

DRAFT UNTIL APPROVED BY SENATE

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE SENATE OF SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY HELD  
TUESDAY, MAY 6, 1969 IN THE FACULTY LOUNGE AT 7:30 P.M.

SPECIAL MEETING - THE ELLIS REPORT

OPEN SESSION

Present:

Strand, K. T.

Chairman

Baird, D. A.  
Boland, L. A.  
Burststein, K. R.  
D'Aoust, B.  
Srivastava, L. M.  
Haering, R. R.  
Hutchinson, J. F.  
Korbin, D.  
Okuda, K.  
Rieckhoff, K. R.  
Sperling, G. B.  
Stratton, S. T.  
Sullivan, D. H.  
Tuck, D. G.  
Vidaver, W. E.  
Walkley, J.  
Wassermann, S.  
Williams, W. E.  
Wong, S.

Evans, H. M.  
Kelsey, I. B.  
Barboza, J.  
Collins, E.

Secretary

Recording Secretary

Absent:

Branca, A. E.  
Cole, R. E.  
Collins, M.  
Conway, J.  
Dampier, J. L.  
Ellis, A. J.  
Hamilton, W. M.  
Harper, R.J.C.  
Hean, A.F.C.  
Koemer, O.  
Lachlan, A. H.  
Lett, S.  
MacKinnon, A. R.  
McLean, C. H.  
Perry, G. N.  
Shrum, G. M.

Dr. John F. Ellis was in attendance to speak to his Report.

The Chairman indicated to Senate that D. Meyers, the Associate Registrar, had suffered a heart attack, and that he would be unable to report for work for at least some six to seven months, at which time it was expected that he would be able to return to work under a reduced assignment. The Chairman indicated that he personally wished to publicly express his concern and his appreciation for everything that Mr. Meyers has done in the past. K. Strand further announced that D. Meakin, formerly of the Chemistry Department, was nominee for the position of Associate Registrar, but that the transfer was not yet completed. He introduced I. Kelsey as newly appointed Director of the Secretariat Services division within the Office of the Registrar.

The Chairman reminded Senate of the procedures which would be followed in considering the Ellis Report - as outlined in Paper S.217, and that, in the interest of time, the Minutes would show for each recommendation a formal motion of adoption moved by R. Haering and seconded by J. Walkley.

(Note to Senate: For the special meetings of Senate held for discussion of the Ellis Report, tape transcriptions have been made and are held in the Secretary's office.)

J. Ellis was requested to provide the opening statement. He noted that there had been considerable comment concerning the Academic Board and indicated that the principle involved in his recommendation was to use external validation as a means of making a number of the judgments required. He spoke on the principle of accreditation, noted that the Academic Board had been given authority to carry out certain accrediting within the province, and discussed the necessity of generating a list of college courses that are taught at university level. Attention was drawn to the items at the back of his Report, pertaining to the Academic Board and its authority. Comments were made on the resources of the Board, to the development of subject sub-committees in a number of areas, and procedures which might be developed, although the matter was not fully clarified at the present time. Membership on the Academic Board was outlined.

He referred to the matter of standards and drew attention to the publication of the Academic Board dated February 1969. He also noted a study undertaken on transfers from Vancouver City College to the University of British Columbia. Further comments were made briefly on the admission requirements of the other public universities within the province. He drew attention to letters which had been received, which had been issued by the Registrar of the University of British Columbia, and also drew attention to statements approved by the University of Victoria concerning college transfer of credit and gradings.

He made reference to admission requirements for American students and commented that throughout the report he had attempted to generate a principle of parallel treatment for parallel groups. He referred to attempts to make studies at B.C. colleges and B.C. senior matriculation

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parallel, through equating twelve years of schooling to twelve years of schooling. He noted that A level standards from Great Britain should be treated like senior matriculation courses in British Columbia. He referred to the principle that where a student is granted admission that credit should then be given for D grades on university level transfer courses, as students obtaining D gradings at Simon Fraser University received credit.

J. Ellis continued and drew a distinction between policies and rules on the premise that a policy is a guide for discretionary action as distinct from a rule which is a specification of a required action. He noted that no admissions policy could be final, as conditions change and programs change both here and elsewhere. He commented briefly on the areas of responsibility, which were suggested for the various sections within the university, which would be concerned directly with admissions and admissions policies.

