

Physical Environment Committee Minutes

September 10, 2014
8:15 am – 9:15 am
Lincoln Building Conference Room

MEETING CALLED BY	Ted Curtis & Harvey Sterns – Co-Conveners
TYPE OF MEETING	University Council Committee Meeting
FACILITATORS	Ted Curtis & Harvey Sterns – Co-Conveners
NOTES SUBMITTED BY:	Shelly Keller
ABSENT	Deans – Vacant Ralph Morrone Shawn Stevens Rachel Thut
ATTENDEES	Stewart Blessing Ted Curtis – Co-Convener Ann Hassenpflug – Vice Chair Julie Hykes Shelly Keller - Secretary Zach Kisor Chuck Kunsman Denise Montanari Harvey Sterns – Co-Convener William Thelin
INVITED GUESTS	Ralph Morrone

Agenda topics

MINUTE APPROVAL

DISCUSSION	Approval of the 7-8-14 minutes was requested.
CONCLUSIONS	Ann requested the minutes be amended by replacing Department of Education with College of Education. Chuck made a motion to approve the minutes as amended and Julie seconded the motion. All in attendance were in favor.

MEETING ITEMS

General Discussion

- Harvey made a motion that Survey Discussion and Central Hower/Zook Update be added to the agenda. Bill seconded the motion and all in attendance were in favor.
- Ted advised he was questioned during the University Council meeting about excessive weeds on campus. Ted explained we are short by about 40 employees in Physical Facilities. The janitorial and grounds divisions are included in that number. Ted further explained he presented a warning to Dr. Scarborough that Capital Planning, which is over Physical Facilities, is short too many employees. That means things start to deteriorate. Buildings and grounds start to deteriorate as soon as they start to be used. We have to maintain those immediately. The Facilities group is just as important as the academic areas on campus. Studies have proven that a decision is made in the first 5-20 minutes of a first visit if UA is still in the running as one of a prospective student's choices. He jokingly advised that we will all need to pitch in to help and Stacey Moore stated they used to do that at Texas Tech. They would hold a "Campus Clean Up Day" of sorts.

Muslim Student Association – Prayer Room Request for Space

- The Muslim Student Association asked the Physical Environment Committee to discuss a dedicated prayer room on campus. (See ATTACHMENT 9-10-14 Information MSA Prayer Room Emails)

The following bullet points, questions, and comments were made during a lengthy discussion with the committee:

- Are there other groups joining this effort? Not at this time.
- Is there a dedicated space in mind? No.
- There are off campus meeting spaces that have been used in the past for groups like this.
- There is a religious group using a space at Rec Center on Fridays from 12pm -1pm.
- Issue with church and state.
- What is needed that is not already available or provided?
- The request from this group is for permanent space.
- Different religious groups have different beliefs depending on the sect.
- Every group has an opportunity to ask for a room here on campus.
- The dedicated space would be like what we would see in a hospital.
- We don't want to privilege one denomination over another.
- Universities do have relationships with religious groups. Kent State/Newman Center was an example given.
- As a committee we do not see the justification for the request beyond what is already provided for groups on campus. The committee feels this topic could be a violation of church and state. It is the committee's recommendation that if this topic is to be discussed further that the University of Akron Legal Department review it next. Ann made a motion and Denise seconded it. Ted abstained from the vote and all others left in attendance were in favor.

Zook – Central Hower Update

- Ann explained that they (Zook Building Committee) are not being kept in the loop.
- Bill advised that he, Ralph and Shelly met with the Zook Building Committee in July. He made a motion that our notes that we shared via email with our Committee, be submitted to today's minutes. Stewart seconded the motion and all in attendance were in favor. Discussion continued on how and why the ad hoc committee was formed. (See ATTACHMENT 9-10-14 PEC Mtg Zook Bldg Reno Comm Mtg Notes)
- Shelly and Bill felt that the Zook issue is now being properly handled. It was their perception that there was a miscommunication/misunderstanding when the Zook project went from "New Construction" to "Renovation". Those involved did not realize the same plans were being used. Changes in administration were happening as well and that is where Shelly, Bill and Ralph felt the communication was dropped. After meeting with the Zook Building Committee, the three felt the problems are being addressed and communication is happening. They feel the problem that still exists is that some members do not like the answers that they are being given.
- SharePoint has been the designated point of communication for the Zook Building Committee.
- Ann read to the committee the most recent email she had received on the remedies.
- Central Hower dividers - Ted said the dividers will be raised from 4 feet high to 6feet high with translucent materials. Prices are currently being reviewed. You cannot see through the divider but it will allow light to come through. Ted is hopeful that this will be completed in the next month.
- It was asked if there are security cameras in that area. Ted was not made aware whether or not security cameras are located in Central Hower.
- A comment was made that the windows in Central Hower are dirty. Will anything be done about that? Ted advised it should be handled.
- There was discussion about classrooms at Central Hower that seem to be ready for use. The Faculty has been told that they cannot use those classrooms this fall.
- Ann stated there were other concerns sent via email from Dr. Li (Zook Building Committee Member) to Ralph.
- Shelly made a motion to end the Zook Building Discussion. Bill seconded the motion. Ann stated our purpose is to talk over these issues and does not want to stop discussing them. Shelly's feelings are that our committee has exhausted this topic and needs to move forward on other issues. We can always revisit new topics but the old Zook topics have been handled to the best of our committee's abilities. Ann opposed to the vote and all others in attendance were in favor.

General Discussion Continued

- Survey- Ralph is collecting data – The committee would like to send the survey out immediately this semester. Bill asked that we give it a week, due to it being a busy time for faculty, and send the survey out after 9/22.
- Discussion continued about weeding from earlier in the meeting. Ann made a motion that she feels the campus is lovely. Zach seconded the motion. All in attendance were in agreement.
- Bill made a formal recommendation to promote or support a campus clean-up day. Ted would like Physical Facilities involved and would like shirts made for the students that are participating that day. Physical Facilities could provide guidance on whether something is a weed or not. Stewart seconded the motion. Ann abstained and all others in attendance were in favor.
- Shelly will add the presentation to University Council on the SharePoint site and Harvey asked that the presentation be added to the minutes also.
- Stewart added that he feels as a group we are identifying the issues. We can't fix them all, but we are trying to help when we can.
- Chuck made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Bill seconded the motion. All in attendance were in favor.

Next Meetings:

Meetings will be held in the Lincoln Building Third Floor Conference Room.

- October 8, 2014 - 8:15 am
- November 12, 2014 – 8:15 am
- December 17, 2014 – 8:15am