

## Minutes

### Senate Consultative Committee February 6, 1992

- Present: Thomas Scott (chair), Mario Bognanno, Amos Deinard, Denise Eloundou, Judith Garrard, Michael Handberg, Paul Holm, Norman Kerr, David Lee, Stanford Lehmborg, Tom Lopez, Karen Seashore Louis, Lois Regnier, Burton Shapiro, Charlotte Striebel, Denise Tolbert, James VanAlstine, Jeff Winker, Shirley Zimmerman
- Guests: McKinley Boston (Director, Men's Athletics), Geoff Gorvin (Footnote), President Nils Hasselmo

#### **1. Discussion with McKinley Boston**

Professor Scott convened the meeting at 12:30 and welcomed Dr. McKinley Boston to make a few remarks to the Committee. Professor Scott observed that the faculty find it interesting that Dr. Boston is the first athletic director with a doctorate; they also find it interesting that he wishes to teach, which is unusual for an athletic director. Perhaps most unusual, he came to the University and, in very short order, also hired a football coach with a doctorate.

Dr. Boston began by recalling that he had been a student at the University--about two years after he had been enrolled. It took him about two years to come to grips with why he was at the University of Minnesota; the early answer to the question was "to play football." He was one of a number who learned to appreciate education towards the end of their undergraduate career, as he moved into planning his professional career, and as a result of marrying someone who valued education. His undergraduate experience left a lot to be desired, Dr. Boston concluded, and while he cannot take all of the blame, neither did he do all that he was responsible for.

In his resume, Dr. Boston recounted, he describes himself as an educational administrator. While that phrase may have escaped the notice of the search committee, it is significant for him. An athletic director wears many hats, he noted: administrator, development officer, entrepreneur, lobbyist, politician--few except the President wear as many hats. He has added two more, that of faculty member and, where appropriate, role model and counselor for student-athletes. In any one day, he might wear three or four of the hats, which is both stressful and exciting. The only way to balance these different roles, he said, is to be constant to what one values--and he values the intercollegiate athletic experience.

There are several beneficial by-products to intercollegiate athletics, Dr. Boston contended:

- Through impact on the affective domain of the participants; it is true that the literature on this point is mixed, but there is enough support for his position, Dr. Boston said, that he can be comfortable with taking the position--and would understand if one chose to disagree.
- It provides entertainment for the University community--faculty, staff, students, alumni--and enhances community-building; athletics has a greater ability and possibility to enhance relationships within the institution, and make people feel good about it, than almost all other activities. It also has the potential to do damage to those relationships,

and he has heard much about this potential here. If the program is run the right way, however, there are tremendous opportunities.

- It provides development opportunities for the University. Again, although the literature is mixed, there is support for the proposition that a well-run program can assist an institution in fund-raising.

In order to deliver these by-products, Dr. Boston told the Committee, the program must be of high quality and be "mainstreamed" into the educational process. A critical problem he faces is elimination of the wall of separation of University Avenue.

He acknowledged that neither this nor any other discussion would change the minds of some faculty; some will respect athletics, some will not, and some will retain open minds and will respect the programs if they can appreciate and respect the outcomes. What he needs, he said, is a level of trust so that the issues can be debated on the merits, not on whether or not the faculty trust him--and the arguments often boil down only to trust much of the time in athletics. The challenge for him is that if there be debate, that sides not be taken because of what he or the faculty represent. He believes, Dr. Boston commented, that the faculty and those involved in athletics are on the same side, and that is to help produce quality students who, it is hoped, once graduated will contribute to society in a positive way.

The staff members in athletics are educators, trying to produce the same product as the faculty. Faculty do not examine the work of their colleagues searching for dishonesty, Dr. Boston observed; they debate principles and data but appreciate the integrity of the effort. He said he hopes, as he works to change values, to make athletics important--and also hopes that it will be recognized that this effort cannot be accomplished overnight. There are many issues which need discussion, and he intends to operate the program in a spirit of collegiality--he will not always agree with the faculty, and he said he hoped they would respect him, and there will be much that athletics will accomplish that the faculty embrace.

