

Civil Service Consultative Committee (CSCC)
April 15, 2021
Minutes of the Meeting

These minutes 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 minutes represent the views of, nor are they binding on the senate, the administration, or the Board of Regents.

[**In these minutes:** PEAK Initiative; Office of Human Resources (OHR) Updates; Chairs Report; Subcommittee Reports; Demilitarization Resolution]

PRESENT: Terry Beseman (chair), Joey Best, Elise Diesslin, Tony Fussy, Missy Juliette, Kevin Kelley, Jean Otto, Meredith Schneider, Nan Thurston, Marc Tye, Mary Zosel

REGRETS: Lorri Chapman, Ray Munro, Brenda Reeves

OTHER: Erik Biever, Natalie Buckman, Scott Creer, Bethany Hansen, Peter Helgesen, Stacey Maher, Megan Murray, Jerry Taintor, Matthew Verkuilen, Terri Wallace

GUESTS: Whitney Henry, Weronika Wasilewski

Terry Beseman, chair, welcomed the committee and the members introduced themselves.

1. PEAK Initiative

Huron Consulting, the firm hired by the University to lead the PEAK Initiative, was invited to provide an overview of the project, and to hear feedback from CSCC members. Whitney Henry and Weronika Wasilewski, both representatives from Huron Consulting, attended the meeting and presented slides titled [PEAK Initiative](#). The presentation covered the project overview, project scope, guiding principles, timelines, and feedback received from the University community. The primary goal of the project, Henry said, is to identify ways to increase efficiency, improve service, or gain capacity to support the mission.

Recently, the [Huron Higher Education Administrative Activity Study](#) was sent to employees to complete. Henry explained that the goal of the study is to better understand administrative activities happening across campus. Beseman commented that the 2020-21 academic year was very different for a lot of employees in terms of workload and duties, given the pandemic and retirements, and asked how employees should compensate for that when completing the study. Henry told members that the instructions and FAQ that accompany the study request that employees indicate their workload pre-COVID-19, unless the employee anticipates their job changing permanently as a result of the past year. Henry also noted that there is an option in the study for an employee to state that their job has changed significantly since COVID-19.

Missy Juliette asked if recommendations for changes to the budget model will be part of the PEAK Initiative. Henry said that the budget model is out of scope for the project, but has been

raised many times, and the feedback received will be communicated to the administration as part of the final report.

Members also provided feedback on communications and accessibility.

2. Office of Human Resources (OHR) Updates

Peter Helgesen, senior employee relations consultant, OHR, provided the following updates:

- OHR offers resources to help with stress, anger and/or sadness through the Employee Assistant Program (EAP) and the Wellbeing program. Individuals experiencing mental or emotional impacts of the ongoing trial of Derek Chauvin are encouraged to take advantage of the resources. Counseling is available 24/7 through the EAP.
- On April 15, from 11:00 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. OHR is co-sponsoring a conversation with African American mental health providers entitled “This Is Exhausting!”

Members also discussed that with the daily stressors of the trial and on-going civil unrest in and around the campus, in addition to added challenges to personal and professional lives as a result of COVID-19, it is frustrating to also have aggressive timelines on the PEAK Initiative. Scott Creer commented that the communications from the President’s Office about the trial and available resources are great, but actions (such as pushing back deadlines on the PEAK Initiative) would be better. Creer told members that PACC contacted the President’s Office to request that the due date to complete the [Huron Higher Education Administrative Activity Study](#) be pushed to allow extra time for employees.

3. Chairs Report

Beseman shared the following [April 2021 Chairs Report](#).

4. Subcommittee Reports

The Communications and Outreach Subcommittee provided the following updates:

- The subcommittee will host a brown bag event in May 2021 related to the Minnesota State Retirement System (MSRS).
- The subcommittee will co-host a webinar with PACC in April 2021 related to the multi-generational workforce.
- The March 2021 civil service newsletter readership was 59.6%.

5. Demilitarization Resolution

Beseman welcomed Civil Service Senators, who were invited to join for the final agenda item, and explained that the University Senate will be voting on the resolution drafted by Briggs Tople, chair, Student Senate Consultative Committee [on the Demilitarization of All University of Minnesota Policing Forces](#) at the April University Senate meeting. Beseman reminded CSCC members and Civil Service Senators that the CSCC leadership submitted a [statement](#) to the University Senate at the March University Senate meeting stating that the Civil Service Senate “voted not to support the resolution in its current form. While we agreed with many elements, as a whole we voted not to support it at this time.”

Following discussions at the March University Senate meeting, Beseman said, Tople agreed to split the resolution into seven separate votes in response to many individuals expressing that they agreed with some elements of the resolution, but not with the entire document. Beseman asked for feedback from CSCC members and Civil Service Senators on whether that adjustment to the resolution changes the decision previously made by the group.

CSCC members and Civil Service Senators provided the following feedback:

- Nan Thurston told members that she also serves on the Equity, Access, and Diversity Committee, which has submitted a statement to the University Senate explaining that they do not have enough information about the particulars of the University of Minnesota Police Department (UMPD) to make a decision about demilitarization.
- Kevin Kelley pointed out that the UMPD officers are colleagues and should be supported. He expressed frustration that this point has not been brought up in any discussions about the resolution.
- Many members stated that the resolution has not changed enough for the Civil Service Senate to vote in support of the resolution.

With no further business, Beseman adjourned the meeting.

Bobbie Erichsen
University Senate Office