The Chairman thanked Dr. Ellis for his comments and noted that individual Senators would now have opportunity to make statements or general comments with a time limit of ten minutes for each of those who wished to speak.

D. Sullivan commended J. Ellis on his energetic report, which had been undertaken in a very short time. He indicated reservations concerning the Academic Board and the mechanisms which might pertain and expressed doubt that the material required could be provided within the time suggested. He also expressed concern regarding possible new admission requirements at the University of British Columbia and the effect this might have. He further commented on problems which he foresaw in connection with gradings for transferability and the matter of prerequisite standards. He noted that the University of British Columbia set forth very clear statements in terms of acceptability of courses from other provinces and the gradings required. D. Sullivan expressed the hope that Senate would look at the items one at a time, but especially to see which parts are interrelated in order that appropriate synthesis would arise.

K. Burstein indicated that he wished to ask certain questions and directed an enquiry to Dr. Ellis concerning the Academic Board, wishing to know whether or not it was the intent that the Academic Board would tell Simon Fraser University which courses are accredited, and wished to know what other universities in B.C. have an external accrediting body. J. Ellis stated that he had suggested that the other two universities in the province do because they accept the programs that are taught at university level by the various colleges. K. Burstein suggested that it would be reasonable to have the other universities endorse the recommendations, and that the universities keep generally in step in these regards.

He referred to claims made by students and others of injustices which had existed under prior policies and expressed the view that the Report would not prevent individuals from making such claims, whether or not true. Particular reference was made to an example earlier quoted by J. Ellis concerning a transfer of a student from the University of British Columbia to Simon Fraser University. J. Ellis noted that the

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student had lost significant credit in the field of Fine Arts and expressed the view that because Simon Fraser does not teach Fine Arts was not good reason for not recognizing quality in such a field given at another recognized institution.

D. Korbin indicated some disappointment in the report, stated that it called for centralization of decision-making without asking to whom the powers of decision-making are being given; expressed concern that American students would require completion of 30 semester hours for admission; noted that amongst the demands presented in the fall there had been inclusion of a student-faculty parity admissions board, and an opening of files to the committee to ascertain injustices; and that he believed the report missed the concept of democratic decision making within the institution or other agencies. He considered this omission dangerous.

G. Sperling indicated that he was still not clear as to the place, responsibility and authority which the Academic Board might have, and that he was not certain as to whether or not the Board would be asking departments to change their courses in accordance with what is in the colleges or vice versa. He considered that the whole question of the role of the two-year colleges required further investigation, but commended Dr. Ellis on the references he had made about the dangers of overly strict prerequisites.

He also expressed concern on the effect of the streaming program in highschools and its sociological effects. He was also concerned that, although parallelism had been described by Dr. Ellis, that he did not consider that a requirement of 3.2 average from highschool graduates was reasonable.

R. Haering indicated that he was a member of the Academic Board, that he envisaged the Board becoming an accrediting agency in the sense that it would determine what courses at the colleges of the Province of British Columbia are of university level, that it would be expected that the university would recognize these courses, but that departmental responsibility would not be impinged upon, as the department would select the specific area (of the three referred to in the report) under which credit for a given course would be assigned. He noted that the manner in which the Board would propose to implement its accrediting in subjects would be through the use of subject committees.

He envisaged no major difficulty in the matter of prerequisite aspects, as the Undergraduate Admissions Board would be expected to inform Senate of the major and honors programs through which recognition would be given, and that there was further provision for review where difficulties are identified. He concurred that timing could present problems, but believed that these could be overcome through an appropriate interim step.

K. Rieckhoff believed the report presented a self-consistent framework, but that there were some minor points on which he would take exception. He noted that the burden of maintaining standards would fall squarely on all faculty, and was concerned that some departments might not employ appropriate steps to retain adequate standards.

D. Tuck referred to prerequisites, but indicated that at a meeting of the universities and regional colleges through the Chemistry Subcommittee there was a surprising degree of agreement. He felt no hesitation relying upon the Academic Board, particularly through the subcommittees, in terms of identification as to courses which could be acceptable. However, he was also concerned with timing, and wondered if the report might have some impact in this regard.

