

BSU Joint Safety Committee Meeting Minutes
Meeting #27 – January 24, 2003

Time: 1:35 P.M.

Place: D301B

In Attendance: L. Abrahamson, M. Halberg, T. Harrison, R. Marsolek, E. Steigauf, J. Sande, M. Taylor,

Absent: D. Finnegan, M. Lanners, J. Mastro, , C. Nason, M. Schmitt, R. Womack

Guest: Kierstin Hoven

There were no changes to the agenda, which was forwarded to the members prior to the meeting.

The meeting opened with Kierstin Hoven addressing the committee about her concerns regarding BSU's preparedness to respond to campus emergencies. She explained that the Recreation Fitness Center staff respond to incidents, such as injuries, severe weather, and fire alarms based on a written plan established for the department. During a recent incident at the swimming pool, she noted a lack of coordination between Rec Center and PE staffs' response, which led to some confusion in directing first responders to the correct location in the building. Though the PE department had been given a copy of the Rec Centers emergency plan, the staff seemed unfamiliar with the procedures and did not appear to be responding according to any organized plan.

The confusion of that incident prompted Kierstin to come to the Safety Committee to ask about the University's overall preparedness to respond to emergencies and if there is a standard plan or procedures used by all departments.

Rich indicated that OSHA regulations require employers to have written emergency plans. He has worked with various departments to establish procedures for weather emergencies. Weather radios have been placed in campus buildings and the departments were directed to develop weather emergency action plans for the buildings they occupy. Some plans were submitted, but not all areas responded. Also, it is not clear if the departments are keeping their plans up to date and are informing new employees about the plans.

Erle and Rich then described a campus emergency plan that was been drafted and submitted to the Executive Council for review, several months ago. Since then, the Interim Administrative Vice President directed that the plan be forwarded to MnSCU as BSU's emergency plan. However, neither Erle nor Rich received any other feedback from the Executive Council confirming that the plan was to be adopted and implemented as drafted. That uncertainty was reinforced when during the last two months, President Quistgaard asked Rich if we had a campus emergency plan and asked him to review a plan developed for the Technical Colleges, to determine if it would be a good model for BSU. Also, earlier this fall, Jeff Sande received a document at a MnSCU meeting that was titled "Minnesota State College and Universities Emergency Preparedness Emergency Plan". It was, and still is unclear if that document supercedes any local plans already developed.

The plan submitted to the Executive Council identifies the duties of Administrators, Directors, and other key personnel who are responsible for managing the University's response to major emergencies affecting the campus. It does not provide that kind of detail at the departmental level. But the plan does direct that detailed department or building plans be developed. A guide to help initiate that process and provide a standard reporting format was also provided. However, that phase has not moved forward, pending a clear message from the Executive Council directing departments to do so.

Erle and Rich added that the campus does not have a very efficient or dependable emergency communication system. The current system relies on a combination of weather radios, pagers, two-way radios, PA systems, and phone calling to communicate campus wide alerts. The system is slow, somewhat complicated, and does not assure everyone on campus will be reached. They consider the establishment of a dependable and efficient emergency communication system as critical to successful emergency response.

Committee members agreed that establishment of a standard campus emergency plan should be a University priority. It was decided that members would request that the issue be included on the agendas of their bargaining units' next Meet and Confer meetings. Management representatives agreed to place it on the next Directors' meeting agenda. Finally, Tim Harrison moved that the Committee chair draft a memo to the Executive Council, requesting them to adopt a plan and take the necessary steps to be prepared to implement the plan, when needed. Melissa Halberg seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The motion was approved by voice vote, without dissent.

Kierstin also expressed her concerns about security, safety, and liability issues related to building access. She explained there has been an ongoing problem with unauthorized individuals gaining access to Rec Center and PE areas during closed periods. In many cases, faculty and staff were using keys to let themselves or others into the areas. In other instances faculty and staff were providing students with keys to enter the areas. In some cases minors were given access and then left unchaperoned by the adults that let them in. There were also occasions of people using the swimming pool when the area was closed. The Rec Center locks have been changed but access problems still occur.

Erle noted that this problem also occurs in other campus buildings. Many keys are unaccounted for, either because they were lost or were not returned by individuals when they left the University. Luther Abrahamson added that there are many keys assigned to individuals who do not need access to all the areas that their keys allow.

Jeff Sande and Erle briefly discussed some of the advantages and estimated costs of installing an electronic, card access system on campus. Some of the system's features include easy reprogramming of access codes, records of when individuals enter and leave the building, and remote locking and unlocking capability. Jeff indicated that the project is on the HEAPR project list. The estimated cost to install the system on the outside doors of all campus buildings is approximately \$900,000.

The committee discussed various ideas about addressing the security problems such as installing the card access system a building at a time, rather than waiting for the HEAPA funding, requiring deposits and increasing replacement fines for lost keys, and reviewing the current key assignment list.

The committee took no specific action and provided no recommendations on the key issue.

The chair noted that the one-hour meeting limit had been reached and asked for a motion to extend or

to table the rest of the agenda until the next meeting. Tim moved for adjournment. Abe seconded the motion. The motion carried by voice vote, without dissent.

A specific date was not set for the next meeting but the Chair advised it would probably be during the third week of February. .

Adjourn: 2:38 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard Marsolek
Coordinator, Environmental Health and Safety