



# OAKLAND UNIVERSITY SENATE

## OAKLAND UNIVERSITY SENATE

Thursday, 30 May 1991  
Tenth Meeting

### *MINUTES*

**Senators Present:** Appleton, Bertocci, Briggs-Bunting, Cass, Chipman, Cowlshaw, Dahlgren, Eberwein, Eckart, Eliezer, Frankie, Garcia, Griggs, Grossman, Hartman, Heintz, Herman, Hovanesian, Kazarian, Lederer, Olson, Pine, Reddy, Schimmelman, Tracy, Urice, Walter, Wedekind, Witt.

**Senators Absent:** Abiko, Beehler, Berven, Braunstein, Bricker, Cardimen, Champagne, Dillon, Fish, Hamilton, Kleckner, Liboff, Long, Mabee, Meehan, Mili, Miller, Mittelstaedt, Pettengill, Rosen, Salomon, Schieber, Schwartz, Stern, Stevens, Theisen, Tripp, Weng, Williams, Williamson, Winkler, Wood, Zenas.

#### Summary of Actions:

1. Amendment to Resolution A, adding language calling for consideration of residential or non-residential facilities (Briggs-Bunting; Garcia). Approved.
2. Resolution A from the Steering Committee advising the Board on conference center issues (Cass; Hovanesian). Approved as amended.
3. Resolution B from the Steering Committee charging the Campus Development and Environment Committee to study land-use issues related to a conference center and second golf course (Cass; Hovanesian). Approved.
4. Combined vote on Resolutions A and B as a package. Approved.
5. Procedural motion to suspend rules to function as committee of the whole (Olson; Briggs-Bunting). Approved.
6. Special Resolution advising the Board on appointment of an interim president (Chipman and Briggs-Bunting; Tracy). Approved.
7. Special Resolution charging the Secretary to communicate Senate and Steering Committee advice to the Board (Appleton; Garcia). Approved.

In Mr. Kleckner's absence, Mr. Dahlgren called the meeting to order at 3:07 p.m., having delayed for a decent interval in hopes of seeing Mr. Pettengill arrive to discuss his subcommittee's report. Still waiting, he suggested opening the session with discussion of the minutes of the 11 April meeting. Although the Senate manifested willingness to approve that fraction of its historical record, Mr. Grossman raised the objection that he doubted they had yet been circulated. It turned out that he was, as usual, correct; so that set of minutes -- along with those of 14 May and this meeting -- await review by a new Senate in September.

With no further old business to delay action, Mr. Dahlgren called upon Ms. Cass to introduce two resolutions from the Steering Committee: Resolution A, which offered advice to the Board

on issues to consider if pursuing consideration of a conference center, and Resolution B, which referred to the Campus Development and Environment Committee responsibility for considering land-use issues related to placement of a conference center and possible construction of a second golf course (Seconded, Mr. Hovanesian). There was no presentation by representatives of the Ad hoc Subcommittee on Conference Center Planning, whose report had been released to senators.

Ms. Briggs-Bunting introduced discussion by asking what the subcommittee had concluded about the relative merits of residential and non-residential conference centers. She wondered whether the subcommittee preferred either arrangement. Ms. Marin, the sole representative of the subcommittee present for this meeting, reported that they had discussed both options but thought the issue should be re-examined in light of new facilities within the area. The subcommittee recommended that residential facilities be limited, if constructed at all. Ms. Briggs-Bunting suggested that the current low occupancy rate in local hotels indicates the merit of caution. She thought a phased-in process might make sense, with a conference center opening as a non-residential facility and gradually expanding to offer enhanced services. She inquired, however, whether starting with a non-residential center might obviate interest from outside developers. Ms. Marin thought it would. Ms. Eberwein pointed out that the Steering Committee, cautiously wording this resolution in the conditional mode rather than urging continued exploration of any conference center at all, had chosen not to recommend either type of facility in the advice to the Board presented in Resolution A.

Mr. Tracy introduced a second consideration by expressing strong hope that any such conference center would be promoted specifically in connection with the university, unlike the Radisson on the Lake facility senators repeatedly hear advertised on the radio with no reference to Eastern Michigan University. Mr. Dahlgren, agreeing with Mr. Tracy, cited the precedent of improved publicity for Meadow Brook events, which are now identified as cultural offerings of Oakland University. Still, Ms. Garcia pointed out, that identification had not prevented the Detroit Symphony Orchestra from transferring a major component of its summer music schedule away from the university to a decidedly for-profit competing facility.