W. Williams believed that the report would grant admission to students currently not eligible, and was not satisfied that this was a correct approach unless there was reasonable indication that students could indeed proceed successfully through to graduation. From this standpoint he was concerned about the impact on overall standards.

S. Wong indicated that he proposed to speak briefly, as he had had a number of discussions with Dr. Ellis. He was in support of utilization of the Academic Board as an accrediting agency, because he believed that faculty and departments had shown inability or unwillingness to act in this area.

B. D'Aoust believed that the report was excellent if one accepted the present system, but would have preferred to have seen a much bolder approach to the total question of admission and what happens to students throughout the university process. He expressed the view that the report continued to work on certain aspects of passing and failing, whereas he believed a much greater emphasis must be given to the process and success of teaching, rather than to failure of students. He was of the opinion that the report tends to perpetuate the present system rather than to strike out boldly in new directions.

L. Boland thought that there had been insufficient discussion concerning the need of the policy and the specific purposes the policy should fulfill and was of the opinion that much greater study should have been given to the articulation of a philosophy of education for the university before the report was undertaken.

As no other Senator indicated desire to make comments, attention was turned to the individual recommendations.

CONSIDERATION OF INDIVIDUAL RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE ELLIS REPORT (IN THE ORDER OUTLINED IN PAPER S.217)

1. Recommendation No. 1

Moved by R. Haering, seconded by J. Walkley,

"It is recommended that the Senate of Simon Fraser University endorses the statement of operating guidelines (Part A)."

R. Haering supported the recommendation and believed that the policy proposed would allow the university to admit and retain students who have a reasonable probability of succeeding in the courses and programs they choose.

G. Sperling indicated that he believed the report gave too much authority to the Academic Board. Question was raised as to whether the AUCC provided for "accrediting" and J. Ellis responded that in the sense the term "accrediting" is used in his report that body did not carry out the function.

S. Wong referred to Page 8, item 4, pertaining to "the leading institution" and J. Ellis indicated that throughout the report this should read "a leading institution."

D. Tuck referred to Page 8, items 6, 7 and 8, which seemed to call for implementation. J. Ellis indicated that it was proposed that Senate would have responsibility to bring policies under systematic review, and that this would have impact on item 8; that the Registrar's Office would be expected to develop means of effective communication for students and faculty within the university and with interested individuals and groups outside the university, and that this would have impact on item 7; and that item 6 would fall under some of the Committee recommendations.

D. Sullivan indicated that the first recommendation covered a part with many sub-parts, and that he reserved judgment on item 4 of the section. J. Ellis provided further comments on this matter.

Vote was undertaken on Recommendation No. 1.

MOTION CARRIED  
14 in favor  
3 opposed  
1 abstained

2. Recommendation No. 11

Moved by R. Haering, seconded by J. Walkley,

"It is recommended that the Senate of Simon Fraser University endorse the statement areas of responsibility and admissions, standings and credits. (Part D)."

J. Ellis indicated that this was a complex and difficult section of the report. The intent of the section is to see Senate in the overriding position of making policy and overseeing its committees, making them responsible with policy being kept under regular review. The Undergraduate Admissions Board is expected to take the policies, make them operate in terms of writing more specific rules as they may be needed, and as these accumulate into new policy or suggestions for the creation of new policies, to bring these back to Senate, with a procedure for regular reporting. The Registrar's Office would be expected to implement the policies under the direction of the Admissions Board.

K. Rieckhoff referred to the "unsolicited report of the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Admissions and Standings on the Ellis Report" and that the Committee's recommendation on item 5.4, page 21 be utilized. J. Ellis suggested that the recommendation is already covered in the report through

other recommendations, with particular reference to recommendation 6 on page 17, and recommendation 3 on page 12.

D. Tuck approved the necessity for both an Admissions Board and an Appeals Board, and J. Ellis indicated that it was certainly his hope that over time the number of appeals would significantly decrease, but that during the period of implementation an Appeals Board could be needed.

W. Williams supported the suggestion made by K. Rieckhoff with reference to the suggestions made by the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Admissions and Standings, and was of the opinion that although the items might be covered in other sections of the report, there could be an advantage in repeating certain specific items.

K. Burstein expressed concern at what had been an Interim Appeals Committee was now proposed as a continuing Appeals Board. He enquired as to the body which would be responsible for reviewing such items as academic probation and required to withdraw. J. Ellis drew attention to the recommendation 14 on page 4.

L. Boland emphasized the necessity of indicating to students the basis on which rejections on admission or transfer are made, and noted that although explanatory and further directives might be developed through the Undergraduate Admissions Board, that such directives should come before Senate on final analysis for approval. He noted further that at the present time the whole role of the Appeals Committee and the potential role of the Appeals Board was not clear.

D. Sullivan again noted that there was interrelationship across many sections and concurred that whenever necessary there should be duplicated statements of overlap responsibility. From this standpoint he believed that action on this section should be deferred.

D. Sullivan continued with specific reference to page 20, item 1.4, and indicated that he did not believe that there was clarity in terms of the role of Senate itself, the role of departments, and the role of the Academic Board - with the result that he envisaged difficulties arising. He suggested that the Academic Board should send recommendations through a mechanism of consultation with departments, as may be authorized by Senate, and that the Registrar then be notified of courses which are acceptable for area credit toward the various degrees. Specifically, instructions could then be given to the Registrar by Senate as to how it is to be used. Ultimately, approval of courses for transfer must go through the Senate.

R. Haering supported the section and agreed that over time as policies become more definitive, there could be a diminishing need for an appeal mechanism. He had no objection to duplication of statements, but did not believe that all of these need be finalized before approval of the current documentation.

Question was raised concerning the possibility of adding clarifying clauses and statements at a later time if items were passed at this time, and it was agreed that at some future meetings there could be motions

providing amendments as required. Further clarification was requested and the Chairman indicated that dependent upon the results of certain motions, a number of changes - particularly those of an editorial nature - could be required and would be made as necessary.

R. Haering offered clarification, pointing out that if a recommendation did not pass, it would be held over for a later meeting, with opportunity for provision of amendments in writing before such meeting. He further noted that at this point a number of items were being dealt with as a first iteration, and that if there was agreement with the item as a first iteration, the item should pass, with the understanding that any necessary editorial changes resulting from later votes, and any statements required for greater clarity could be made.

The Chairman noted that each Senator would be expected to consider whether in totality he feels that comments weighed pro and con are such that a section should be opened up for substantive debate and item by item change, or whether in totality he would be prepared to accept it as it stands.

Vote on Recommendation 11 was then undertaken.

MOTION CARRIED

11 in favor

5 opposed

3 abstained

3. Recommendation No. 2

Moved by R. Haering, seconded by J. Walkley,

"It is recommended that the Senate of Simon Fraser University endorse in principle a procedure for accrediting colleges. (Part D)."

J. Ellis indicated that he had commented at some length in his general remarks on the procedure envisaged. G. Sperling still considered that the procedure was vague and wished to know what would be likely to occur if the Academic Board indicated a course should be accredited but a department of the university indicated that it should not. The Chairman suggested that the Academic Board would examine all courses offered in all the colleges in British Columbia, and would provide a listing of those courses that were of university level, but would make no reference as to the specific equivalencies offered by a given university. The listing of courses would be presented to the departments, which would indicate those deemed equivalent, those in an area not directly equivalent and so forth. The Chairman further noted as there is provision in upper level semesters for a student to include certain lower level courses in fulfilment of requirements, that some considerable flexibility existed. It was noted that as discrepancies become wider and wider there would of course be greater and greater difficulty. G. Sperling referred to the four-year principle under which a student would normally be expected to get a degree in four years, and the Chairman indicated that there were certain restrictions and that there would not necessarily be direct transference of full years to match full years.

J. Hutchinson indicated that his reservations would be removed if he were certain that the Academic Board would arrive at its initial listing through the processes suggested by Dr. Ellis by adequate utilization of the subject sub-committees. He requested that the letter from the Academic Board be read in this connection, and this was done. W. Williams noted that in effect the Board had indicated willingness to carry out a feasibility study, but that there was not assurance that the proposed procedure could come to fruition. W. Williams was further concerned lest the Academic Board indicate not only courses of the university level, but that it indicate that such and such a course at the college is the equivalent of a course at Simon Fraser University. J. Ellis indicated that the procedure proposed did not follow that form, but that the Academic Board would be expected to identify those courses considered being offered at a university level, and that such courses should normally carry transfer credit. The specific decision as to whether or not direct course equivalency would be given would be one referred to the departments, allowing for decision as direct equivalents, subject area equivalents and unassigned credit. He further noted that one of the difficulties had been the lack of willingness of the university to accept courses from the colleges with the result that little substantive information was available. The new procedures were expected to provide that a feedback was available. The new procedures were expected to provide a feedback mechanism which could be of value both to the university and the colleges.

K. Burstein was concerned with page 12, item 4, and noted that it was proposed to agree to accept and act upon the information provided by the Academic Board unless it can be shown to be in question, and felt that this was not a sufficiently clear-cut procedure. He was of the opinion that if Simon Fraser signed onto these principles, the other universities should do so. He also was concerned with the matter of accreditation and recognition of courses from other jurisdictions.

J. Ellis indicated that in the United States there are accrediting agencies and that appropriate data can be obtained, but there was further provision for utilization of the principle of utilizing evaluations from a leading university in the particular region. K. Burstein felt that if the Admissions Board was being charged with utilization of this type of data and making decisions on accrediting, it could do similarly for B.C. colleges.

W. Williams again indicated his reservations on the capability of the Academic Board at the present time to adequately carry out the functions proposed.

L. Boland noted that earlier J. Ellis had referred to the possibility of transferring course work in Fine Arts, and commented that the fact credit transfer might be refused might arise from decision that this university did not deem it to be an appropriate university level study.

Vote was then under taken on Recommendation No. 2.

MOTION CARRIED  
12 in favor  
2 opposed  
2 abstained

4. Recommendation No. 3

Moved by R. Haering, seconded by J. Walkley,

"It is recommended that the Senate of Simon Fraser University request the Academic Board to inform the university of those courses and programs offered by colleges in this province that can be considered equivalent in terms of content, levels and requirements to courses and programs typically found in the first two years at university. (Part B)."

K. Rieckhoff referred to previous discussion which had included aspects which would pertain to item 3. He had been of the opinion that the Academic Board would indicate university level courses and also the type of credit which would be allocated, but he now understood that the Board would provide a general statement as to level, but that it would not make specific recommendations regarding Simon Fraser courses, direct or indirect equivalent, and wished to know whether he was correct in that interpretation, to which an affirmative answer was given. J. Ellis referred to Recommendation No. 6.

G. Sperling enquired as to how the subject committees, to which reference had been made, were selected, as to the frequency of meetings and as to whether or not it was intended that they would meet more frequently. D. Tuck responded, noting that a number of the disciplines had held meetings and that much of the preliminary work had been set in motion through a meeting convened at the Academic Board held in December. He noted that the Chemistry group had met again recently.

L. Boland expressed the view that if the Academic Board identified courses such as Fine Arts as being at the university level, it would still not resolve the problem as to what action Simon Fraser University should take concerning the course.

D. Sullivan commented on the question which had been raised by K. Rieckhoff and the response thereto, as he had believed it had been the intent to have the Academic Board indicate subject equivalents, etc. Under certain conditions he believed this would be a logical thing for the subject committees to participate in. However, as currently expressed, he felt that the proposed procedure would not do a great deal more than make information more accessible and better disbursed within the public, since the matter of Simon Fraser course equivalents would still be a departmental prerogative. He commented that under Recommendation 8 - unassigned credit in a subject area - that this matter was a faculty responsibility, and that the faculty would have to determine whether or not it approves transfer credit, for example in Fine Arts, toward the Arts degree. He was still not clear as to who would make the decision and felt that difficulties could arise.

J. Ellis referred to the protective mechanisms as outlined under transfer credit on page 25, noting that a student seeking admission with transfer credit is advised that he must meet the general and specific requirements of the faculty and departments in which he chooses to major.

K. Burstein believed the issue unclear, as it was understood that the Board would assess courses as being college level transferable courses and that under the report all transferable courses would be transferred in total, with the amount of credit to be divided among three categories. J. Ellis noted that this was correct, but that the items could not be read without looking at the totality of the report, and that in some instances, particularly where a student changes fields, some of the transfer credit would not apply to the particular degree being sought.

