

TO: President Jack Miller
FROM: President of the University Senate

1. The attached motion of the University Senate, dealing with
UPBC report on Athletic Field
is presented to you for your consideration. Two additional copies are included for your use.

2. This motion was adopted by the University Senate on 27 Sept. '07

3. After considering this motion, please indicate your action on this form, and return it together with the original copy to the President of the University Senate.

4. Under the By-Laws of the University Senate, Section 3.8, the following schedule of action is to be observed.

a) By _____, Senate action reported to the President of University.
(Date)
(Within five school days of the session in which they are adopted).

b) By _____, President of the University to return the motion to the
(Date)
President of the Senate. (Within 10 school days of its receipt).

1 Oct. '07 Tim Craine for J. Craine
(Date) President, University Senate (Tim Craine)

ENDORSEMENT:

TO: President of the University Senate

FROM: President Jack Miller

1. Motion Approved In receipt of Report

2. Motion Disapproved _____
(Explanatory statement must be appended)

3. Action "is deferred" _____

4. Resolution Noted _____

5. Other _____

10/30/07
Date

Jack Miller
President

UPBC Report on Athletic Fields. Senator Blitz, the outgoing chair, presented the report and acknowledged the current UPBC chair, Senator Crundwell. Senator Sims moved to accept the report: Approved.

From: David Blitz, Co-Chair, UPBC
To: Tim Craine, President, CCSU Senate
Re: Sports Fields Project
Date: July 12, 2007

Dear President Craine:

As you will recall, the special meeting of Senate on May 14, 2007 approved a resolution to: "Send the 7 phase athletic fields project to UPBC and the Facilities Planning Committee for consideration in terms of strategic planning, specifically: 1. retention of some but not necessarily all of items; 2. alternate recreational needs of interest to students; 3. urgent facility needs which may be possible under plant reserve rules, and [the Chair] Report back to Senate at end of June 2007."

What follows is the report from the Co-Chair of the UPBC, based on discussions at UPBC at May, June, and July meetings. This report was received at the UPBC meeting of July 11, 2007, and modified to its present form, which I hereby transmit to you for referral to Senate.

I: The Athletic Fields Project

While it is understood by all that the facilities reserve fund needs to be reduced, and that its present size of about \$20 million is excessive, there remains legitimate scope for disagreement on how that should be spent down. The President, in his letter to faculty on May 14 stated that the approximately \$6.5 million to be spent is money already derived from a special student fee, and can only be spent only on "outdoor recreational and intercollegiate athletics facilities". An additional \$3 million required for the project takes into account fee income for the coming two years during which the project would be underway. A variety of different responses to this can be identified.

(1) Those who agree with the President argue that the money was "ear-marked" for athletics when the fee was proposed to the BOT, and that it has accumulated without being spent for that purpose, so that there is either a legal or a moral obligation (or both) to spend the sums as proposed. The proposal has been approved in principle by the BOT based on the "Use of Designated Fund Balances to Finance Recreation, Intramural and Athletic Fields at CCSU" staff report (May 10, 2007 attached, appendix 1). What remains is to examine bids; reconsideration is possible only if the bids are above the maximum allocated.

(2) A number of members of the committee have questioned why this sum is being spent exclusively on athletic fields, and have pointed out that, anecdotally, there is more interest among students in having an indoor health and exercise facility than outdoor fields which can be used only part of the year, and for which priority will necessarily go to organized team activities, not individual health and exercise.

(3) At least two members of the UPBC have asked why part of the money to be spent could not be used for the construction of the much needed Public Safety building, to replace the "hut" which currently serves that function, along with needed upgrade to communication on campus in cases of emergencies.

(4) At least one member of the committee has asked how the planned field improvements fit in with our stated university goals for strategic planning and has expressed concern about the apparent independence of the two processes. This committee member was to meet with the CAO, a member from the FPC, and the consultant for the fields; but ended up only meeting with the CAO. At the meeting, it was agreed, in alignment with strategic planning and accountability measures, that a series of measurable goals would be developed for co-recreational activities, intramural athletics, and Division I athletics. Goals would allow the community to see what goals are being addressed by the field upgrade and which will be left for future planning operations. Goals would also be used as benchmarks to schedule activities on these fields such that a variety of activities take place on the field as planned. The CAO stated that these goals would be forwarded to the President in due time. As the clearinghouse for information on strategic planning, the UPBC too should be included and be shown all the goals- with the included identification of which goals will be addressed with the field up-grade.

(5) There is concern that cost over-runs on a project such as this could be on the order of 1/3 to 1/2 times the bid amount, which would dangerously deplete the building reserve fund if total costs rose to \$12 million on this basis. Note: the legislature has just voted to explicitly limit expenditures to no more than \$10 million.