Mr. Dahlgren then anticipated proper procedure for handling the two resolutions on the floor by proposing that the Senate vote on both at once. Ms Garcia, however, wished them to be divided. Mr. Appleton, wearing his Parliamentarian's hat, discerned no problem; he advised that the body should discuss each individually and vote on them in sequence, then vote on the combined package.

Before advancing to a vote on Resolution A, however, Ms. Briggs-Bunting announced her intention to offer an amendment offering the Board advice on issues to consider in deciding between a residential or non-residential conference center model. Her statement embroiled the Senate in a temporary parliamentary tangle while people figured out whether she was introducing new business or simply acting on business officially announced in the agenda. Mr. Appleton pointed out that the Senate Constitution wisely restricts official business in spring or summer sessions to matters already specifically agreed upon as items of ongoing action by a formal vote during the winter semester. The Senate thereby protects itself from the danger of some small group's taking advantage of the absence of quorum requirements outside the usual governance year by gathering in a special meeting to transact important business unbeknownst to other members of the Senate and university community. Ms. Briggs-Bunting maintained, however, that her amendment simply advanced the Senate's work on the conference center

issue, which had been formally agreed upon as the sole item of business for the spring session. She explained that she had problems in responding to a subcommittee report that expressly indicated that some members of the subcommittee itself had not seen it and might not concur in its recommendations and therefore wanted to make sure that issues raised at the 14 May Senate meeting had been fully considered. Mr. Grossman had a hard time understanding why there should be any obstacle to amending a resolution, and Mr. Appleton agreed with him that such action presented no parliamentary problems even though, as Mr. Bertocci mentioned, some senators thought different rules pertained for resolutions than for regular motions. The upshot of this discussion was that Mr. Dahlgren invited Ms. Briggs-Bunting to offer an amendment to Resolution A. She, seconded by Ms. Garcia and assisted editorially by Mr. Bertocci who furnished specific wording, moved to add language stipulating "that the issue as to whether the conference center be residential or non-residential be examined in the light of current actually or potentially competing local hotel and other lodging facilities." The amendment carried by unanimous voice vote.

With attention redirected to Resolution B, Ms. Garcia objected to it strongly. She had heard much talk of a potential second golf course, though administrators questioned about it routinely claimed that no such plans existed. Still, there are those who say that there may be a donor in the wings who is willing to fund that project but no other. What, she inquired, would happen if someone else should offer funding for a bawdy house? She saw no need for the Campus Development and Environment Committee to study the issue and simply wished for the Senate to issue a decisive NO immediately to the idea of building another golf course. Ms. Eberwein explained that the Steering Committee, aware that the Subcommittee on Conference Center Planning had explicitly not discussed the related matter of another golf course and that the Campus Development and Environment Committee had not yet tackled this issue, was trying to provide an appropriate governance route that would provide useful counsel while strengthening the Senate's opportunity to vote an informed yes or no. Ms. Garcia, seeing no need for such inquiry, suggested revising Resolution B to retain the first three lines and break the fourth with a semicolon after conference center, followed by new language: "However, the possible development of a second golf course is not approved by the Senate." Mr. Tracy objected that this amendment changed the nature of the resolution. He considered the Senate's rejection of an idea out-of-hand inappropriate and advised using proper governance channels. Ms. Garcia said she thought she was using a proper governance channel, having interpreted the Provost's assurance that the Senate would have a chance to say yes or no to conference center issues at its extra sessions to mean that decisive action could be expected. Wasn't this what he meant? Not really, according to Mr. Dahlgren, since there had not as yet been a chance for proper review by the responsible committee. Ms. Garcia then withdrew all but her strongly stated position, assuring her colleagues that they all knew how she would vote next year on the golf course possibility.

Mr. Dahlgren then called upon the Senate to vote on the resolutions individually and as a package. Resolution A was unanimously approved as amended, Resolution B approved by voice vote, and Resolutions A and B jointly authorized by the Senate:

A. Resolved that the Senate recommend to the President and the Board that, if they decide to pursue development of a conference center on the Oakland University campus, they act judiciously to ensure that it be a fully self-supporting enterprise; that the facility be made available for university-sponsored scholarly and public service activities; that a differential rate structure be established to encourage academic units to use the center; that all programs associated with it be compatible

with Oakland University's role and mission; that the issue as to whether the conference center be residential or non-residential be examined in the light of current actually or potentially competing local hotel and other lodging facilities; and that careful provisions be made to protect this institution financially in the event of the center's closing.