Dr. Boston told the Committee he has three immediate goals:

1. To make sure that athletics are mainstreamed into the academic life of the University;
2. To rebuilt deteriorating community support for intercollegiate athletics; and
3. To evaluate the staff and coaches to determine the degree to which they can contribute over the long-term.

One Committee member noted that none of his hats, nor his goals, included winning records. Dr. Boston replied that he assumes winning and academic quality need not be mutually exclusive. He has every intent, he said, to lead the football team to the Rose Bowl and to have all teams competing in national championships and among the top 25 in their sport. And, he added, this goal is predicated on the assumption that it will be done right. Winning is IMPORTANT--it's like competing for research funds: your dean doesn't want to hear all the time how you were in second place. But you don't cheat to obtain research funds and athletics isn't going to cheat to win.

Dr. Boston was asked how he would bring student-athletes into the academic mainstream; he rejoined that he hoped most of them are! Among his first challenges, he said, is to deal with the widespread assumption that most student-athletes are NOT in the academic mainstream--when in fact most are and most are capable students. He needs to address quickly the issues associated with the students at risk. He said he feels strongly that the University of Minnesota has had a problem--at least for 27 years, since he was here as a student-athlete--in that it needs to find a way to make comfortable in this community those who have different frames of reference. Being the only Black or Indian in a class means being scared to death; you make a mistake and people are quick to judge. Many students at risk come to the University without an appreciation of why it is they are here; for students at risk, education may not have been valued in their homes. In urban America, the extended community isn't there and there is no "safety net" now. There are a number of students of color who have different values as well as inadequate preparation; for college, the best model of support for this kind of student is the historically Black universities. They are nurturing; the faculty is not judgmental, it accepts diversity, serves as mentors, and reaches out. Freshmen need strong counseling and must be made as emotionally stable as possible--and a lot of people other than the coaches and the athletic director have to be involved, Dr. Boston said. This is the most critical problem--the high risk students--rather than any debate about the 80% or more of student-athletes who will do well no matter what the department does.

Asked about the advising provided to student-athletes, Dr. Boston said that Dr. Elayne Donahue's office does a marvelous job. Although she reports to the Provost rather than the athletic directors, he pointed out, he and Ms. Voelz work very closely with her office. The counselors in her office act as ACADEMIC counselors; there is a question, which he is now discussing with Dr. Donahue, about the extent to which they should be involved in counseling on matters other than scheduling, remediation, and monitoring--such as enhancing the affective development of student-athletes.

Professor Scott thanked Dr. Boston for joining the Committee and wished him well.

## **2. Reports of the Chairs**

SENATE BUDGET COMMITTEE Professor Scott next turned to Professor Louis for a report for the Senate Budget Committee. Professor Louis distributed a memo outlining a set of procedures to be used in setting the Senate budget and responding to requests for funds for special projects. With minor changes, the Committee accepted the procedures. She also explained why the funding for the Select Committee on Gays, Lesbians, and Bisexuals will receive funding in excess of that which can normally be expected. There was agreement that not all of the available funds in the Senate should be spent in order to see what next year brings.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY Professor Lehmberg then reported on the issues with which SCEP has recently been dealing. One of them was very minor revisions of the policy on scheduling athletic events during study day and finals week (**approved without dissent by SCC**); he confirmed that this policy would apply to all campuses of the University but that its application to the coordinate campuses should be clarified and confirmed. SCEP has also been discussing evaluation of teaching; the Committee, he said, can expect a policy document for the Senate before the end of the year.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE AND PLANNING Professor Shapiro reported that SCFP had reviewed the changes in Facilities Management and its absorption of Physical Planning and the issue of operating costs for new buildings, it will join the Senate Committee on Faculty Affairs for a discussion of the health plan proposal, it discussed contingency planning with Senior Vice President Infante, and it reviewed a list of building requests which would be submitted to the legislature if a bonding bill were to be considered. Committee members briefly discussed the possibility of seeking capital funding for deferred maintenance (which presumably would not require a 1/3 matching by the University), obtaining operating funds for buildings, and the several options which might be considered with respect to balancing future tuition increases, salary increases, and program cuts. Asked about salary increases if there should be a rescission this year, Professor Shapiro responded that Dr. Infante had said that the salary increases would be the last element of the budget plan that would be dispensed with.

