

Item: Senate Minutes, March 1998

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DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY

APPROVED MINUTES

OF

SENATE MEETING

Senate met in regular session on Monday, March 9, 1998 at 4:00 p.m. in the University Hall, Macdonald Building.

Present with Mr. C. Stuttard in the chair were the following:

Adams, Apostle, Archibald, Bell, Bleasdale, Boychuk, Bradfield, Clements, Faulkner, Fooladi, Furrow, Gantar, Guppy, Gupta, Hooper, Kay-Raining Bird, Kimmins, Kipouros, Lacey, MacDonald, MacInnis, Maloney, McIntyre, Moore, Morrissey, Myers, Patriquin, H. Powell, Rathwell, Ricketts, Ross, Scassa, Shafai, Shepherd, Siddiq, Taylor, Tindall, Traves, Ugursal, White, Wrixon.

Regrets: Binkley, Bishop, Cameron, Coffin, Connolly, Cunningham, Egan, Emodi, Farmer, Robertson, Rosson, Russell, Wallace.

98:037.

Adoption of Agenda

The agenda was adopted as circulated.

98:038.

Minutes of Previous Meeting

i) Approval

Members agreed to several changes and additions to item 98:34, the Presentation from the Director of Facilities Management. At page 3, paragraph 2, line 2, "Planning Division" was inserted after "Space", and at line 6 in the same paragraph, "demonstration" became "demonstrate"; at page 4, line 3, "chillers" was moved and inserted after "ventilation," and a new sentence was added: "The latter were badly in need of increased capacity."; at page 4, paragraph 3, line 11, "fuel" became "natural gas"; at page 5, last full paragraph, 2nd last line, quotation marks were inserted to enclose "three times"; at page 5, the "Commissioners" referred to in paragraph 4 became "Commissionaires"; and at page 5, paragraph 2, line 9, "sink" was changed to "energy source". Mr. Ugursal asked that a final sentence be added to paragraph 4, page 5, to read: "Mr. Lord indicated that after Dalhousie Security Services took over there were a number of arrests on the Sexton Campus."

ii) Matters arising

Mr. Ugursal indicated that following the last Senate meeting he had phoned the Halifax police and spoken with the case manager, who was unable to find a record of any arrests at DalTech Campus during 1997. Could Mr. Lord provide a list of the arrests to which he had referred during his presentation to Senate? Mr. Kipouros responded that in January 1998 police had informed him of the arrest of an individual who had broken into his office in the "G" Building.

98:039.

Nomination to Senate Committee

On behalf of the Senate Nominating Committee, Ms. Guppy moved:

That Senate approve the nomination of Senator Gail Tomblin Murphy to serve as Senate's representative on the Advisory Council on Athletics, for the term March 1998 to June 30, 1999.

The motion was CARRIED.

98:040.

SCAA - Motion

The following motion was moved on behalf of the Senate Committee on Academic Administration:

That the wording for English Parchments for Dalhousie University, as approved by SCAA, March 2, 1998, be adopted.

Mr. Kimmins proposed a friendly amendment that in the first line of text, following the student's name, "that" become "this". There was no dissent from members present. Mr. Kimmins also requested that the adopted text be reproduced without right margin justification, so that the last letter in each line was connected to the last word in each line. Ms. Lyttle, Chair of SCAA, noted that faculty and students had given careful consideration to multiple versions before arriving at the proposed wording for the Dalhousie Parchment. In keeping with the move from Latin to English, the final discussion had been undertaken electronically, as a virtual meeting. Of the two-thirds of SCAA members who had been available and voted, all but one had supported the wording before Senate. Ms. Lyttle believed SCAA had achieved its goal of producing wording which would convey the importance of the document in an elegant manner, and maintain the dignity of Dalhousie parchments. Mr. Adams asked for and received confirmation that the name of the student would be larger on the final copy. He also wished to clarify for the minutes that SCAA was still considering the desirability and feasibility of making Latin parchments available at a nominal fee for any student enrolled at Dalhousie prior to 31 December, 1997. The students supported this proposal for a parchment exchange.

The amended motion was then CARRIED.

98:041.

Reconstitution of the University Committee on the Environment

Myers/ McIntyre moved:

That the University Committee on the Environment be reconstituted as the Senate Committee on the Environment, with terms of reference as circulated (dated February 2, 1998).

Mr. Myers, a student Senator, reminded members that before Christmas, in light of the fact that this Committee had not met for several years, Mr. Stuttard had drafted and brought to Senate a proposal for new terms of reference. The proposal to change the terms of reference had been defeated, and the subsequent Senate meeting had considered a motion to abolish the Committee. This, also, had been defeated. That had left Senate with a Committee which was inactive, had too many members, and had unworkable terms of reference. However, it had agreed to the draft of proposed new terms of reference contained in the mail-out for this meeting. Mr. Myers had solicited and received responses from students and professors, including Dr. Willison in the Biology Department. Students had responded to the effect that the University needed a Committee devoted specifically to environmental issues, which could be objective enough to fight for environmental issues, without any apparent or real conflict of interest. They had also been concerned that environmental issues, which were becoming an increasingly crucial aspect of the education of future citizens, were being pushed to the back burner at Dalhousie. As a leader in many areas of higher education, Dalhousie should also lead in the area of environmental protection. Mr. Coté, the current Chair of the University Committee, reminded members of his previously circulated message encouraging their support for reconstitution of this Committee. It had been active in the past, though activity had slowed in the past few years. With Amalgamation, some issues, such as those surrounding construction of new buildings, were now even more important. He assured members that were they to adopt this motion he would get the Committee working.

