

STONY BROOK UNIVERSITY SENATE

University Environment Committee

Meeting of September 11th 2019, 1:00 - 2:20 pm
Administration Conference Room, Administration 407

MINUTES

Attendance: Thomas Wilson (elected Chair), Michelino Puopolo, Dmitri Tsybychev, Sean Deery, Gary Kaczmarczyk., Frederick Walter, Mona Ramonetti, Malcom Bowman, Matthew Eisaman, Jeanne Charoy.

Meeting called to order at 1:04

Election of Chair for 2019 - 2020 academic year. As per the University Senate bylaws, the Chair of the University Environment Committee has to be elected each year. There are 16 people with voting power on this committee and enough members were present at the meeting to conduct business. Frederick asked whether there were any nominations for Chair for the year 2019-2020 and Thomas self nominated. In view of his great work in 2018-2019, Frederick entertained a motion to nominate Thomas as Chair again. Jeanne moved the motion and Mona seconds. The motion is unanimously accepted. Thomas was elected Chair of the committee.

Consideration of minutes of May 8, 2019 meeting. Because attendance was low at our May 8th 2019 meeting, the minutes had been approved with the provision that they would be circulated at the following meetings. Thomas entertained a motion to accept the May 8th minutes. Mona moves the motion and Michelino seconds. Let the record show that there were none opposed - the minutes were approved.

Working groups review/report

Natural Environment and Preservation working group.

Thomas is the coordinator for this working group. This group has installed a level gauge in the East Recharge Basin / Lake Briana on Monday 9/9/2019 with the help of undergraduate and graduate students. The police have been informed and now that we are there legitimately. Thomas showed pictures of the installation. A diagonal pipe contains a meter which is designed to log water level. This instrument was offered by a faculty member because it was too obsolete for their purposes. The sub-committee will maintain the installation to make sure it stays accurate. One of the goals is to evaluate the level at which the lake could become a flood problem. Just from comparing pictures of the lake from January and September, it is clear there are significant level changes and so it is worth monitoring.

This year is the 50th anniversary of the Ashley Schiff Preserve. There will be an event on Friday October 4th from 5:30 to 7:30 in the Wang Center. Although it has existed for 50 years, this preserve has no formal protection. The committee, and the Friends of Ashley Schiff would like to see formal protection - the 50th year anniversary seems like a strategic time to achieve

this. Thomas drafted a University Senate Proclamation that advocates for formal protection of the preserve. He read the proclamation to the members of the committee.

Frederick asked who would have the power to design Ashley Schiff as a Forever Wild area. Thomas answered that it could be made formal and permanent by an act of the legislature. But members have not been eager to push this in absence of support from the SBU admin. It seems that the block has been the reluctance of the administration to close its options (e.g. it would prevent them from building a parking lot there in the future for example).

Malcolm mentions that all previous SBU presidents had agreed not to develop the preserve but did not want to tie the hands of future presidents. Students ten years ago obtained 3,000 signatures on a petition to formally protect the preserve. Following this, the president at the time decided to support legislation, together with the then Provost and one of the board trustees. Malcolm drafted a legislation, but something went wrong in Albany and the project failed. To make this happen you need support in the State Senate (Flanagan for this jurisdiction).

Thomas suggested that the UEC recommend to the senate that we add our support to the endeavor to protect Ashley Schiff. Frederick agreed that the place to start would be a resolution to the Senate. Thomas will send the Senate Proclamation draft by email.

Thomas requested a motion to approve the draft in principle (in draft form) to be sent to the Senate Executive Committee with the intention of getting this on the Senate floor for a vote. Mona moved the motion, Michelino seconded. In discussion, Frederick suggested that the appropriate time to do this would be October 7th because the anniversary of the preserve is October 4th. Malcom commented that we should have this approved by the Senate executives before the anniversary. The motion was unanimously approved.

Transportation working group.

Matt Eisaman has been the coordinator and he would do it again but he is going for tenure so he is requesting that somebody else take on the role in the meantime. Given that we will have some new members in the near future, we will revisit the decision of who will be coordinator in future meetings.

Some transportation news: Medicine has been parking in the R&D park and taking shuttles, which is something our committee had suggested. A sidewalk in the main campus entrance has been difficult to walk through because tree branches are blocking the way. Funding for the bike stations has allowed activation of the bike station on south campus. In addition, there is a sidewalk under construction by the South Stony Brook road which makes it all the way to the R&D park so it will encourage walking and biking. It adds a walking path from South P lot and the bus stop to the tech park. These are good developments,.

Efficiency, Recycling and Liveability working group. Sean is not an undergraduate student anymore, it is better for a member of the committee to be coordinator. Jeanne volunteered to be the coordinator for this group.

Pesticide working group. Last year this group passed recommendations for changes to the pesticide policy on campus. Gary said he will check how things are moving along but that EHS

has no objections to the draft language. The Pesticide group will be merged with the Efficiency, Recycling and Liveability group.

Research working group. Michelino will be the coordinator for this group.

Frederick noted that these sub-committees need not be confined to the committee. A next step for UEC would be to act as leaders of these sub-committees but to invite members of the community to participate. Malcom mentioned that there is a pool of students to tap from in SoMAS. Thomas confirmed that if more than two undergraduate students are interested they should reach out to us, that would be great.

November presentation on infrastructure to University Senate with Kathleen Byington.

UEC is on the agenda for the Senate meeting in November - the topic is infrastructure but it is unclear how wide ranging the discussion will be. Frederick mentioned that the presentation may include a discussion of campus sewage but that it is still being discussed. Thomas had a discussion with Senior VP Kathleen Byington and had a positive impression: she talked about the parking situation and was interested in talking about ways to fix the issue creatively (taking into account carbon emission, walkability, etc.). Frederick mentioned that somebody needs to come up with a master plan for circulation on campus and UEC should be part of that conversation. Kathleen will be at the October meeting with Dean Tufts, the VP for Facilities and Services, and hopefully become regular attendees.

Recruitment for open committee positions.

UEC needs more members. We are recruiting for open committee positions. We need two undergraduate students representatives. In addition we need members for the Humanities and SBS positions. An election was held in those departments and there were multiple ties: there were four humanities candidates with tie votes and three SBS candidates with tie votes and there is one seat to fill in for each department. Therefore Thomas proposed to pick names randomly and to call them in that order to ask if they are interested in being members. The Senate approved this decision. Frederick read the names of the Humanities candidates. No members of the committee raised any comments about them. Numbers were written on pieces of paper and put in a cup - each candidate was given a number. Dimitri pulled number 5, Michelino pulled number 4 and Sean pulled number 3 - 5, 4, 3 will be the order in which Humanities candidates will be contacted. For SBS, the order was 4, 2, 3, 1.

Old and new business. Frederick talked about an email from Albany about a student led climate strike in schools. There may be an event at the Staller center. The committee should be aware of this. Frederick is presenting a talk on the physics of climate change. There is a week of action for climate change from September 20th to September 27th.

Next meeting is Wednesday, October 9th, 2019 at 1:00pm - 2:30pm in the Vice President conference room. .

Thomas entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting. Dimitri moved. None opposed.
The meeting adjourned at 2:05pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeanne Charoy