STUDENT SENATE CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE Mr. Lopez reported on the items the SSCC is working on, which include increasing accountability for student senators and committee members, student fees, a policy handbook for students, and completion of the search committee handbook for students. Mr. Lee then reported on the "energy summit" of three weeks ago, which was convened with the purpose of beginning work on the development of an energy policy for the University. As a result of the summit, attended by several student governance groups and representatives of the administration, a draft policy has been developed and will be parsed and distributed to appropriate Senate committees for review; it is hoped that the final policy can be voted on at the April Senate meeting. Professor Scott affirmed that he had worked with SSCC to distribute the elements of the policy to the committees for review.

FACULTY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE Professor Scott reported for FCC that the review of the grievance procedure has begun; some members of the Committee participated in interviews with the finalists for the position of General Counsel and for the position of Director of Public Safety.

### **3. Statement on Faculty Role in Advising**

Professor Scott next turned to Professor Lehmborg to explain the policy statement on the faculty role in advising. Professor Lehmborg told the Committee that SCEP had been discussing academic advising for a year and, jointly with Vice Provost Anne Hopkins, last year appointed a small committee chaired by John Anderson in the College of Biological Sciences to review earlier reports and advise it on the next steps. The report pointed out that in so large an institution, advising takes many different forms; out of the discussion of the several issues raised, one of the most important to emerge was the role of the faculty in advising. At first the committee was not sure there was a problem--if it wasn't broke, why fix it?--but as it attended to the information, it realized that things are broken and need attention. SCEP concluded that in many areas of the University the faculty have NO role--and some do not want a role.

A related issue was the low quality of letters of reference that University students receive from the faculty when they are applying to professional schools; Professor Deinard had joined SCEP to point out the problem in the Medical School, Professor Lehmborg reported, and he had since heard Dean Stein of the Law School make the same point. The policy statement SCEP brought to the Committee does not deal directly with the question of letters of recommendations, but there were a variety of points of view on how it should be addressed and SCEP was unable to reach agreement.

The policy statement says that fundamentally faculty should be involved in advising, should probably do some advising, but at least they should oversee how it is done in the unit. The statement received all but unanimous support from SCEP; one member of the committee abstained on the final vote, Professor Lehmsberg said. This policy, it was noted by another Committee member, provides Vice Provost Hopkins with a stronger position with which to deal with the colleges and departments; most of what needs to be done she can do on the authority of her own office, but she will be in a better position if the faculty adopt this statement.

**The Committee voted unanimously to place the policy statement on the docket of the Senate for action.**

#### **4. Discussion with President Hasselmo**

SUPERCOMPUTING Professor Scott next welcomed the President to the meeting and asked him to comment on the issues surrounding the funding for the Minnesota Supercomputer Center [hereinafter MSC]. The President began by commenting that never has such a productive enterprise generated such a storm of misunderstanding--the MSC produces creative solutions for intractable problems and is a productive, creative entity; there is NO factual business for the storm that surrounds it. It may be, he said, that there has not been enough reporting of what the MSC is doing and on its financial solvency. It is a HIGHLY PRODUCTIVE unit, the President emphasized vigorously. The controversy is particularly puzzling if one looks across the nation at institutions struggling to operate supercomputing--while the University obtains it at an incredible rate.

The MSC is a private corporation, the President commented, and in the business there are proprietary interests which must be protected. But there is absolutely NOTHING clandestine about what it is doing, the President again emphasized. It is a very effective and efficient operation that has given the faculty unequalled access to supercomputing. He told the Committee that he had been at a university where supercomputing had failed, so he knows of the difficulties involved in keeping it. The MSC has an overwhelmingly positive record, he said, and while there is a risk in providing the support for the next four years, it is a risk within acceptable limits and one shared with the major supercomputing companies. To NOT take the risk will remove a tremendous opportunity from the University. Either the MSC must purchase the next generation of equipment or the University should dismantle the MSC--a step that would significantly adversely affect research in a number of fields.

