noted that the University spent \$50,000 on a study to look into the feasibility of installing de-watering wells. A final report of this study will be available on November 21st, 2003. Gordon Girtz mentioned that a preliminary report had been submitted on April 16, 2003. Mr. Denny denied receiving a copy of the preliminary report despite requesting a copy several times. Mr. Denny stated that the total cost for the temporary de-icing project at the ERRG will be \$100,000. Ms. Scheich added that no O&M dollars (State dollars) have been spent on the ERRG; Parking and Transportation self-funds all such projects. All parking facilities including the ERRG require maintenance work. It is estimated that Parking and Transportation spent roughly \$2,000 to clean up the rock particles that fell as a result of the freeze/thaw cycle, but this clean-up would have been done in the ERRG regardless of whether there was a problem or not as part of the on-going maintenance operations. Mr. Girtz added that approval has been given to spend \$20,000 on cleaning out the trough, although this work has not yet been done.

Mr. Denny noted the University recently received a proposal from CNA (Charles Nelson & Associates) to do annual maintenance of the space between the ERRG and the rock face. This proposal is very extensive and will be reviewed thoroughly. Ultimately a decision will be made whether the University is interested in such a maintenance agreement or not.

Professor Alexander informed today's guests that in the spring STCFSS will ask for a complete accounting of all the costs that were incurred in the

ERRG temporary de-icing project. A member added that despite the fact that construction projects are very complicated, the University should not become accustomed to its projects costing more than they should. Professor Alexander stated that STCFSS is supportive of the efforts put forth by Capital Planning/Project Management. It was agreed this agenda item would be revisited in the spring of 2004 once the heating season has concluded and some initial cost estimates can be compiled with respect to the temporary de-icing plan.

A member asked what is being done to change the paradigm at the University in terms of construction projects always costing more than initial estimates. Mr. Perkins explained that current institutional policies, procedures and standards are the reason for many of the problems the University is dealing with today. He asked the Committee to bring this message to the Board of Regents as a means to secure more funding for construction projects. It is not in the University's best interest to always seek out the lowest bidder or rush into projects without investigating them fully. When Capital Planning/Project Management brings forward a project for consideration it must commit to a cost without investing more than 5% of the engineering or technical analysis on a given project. This approach needs to be rejected and the University needs to plan further into a project before it commits to move forward with an initiative. Mr. Perkins believes that the University can save a substantial amount of money by improving the University's processes. It was further noted that the University does not do a good job of adequately using the resources it contracts. Professor Alexander believes that the University should also better utilize its own internal talents and expertise rather than constantly going outside the institution. In order for this to happen, however, these resources need to be assembled into a concise format so they are easily identifiable. It was suggested that STCFSS be asked to help identify these resources.

The focus of new Capital Planning/Project Management team is to:

- Get the office in 'ship shape' and cleanup the problems left by its predecessors.
- Advance the program to a different culture by treating its clients as customers.
- Assume financial accountability.

One member asked how many projects the University has funding for that it plans to start in the near future. It was noted that this year Capital Planning/Project Management received \$108 million for newly funded projects and this was distributed among approximately 125 identified projects.

Will the new Translational Research Facility (TRF) suffer from the same residual problems as other facilities on campus due to legislative requirements to submit a cost estimate with very little analysis? The TRF project was delayed 1.5 years and during this time inflation naturally occurred. This inflation was never funded. As a result, the building has had to be scaled back by removing systems in order to stay on budget. Ultimately, removing systems from the facility will impact the programmatic needs of the end user. Legislative requirements that force a price to be put on a building in the early stages of pre-design may not reflect the programmatic needs of the user.

Are there any projects coming down the pipeline that will benefit from the changes that Capital Planning/Project Management are implementing? First and foremost, the goal is to build buildings within budget. Overtime, the goal is to affect and change policy at the University. There is a perception that some contractors and consultants believe that the University is a "marshmallow" and that profits can be made on change orders and by suing the University. This perception needs to be changed.

Representatives from Capital Planning/Project Management guaranteed that process changes will be made and positive results will occur; although this will not happen overnight. It is imperative that Capital Planning/Project receives adequate funding for its projects.

Professor Alexander thanked today's guests for attending this meeting. Mr. Perkins and Mr. Denny were instructed to contact Ms. Dempsey, Senate staff to get on the agenda in April. Members were encouraged to contact Mr. Perkins or Mr. Denny if they have any questions.

IV). Hearing no further business, Professor Alexander adjourned the meeting.

Renee Dempsey  
University Senate