

24 May 2002
SINGLE ITEM MEET & CONFER

Present: Chris Brown, Jauneth Skinner, Rich Gendreau, Rod Henry, Rod Witt, Jo Jordan, Jon Quistgaard, Dave Larkin, Carl Baer, Gerry Amble.

The meeting was called to order.

Brown: Of course this meeting relates to one particular topic and we would like your comments with regards to this. We wonder why we were not informed. We would like to know when were you notified that MnSCU intended to merge BSU and the three technical schools into a Poly Technic College?

Quistgaard: Officially? I heard about it this last Tuesday.
Unofficially? I learned about it when I read your letter.

Brown: Who informed you officially?

Quistgaard: Linda Baer. I met with her to find out what was going on. She informed me a news release was coming out. I asked if I could see it, she said yes... And that is how I found out.

Brown: This was not discussed in the Leadership council... Not a hint about the direction this was going...?

Quistgaard: No.

Brown: Was Kinkel involved?

Quistgaard: My understanding is that all the legislators in the region were involved. There was no discussion on this matter to my knowledge. Other communications were after the press release.

After I met with Dr. Baer... I wrote a memo back to the bargaining unit heads on campus on e-mail -- sent it back a.s.a.p. To all bargaining unit heads.

Brown: What about local meetings? I mean obviously you are taken aback by this situation.

Jordan: In relation to this.. How do you anticipate sharing this information with the campus community? I got an e-mail specifically from my dean. I am concerned about information coming from one source, not from too many different places, so we are all together on this. How will we receive this information?

Quistgaard: We need to use the Meet & Confer process, maybe the President's newsletters. We did not discuss yesterday that deans should report back to their colleges yet. We do not have much information beyond what I read at this time.

Brown: In the meeting I crashed last Friday Linda Baer's indicated that she and Jim Bensen made a number of plans relating to this institution, "...that I would be surprised by these plans". Did Bensen have any involvement in this? It is particularly interesting in light of his recent retirement.

Quistgaard: No, not to my knowledge.

Brown: Is this a done deal? Or is it exploratory?

Quistgaard: This is exploratory, based on what I know. The three presidents are looking at this regarding what we think would be in the best interests of students and for the region over the long term.

Brown: Are time lines set yet?

Quistgaard: The information I have suggests about a year.

Brown: Do you plan to use the university the planning process?

Quistgaard: I don't know yet.

North West Tech will operate under own separate and distinct mission... There will be no co-mingling of budgets, we will not co-mingle resources... I have not heard the word merge...

Brown: This is not what I heard at the meeting I was at down state.

Henry: We know Bemidji Tech is a BIG money loser... With faculty and other things that would need to be let go at the best of times... What happens to us if we have to take them on? Particularly in our current budget crisis?

Quistgaard: We will be separate and distinct institutions... Our money will be separate... We still need to deliver lib ed courses to them... Our mission is to be separate too. I have assumptions too but I do not know where we are with their money yet... Until I look at their books.

Henry: This is a problem... Given our current budget crisis.

Quistgaard: Bemidji Tech has a central distribution system with all their money coming from a central location. I am concerned about taking on additional financial burdens at this time, too.

Brown: Our concern is our personnel... Have any studies been done considering course duplication and transfer curriculum? And who gets whacked?

Quistgaard: I do not know if there have been studies.

Brown: Is there rostering or re-rostering or merging rostering...?

Quistgaard: There is no planning done with regards to any of this.

Brown: Will there be special funding if we become a "Cal Poly"?

Quistgaard: I do not know.

Witt: With all due respect, we are here because you say you do not know. This scares the hell out of me!

Quistgaard: This happened on Wednesday and I just do not know. I do not have any answers... I do not have a lot of information.

Jordan: Dr. Quistgaard, I hear two separate things: and this scares me. That there would be three high level administrators get together and explore this for a year.... Or that a triumvirate of three presidents will try to administer this and they do not know what is going on.

Quistgaard: This has been held and conducted at the system level... Without my knowledge.

Jordan: This is not okay...!

Brown: You should have been informed.

More questions: Are we looking at two different tuition rates? Any other implications from an economic stand point that you are aware of?

Quistgaard: No. I do not know where we are until I look at their financial books.

Brown: What is a poly technic institution ... what is the definition ?

Quistgaard: There are different models all over the world...

Brown: What is it in light of "Cal Poly", to quote the chancellor?

Quistgaard: An emphasis on rational critical thinking skills and students prepared for occupations similar to a two year British school model.

Brown: In past we have looked at co-location... The faculty senate is not necessarily on board with those past arrangements.

Quistgaard: I am not certain what St. Paul has in mind for us... We will not become a poly tech as long as I am at the helm.

The discussion continued.

Quistgaard: There will be a meeting on June 12th in Detroit Lakes to take additional input.

Henry: Can mere mortals address the board at this meeting...?

Amble: No... They must be an archangel...

Quistgaard: We were told there would be no input from us...

Brown: Who told you that you would not be allowed to testify...? Who is trying to gag you?

Quistgaard: I have no idea. I don't think there will be an attempt to gag me... But we were told that we could not speak at this meeting.

Witt: I have attended board meetings for a number of years... When has anything of this magnitude been done without our being invited or input from those involved...?

Quistgaard: Not ever, to my knowledge.

Brown: Was our administration in attendance at these public meetings?

Quistgaard: I had no reason to believe that I needed to attend any of these meetings.

Henry: I never heard this coming from those seventeen public meetings... The techs seem to be as blind sided as we are.

Brown: We formally request copies of these minutes, from all seventeen of these public hearings.

Quistgaard: I would like to see these too.

Brown: There is a rumor that this is being done to us as punishment for the hockey arena...

Baer: I have heard lots of rumors!

Quistgaard: I have not heard this rumor...

Brown: We would like to enter into blanket suspension of time lines until the first duty day of Fall Semester 2002, until all faculty can be back on duty. Would the administration be agreeable to this...?

Quistgaard: I would be open to this.

Brown: Obviously we will be grieving this matter... It is a violation of contract according to Article 6, and we have association rights regarding this matter and we intend to pursue this...

The discussion continued.

Brown: What are your plans for the meeting on the June 12th...?

Quistgaard: We need an ITV feed to BSU... So people here can participate... Thief River Falls too, because of distant... I suggested it... I do not know if they will do it or not.

The discussion continued.

The meeting adjourned with the following actions:

Brown: BSUFA makes a formal request for the transcripts of the seventeen public meetings.

Larkin and Quistgaard: Formally request copies of these too.

Brown: A formal request from Faculty Senate to adopt a blanket resolution to halt all activity on this matter until the first duty day of the Fall 2002 Semester, when Faculty Senate reconvenes.

Respectfully submitted,
Jauneth Skinner, BSUFA Secretary