It was noted by one Committee member that the plan was approved by both the Advisory Users Committee and the Senate Committee on Computing and Information Systems--which, of any groups of faculty on the campus, they should know most about supercomputing. The President concurred, and also pointed out that the commitment is to purchase services; if the MSC does not or cannot provide the services, the University does not pay.

Brief allusion was made to an anonymous document containing various charges about the MSC and the State Special appropriation which is directed to the MSC; the President observed that the charges reflect a failure to understand the situation in that the funds would not exist if it were not for the MSC. This is similar to the situation with respect to the funding for the Art Museum and the new intercollegiate athletic facilities: the dollars would not be available if not for that purpose.

The President agreed that a summary statement about the MSC and its funding should be issued. He noted that Senior Vice President Infante, who has been unjustly vilified, has been trying to get out information on the solvency and propriety of the MSC and its tremendous value to the University.

The President dismissed the allegations of conflict of interest: He pointed out that both Senior Vice Presidents Erickson and Infante are on the Board of Directors of the MSC to represent the University, the company is owned by the University, it exists only for the University, and the profits go to the University. Where, he inquired, is the conflict of interest? There is only one interest involved, that of the University of Minnesota. There is no conflict and no opportunity for private gain.

The President also pointed out that the Board of Directors consists of well-known people, that there is nothing secret about what is done, the MSC is subject to regular accounting procedures, and that the State finance people have all reviewed MSC operations and said it was fine. It is a private company that does product research, he affirmed--and the companies contracting for the services do not want their competitors to know what they are doing, but there is no secret research for the Department of Defense or any other agency.

It was recalled by one Committee member that he had expressed concern, at an earlier meeting, about Dr. Infante continuing to play the role of "point man" on supercomputing; his previous connection to IT, and the continued criticisms, could undermine his credibility as Senior Vice President. The President said he had not heard that point made but acknowledged the perception could be a problem. Both he [that is, the President] and Senior Vice President Erickson are as committed to the MSC as is Dr. Infante, and they have clearly different perspectives on it.

What is more disturbing, said one Committee member, is the distrust that this and others issues reflect--distrust of the administration by faculty, students, and staff on decisions made and on conflict-of-interest issues. The President agreed. Another agreed, noting the administration needed to combat a deeper sense of distrust, a lack of faith in the decisions, that goes beyond supercomputing.

Part of the problem, suggested another Committee member, stems from the earlier decision, later reversed, to house all computing under the MSC. There are also abroad in the land two misconceptions which need to be corrected: that the funds from the State Special could be used for other activities (they cannot) and that personal computing would be sacrificed if the guarantee of \$32 million had to be fulfilled without state funding (they are unrelated). The President was urged to take steps to deal with these misunderstandings.

Purchase of this equipment, it was suggested, with its life expectancy of 3 - 5 years, is like buying a car: either one can save money and pay cash or one can buy and pay for it over time. Is there a way to handle the financing so that 3 - 5 years from now the MSC would be in a better position to make the investment? The President responded that the MSC equipment situation is similar to renovating athletic facilities: one must remodel to generate the income to pay for the remodeling. There were plans laid 3 - 4 years ago to buy the new supercomputing equipment, but it was not possible to set aside sufficient funds to do so.

The President concluded the discussion of the MSC by cautioning that nothing he said is intended to be a smoke screen and that the Committee should NOT be deterred from asking questions nor should it hesitate to ask whatever it wished. He has himself, he pointed out, been doing exactly that.

THE BUDGET AND CONTINGENCY PLANNING Discussion next turned to the budget and contingency planning. The administration is reviewing contingency plans, the President told the Committee; the news from St. Paul is not encouraging--it appears the shortfall may be 30-40% worse than expected and it could be close to \$500 million. It is not inconceivable that the University could face a deep cut; the question is whether or not the entire State government will share in the reductions or if some parts of it will be exempted. This year the University cut \$27 million out of its biennial budget; there could be a \$30 million ANNUAL cut in addition--which is twice as much as the recent reduction.

