

Minutes

Senate Consultative Committee June 2, 1988

Present: Tim Allison, Joan Bannister, Ellen Berscheid, Mark Brenner, Charles Campbell, Shirley Clark, Richard Goldstein, Warren Ibele, Lynnette Mullins, Ronald Phillips, Michael Rodriguez, Carrie Simenson, W. Phillips Shively (chair), Matthew Traxler, Mark Umland, James VanAlstine, Bruce Vandal

Guests: James Duffy (Director, Bookstores), Linda Ellinger (chair, Assembly Committee on Student Affairs), Jan Morse, June Perkins, Richard Sauer, and others

1. Presidential Search Advisory Committee

Professor Shively closed the meeting for Committee discussion of the membership on the Search Advisory Committee. There was brief review of the designation of the chair and vice chair, the role of the search firm, and agreement that a "lead" student should be designated as contact. The Committee unanimously approved the names that Professor Shively (for the faculty) and Mr. Vandal (for the students) submitted. The names of the civil service and P/A representative were also approved. The membership on the Search Advisory Committee will be announced at the June Regents meeting.

2. Bookstore Reserves

Professor Shively welcomed James Duffy and Linda Ellinger to the meeting to discuss Bookstore reserves. He noted the previous involvement of SCC with the issue, including the various proposals that had been developed on how the reserves should be used. He also apologized for letting the issue slip through the cracks since SCC last dealt with the subject and said that any resolution would have to come from SCC next year--following review by the Senate Finance Committee of Bookstore and all other reserve funds.

Mr. Duffy reported that the current reserves (as of 2/29/88) are \$219,000. Those funds had previously been identified for bookstore expansion, but there was no longer a need for expansion. It was suggested that an appropriate use of the reserves would be to contribute them to the Libraries for new book acquisitions. After discussion of various alternatives (including grants to needy students through department offices and a spend-down through a sale of books to promote personal libraries), the Committee agreed that library acquisitions was the wisest use of the funds. This proposal was also endorsed by Mr. Duffy and Ms. Ellinger.

Committee members also agreed that these funds should not be viewed as replacement money for acquisitions, and that the use of the money in the future would need to be reviewed.

In response to a question, Mr. Duffy explained that the surpluses produced by the Bookstores arose from a budgeted margin of 1.5 - 2.0%, which was a cut from previous years. Most of the income came from the Minnesota Book Center and the H. D. Smith bookstore, and then from the sale of computers and such items as t-shirts. Even with a small budgeted margin, on gross sales of \$20 to \$22 million per year there will be close to \$400,000 in surplus. The margins were reduced by providing a 10% discount on all trade books, a 35% discount on all New York Times bestsellers, and a reduction in

the margin on supplies.

Mr. Duffy told the Committee that he would appreciate receiving a recommendation from it about the distribution of the money, especially if it is inclined to direct the funds to the libraries; the fund has, in the past, been drained for other uses. Professor Shively responded that it was the clear sense of the meeting that for next year the money should go to the libraries for book acquisitions; a recommendation for future years should await SFC review.

Mr. Duffy was also asked if a small part of the money could be used to improve customer relations, particularly the ability to track and report on the status of computer orders and whether or not an item was on sale.

3. Review of the "Minnesota Facilities Model"

Professor Shively distributed a memo from Tom Scott, chair of the Physical Plant and Space Allocation Committee and a memo from Clint Hewitt to Professor Scott. The question at hand is how a review of the Minnesota Facilities Model should proceed.

The Model is used to evaluate the need and quality of virtually all space assigned in the University; the Physical Plant Committee has suggested that some revisions may be necessary, especially as the Model deals with space for graduate fellows, emeritus faculty, and student space.

Mr. Hewitt indicated in his memo that he is prepared to proceed with the review. The Committee agreed that the two new chairs (of FCC and SSCC) should work together in the near future with Mr. Hewitt to negotiate the role of a group to review the Model.

4. Discussion with President Sauer

Professor Shively welcomed the President to the meeting; he told President Sauer that one question the Committee had was how Commitment to Focus planning would go forward and the University kept moving now that Provost Benjamin had resigned. President Sauer said he will recommend to the Board of Regents that the Academic Priorities plan be adopted (in July) and that he intends to have an Acting Provost named by next Friday. He said he senses there is support from the Regents for action.

