

2020-21 UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

April 1, 2021

CIVIL SERVICE SENATE MINUTES

A special meeting of the Civil Service Senate was convened via Zoom on April 1, 2021. Chair Terry Beseman presided.

1. Conversation with Regent David J. McMillan

Beseman hosted a round of introductions, and then welcomed Regent David J. McMillan to the senate meeting, explaining that Regent McMillan was invited to talk about his experiences as a member of the Board of Regents, and to address a few [broad topics that were submitted to him in advance of the meeting](#). Regent McMillan thanked the senate for the invitation, gave a brief overview of his career and work on the BOR, and then addressed the topics he was given.

Campus Safety/Security

McMillan told members that he looks at campus safety and security on the Twin Cities campus in two ways.

1. The first is a recognition that the campus is in the middle of an urban area, which impacts the security of campus and decisions about the necessary personnel to handle those security issues. Along with these decisions, he said, it is important to recognize that the security presence impacts how some individuals feel safe on campus, and the institution must work to make everyone feel safe.
2. The second consideration is that the security of campus, or lack of security, puts the Twin Cities campus brand at risk. The institution must be able to attract the best faculty, students, and staff, he said, and if people don't feel safe working on campus or sending their kids to school on campus, it will jeopardize the University.

McMillan explained that Dr. Cedric Alexander's report titled [University of Minnesota, Twin Cities Review and Recommendations to Strengthen UMPD Alignment with Campus Community Expectations and Values](#) was a good first step to help address campus safety concerns. He emphasized that President Gabel is approaching these issues in the right way and he has confidence in UMPD Police Chief Matt Clark.

Staff Reduction/Compensation Challenges

Civil Service Senators shared the following concerns with Regent McMillan:

- Many civil service employee salaries are not in line with market value, due to salary compression and other issues, and now with many employees feeling burnout, there is a concern about retaining talent at the University. Senators want the BOR to understand these issues when discussing budget and compensation decisions.
- When discussing budget and compensation issues with the Office of Human Resources (OHR), civil service governance is always told that there are two revenue streams that account for compensation increases: state funding and tuition dollars. However, many civil service employees are either directly or indirectly funded by research dollars, and

despite the hurdles that OHR describes, many employees are seeing that their work is bringing in significant research funding dollars - twice as much as the University receives from state funding. When employees see reports about how underpaid employees are, while also seeing the money being brought in on account of their work, it creates a stressful, and sometimes toxic, working environment.

- Civil service employee compensation is a consequence of the budget, not a driver.
- In-salary adjustments are the primary way to get an employee paid their market price. These adjustments are possible to get, but very difficult because departments are not budgeted to make the adjustments. This issue leads to the University losing long term talent.

McMillan thanked senators for sharing their concerns, and then responded with the following points:

- The BOR, particularly in committee, is trying to dive deeper into issues surrounding compensation, job markets, and job families. Part of this work includes elevating the OHR leadership into a cabinet position that reports directly to President Gabel.
- Ken Horstman, interim vice president, OHR, has shared with the BOR that the University is missing compensation benchmarks and has also said that the institution can no longer simply hold the line on compensation without causing morale and retention issues among employees.
- Comments received today make it clear that the BOR needs to hear about and think about compensation issues for civil service employees more often.

2. Senate Debrief on the [Demilitarization Resolution](#)

Beseman reminded senators that the resolution was discussed at the March University Senate meeting, and will be voted on by the University Senate in April. Beseman asked for feedback from senators, and received the following comments:

- The definition of firearm is too broad, and includes service weapons.
- Senators expressed concern about how the outcome of the Derek Chauvin trial will impact campus and the city of Minneapolis.
- One member asked if Chief Clark would be at the April University Senate meeting to answer questions.

Beseman told members that he wasn't sure if Chief Clark would be available before the vote to answer questions. He explained that President Gabel has said that she would prefer that the MSafe Implementation Team review the impacts of demilitarization on campus before any decisions are made, but the students do not want to wait for that review. He also told members that there has been some discussion about breaking the seven requests in the resolution into separate votes at the April University Senate meeting.

3. Unit breakouts: Update on elections communications

Beseman then directed senators into breakout rooms to discuss communication plans for the upcoming Civil Service Senate election.

With no further business, Beseman adjourned the meeting.

Bobbie Erichsen
University Senate Office