The motion was CARRIED.

98:042.

Report of the President

The President congratulated Sara Iverson, winner of a 1998 Steacie Fellowship, one of the most distinguished prizes awarded young scientists. On matters relating to Collective Bargaining, he quickly summarized his communication of earlier in the day. The University had agreed to resume negotiations with CUPE. The Conciliator working with the Board and the DFA would be filing his report imminently. The Board was open to resume negotiations, and he assumed DFA was also. In preparation for the eventuality that a strike would not be averted, the Administration was preparing to deal with the consequences of a strike. To that end the President had established a Strike Management Committee which was reviewing issues which would arise. He hoped to inform the University in the near future of some of the issues considered and conclusions reached.

The Committee was reviewing the policies and practices of the last strike. Any helpful suggestions from members of the University should be forwarded to Brian Christie who was coordinating this Strike Management Committee.

Mr. Bradfield referred to an email which he had sent previously concerning last week's visit of the Federal Finance Minister, in Halifax to speak to University Professors and Presidents. What issues had been raised by Dalhousie's President? Mr. Traves responded that the Vice-President (Student Services), Mr. Eric McKee, had attended the meeting which had discussed issues arising from the recent federal budget, such as the Millennium Scholarship proposals, and other items relating to funding levels. A number of University people had been available in the audience, and had urged the Finance Minister to take steps to ensure that research funding was protected. The intention to remove the funding cuts earlier announced had been welcome. But the proposed increase in funding, which amounted to 1% in each of the next two years, was inadequate, and this had been impressed on the Minister and the Premier who was also in attendance. Those in attendance had also raised concerns that Millennium Scholarships be coordinated with existing and evolving federal and provincial programmes and structures. The Finance Minister had also been encouraged to appoint to the federal committee being established individuals from Universities with administrative experience with loans and awards.

Mr. Myers expressed the frustrations of students over the Administration's lack of commitment to keeping them informed about contract negotiations and the potential implications of a DFA strike on their careers. Mr. Traves reminded Senators of the two memos issued to students and addressing their concerns. They could be found on the University's Website. The Administration would publish as many memos as necessary to keep students informed. Questions should be taken to Vice-President Eric McKee who was coordinating this program of information. Ms. Howard, a student from King's College, was concerned that the postings around campus had not mentioned the CUPE negotiations, although their strike vote had been taken even earlier than the vote by the DFA. Mr. Traves responded that to the best of his information the strike vote by CUPE had not been completed, but had been referred to the Minister of Labour. He understood that CUPE was not in a position to strike at the moment. Mr. Faulkner asked whether the President, in referring only to a potential strike, had ruled out the possibility of a lockout. Mr. Traves indicated a lockout had not been ruled out. Mr. Faulkner observed that it would be unfortunate were either the DFA or the Administration to make pronouncements or offer opinions that might be construed as authoritative, particularly by students, on what might happen to credits, examinations, timetables, and a range of related matters, in the event of a strike or lockout. He wondered whether the Chair of Senate would consider writing to both the President and the DFA to ask for their cooperation in ensuring that anything to do with academic policy, such as credits and timetables, would be referred to him. It was important that students and the media understood Senate's position, because Senate was the only body that could make those types of policy decisions. Mr. Stuttard agreed that Senate was the only body with the authority to rule on such issues, and reminded members that in the past motions on such issues had been adopted by Senate, which served as a precedent for the way this body responded to labour disputes. Senate would wish to continue its oversight on these matters. The difficulty was knowing when to make a statement. Motions adopted in the past had addressed primarily what was to be done after any dispute, in the interests of clarifying what was expected of students, faculty, and Administration, and the Registrar's Office, and in order to make recovery from any strike/lockout fair and least stressful for students. It would be premature to make announcements until we knew how long a dispute lasted, and the conditions under which faculty were returning to work.