It is hard to do contingency planning in these circumstances, the President commented; one can hardly think about such a maiming of the institution unless one's back is to the wall. One must be concerned, too, about striking unnecessary fear into everyone's hearts. The President said he hopes the State realizes the damage that will be done and that the University will not readily recover as the State gets through a bad economic period.

The President said he had gotten the message that there had been too much across-the-board cutting in the last round. While it will be helpful in terms of the political arena to lay out plans for cuts, waving a "bloody shirt" is dangerous; the President said he was very reluctant to do that. He will not say that a unit is to be eliminated unless that decision is inescapable; he will not waive flags for political purposes.

The question is how to express the severity of a cut when the institution is already strained? The President said he appreciated the support of students in laying out the impact of constantly increasing tuition rates. Some in the State say tuition should keep on increasing, even up to the point where it covers 2/3 of the cost of instruction. That would be a dramatic change in higher education.

The University needs to continue to make the argument that higher education is important in economic development. There is alarm over 500 plant employees in Detroit Lakes; University research programs generate between 5000 and 6000 jobs! The University needs to quantify its impact as an economic engine. For jump-starting the economy, the President commented, it's hard to imagine a better investment than the University and the multiplier effect it has. The University could also quantify the lay-offs likely with a \$30 million cut, but the President repeated that he does not want to be program-specific, in predictions of disaster, because it is such a blow to the programs.

There are three different alternatives being considered. One is like the present budget, which combines tuition increases and program cuts. A second is to absorb any cuts completely through program cuts, with no further tuition increases. A third, a break with the land-grant tradition, would be to stop being dragged into high tuition and instead tell the legislature it should deliberately go to a "high tuition, high aid" system and put additional funds in student aid. Right now the institutions are being dragged into high tuition without the accompanying increase in student aid. The President concurred in concern about the lack of aid for graduate and professional students; he also noted the high percentage of undergraduates who receive no parental aid.

The reserves, the President said, could be used for phasing over a 1 - 2 year period of program changes but could not be used for the long term. The administration has said the University will stand pat on the 5% salary increases; even though it has been suggested the increase should be relinquished, the President declared, it will not be.

One Committee member, pointing to the pattern of high tuition increases recently, argued that students are already too financially strapped and that any additional budget problems be dealt with by considering program offerings rather than tuition increases. It was also suggested that any increase in aid should be primarily grant funds; the President agreed--and the family income limits should be made as high as possible.

It was also suggested that an increase in work-study aid could help students through jobs on campus and perhaps also reduce institutional costs by reducing the need for full-time regular employees. The President said he feels student employment is important but that he receives conflicting evidence about it--often student jobs go unfilled. It is a factor in community-building, and there may be a way to accomplish two goals with increased student employment. Employee groups, however, do not want to see it expanded.

There are three worries about these possibilities, said one Committee member. High tuition could drive students to other states for their education; those students may, in turn, SETTLE outside Minnesota; the University has been blessed with generous alumni, and it is possible that between large student loans and driving students out of Minnesota, there could be implications for future fund-raising. The President agreed. Financial aid for scholarships has begun to pick up, although it is still small, and Minnesota could lose students to other states if it erects high financial barriers.

The University makes a substantial contribution to the quality of life in the State, it was noted by another Committee member. The President again agreed. He noted that the United States has done extraordinarily well in providing access to higher education, but to a certain extent it has been mesmerized with the numbers at the expense of quality. It is to be hoped that attention to quality will not affect the numbers. Other nations spend a lot of money on higher education for their young people--but access is VERY restricted: It is free for the 3 - 5% who can get in. The United States has provided broad access and at the same time kept quality relatively high. If that is to be retained, higher education must be made a priority.

The Committee adjourned at 3:00.

-- Gary Engstrand