(6) It has been argued that the sums collected from the special fee have already been spent on athletic activities. At UPBC request, the CFO prepared a statement, "Intercollegiate Athletics: Revenues and Expenditures" for 1999 – 2006. This report (see appendix 2) indicates that a total \$33,216,441 was spent as operating expenditures for athletics from 2001-2002 (the onset of the additional fee) to 2005-2006 (this latter year is estimated). In comparison, revenues were \$3,373,535 (from NCAA revenue, outside gifts, game guarantees, ticket sales and miscellaneous sources); for a net transfer of \$29,842,906 from the university. Thus, average transfers per year to athletics in the years since the \$150 additional fee was collected were in the order of \$5.97 million dollars; far in excess of the approximately \$1.5 million dollars collected each year from the student athletic fee. Figures for 2006- 2007 will be available within a month from the auditors and will be included in an update to this report. The UPBC has also requested information on the amount of money already allocated to facilities renovations in Kaiser and the fields for athletics (money that we argue should be included in fee spending on

athletics and recreation since the fee was collected)

The above argument suggests that the \$150 per student can just as well be seen as a partial offset of the overall negative revenue from athletics; the general revenue surplus may just as well – and plausibly does – come from savings from unfilled faculty and administrative lines.

(7) In discussions with faculty, the administration stated a ‘moral obligation’ to use the money derived from the additional student fee gathered since 2002 and spend it towards the fields. Faculty on the UPBC have pointed out that there are serious flaws with the moral obligation claim as well as with the general mechanism to which the University has increased the General Fee. The University in the past has increased the General Fee over the years to help meet Title IX compliance, get better cable service, and other items, without the rationale for these increases being communicated to current and future students. If there is a true obligation then what accounting methods are in place to ensure that past and current obligations are being met? Furthermore, why haven’t fees been categorized as use-specific fees (e.g. Student Activity Fee and Information Technology Fee) to account for the extended obligation?

Preliminary conclusions are (i) that further examination of expenditures for athletics is required, given the above questions and the unavailability of the 2006-2007 figures at the time of the writing of this report; (ii) construction of an indoor health and exercise facility should be seriously considered as a modification to the current plan, replacing one or more of the field constructions; and (iii) given the tendency for cost over-runs even for on-budget bids, a cap below \$9.5 million should be set for the project. Given that over-runs tend to be up to 50%, perhaps a cap of \$6 to \$6.5 million would be more reasonable. Further, UPBC needs to monitor the priorities and status of bonding for other campus building, especially but not limited to the Public Security building, the Diloretto-Willard complex renovation, and the “swing space” academic building.

II: Relation between UPBC and FPC

In his letter of June 14 to me (attached as a second appendix), President Miller asks a number of questions concerning the role of the UPBC and the Facilities Planning Committee (FPC).

(1) He suggests that an “important role” can be played by the UPBC in terms of “helping to review the bids and gather information about the progress of the project.” He also proposes that the UPBC can “play a major role in making certain that there are no significant variations from our original estimates”

(2) He enquires concerning the relation between the UPBC and the FPC, and stresses the importance of a “better methodology for information sharing and a more strategic interface between these groups”.

As concerns (1) we agree that the UPBC can and should review major decisions, such as that to go ahead with the athletic field project, in terms of institutional priorities and strategic planning, without, however, assuming authority it does not have for operational details of application in the field. In this respect, the UPBC should have reviewed the document sent to the BOT, and the absence of such a review is the source of much of the current controversy. (UPBC had a report on three possible plans in Fall 2006, but no further presentation on the final proposal was submitted to UPBC by the Administration).

As concerns (2), we agree on the need to clarify the relationship between UPBC and the FPC. Currently, two faculty members are ex-officio members of the FPC – the Vice President of Senate, and a faculty member who originally served as representative of the Chair of the UPBC, and now represents the School of Arts and Sciences. In its advisory capacity to the Chief Administrative Officer, the FPC is closer to the supervisory issues related to contracts than the UPBC.

In order to improve communication between the FPC and the UPBC, we can take a number of measures: (i) request that one of its faculty members provide regular reports to the UPBC; (ii) invite the CAO on a regular basis to report to the UPBC and/or (iii) name an additional member of the UPBC to serve on the FPC and report back. Discussion should be held on these options.

This would contribute to better communication between the two committees; but the substantial consideration is transparency in decision making, shared governance, and respect for priorities in terms of strategic planning, all of which have, at a crucial moment in the past, been lacking in the athletic fields project. Consequently, I conclude that the matter remains one for active debate and follow-up as bids are received by the Chief Administrative Officer and we have a clearer view of real projected costs. This report should be followed up by further reports to Senate as the situation develops.

Cc: Dr. Jack Miller, President, CCSU

Att: Letter of Jack Miller to David Blitz, June 14, 2007

Revenues and Expenditures, Intercollegiate Athletics

Use of Designated Fund Balances to Finance Recreation, Intramural and Athletic Fields at CCSU” staff report (May 10, 2007)