

**STONY BROOK UNIVERSITY SENATE**  
**University Environment Committee**  
Meeting of May 6th 2020, 1:00 - 2:20 pm  
Online meeting

Attendance: Thomas Wilson, Jeanne Charoy, Clifford Knee, Gary Kaczmarczyk, Hiya Panja (new member: Biology major freshman, undergraduate Senate member), Sarah Battaglia, Malcom Bowman, Christopher Sellers, Frederick Walter, Dmitri Tsybychev, Mona Ramonetti, Joanna Kaczorowska, Chris Sellers.

Meeting called to order at 1:08

The meeting started with the consideration of last month's minutes. Thomas Wilson entertained a motion to accept the minutes, Dmitri Tsybychev moved and Chris Sellers seconded. The minutes were accepted without any opposition.

Gary Kaczmarczyk had to step off at 1:12pm

**Chair report:** First, Wilson informed the committee that he was given the opportunity to nominate members for outstanding community service this year. While it is always hard to pick, he chose Mona Ramonetti for her service to the transportation working group and for representing the University Environment committee and the Senate on the transportation task force. He also chose Jeanne Charoy for coordinating the Efficiency, Recycling and Liveability working group and for serving as secretary. Thomas Wilson himself was also nominated.

Wilson informed the committee that Senate elections will happen eventually (possibly deferred until September) and that there will be elections to refill positions on this committee. It is unclear at this point how this will affect this committee but current members may have to come back in September. Wilson said he is running for reelection as he would like to continue his work on the committee. Matt Eisaman and Michelino Puopolo's terms are ending - Wilson did not know whether they will stand for reelection. Sellers mentioned that he is going on a fellowship at University of Texas next year and may not be able to attend meetings then. Wilson told Sellers that this wouldn't automatically disqualify him as there is every possibility that the committee will continue to meet online next year. There is an open position on the committee for someone at the Health Sciences Center. Charoy can continue to serve as the Graduate student representative but may graduate in December. Hiya Panja will check with the Undergraduate Student Government about designating an Undergraduate student representative. Wilson added that anyone is free to come to the meetings even if they are not official members.

Wilson asked Frederick Walter whether there were any updates on the Senate retreat. Walter answered that it was postponed and had not been rescheduled as of yet. Wilson asked the committee members to let him know about any reports they may have about work of the committee so he can report them during the retreat.

**Open discussion of the Covid-19 response on campus:** Clifford Knee informed the committee that campus is currently focused on the recovery planning. Stony Brook has created 10 working groups, including a return to work planning group (which will talk about the new responsibilities of the employees), a DoIT group (which looks at what to do if one has to work from home), a group looking at campus dining, a facility group (which looks at cleaning, social distancing and engineering controls), a group on health and safety, a group on international programs, a communication group, a campus security group, a research task force lead by Richard Reeder and an HR group. There are many unanswered questions at this point and many unknowns. These groups have just started having meetings but within the next week or so, the questions to be addressed will become more detailed and the actions to take can be fine-tuned. Campus is also waiting for specific guidance from the Governor. The field hospital was turned over to AECOM (a large general contractor and construction company).

Wilson asked whether AECOM also provided medical staff if needed. Knee answered that no, AECOM is only responsible for maintenance of generators, making sure that pipes don't freeze, etc... Walters asked whether maintenance was state controlled or federally controlled. Knee said he would think Federal as the DEC had nothing to do with it. Malcolm Bowman asked whether the field hospital had any patients and the answer was no. Walters noted that the field hospitals are held for the anticipated second wave; however they are not winterized. Knee added that there may still be heating, but that some of the piping is exposed so there are concerns about freezing. These field hospitals are not meant for the long term. Sarah Battaglia gave the committee some information about Covid-19 cases at the SBU hospital: the first person under investigation was admitted in mid-February and the first confirmed case was in early March. There has been 4000 positive tests, and two weeks ago there were 437 people hospitalized. Recently 183 people were hospitalized, with about 1/3rd in ICU. The numbers are decreasing. 3% of health care employees have tested positive within two months. There is a lot of research going on on Remdesivir and use of convalescent plasma. Wilson added that morbidity at the SBU hospital had been really outstanding (about half of some other hospitals in the NY area).

