

## CIVIL SERVICE CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

### Minutes of the Meeting

April 30, 2015

[These notes reflect discussion and debate at a meeting of a committee of the University of Minnesota Senate; none of the comments, conclusions or actions reported in these notes represent the views of, nor are they binding on, the Senate, the Administration or the Board of Regents.]

In these minutes: [Constituency and open seats on the committee and senate; information technology priorities]

PRESENT: Bill O'Neill, chair; Gordon Fisher, vice-chair; Terri Wallace, Duane Orlovski, Jean Wang, John Paton, Lynn Hegrenes

REGRETS: Samantha Duke, Patti Dion

ABSENT: Carolyn Davidson

OTHER: Ray Muno, Mike Sutliff

GUESTS: Bernie Gulachek, associate vice president, Office of Information Technology (OIT); Heather Noble, associate CIO, OIT

Chair O'Neill welcomed the committee.

### **1. Constituency and open seats**

The committee discussed the civil service constituency, and open seats in the civil service senate and the consultative committee. O'Neill asked the committee for ideas on how to fill the vacancies and increase value to what the committee was doing. Hegrenes asked about combining P&A and Civil Service (CS) into one senate, saying the Duluth campus had structured it that way. Terri Wallace said one issue was the difference in the compensation and benefits packages between the employee groups. Jean Wang noted separate subcommittees could deal with the compensation and benefits concerns of each group. Orlovski expressed concern about the voice of the civil service being lost, noting that P&A is very engaged and active. O'Neill said it might be worthwhile to have a more formalized engagement with civil servants about the value of governance, saying many people do not realize how important it is. He also said he had been very impressed with the campus climate events.

Wallace said civil service would raise its profile as it continued with its communications plan. She said people's perception was that civil service did not do anything. Wallace said they should not just bring in speakers, but that the senate should engage them as to what they are doing as well. John Paton agreed with Wallace, saying he had heard from people wondering when the Senate had last met. Paton said there may be opportunities to work with P&A on joint initiatives, and agreed that while speakers at senate meetings may be informative, there is little or no discussion. He also noted there had been people who had dropped off the committee and senate because of job reclassifications, and suggested rolling elections. If there is an available seat and someone volunteers, the opportunity should be taken. O'Neill pointed out the committee and

senate have a certain structure and the representatives may not fill the need, depending on what unit they are. Fisher said this was a formula determined by the bylaws, and noted there were two positions on the CSCC to be named from academic units. Fisher went on to note the committee needed to select a chair-elect for 2015-16, and asked that names be submitted to Mary Jo Pehl in the Senate Office. Fisher then described the time commitment and duties of the chair-elect.

Fisher submitted a draft decision tree/flow chart diagramming how the consultative committee could move forward. He noted that while this was only a draft, one potential result might be that the consultative committee disband. Fisher proposed a senate meeting in June, and the committee discussed a potential agenda, which included:

- Chair final report
- New chair-elect and members of CSCC
- Provide details of openings
- Open the meeting to take suggestions about moving civil service representation forward
- Vote on service requirements (lowering length of employment before serving)
- Listening session

Wallace asked why civil service representatives couldn't approach each of their deans to encourage membership among the larger CS constituency, and said the dean of her department had just sent out a call looking for P&A senators. Fisher said he believed every so often emails were sent to supervisors encouraging support of employees being active in governance. Orlovski said in years past it had come from the President's office to the deans, and indicated an expectation of allowing employees to participate. Fisher said it would be good for deans, the President, or both to communicate they support participation in governance.

Fisher said he also wanted to move forward with shortening the period after which civil servants could become involved in governance. Currently, a civil servant must be employed two years and the proposal is to shorten it to one year, after the probationary period is cleared. O'Neill said in his experience at new employee orientation, he met many people who expressed interest in becoming involved but were told they had to wait. Wang said when she began at the University, she expressed interest but the time frame was not communicated to her, and she agreed one year would be a good change.

Fisher presented the idea of a listening session or event, saying the main point would be setting aside a time and place for civil servants to talk face to face with their representatives. Fisher said if it was well attended, that would tell them something and they could build off what people say matters to them. Fisher said they could also recruit attendees for CSCC and/or CS senate. Likewise, if such an event were not well attended, they could follow up with a survey about the perceived value of civil service. This survey could also be used as a tool for recruiting. Fisher said if they discovered CS representation was of low value but people had suggestions, they could build from that as well. If a survey indicated it is of low value and there are no suggestions, that would solidify the idea the committee and senate were disengaged, and that in turn would lead to the discussion restructuring. Fisher stated they were getting to the point where the group would not be solvent unless they were able to engage people.

Wallace said she liked the idea of the listening session, and suggested doing at least three or four throughout the Twin Cities campus in order to provide convenient options to attend. O'Neill wondered about the value of a listening session for the consultative committee and the senate only, and then moving it out to the greater civil service community. Wang wondered how to get people to realize the work that was being done if they do not come to a senate meeting and there was nothing being voted on. Fisher acknowledged this was the heart of the matter, and said CSCC could not be effective in governance unless the people being represented were communicating issues and the group's job was to keep asking. Wallace said the new communications plan was a major piece of this effort. Paton asked if there was a mechanism on the blog by which constituents could submit issues, and Orlovski said yes. Fisher asked if anything had been submitted via this means, and Orlovski said no, but that it was still quite new. O'Neill said he had had various communications with constituents about various issues, including the probationary period, maternity leave, and why P&A get more investment benefits. Wallace asked if they were able to do a survey through the blog, such as SurveyMonkey, to ask constituents what they wanted in terms of benefits and said it would be one way to engage people. Orlovski said that could be done in Google forms.

Paton said there had been no discussions in the senate meetings or CSCC about what issues people had. Fisher said the first thing would be to schedule the senate meeting, and discuss the possibility of listening sessions. Paton said having a listening session with the full senate prior to the meeting might be a good way to get more buy-in from senators, who would then spread the word. O'Neill asked if the next Senate meeting would be an opportunity to do this. Wang suggested dividing up the senators and personally contact them to encourage their attendance. Ray Muno asked if there was a way to communicate this information via paper, saying people are deluged by emails and no longer open them. He suggested a mailing could direct people to their email or a website. O'Neill said he would check with the Senate office about that possibility.

Lynn Hegrenes suggested a panel of people speak about why they got involved in governance at the listening session. Fisher then said they would divide up the Senate list for committee members to contact senators to encourage their attendance. Fisher asked Pehl to schedule a senate meeting in June and look into the possibility of rolling elections. Fisher asked Wallace and Paton if they were interested in serving on the consultative committee again, as their terms ended this year, and both said yes.

O'Neill then discussed recommendations for candidates to serve on the Committee on Committees (ConC). He said the proposal for civil service representation was due to ConC by June 15 along with candidates' names. Fisher said he and O'Neill had recommendations as to whom they would like to put forward for the ConC, and the committee would vote at the next meeting but the senate would vote to amend bylaws.

## **2. Information technology priorities**

O'Neill welcomed Bernie Gulachek, associate vice president, Office of Information Technology (OIT) and Heather Noble, associate CIO, OIT. Noble said it was the third year of OIT's governance input process in which they met with various groups and asked about their IT

priorities. From past meetings, Noble said, they had established formal communities of practices to support the initiatives and priorities that had emerged.

Gulachek said when they began process three years ago, there was a perception across that IT was making up its own agenda and was not connecting it very well with what the community was looking for IT to do. Gulachek said they were conducting almost 50 meetings and had heard from over 1300 people in an online survey to ensure IT activities in the next fiscal year were in alignment with what they were hearing from the community and senior leadership.

Gulachek drew committee members' attention to the materials previously distributed and highlighted the priorities that had emerged during their process last year:

- Improved video collaboration, via WebEX
- Enterprise System Upgrade Project (ESUP): technology community and tertiary system readiness
- Security: early start on risk assessments and management plans.

O'Neill said wifi throughout campus was spotty, and that there seemed to be dead spots and its capacity did not seem to have the robustness that so many mobile devices require. He also pointed out that while there were a lot of technology upgrades, staff does not have the latest technology. O'Neill also asked if there were opportunities to educate people to keep up with evolving technology, saying it could be a potential disconnect down the road. Paton agreed Wi-Fi did not work seamlessly going from building to building anymore; on his devices he had to reestablish Wi-Fi connection each time he changed location. Paton also noted the shortage of smaller rooms with tech setups and IT equipment. Wang asked if OIT worked with Dining Services, saying their website for ordering was terrible. Fisher said there were a variety of systems he worked with to collect data throughout AHC, and there needed to be an easy way to make file transfers among different vendor systems. Fisher also discussed accessibility to testing centers as more and more national tests move towards online testing. In AHC, they have had difficulty with access to spaces equipped for this and having sufficient Wi-Fi access to handle forty users in a room. Fisher said he had also experienced Wi-Fi cycling on and off, and that he often heard complaints about this from others.

Paton reiterated the lack of space and resources, and discussed the logistics of setting up meetings with laptops in a room because there is nowhere else to do it. Fisher said he'd received a lot of positive feedback about WebEx, and Hegrenes agreed it worked well. Wallace said the one helpline they were now using in her department had improved significantly. She also expressed her appreciation for the acquisition of University copy of Adobe Pro.

O'Neill asked about the interface between IT and emergency preparedness and emergency response teams in the event of a major event. Gulachek said that fire-life safety was a major priority and computer applications ride on top of the infrastructure that is in place. He said TextU is an example of an emergency notification, and that they worked with central security to provide other mechanisms to alert the campus of an event. Gulachek said they were in continuous dialogue with University Services and Central Security about IT integration with emergency alerts and preparedness.

Wallace discussed disposing a computer monitor. She had to call outstate to dispose of it, and she wondered why used computers weren't being gathered in a central location for disposal. Paton discussed the recycling program, and the committee briefly discussed repurposing, refurbishing, and recycling of old computers. Paton asked a question about sending out large emailings. Gulachek said that was a limitation of the Gmail application, and suggested using Google's web client feature.

Gulachek and Noble expressed their appreciation for meeting with the committee.

Hearing no further business, O'Neill adjourned the meeting.

Mary Jo Pehl  
University Senate