



OAKLAND UNIVERSITY
S E N A T E

OAKLAND UNIVERSITY SENATE

Thursday, 14 April 1994
Seventh Meeting

MINUTES

Senators Present: Benson, Bertocci, Bhatt, Braunstein, Bricker, Briggs- Bunting, Buffard-O'Shea, Capps, Chipman, Cole, Dahlgren, Downing, Eberwein, Fish, Gerulaitis, Grossman, Hansen, Hildebrand, Hough, Khattree, Kheir, Liboff, Mabee, Mittelstaedt, Moore, Moran, Muir, Olson, Otto, Packard, Pine, Pipan, Polis, Reddy, Reynolds, Rickstad, Rozek, Rush, Russi, Schmitz, Schott-Baer, Sevilla, Shepherd, Stevens, Wedekind, Zenas.

Senators Absent: Abiko, Andrews, Ari, Christina, Dunphy, Frankie, Garcia, Hormozi, Hovanesian, Marks, Rooney, Schwartz, Selahowski, Stano, Taam, Thomas Urice.

Summary of Actions

1. Minutes of 17 March 1994 (Briggs-Bunting; Hough). Approved.
2. Procedural motion to waive second reading of item below (Rush; Olson). Approved.
3. Motion from the School of Nursing to amend its Constitution (Zenas; Grossman). Approved.
4. Procedural motion from the Steering Committee to staff Senate committees (Rush; Hough). Approved.
5. Amendment to item 6 below, adding the possibility of summer meetings (Hough; Capps). Approved.
6. Procedural motion from the Steering Committee to authorize spring/summer Senate meetings on specified items of business (Hough; multiple seconds).

When Mr. Russi asked at 3:14 p.m. "May I bring this meeting to order," Ms. Briggs-Bunting replied "Why not?" This established an atmosphere of good will that prevailed through consideration of the minutes of 17 March 1994. These were approved without modification (Moved, Ms. Briggs-Bunting; seconded Mr. Hough). The chair then, announcing that there was no information to be presented on this occasion with respect to either item identified on the agenda and noting the absence of old business, called for presentation of the first item of new business.

Dean Zenas (seconded by Mr. Grossman) then introduced a motion for constitutional amendment:

MOVED that the Senate recommend to the President and the Board approval of an amended "Constitution of the Oakland University School of Nursing.

When Mr. Russi asked her to identify key changes, she pointed out that voting privileges on the Assembly have been specified a bit more narrowly than before and that changes have been

made to achieve parallelism in charges to standing committees. As a point of information, Mr. Liboff inquired about the special and visiting instructors who hold voting rights in the Assembly, wondering how long such persons generally serve the School and whether there is a kind of permanence to their appointments. Ms. Zenas replied that special instructors are especially important for their clinical roles and often maintain long-standing involvement with the Nursing program. Observing no raised hands or other evidence of forthcoming questions, Ms. Rush (seconded by Mr. Olson) then introduced a procedural motion to waive the requirement of a second reading for this motion. That motion passed, as did the main motion.

That decision freed Ms. Rush (seconded by Mr. Hough) to introduce the second item of new business: a procedural motion from the Steering Committee to staff Senate committees and appoint 1994-95 chairs. Explaining that the Steering Committee had arrived at the roster of names displayed on the agenda after careful deliberation, she refrained from reading the full lists aloud but directed attention to the agenda itself. No discussion ensued, and all faculty listed were confirmed as elected for terms beginning 15 August 1994.

With both items of new business so happily accomplished, Mr. Hough quickly introduced a procedural motion from the Steering Committee to provide constitutional sanction for spring term Senate meetings on any of three specified items of business. Several seconders voiced their support.

MOVED that the Senate authorizes its Steering Committee to call meetings during the Spring term, if needed, with the agenda limited to action on any of these three issues that may require Senate counsel: 1) the Strategic Plan 2) proposed Master of Science in Physical Therapy 3) reorganization of the Honors College.

Ms. Briggs-Bunting then suggested it would be prudent to add a possible arrangement with Detroit College of Law as a fourth item on that list, just in case there should be rapid developments related to that issue during the spring.

President Packard then came forward to provide some perspective on that issue, explaining that she and a subcommittee of our Board have been working with a similar group from the Detroit College of Law to see if the two Boards can arrive at a general letter of agreement with respect to an inter-institutional relationship. If that should occur, then committees already appointed at Oakland University will meet over the spring and summer months with similar groups from DCL to work toward specific agreements for eventual formal action. When she asked whether the Senate wanted to discuss the general merits of such a relationship, Ms. Briggs-Bunting responded that, as a strong supporter of an alliance, she wanted to protect our community from being impeded by a lack of spring/summer governance flexibility. Ms. Packard stressed that no actual merger is being considered; indeed none is legally possible given the law school's covenantal relationship with the YMCA. curricular or governance issues would arise of a sort the Senate is constitutionally obligated to decide.

