

# The University Senate Of Michigan Technological University

## Minutes of Meeting 333

3 May 2000

Synopsis: The Senate

- (1) Adopted Proposal 21-00, Referendum on Presidential Performance.
  - (2) Tabled Proposal 15-00 until information on determining healthcare cost increases is received.
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### 1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

President Seely called University Senate Meeting 333 to order at 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday, 3 May 2000, in Room B45 EERC.

Secretary Reed called roll. Absent were representatives from Education, Mining Engineering, Physical Education, Institute of Materials Processing, and Student Affairs and Educational Opportunity. Liaisons in attendance were Josh Bennett (USG) and Ted Soldan (Staff Council).

### 2. RECOGNITION OF VISITORS

Visitors included Steve Bowen (Interim Provost), Tony Rogers (Chemical Engineering), Geoff Roelant (USG), Marcia Goodrich (*Tech Topics*), Chris Webb (*Daily Mining Gazette*), Roger Wickstrom (*Daily Mining Gazette*), William Vockel (Mathematical Sciences), and Jason Myers (*MTU Lode*).

### 3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Williams MOVED and Ouellette seconded the motion to approve the agenda as presented. The motion to approve PASSED on voice vote with no dissent. [Appendix A. NOTE: Only official Senate and Library archival copies of the minutes will contain a full complement of appendices.]

### 4. NEW BUSINESS

#### Proposal 22-00, Recommendations on Medical and Health Insurance Benefits [Appendix B]

The proposal was introduced as new business.

### 5. OLD BUSINESS

#### A. Proposal 21-00, Referendum on Presidential Performance [See minutes, page 8490, for a copy of this proposal.]

MacLennan MOVED and Sloan seconded the motion to approve Proposal 21-00.

Seely introduced the suggestion to change the title to "Referendum on Administrative Performance." Hackney noted that this was unfocused and Williams pointed out that presidential performance includes performance of the entire administration. Bowen commented that a focus on the President is not consistent with the Administrative Evaluation Commission report. The consensus was to leave the title as originally presented.

Vilmann MOVED and Hodek seconded the motion to table Proposal 21-00 until the first meeting in January 2001. The idea is that it is too early for this action and that this referendum is poorly timed given recruitment, fund-raising, etc.

Blanning commented that it is already late this year, but that a resolution next January would be meaningless. Pegg noted that, while the Senate's role is advisory and the Board cannot be forced by the Senate to do anything, it is important to communicate and let them know Senate opinion. Snyder felt that this proposal was well timed, coming at the point of hiring a new Provost. He noted that this President has both great strengths and great weaknesses and that this proposal encourages the Board to allow the President to focus on his strengths.

The motion to table FAILED on a secret ballot with 25 no votes and 9 yes votes.

Hackney MOVED and Kunz seconded the motion to move from page 2 "The University Senate concludes that President Tompkins has lost the trust of the campus community and action by the Board of Control is required to address this situation." to the top of the proposal.

Seely stated that if the motion passed the Senate would adjust the remaining language as needed.

Several Senators noted that this substantially changed the referendum to a vote of no confidence in the President, and that this was not what they had discussed with their constituents. Seely reviewed the Executive Committees feeling that a list of action items was preferred to a no confidence vote, that the groundwork for a vote of no confidence was not in place, and that it was important to validate the report of the Commission.

The motion to amend FAILED on a secret ballot with 29 no votes and 4 yes votes.

Pegg MOVED and Goltz seconded the motion to amend the fourth bulleted item on page 1 to include language that administrators will be evaluated annually by a statistically valid survey until scores improve.

Senators Green and MacLennan noted that the annual release of the Board of Control evaluation of the President will largely accomplish the same thing as a new evaluation every year. Several Senators noted that there was a need for Board action here, not for the Senate to appoint a new commission every year and go through this same process.

The motion to amend FAILED on a secret ballot with 31 no votes and 3 yes votes.

Williams MOVED and Vilmann seconded the motion to delete the third bulleted item on page 1.

Several Senators noted that external relations were the great strength of the President, but that it was not the Senate's role to define the job of the President. Others noted that there is not a need for the President to spend more time on external relations than now. Ftaclas pointed out that bullet 3 is consistent with current practice at MTU and is indeed a common management model at leading universities.

The motion to amend FAILED on a secret ballot with 24 no votes and 10 yes votes.

Senator Hodek spoke against 21-00, noting that it will create poor public relations across the country for MTU, that there is no reason for the Senate to presume that the Board cannot function effectively, and that the Board is aware of the Commission's report and does not need Senate assistance in acting on it.

Snyder noted that 21-00 emphasizes the importance the campus community places on the Commission report, and Blanning noted that failing to conduct this referendum may be interpreted by some as lowering the credibility of the Commission report.

Long noted that this referendum will provide either endorsement or a failure to endorse the Commission report by the campus community, which is important given the low return rate of their questionnaire. Long indicated that it was important to go forward, get the opinion of the entire campus community, and pass that onto the Board.

Tampas indicated that it was important that numerical results go forward, whether or not they endorse the Commission report's findings.

Several Senators spoke of the Senate's improved relationship with the Board and the increased credibility with the Board in recent years, and it was important to not jeopardize that. Seely noted that the Board understands that we are very concerned. Snyder noted that it is the Senate's responsibility to communicate our concerns, and this is a responsible way to do this.

Pegg MOVED and Pennington seconded the motion to consider Proposal 21-00 as an emergency proposal.

The motion to consider Proposal 21-00 as an emergency proposal PASSED on a secret ballot with 32 yes votes and 2 no votes.

The motion to approve Proposal 21-00 PASSED on a secret ballot with 29 yes votes and 5 no votes.

Referendum ballots will be sent to all Senate constituents. Ballots will be due on Monday, May 15.

**B. Proposal 15-00, Health Care Premium Cap for Medicare-Eligible Retirees [See minutes, page 8479, for a copy of this proposal.]**

MacLennan MOVED and Pegg seconded the motion to approve Proposal 15-00.

Tony Rogers, Senate Fringe Benefits Chair, introduced the proposal. Rogers indicated that the impetus for this proposal began with a jump of up to 70% on premiums indicated on the fall 1999 TechSelect forms. This makes it difficult for retirees to plan, and the goal of this proposal is to limit dramatic increases while recognizing the fact that health care costs do change over time.

Pickens noted that projected costs in health care are greater than the CPI, while Social Security adjustments are lower than the CPI. A three-year moving average approach to limiting dramatic premium increases would make sense, but it does not make sense to tie these to Social Security or the CPI. Medical care is expensive, and anything that costs the University money is not likely to be permanent. The Board instituted the 20% retiree medical benefit co-pay program in 1992, and was changed within a few years. Implementing this proposal with a limit lower than the increase in cost of medical care is not likely to be a permanent solution

Rogers noted that the Social Security increase is equivalent to the income increase for retirees.

D. Reed noted that there are indices of health care costs. Barna noted that a longer term (five years) moving average would be acceptable, as would a limit equal to the CPI. Pennington noted that, realistically, any limit to the health care premium should be tied to increases in health care costs.

Snyder MOVED and Williams seconded the motion to table Proposal 15-00 until information on determining healthcare cost increases is received.

The motion to table PASSED on voice vote.

**6. ADJOURNMENT**

Long MOVED and Ouellette seconded the motion to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 7:17 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by David D. Reed  
Secretary of the University Senate