The President was asked about the possibility of uncoupling the position of Provost for the Twin Cities campus from the position of Vice President for Academic Affairs. He said that structural issues were wide open questions and referred the Committee to the Peat, Marwick report as well as a recent paper prepared by Joe Graba of the State Board of Vocational Technical Education. (Both reports will be forwarded to the members of the Committee.) The Peat, Marwick report will be discussed by the Board of Regents. He also noted that the Spencer Commission appointed by the Governor will look, at least indirectly, at structural issues.

A question was posed about what tasks the new Vice Provost for Minority Affairs would take on; President Sauer said she intends to first look at OMSSA. If the Regents choose to change the structure of the administration, he added, it is unlikely that her responsibilities would be affected.

5. Reports of the Chairs

Professor Clark reported on the items discussed at the last meeting of the Senate Finance Committee, the meeting the next day to begin discussion of legislative request priorities, and on the necessity for several meetings as the summer progresses to respond to the development of the request.

Mr. Vandal reported that SSCC continues to try to address the subject of ROTC and treatment of gays. He announced the election of Carrie Simenson as chair of SSCC for next year; the Committee applauded her selection. Mr. Vandal also expressed his thanks and appreciation to the faculty of SCC for their support during the year.

Professor Shively reported that FCC had asked for preparation of a handbook for committee chairs and had provided for the appointment of a committee to prepare the restructuring of the Senate committee structure and for the Task Force on Elimination of Mandatory Retirement. Professor Shively also thanked the student members of the Committee. He concluded that it had clearly been a very trying and exhausting year for all of the members of the Committee.

6. Legislative Request Priorities

Professor Shively enumerated the priorities which had come out of the discussion at the FCC meeting: anticipatory retention money (with the note that this item should not be crowded out by a request for money for such items as space operation, fuel, and utilities), faculty salaries, money for the Commitment to Focus plans, for SEE budgets, for Libraries, and to obviate the cap on health benefits. Mr. Vandal recited the student priorities, which include a strong message about professional tuition offset and cost-related tuition, proposals for health science scholarships, removal of marginal or questionable items from calculation of instructional costs, and study space. Professor Clark noted that faculty fringe benefit flexibility, civil service salaries, and assistance to the administration on funding for the Academic Priorities were additional issues which should rank high.

It was pointed out again that with many programs or activities currently on soft funding, and with that funding to be discontinued, there was a great need to know the schedule for reallocation and the future of those programs. The situation is "downright scary, if not impossible," in the words of one Committee member. One argument which can or should be made is that the funding should be incorporated into the base funding for the University on the grounds that the money would have been provided by the legislature had there been a request. The University is looking at the next session to save it, which is to be hoped for but which may not occur.

Other issues raised were: Whether or not fuel and utilities should even be regarded as a high priority for SCC, the manner in which issues and data are presented to the Committee and to SFC, whether or not there were any central budget principles at all (now or previously), the manner in which data are presented to the legislature.

Professor Shively suggested that there are three "blocks" of items: those related to the physical operation of the campus, those related to academic improvements (salaries, tuition, equipment, retention), and those related to CTF planning (and money for the "softly-funded" programs). If

planning is to continue, then those elements of the request must be given high priority, he said--and others will then be lower.

It was suggested that the items could, in part, be broken down. For example, faculty salaries could be tiered. The case can be made that this is a huge item; the University most recently ranked 28th out of the top 30 research universities, according to AAUP data, and salaries should probably increase about 17%. If 10% of that increase were designated as highest priority, along with CTF items and others, and then another 7% in salaries were noted as of high importance, perhaps the legislature could be shown what it was buying for its money.

The Committee agreed to continue its discussion with the Senate Finance Committee the next day.

7. Report on Student Grievances

Professor Shively welcomed Jan Morse, who had prepared a summary report on student grievances at the University (the report was distributed at the meeting). Ms. Morse summarized the report; she told the Committee she had found there was widespread confusion, diversity, and a piecemeal approach to student grievances across the institution.

Asked what it would take to restructure and make sense of the grievance procedures, Ms. Morse suggested that the Senate should take the issue up. Committee members discussed various issues, including the provision of syllabi and notice of class requirements (problems about which are the basis of the majority of the grievances). One way to improve the situation might be for SCC to write to the Deans to suggest that information be disseminated to the faculty about ways to avoid grievances. If there is to be a centralized grievance procedure, the Committee agreed that any proposal would have to go to the Senate and to the Committee on Educational Policy.

It was agreed that SCC would take this issue up again in the fall to determine how to proceed.

The Committee adjourned at 3:00.

--Gary Engstrand