I. CALL TO ORDER: 7:08pm
   a. Present: Representatives Abneris, Buke, Nate, Hand, Barton, Lady, Lee, Stephen, Malcolm, Katie, President Saccone, Vice President Mbagwu, Treasurer Benson
   b. Absent: Sidney, Pannuto, David W.
   c. Excused: Malewski,

II. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

   Moved by Kyle seconded by the hand. Approved unanimously.

III. APPROVAL OF THE PREVIOUS MINUTES

   Moved by Benson, seconded by Kyle. Approved unanimously.

IV. Guest: Provost Martha Pollack

   I mentioned this to Phil previously, when faculty have meetings we never take minutes, we never approve the agenda. This is great. It’s good to see you so organized. I’m a computer scientist by training. I started chairing CS, then I was the dean of information, then I was vice provost for faculty and budget. Finally, in May of 2013 I became the provost. Does anyone know what the provost does? Michael?

   Benson explains.

   He’s absolutely right. I oversee the academic aspect of the university as well as the budget. I’m also the number two to the president. At Michigan and at 40% of universities, I oversee the budget for the academic enterprise. I don’t oversee the Hospital’s budget. The decision at Michigan to make the chief academic officer the chief budget officer was very intentional ~ 30 years ago. I’m not a business person by training but whenever we make a decision about money or space it’s always in the context of our academic mission. We’re always aligning what we need to do as a university with what we need to buy.

   There are three executive vice presidents at the U and 11 total executive officers. The executive vice presidents are the provost, the chief financial officer and the head of the medical system. The CFO is responsible for maintaining our resources. He oversees IT,
and facilities, investments, HR, and the like. The CFO is responsible for preserving and caring for what we have. I like to say that he brings it in and I’m responsible for spending it 😊

When I look to the future, I tend to think of the U having three priorities: First academic excellence. The vice president of research reports to the president but now also has a dotted line reporting line to me. We need to be concerned about research at both the undergraduate and graduate side. We need to do world class cutting edge scholarship and research. A second big piece is our commitment to social justice broadly and to diversity specifically this is a university that is deeply committed to diversity but we live in a state where we are legally banned from pursuing certain types of diversity. People ask why we still have racial tension at a University, the reason is that we’re in a society, we need to work on it. A lot of my time goes towards how we can become more equitable and diverse within the bounds of the law. The third big part of my job is the money and the finances. Making sure that each of our programs has the funding it needs to be excellent while at the same time grappling with the forces. We’re up against two really big forces. First is the disinvestment by the state. States across the country including Michigan have cut and cut and cut form higher education. On a per student basis, we’re getting less than 60% of what we used to get a decade ago per student. There are also broad economic factors that are driving up prices like in healthcare for example as compared to agriculture. It still takes us one professor to work with a group of students. We can’t mass produce. When you go to hear a string quartet, it still takes 2 man hours to play a 30 minute concert.

Anyway, those are the things that I worry about. What questions do you have?

**Phil:** As of January 2014, there were a number of provost committees that were charged with examining a lot of these things. Those reports are in and are available on the provosts’ website. (LINK). I encourage you all to take a look.

**Mike Hand:** In addition to helping with RSG, I’m also involved in the University’s IT council. One of the questions that we always come up against is how do we balance strategic vision initiative vs infrastructure initiatives. I imagine this exists beyond IT. What do you draw on to make these decisions?

**Provost:** This is a really challenging question! Those of us in leadership attempt to push ourselves to find ways to invest in innovation. It is really easy to let the stuff that just has to be done consume all of your money and time. There are increasing demands for compliance types of things. One of the things we ask the deans, and unit leaders to do is find 1.5% of their budget in lower priority activates that they’re willing to stop doing so they can invest in higher priorities. Sometimes they come back and say that everything they’re doing is their highest priorities. It’s a part of our budget discipline to see what you can stop doing to start new things. What’s the saying, a Woody Allen saying? Anyway, I think it is really important to make sure that every day you start by saying what’s new and exciting and how can be find the resources to do it.
Michael: Question on monorail / brt / north campus connection.