This view of the matter prompted Mr. Bricker to ask whether the president thought that the Senate should be consulted if a nuclear facility under similar charitable auspices were to project a move onto our campus. An affiliation with the Detroit College of Law would have enormous impact on Oakland University and its public image, and therefore he strongly urged commitment to full deliberation on such a change. Ms. Packard agreed but questioned, since things are still so far from a decision, when (rather than whether) the community should

discuss this matter. The DCL Board, she reported, has made no firm decision yet to leave its current location. Ms. Rush understood the Steering Committee's motion as intended to provide that body with constitutional authority to put specific items on the Senate agenda between winter and fall semesters without obligating it to summon the Senate unless business should arise necessitating action. She advised adding the law school to the other three items listed in the motion. Mr. Hough, as the motion's sponsor, promptly accepted her proposal as a friendly amendment.

Returning to the president's question about the timing of Senate involvement, Mr. Bricker declared a possible alliance with the law school too serious a matter not to be considered, at least informally, by the Senate as early as possible. He would find it impossible to support any arrangement not properly deliberated upon in its early stages. Mr. Hough, apparently agreeing, called to mind the practice of Senate "conversations" on matters of widespread community concern not yet formulated for legislative action. Ms. Packard expressed openness toward that idea but stressed that Oakland University must avoid giving any impression of trying to pull the Detroit College of Law out of Detroit. Until such time as that Board (not simply a committee) makes a formal decision to undertake a move, we must behave discreetly. Filling in background, she mentioned that DCL now confronts serious space needs, especially for its library, but finds no place to move in its immediate vicinity. If a new Tiger Stadium is built downtown, that facility may well displace the school altogether. Oakland's stance is that we are willing to talk with DCL representatives and explore possibilities but will not extend any sort of public invitation at this point. Our position, she averred, is a sensitive one: We do not want to seem either indifferent or too eager.

When Mr. Liboff inquired whether consideration had been given to the impact of DCL's potential relocation to our campus on the parking situation and our own library space, Ms. Packard assured him that library implications were being considered in great detail. As for parking, any agreement with DCL would entail their paying for additional parking space, which would be located where Oakland thinks best. Bringing a thousand new students with their faculty and support staff to this campus would place heavy demands on parking space. Mr. Liboff then asked how the two institutions would handle differences in governance, and the president acknowledged that there would probably be some variations. As no merger is planned, however, each institution could maintain its own practices and prerogatives. What may develop, she suggested, is an entirely new kind of relationship with no parallel that she or Mr. Russi can discover, even though there are affiliations of public with private institutions that provide useful perspective.

Mr. Downing responded that he considered this an exciting opportunity, which brought out ever more fully the wisdom of amending the motion to hold open the possibility of Senate discussion over the next few months. With timing of possible developments so inexact, Mr. Grossman thought it wise to modify the motion to build in the possibility of a summer meeting. Mr. Hough agreed. On the other hand, Mr. Liboff worried that many persons tend to scatter during the summer. He worried about making major Senate decisions at that season. Ms. Muir added that spring absences were as likely as summer ones. She wondered whether the Senate Constitution made any provision for appointment of substitute senators so that no unit would lack representation. Mr. Grossman replied that it does not; nor does it set any quorum rules beyond fall and winter semesters. Mr. Bricker shared his colleagues' concerns about the diminished authority of decisions made under such compromised conditions, including any decisions about the Strategic Plan--a document that, he had been told, must be voted up or down as a whole. As the final plan could be no stronger than its weakest link (that being, in the

most recently circulated draft, its handling of undergraduate education), he strongly urged the Strategic Plan Steering Committee to try to provide for substantial informal discussion before moving toward legislative vote. Mr. Hough (seconded by Mr. Capps, then moved to add the summer term to the motion on the floor. Mr. Liboff doubted that change was necessary, since he placed the DCL issue in a different category than the original three items; having fewer governance implications, he thought that particular matter might quickly come to a head. Mr. Chipman, professing confidence in his fellow senators' responsible behavior, favored the amendment to add the summer term. He advised providing the Steering Committee flexibility to do what its members think best. On that note, Mr. Russi called for a vote on the amendment to add the summer term. That passed, as did the twice-amended main motion:

MOVED that the Senate authorizes its Steering Committee to call meetings during the spring and/or summer terms, if needed, with the agenda limited to action on any of these four issues that may require its counsel: 1) the Strategic Plan 2) proposed Master of Science in Physical Therapy 3) reorganization of the Honors College 4) agreement with the Detroit College of Law.

With formal business concluded and no private resolutions arising under the rubric of Good and Welfare, Mr. Russi invited all present to join in a reception honoring Ms. Eberwein, who will resign her position as secretary to the University Senate at the close of this rapidly extending academic year. Applause followed and was succeeded by Mr. Stevens' announcement of still more cause for celebration: The School of Business Administration has just been informed that its undergraduate and graduate programs have won continuing accreditation by the Accreditation Council of the American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business and that its Accounting program has won initial accreditation. On that joyous note, Mr. Russi welcomed Ms. Briggs-Bunting's call for adjournment at 3:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted
Jane D. Eberwein
Secretary to the University Senate

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