

Minutes*

**Senate Consultative Committee
Thursday, September 16, 2004
3:00 – 4:00
Room 238A Morrill Hall**

Present: Mary Jo Kane (chair pro tem), Jean Bauer, Susan Brorson, Dan Feeney, James Kanten, Taquee Khaled, Scott Lanyon, Jamie Larson, Tom Pielow, Jeff Ratliff-Crain, Stacey Vonderhaar, Nathan Wanderman, Carol Wells

Absent: Marvin Marshak, Charles Campbell, Carol Chomsky, Tom Clayton, Seyon Nyanwleh, Colin Schwensohn, Teresa Wallace

Guests: none

Others: none

[In these minutes: (1) introductions; (2) Senate docket (renewable energy resolution)]

1. Introductions

Professor Kane convened the meeting at 3:15 and called for a round of introductions.

2. Senate Docket

Professor Kane turned to the Senate docket and noted Professor Morrison had pointed out at the FCC meeting that one item should be added to the list of Senate actions to which the administration has not yet responded: the academic governance policy.

The Committee unanimously adopted a motion approving the docket, with a contingent section: The resolution from the Social Concerns Committee would be pulled from the docket unless the language about the Senate is changed to the committee. If it is changed, then both the Social Concerns resolution and the Finance and Planning resolution responding to it will be included; if not, they will both be pulled.

Professor Feeney noted that anyone at the Senate meeting could move to convert the Social Concerns resolutions from "information" to "action," although it would take a two-thirds vote of those present to do so. The President should be informed of this possibility, he said,

The two resolutions in question were:

I. From the Social Concerns Committee:

Renewable Energy Resolution of the Social Concerns Committee

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Whereas, the University of Minnesota is committed to excellence and leadership in protecting the environment, and

Whereas, the University of Minnesota has a tradition of concern for the environmental impacts of its actions, and

Whereas, burning fossil fuels is also a major source of greenhouse gases which cause global climate change, and

Whereas, burning fossil fuels is a major source of pollutants including: sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, mercury, and particulate matter, and

Whereas, the State of Minnesota is working to create incentives for renewable energy production, and

Whereas, the Board of Regents' Policy on Pollution Prevention and Waste Abatement affirms their commitment to, "encourage pollution prevention...through changes in purchasing policies and specifications," and

Whereas, purchasing electricity and fuels produced from renewable resources supports the local development of Minnesota's wind and other clean renewable energy resources.

Therefore, the University Senate recommends that:

The University of Minnesota encourage local, renewable energy projects on its campuses.

Renewable energy includes: wind, solar, biomass, geothermal, hydrogen or future technology with a low impact on the environment. Local, renewable energy projects should provide students and faculty with the opportunity to research the technologies and benefits of local, renewable energy, and

A percentage of electricity on all campuses be purchased through a wind energy program to support the development of Minnesota's wind resources and to reduce our purchase of non-renewable derived electricity, and

By January 1, 2014, at least twenty-five percent of the energy used at the University of Minnesota be derived from a local, renewable source or purchased from a wind energy program or other renewable energy sources.

May 2004 13 in favor, 0 opposed

II. From the Finance and Planning Committee:

Statement on Renewable Energy Resolution
by the Senate Committee on Social Concerns

The Senate Committee on Finance and Planning (SCFP) respectfully disagrees with the resolution concerning renewable energy adopted by the Senate Committee on Social Concerns.

SCFP believes that the resolution has serious errors that undermine its purpose. We are concerned that current renewable energy projects may not be truly renewable at present, in that their consumption of fossil fuel used in production and transportation may actually exceed the energy delivered. SCFP also believes the resolution is ill-advised because it sets a date for University use of renewable energy at a stipulated level when the technology does not yet exist or is not economical to use.

It is the judgment of SCFP that the intent of the resolution has been superseded by the Regents' policy on "Sustainability and Energy Efficiency" (see below), adopted in July, 2004. The Regents' policy is more thoughtful and practical, and SCFP would not want to see that policy undermined by the resolution from the Committee on Social Concerns.

Adopted unanimously September 14, 2004

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REGENTS' POLICY ON SUSTAINABILITY AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY

SECTION I. COMMITMENT.

Sustainability is a continuous effort integrating environmental, social, and economic goals through design, planning, and operational organization to meet current needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Sustainability requires the collective actions of the University of Minnesota (University) community and shall be guided by the balanced use of all resources, within budgetary constraints. The University is committed to incorporating sustainability into its teaching, research, and outreach and the operations that support them.

SECTION II. GUIDING PRINCIPLES.

Subd. 1. Leadership. Through excellence in environmental education, research, outreach, and stewardship, the University shall strive to be a world leader by promoting and demonstrating sustainability and energy efficiency and by producing leaders and informed citizens.

Subd. 2. Modeling. The University shall strive to be a model in the application of sustainability principles to guide campus operations by:

- (a) meeting and aspiring to exceed all applicable regulatory requirements;
- (b) preventing pollution at its source;
- (c) reducing emissions to the environment; and
- (d) encouraging the use of a life-cycle cost framework.

Subd. 3. Operational Improvements. The University shall undertake a continuous improvement process that seeks to meet the operational performance targets, goals, and objectives designed to achieve sustainability.

Subd. 4. Energy Efficiency. The University shall undertake a process to increase energy efficiency, reduce dependence on non-renewable energy, and encourage the development of energy alternatives through research and innovation.

[Note: Subsequent to the meeting, the Chair of the Social Concerns Committee changed the wording in the resolution.]

Professor Kane asked if the students had any other business for the Committee. Inasmuch as they did not, she adjourned the meeting at 3:30.

-- Gary Engstrand