

University Library Committee Minutes
May 18th, 2016, 3:15 pm

Present: Thomas Burr, S.J. Chang, Chris Hamaker, Cindy Kerber, Marie Labonville, Dallas Long, Jay Percell

Absent: Magdalena Casper-Shipp, Chad Kahl, Kelly Murphy, Molly Quinn, Dane Ward, Clint Warren

Meeting was called to order at 3:15pm.

Carlyn Morenus retired at the end of the semester. We wish her well in her new home and new career as a librarian.

Labonville caught an incorrect year in the previous month's minutes regarding the close-out paperwork for the potential rehabilitation of Milner Plaza and the first floor renovation. With the edit, the minutes from the April meeting were approved. Burr said he will send copies of the minutes to Cynthia James. Burr asked if anyone remembered when the committee's annual report must be submitted. Burr and Long thought last year's report was submitted in January. Percell offered to send Burr copies of the photographs he took of IRMA (first floor) during last month's tour. Burr asked whether trustees had toured IRMA, and Long said some have. Burr suggested the library invite people (trustees?) to see it. Long said the library administrators were told by facilities not to bring many people through IRMA for various reasons, however the trustees probably have access to whatever they might like to see.

Hamaker noted that his term on the committee is coming to an end, and he will rotate off for the fall semester. Burr said the committee will be large in the fall, with new members joining us, including Alan Lessoff (History) and Melissa Johnson (Art). Kerber said she may not be able to participate in the fall due to a scheduling conflict with a fall class but isn't sure yet.

Burr asked whether the committee's starting time for meetings should be in the evening next academic year, perhaps at 5pm, in order to accommodate the larger committee roster. Presumably many members will be teaching at the 3:15pm starting time. Members disagreed, and continuing the 3:15-4:45pm meeting on the second Wednesday of each month was endorsed.

Burr asked Hamaker if he had final thoughts that he wished to share. Hamaker said he had learned a lot about the library and appreciated the committee's open discussions. Kerber agreed with the sentiments.

Burr reported that he spent approximately 90 minutes meeting Susan Kalter, the chair of the academic senate. Burr wished to emphasize that Milner Library is one of the University's seven colleges and has its own governance structure. Kalter had said some senators on the academic senate and at least one librarian had believed the University Library Committee governed Milner Library, operating similar to a board of directors. Burr asked the committee what sort of governance is most appropriate for Milner. Additionally, Burr reported the Board of Trustees' resolution to fix the Milner Plaza and the first floor was postponed to the July board meeting. Burr and Long explained what they knew of the BoT's rationale for the delay.

Burr noted that Kalter said she'd learned during a meeting she'd had with Ward, Kahl, and Long that not all subject librarians are welcomed to meetings with the academic departments. Kalter knew that to be the case with the English department but thought perhaps that case was unique.

Labonville asked what the governance structure of the library looks like right now. Long explained that currently the library has a faculty council consisting of elected Milner faculty. A library council will replace the faculty council in August and will be more inclusive, consisting of elected faculty, administrative professionals, and civil service. Labonville asked if the council consists of Milner Library faculty and staff or of persons outside of Milner. Long clarified the council is Milner faculty and staff.

Burr asked what do the colleges need from Milner? Kerber said her subject librarian is very connected with the Mennonite College of Nursing, and she knows the Mennonite faculty can reach out to her for help with many different things. Hamaker, Burr, Percell, and Labonville felt similarly regarding their subject librarians. Chang noted a librarian for the College of Business spent a lot of time in the college, but she retired and he has known the succeeding librarians less well. He asked Hamaker if his librarian is responsible for the department of Chemistry. Hamaker replied that Julie is the librarian for multiple departments, mostly in the physical sciences. Chang thought the College of Business was too broad for one librarian, and Long said two librarians are dedicated to the COB but he wasn't certain how Joe and Danielle split up the college's departments.

Percell said the College of Education needs state of the art teaching and learning facilities in order to better prepare teachers. Kerber said that sounded similar to the nursing simulation lab. A committee member asked whether the library could be more involved in teaching using primary sources. Another committee said they thought the CTLT offered some sessions on that topic for faculty members. Burr asked whether the library should be more closely involved with Research and Sponsored Programs in order to support faculty research. Long said Milner has proposed programs for CTLT that are not always accepted. Maureen Brunsdale, the special collections librarian, facilitated a very well received program for faculty on teaching with special collections a few years ago.

Burr said maybe the committee members should go to the other departments in their colleges and talk about the library if librarians have difficulty gaining access to certain departments. Kerber asked whether members are representatives back to their colleges. Chang said he did not think the strategy would be effective; if departments close their meetings to persons not affiliated with the department, they will not be receptive to other faculty either. Hamaker said he knew of a department that did not want their own dean to attend its faculty meeting.

Long asked what Kalter wants from the committee? Burr is looking into what university library committees at other institutions do and how they relate to the library and to the academic senate. Chang said he wished the library had greater autonomy and perhaps the dean of the library should be something different from the deans of the colleges. Chang believed that is the case at research universities. Long said at some major research universities, the dean of the library is actually a vice provost.

Kerber said the committee should not mandate that librarians go to departments' faculty meetings because doing so would be off-putting to some. "More power is good but be careful how you wield it." Members agreed.

Burr said he was going to investigate library's organizational structures and how libraries market themselves to faculty. Percell offered to help Burr. Burr said they would have something to report out at the September meeting, and he and Percell would get together over the summer.

Meeting adjourned at 4:45pm.