B. Resolved that the Senate charges its Campus Development and Environment Committee to look into land use issues related to placement of a conference center and possible development of a second golf course and that it report its findings and recommendations to the Steering Committee by December 15, 1991.

Having concluded its official business for the year, the Senate might have adjourned at this point but for the additional challenge posed by President Champagne's 24 May announcement that he was resigning from Oakland University and would begin new duties as chief executive officer of the Crittenton Corporation at the beginning of August. Mr. Chipman introduced that subject by reading a private resolution jointly sponsored by Ms. Briggs-Bunting and seconded by Mr. Tracy that offered advice to the Board on characteristics the Senate wished to see in the person soon to be named Interim President. Mr. Appleton ruled, however, that senators could not initiate new business beyond that previously identified in April as the occasion for additional meetings in the spring term. His sympathy with the resolution did not allow him to support deviation from rules adopted for the overall protection of the body. Yet, Mr. Tracy pointed out, the Good and Welfare section of the agenda specifically allows private resolutions. Mr. Appleton, who regretted the inclusion of that formula in spring term agendas, proceeded to read the enabling motion of 18 April that limited business for May-June Senate meetings. On the other hand, he offered a parliamentary escape option, suggesting that his colleagues vote to suspend the rules and function as a committee of the whole. In that guise, senators could talk unofficially about anything they wanted. Impressed with the need for immediate consideration of a decision so momentous and yet so imminent as appointment of a leader for the university, Mr. Olson moved that the Senate enter this mode (seconded, Ms. Briggs-Bunting). When Mr. Grossman inquired whether a committee of the whole could pass resolutions, Mr. Appleton said they could do so unofficially with the rules suspended but could speak only in their own names rather than for the Senate itself. Mr. Olson suggested advancing any resolutions with names of participants attached. These recommendations won unanimous support.

Mr. Chipman then recurred to the actual resolution:

**Resolved** that the Senate advise the Board of Trustees of its intense interest and concern in the selection of an interim (or acting) President and the importance of selecting an individual who has both strong academic credentials and solid administrative experience including a record of demonstrated leadership, extensive teaching and recognized research; ideally it would be someone with a historical perspective on Oakland's development who possesses, as well, a broad view of Oakland's responsibilities as a state-assisted institution of higher learning.

He explained that he and Ms. Briggs-Bunting advanced this resolution in hopes that the Senate could contribute constructively to the search process from the very start. He declared himself open to suggestions about the best way to advance these purposes even if that entailed calling an extra Senate meeting. Mr. Olson urged immediate communication of the Senate's views to the Board, which was likely to move quickly to name an Interim President. Mr. Appleton,

sharing that sense of urgency, suggested that the Secretary of the Senate represent this body's interests and those of the Steering Committee to the Board; this, he pointed out, could be accomplished with real expedition, if the secretary were willing to accept such onerous duties. Mr. Cowlshaw recommended strengthening her position by saying that the consensus of senators assembled at this meeting supported the statement she would advance. Ms. Garcia pressed for doing both things simultaneously: supporting the Chipman/Briggs-Bunting resolution and delegating the secretary to communicate with the Board. Mr. Dahlgren then called for a vote on the actual resolution, suggesting a friendly amendment (graciously welcomed by the authors) to indicate that it expressed the views of a specific group of senators meeting on a particular occasion. Thus modified, the resolution won unanimous assent. Ms. Garcia then asked Mr. Appleton to phrase his idea as a resolution, which she then seconded:

**Resolved** that this body charges the Secretary of the Senate to confer with her colleagues on the Steering Committee and that she inform the Board of the sentiments of this body and members of the Steering Committee who are available.

This resolution, too, won unanimous consent.

Mr. Dahlgren then moved ahead to share a few information items, judging such interchange allowable under parliamentary rules. He wished he had a lot of news to tell about the presidential search but admitted that he had learned of Mr. Champagne's decision only the previous Friday and, despite having heard multitudinous rumors, knew nothing about favorite sons or likely candidates for the interim presidency. What he could report more knowledgeably was the discouraging news that the science building project remains on hold in Lansing, although there is reason for hope that it will be one of the first construction projects to be authorized -- perhaps by the end of the summer. Assured after a somewhat complicated meeting that nobody was going away angry, he welcomed Ms. Briggs-Bunting's call for adjournment at 3:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:  
Jane D. Eberwein  
Secretary to the University Senate

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The logo for the Oakland University Senate Home Page. It features the text "OAKLAND UNIVERSITY" in a gold-colored oval, with "SENATE" in large, bold, black letters below it, and "Home Page" in a smaller, italicized font at the bottom.

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