Governor Cuomo has put out a list of criteria to meet for reopening, including being under 70% capacity in hospitals. Walters mentioned that the SBU hospital has never been under 70% capacity. Wilson answered that they probably mean the hospitals need to have a surge capacity of 30% and that the SBU hospital could achieve this without going bankrupt. Sellers asked whether there was any news on testing. Wilson answered that testing had been expanded to more essential workers including teachers and educators. Sellers mentioned that the logistics of testing every student, faculty and staff at SBU seemed difficult to implement. Wilson raised the topic of antibody testing and whether those are accurate or not. Knee mentioned that they are much more available now; Walters added that they have high false positive rates.

Sellers asked whether there could be opportunities for this committee to help SBU come back to a better normal rather than a new normal. Wilson agreed that this is something that the committee needs to put back on the table. Walters explained that the Senate has tried to

convince the President that governance should get involved in the Covid-19 task forces/working groups but that has not happened - as of now there are no faculty voices on these groups.

Wilson noted that while for some people normal operation means going to campus everyday (e.g., food workers, facility managers), for others it may not be necessary. A good way to reduce the carbon footprint of SBU and to reduce traffic and parking problems would be to encourage employees to work remotely some days in the week. This is something to think about when thinking about a return to normal. If the average employee is able to work from home one day out of every two weeks, that would be a 10% reduction in all the load on the infrastructure. Walters added that the field hospital is currently taking parking space, and if dorm space is also limited there will be a lot of commuter students who would need parking - these calculations need to be considered. Wilson added that the South P lot is currently used as a testing facility and the field ER is also there.

Malcolm Bowman asked whether faculty can teach if they test positive. There was no answer to this question as of yet.

### **Working groups**

*Research group* (coordinator: Michelino Puopolo). Michelino Puopolo was absent. No new business from the research group.

*Natural Environment and Preservation working group* (coordinator: Thomas Wilson). There has been progress on Ashley Schiff: The resolution passed in the Senate and there were talks with legislators about updating the legislation and putting the preserve in the park systems. The plan is to talk to them and to approach the new SBU president as soon as practicable.

This working group also conducted the Lake Brianna project: The group obtained authorization to put up instruments and collect data. Wilson asked Knee if he knew about the East recharge being connected to another recharge at the intersection of Nicholls Rd and the main entrance and whether that was an overflow or back and forth. Knee answered that he believes it to be back and forth because some of the discharge comes from the hospital. Wilson noted that it could be interesting to test to see if the levels between the recharges are the same and make sure that the low spot for overflow is not in the other basin.

*Transportation working group* (coordinator: Mona Ramonetti). Mona Ramonetti was absent (she was attending a transportation task force meeting). No new business for this group.

*Efficiency, recycling, and liveability* (coordinator: Jeanne Charoy). Sean Deery may still be able to work on the committee in the Fall. He will write reports on his projects so others can pick them up in the future.

**Old and new business.** No old business. Wilson brought up one new business item: the time of the monthly UEC meetings. The current time is not so practical anymore, the committee will discuss over the Summer to determine if another time would work better.

Walters thanked Wilson for his leadership over the past two years. Wilson thanked Walters and said that it had been a privilege working with all the members of the committee and to serve the Senate. Bowman said that committee members could advocate for Wilson's reelection for UEC. Although it is not clear at this point when the election will occur. Wilson asked whether committee members would like to meet on June 10th to discuss Covid-19 and whether the current committee members will meet in September or not. It was decided a meeting would take place on June 10th.

Bowman mentioned that there are tensions between the SBU Senate and the administration, as the administration does not seem to respect the Senate's work. Walters said he hopes the new President will provide a new opportunity to get off the right foot. She has met with the union and should meet with the Senate executives soon. Wilson added that Dean Tufts and Kathleen Byington have been invited to every meeting and that he could certainly invite the President too.

The next meeting will be June 10th, 2020 from 1:00pm to 2:30pm

Wilson entertained a motion to adjourn. Sellers moved. None opposed.

Meeting adjourned at 2:01