Returning to the Millennium Fund, Mr. Bradfield wondered whether anyone at the meeting with the Finance Minister had questioned his financial calculations, something with which the Minister

sometimes had trouble. The Minister had referred to a \$2.5 billion fund which would handle 100,000 scholarships annually, with a \$3,000 average for each, which suggested a rate of return well above 10%. Had anyone asked where he thought he could get that rate of return? Secondly, Mr. Bradfield noticed that the ITI ads were again in the press, but had been modified. Did the changes reflect the problems some of the students in the programme were experiencing? He understood that the original ads had led many of the students to believe that their entrance into this programme would set them up with a job. The new ads did not quite say that, but gave the impression that a Masters degree could be secured through the programme. This was troubling because the requirements for entry (three-year BA with a "B" average) appeared to be below the standard for acceptance into Dalhousie Graduate Studies. Also, had there been any complaints from students in the programme? Mr. Ricketts, Dean of Graduate Studies, explained that the minimum standard for admission to a non-thesis Masters degree was a three-year undergraduate degree with a B average in the last two years. Ms. Morrissey explained that the change to the advertisement had been to add a stipulation concerning the transfer of credits towards a Masters degree. The Masters degree was advertised with a promise from ITI that they would secure a Masters degree for those students. Whether this would be through Dalhousie or not was up to Dalhousie. In response to Mr. Bradfield's question concerning the number of non-thesis Masters students enrolled in Graduate studies, and how criteria for their admission differed from criteria for students entering a thesis MA, Mr. Ricketts noted that an Honours Degree or equivalent with a B average was the normal minimum requirement for entrance to a thesis degree. For some other non-thesis programmes, some departments set minimum requirements higher than those set by Graduate Studies. The second criterion for admission was an ordinary Bachelor's degree, and this was the minimum admission criterion used for a number of course-based programmes, such as the MBA, the MPA, and the Masters of Development Economics. But some departments chose to raise the minimum requirement. Concerning complaints from students, Ms. Bleasdale had received a complaint apparently written by one or more students in the ITI programme, but since it had not been signed she could not share it with Senate.

Mr. Ugursal understood that on February 12th the Dalhousie Arts Centre had hosted a public discussion of a community Performing Arts Centre, and that Bill Lord had apparently presented a plan to expand the Rebecca Cohn Auditorium's capacity from 1,000 to 1,800 seats at a projected cost of \$12 million, and to build a two to three storey parking lot at a further cost of \$3 million. Mr. Lord had indicated the University was unlikely to provide the money, but it would come from external fund-raising. Was there any truth to this? Mr. Traves explained that for a few years a variety of interest groups had been discussing an Arts Centre for the City of Halifax. But no one had produced money for the venture. Dalhousie had kept its distance from the proposal, to some extent, though it was not hostile to it. This was certainly not a University priority in terms of facilities, construction and maintenance; and it was difficult for Mr. Traves to conceive of circumstances in which it would become a priority in the next ten years. At the February 12th meeting, Mr. Lord had been responding to specific questions concerning the viability of enlarging the Cohn, and had addressed technical issues. To the President's knowledge, there were no plans to build a costly multi-storey parking lot.

Mr. Tindall posed a question concerning *Dalhousie News*. Roughly one month previously, a colleague had submitted a letter to the Editor of *DalNews*, and shortly thereafter had been surprised to learn that it had been rejected on what he considered to be the unreasonable grounds that the publication did not permit items such as letters or opinion pieces. He had been informed that the new policy could not be revisited until June, if then. Did Senate find it acceptable that a

University paper was not open to members of the University community, and members of Senate, in particular?

Mr. Bradfield found it strange that an institution committed to the exchange of ideas had a paper which allowed no room for dialogue. He had similar concerns regarding *Notice Digest* which allowed the Administration to put out information on Collective Bargaining, but did not provide the same access to the groups with which the Administration was bargaining. He also wanted to pass on a colleague's comment about the recent document concerning the new Banner organization, which had carried a picture of the Vice-President (Finance and Administration). He agreed with the colleague that the communication should have had a picture of Ms. Bleasdale, who had "pulled Banner out of the fire".

Mr. Faulkner wondered whether the issue of access to *DalNews* and *Notice Digest* could be referred to the Senate Committee on Academic Administration for action and a report. Senate was the final authority on academic matters, and issues about how we carried on campus dialogue were in a general way issues of academic administration. Mr. Stuttard noted this was a possibility, but that neither *DalNews* nor the *Notice Digest* were organs of Senate. He added that the former Editor of *DalNews*, Mary Somers, had responded to Mr. Tindall, but the response had not gone out over the Senate list, by her choice. Mr. Tindall reported that he had not received that response. Mr. Stuttard also pointed out the existence of a Committee on Public Relations, of which the Chair of Senate and the President were both members, but during his term as Chair of Senate he had never been called to a meeting of that Committee, despite his suggestion that the Committee should meet. Mr. Traves, the Chair of the Committee, agreed to pursue this issue. The President added that he was pleased to hear members speaking to the importance of communications, since on several occasions he had been chided for his "temerity" in speaking to the University community. Mr. Ugursal thought that recent criticisms of the President had been based on the fact that no one else had access to the mechanisms of communication available to him. The President thought the complaints had not been about lack of access, but about his right to speak directly to the community. Mr. Tindall noted that the Trade Union Act of Nova Scotia prohibited an employer from bargaining directly with employees who had a legal bargaining agent to act on their behalf.

Mr. Adams asked all faculty members to allow representatives of the DSU into their rooms to distribute post cards, ribbons, and to talk to the students about their concerns in the face of a possible strike. Secondly, he doubted the reminder was necessary, but asked members to voice their concerns about higher education when they went to the polls on election day, March 24th.

98:043.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 5:55 p.m.