Further question was raised by K. Burstein concerning courses such as Fine Arts, Italian, with enquiry as to the sub-committee that might give consideration to these. J. Ellis indicated that one of the premises of the report was that a student's experience with an institution of higher learning is more than the sum total of the number of courses that he had, and that if the student had attended a reputable institution and does university level work, presumably he should have some recognition for that. He was of the opinion that because some areas of human knowledge, generally recognized as being reputable at a university level, are not taught at this institution, did not seem to be sufficient reason for failure to recognize the worthwhile experience undertaken elsewhere insofar as the granting of credit is concerned.

J. Hutchinson considered that the item in its present form should be defeated, as it could lead to blanket accreditation of virtually every existing course in every academic transfer program from the regional colleges in the province.

Vote was then undertaken on Recommendation No. 3.

MOTION CARRIED  
10 in favor  
5 opposed  
2 abstained

K. Burstein requested that his negative vote be recorded.

5. Recommendation No. 4

Moved by R. Haering, seconded by J. Walkley,

"It is recommended that the Senate of Simon Fraser University agree to accept and act upon the information referred to in Recommendation 4 until or unless it can be shown to be in question."

L. Boland suggested that the item not be passed, as it provides for only two options, namely acceptance or rejection. He was of the opinion that there should be provision for an intermediate position of acceptance with limitations.

D. Sullivan suggested that it was desirable that further consideration be given the mechanisms, particularly of those pertaining to unassigned credit and equivalencies. He also felt it desirable to wait until the Academic Board indicates that it has completed its feasibility

study. He was in agreement in principle but was concerned about the methods.

Vote was then undertaken on Recommendation No. 4.

MOTION CARRIED  
9 in favor  
6 opposed  
1 abstained

6. Recommendation No. 5

Moved by R. Haering, seconded by J. Walkley,

"It is recommended that the Senate of Simon Fraser University agree with the principle that a student should be able to complete a four-year degree in approximately four academic years, whether or not he commences his studies at this university, provided that: (Part C)

- 5.1 he maintains a satisfactory level of achievement in full programs of university level studies.
- 5.2 he spends at least the last two years of his degree program at the university.
- 5.3 he does not change his academic objectives.
- 5.4 he has made a reasonable effort to complete prerequisites of lower division work for his chosen program during his first two years of study."

J. Ellis spoke briefly and noted that much of the material had been covered in earlier comments. If a student starts to major, for example, in Fine Arts, but does two years in that study and then transfers to Simon Fraser University for a B.A. in English, he obviously could not satisfy condition No. 5.3, as his academic objectives have changed. Similarly, he has to meet the requirements, general and specific, of both department and faculty. The principle is one of completing a four-year degree in approximately four years, subject to the conditions noted.

S. Wassermann noted that an individual is expected to undertake the last two years of his work here, but that on page 25 there is provision for an exceptional case. J. Ellis noted that a number of individuals had raised questions on this item, and that indeed page 25 was to provide for very unusual cases.

K. Rieckhoff noted that he was in general agreement with these suggestions, but that he saw certain practical difficulties in application, and that in a number of cases it would not be possible for an individual to finish his degree in four years if certain items are lacking that are specifically required by department or faculty.

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D. Sullivan was concerned at the lack of specific means for making it clear to a student where the responsibility lies as to how the non-direct equivalent credits would apply. He was hopeful that more clarification would arise. J. Ellis suggested that Recommendation 10 might take care of a number of these matters, with the understanding it would be necessary to make widely known the fact that a student intending to major in certain subject fields might be expected to enroll as a freshman in the university if there are obvious difficulties of transfer credit in the particular discipline.

Vote was then under taken on Recommendation No. 5.

MOTION CARRIED  
9 in favor  
2 abstained

7. Recommendation No. 10

Moved by R. Haering, seconded by J. Walkley,

"It is recommended that the Senate of Simon Fraser University request the Undergraduate Admissions Board to inform Senate of major and honors programs in which the principle agreed to in recommendation 5 appears difficult to meet. (Part C)."

MOTION CARRIED  
13 in favor

ADJOURNMENT

It was suggested that another special meeting be held. It was moved by S. Wong, seconded by G. Sperling that the meeting adjourn.

MOTION CARRIED  
7 in favor  
6 opposed  
1 abstained

The meeting adjourned at 11:45 p.m.

H. M. Evans  
Secretary