Martha: I don’t see that in the cards right now. I think there is a lot of interest in it! I spent my first 7 years on North Campus. There are some proposals on the table to do some building on North Campus. We do have a new president and he’s looking at the balance on what we spend on building and infrastructure vs what we spend on programs. We are very luck on this campus, granted not every building is gorgeous and I apologize now for anyone in the dental school or the pharmacy school those buildings are in need of renovation. He’s thinking about all of this and how we balance that. One challenge of putting restaurants on north campus is the question of the summer.

Michael: One way to help with that would be to have a bar or restaurant that serves alcohol given the graduate student, staff, and locals in the area.

Martha: An interesting idea. In the past, when we’ve looked at it but it’s hard to get folks. It’s a self sustaining loop

Michael: Health insurance

Martha: Not my wheelhouse but a good point.

Max Oleander: You mentioned that you’re the chief academic officer. What autonomy do deans or departments have?

Provost: I hate to be cynical, but at the end of the day it has to do with the budget. The deans have a lot of budget autonomy. We have an activity base budget. That means that every school or college gets their tuition model. Now there is an attribution model so if you’re an undergrad in engineering and you’re taking a math class, math will get some money. Grants that professors receive have two parts, one is the direct costs controlled by the professor and the indirect costs which go directly to the college. We also get some funds from the state appropriation. We also collect taxes from the units. We mix that with the state money and then use it to fund the organizations that don’t bring their own funds in such as the library. Deans can be extremely autonomous. Details of curriculum do run through their curriculum committees. Some decisions have to get university approval. For example, if a school wants to hire someone with tenure, it needs regent approval, as would creating a new degree. This model is a huge strength in a number of ways. When people ask what differentiates Michigan, I’d say its our breadth of excellence. We tell the deans, you run the best X school that you can! And there are very different ways to do this for different disciplines. What is challenging about this model is that it can be very fragmented. We can have five faculty working on the same thing and not know anything about each other.

Max: Thank you! Can you expand on the academic oversight role of the provost?

Provost: The curriculum is owned by the local faculty. That happens at the school or college level. Hiring decisions if they’re pre tenure are at the school or college level. If
someone is awarded tenure or if someone is being hired with tenure it needs to go through the Provost to the President and then to the Regents.

Bake: How about honor codes?

Provost: That’s at the school and college level.

Phil: I have a question about the academy. I had the chance to read the report about being a faculty member in the 21st century. It interested me because it said that some universities are having trouble keeping and retaining young faculty. What do you see as the challenges?

Provost: Being a faculty member is a great job. We love to complain, but there isn’t a better job. If you look at the list of places where we look to complete for faculty, it’s a great list. Its Harvard, Berkeley, Chicago, etc. That’s overall for the whole university. For public health it would be Johns Hopkins, etc. I just reported these numbers o the Board. In terms of percentage, there are two ways to look at it. First, how many times did someone try to steal our faculty and we won? And then there is also how many did we keep? On the latter question, 58% of the faculty that considered leaving for reasons other than retirement or not being granting tenure, 58% stayed. For those that we tried to keep it was overall close to 80%. Sometimes a faculty member gets a great offer and you don’t want to counter. We have great faculty members but not every faculty member. There are some reason that we don’t engage, for example, a spouses parents are sick, etc. Or someone wants to go work at Microsoft. Why do we loose people? Sometimes its money, its not often. Sometimes the privates offer better toys. Startup money in a minute big lab money. The biggest issue for faculty is dual career. Spouses need a job. I’ve lost people that I’ve tried to hire because the spouse or partner is an architect or lawyer. Detroit isn’t like Boston or New York. Its on the rise, but it isn’t there yet. One thing on startup packages. We offer big packages in Computer Science. It’s not a big deal. Look at other issues. Don’t make your decision on that basis.

Mayra: you mentioned at the beginning that by law the University isn’t allowed to do affirmative action on the base of Race. That shouldn’t stop us though.. what is the university doing with race relations on campus.

Provost: That isn’t an excuse, it’s a reality. Faculty though is a bit more complicated the law has a provision that any federal law trumps state law. And there is a federal law that says we have to practice affirmative action for faculty hiring. Here’s an example of how the explicitly hurts us. Many of the privates can go to certain schools and target students with scholarships. We have to go to schools that have both majority and minority schools. We are doing everything we can within the law. The law does not preclude us from targeting students that would increase our socio-economic diversity. Sometimes that aligns with race but not always. The law doesn’t preclude us from heavily recruiting from certain regions. Detroit, unfortunately, doesn’t have many students that are prepared to attend the U. But we do go to Chicago. We can’t give material benefit for the benefit of race, ethnicity, or gender. But we can send more recruiting people to those areas. We also
work on yield management as well. Number 3 on the numbers issue, we try to do more with Detroit. We’re also trying to do more on campus to improve the climate and sense of equity. All undergrads, freshmen, are required to go through a “Step it up” program. It teaches students to recognize and stop offensive actions.

There are some programs for faculty to teach in multidisciplinary settings. We’re starting a program to help faculty avoid implicit bias on hiring committees.

The president is going to be making a major speech on this in December. You should read the diversity report online.

**Phil** And within that, they are going to be charging a separate committee to deal with just faculty.

Martha you may want to invite in Rob Sellers, the Vice Provost of diversity and inclusion (title?) He used to be the chair of Psych and his research involves young African American men. You might want to have Rob come in.

V. **OFFICER REPORTS**

a. **President Phillip Saccone**

I’ve added Vice Provost Sellers to my list of guests for next term. I also encourage you to take a look at the reports on the Provost’s webpage. There are a few things that directly interact with grad students.

Thank you all for showing up and asking good questions. We have a meeting next week with Dean Weiss. She is someone to ask programmatic questions of for ALL graduate programs. She has been a great friend of RSG.

I’ve asked her to speak on some of the meetings she has attended recently at AAU and APLU. There has been a lot of focus on how do you get graduate education to be a focus at the level of the Provost, President, and regents. This is a national issue. I don’t know the cause but people seem to assume that graduate students have it together and they don’t need much attention. It’s a big barrier.

I thought that six weeks of open agenda time would be enough to land the president. It was not. So he will be joining us on February 11th. More on this later.

Two big things, we have our lunch with the deans event on Thursday and Friday on North Campus and Central Campus. I hate using this term, you are required to attend one of the two. I’m not going to say that I’m going to penalize you, but please do your service and go. Stefan, Malcolm and a lot of the other academic affairs people have done great work.
Next week we have a band coming and a party on Friday. I expect to see you all. Please come. It will be at the Blue Lep on Friday. Thanks to Abneris.

b. **Vice President Chuky Mbagwu**

In the insert of time I’ll keep it short as well. The communication apparatus is working on it. Newsletter will be coming out next week since we have a lot of events.

c. **Treasurer Michael Benson**

We currently have $28,054 in our account with 6 pending requests. The budgetary committee will be meeting tomorrow to adjudicate this.

VI. **COMMITTEE UPDATES**

a. **Academic Affairs Committee**

Stefan: Lunch with the deans be there. I move that we approve and receive the minutes. Seconded by Michael Benson Approved unanimously.

Chris: I had the pleasure of going to two recent CSG meetings as the author of the resolution. It was interesting to see how they ran things. The resolution that I helped to author passed 34 – 0 -2. This was a resolution to recommend changing the university’s nondiscrimination clause to include “Sexual Expression” this means that we have 42,000 students behind this initiative that we started in RSG.

Phil: We’re now going to the general council to make sure that things jive with him as well as title 9. We will then go to the provost and the president.

Chris: We’re also drafting a letter for grassroots support. Also, I now sit on the SACUA committee for an inclusive university. They waited to see what CSG did and now they’re moving forward. They’ve asked me to put a FAQ together. (Appointed by President Saccone)

b. **Budgetary Committee**

See Treasurers report

c. **Elections Committee**

Michael explains the election process and encourages people to run.

d. **Legislative Affairs Committee**

Minutes Michael, Chris. Approved with one abs
e. Student Life Committee

Apparently we have an event a week from Friday. You should all go! The main things that we’re working on as a committee is the survey that we’re going to be sending to the student body. We’re finalizing it now, and by that I mean starting. We’re going to continue that process at the SLC meeting next week. If anyone is interested in joining us, we’re going to be meeting after the board meeting. If you’re interested in participating prior to that, we can give you access to the Google doc that we’re using as a scratchpad.

Phil: This is important, this is how we’re going to get some new issues to look into as well.

Mike: Move that we receive and approve the minutes. