



# Facilities Subcommittee

(a subcommittee of the Strategic Planning and Budget Committee)

**Date:** Wednesday, Feb. 25  
**Time:** 12:03 to 12:56 p.m.  
**Location:** 268 KSC

## Minutes

**Status:**  
Approved 03/25/15

**Present:** Jane Hovland, John Rashid, Pat Keenan, Harlan Stech, Laura Lott, Mindy Granley, Mark Nierengarten, Geoff Bell, Alek Mintz, Hannah Keil, Laurie Fosnacht, Steve Bardolph, David Worley, William Salmon, BreAnn Graber (Staff Support), Mick McComber (*Guest*)

**Excused:** Rebecca Teasley, Gina Pudlick

### Call to order—

Chair Pat Keenan called the meeting to order at 12:03 p.m. on Wednesday, Feb. 25, 2015.

### Approval of Minutes—

A motion to approve the minutes from the Jan. 28, 2015 meeting was seconded. There was no further discussion. The motion to approve the Jan. 28 minutes was carried on unanimous vote.

### Fencing Discussion—

Keenan reminded the committee that there will be a steam line replacement in summer of 2015, requiring the removal of a portion of fencing along University Drive—the section from the Darland Administration building to the Sports and Health Center. He then introduced guest Mick McComber of the Recreational Sports Outdoor Program (RSOP) to speak about fencing.

McComber provided some history of the fields at UMD and passed around a photograph of the fields (to which he was referring). He indicated that administrators in the 1980s had viewed fencing around the perimeters of fields to be a best practice from a liability and legal standpoint. McComber pointed out that fields in Hermantown, Esko, Jean Duluth, Wheeler, etc. all have fencing around their perimeter. McComber indicated that athletic professionals have an obligation to offer an environment that is safe for its users and visitors. Limiting time and duration of space is critical; otherwise, negligence will result.

Fences are used to prevent individuals from walking across fields and balls (or other items) from making their way out of designated play areas. The turf industry has developed standards to preserve the quality of the terrain to prevent injuries—particularly head injuries, with the extra focus on the need to prevent concussions.

McComber reminded the Facilities Subcommittee members that fields are not green or park space; they are heavily scheduled, maintained and managed spaces. Fields must be monitored (closing them if they are too wet, for example), treated and prepared for competition. He acknowledged the dangers of people climbing fences, but emphasized how fences deter unauthorized users from using the fields. McComber expressed his concern for the safety of students if the fences were removed. He also said how he would not be opposed to upgrading the fencing to be more aesthetically pleasing. A member of the committee mentioned the nice cast-iron fencing around Malosky Stadium. However, McComber indicated that such fencing is very expensive and would most likely not be possible due to budget concerns.

While McComber reiterated that RSOP and Athletics rely on fencing to minimize disruption, traffic and putting people in harm's way, another committee member questioned the negative impact such fencing has on visitors to campus. Another member mentioned how planting shrubbery by the fencing might make it more pleasing to the eye; however, due to a heavy amount of plowing that takes place in the area being discussed makes it difficult for plants to grow well.

McComber shared his view that a way of securing the space is necessary. He pointed out that the fields are used by the community as well; and the last thing he would want to see would be kids chasing a ball out into the street (if there were no fencing). Fencing also makes it easier for his staff to monitor and manage the schedule of the fields and minimizes conflicts with community members arguing over fields. McComber also mentioned the fact that UMD is required by Title IX to have a regulation size soccer field for the women's team to practice. The only space UMD has meeting that requirement lies in the fenced area, providing another reason the space needs to be protected.

One Facilities Subcommittee member asked about the possibility of using fields across the street (from St. Marie). However, these fields are for informal use only—at least for now. McComber mentioned that the Master Plan did include “pie in the sky” talk about putting in sports fields across from St. Marie. He said how convenience has to be balanced with use. Another member of the Facilities Subcommittee—who was a UMD soccer team member—said that the fields serve as a learning opportunity—much like a classroom. She emphasized the importance of keeping students safe and keeping the fields in good condition.

McComber talked about how fences create a safe space, prevent injury and discourage unauthorized users from using the spaces—especially those with dogs who may not clean up after them. It was mentioned that the University of Minnesota Twin Cities (UMTC) uses fencing around its fields; however, McComber did acknowledge that the fields are away from campus and are near a railroad. Risk Management had given UMTC the recommendation to use fencing; however, it has been hesitant initiating any recommendation to UMD.

The closing discussion resulted in members recognizing the need for safety, the desire for more aesthetically pleasing fencing and the limitations of financial resources. Due to safety and budget considerations, the Facilities Subcommittee supports the project's scope to replace the fencing upon completion of the steam line replacement with an attempt to beautify the landscape around the fencing to make it look more aesthetically pleasing.

#### **Strategic Planning & Budget (SP&B) Committee Update—**

Chair Pat Keenan told the committee he would provide a SP&B Committee update at the next meeting.

#### **Potential Future Topics of Discussion—**

The following items were mentioned:

- Annual Capital Budget
- 6-Year Capital Budget
- Higher Education Asset Preservation & Replacement (HEAPR) List
- Repair & Replacement (R&R) Budget

*Next Meeting:* Wednesday, March 11\* at noon in RDC 333 (across from the Residence Dining Center)

*\*Meeting was cancelled. Next meeting would be Wednesday, March 25, 2015 at noon in Garden Room.*

**Meeting Adjourned 12:56 pm**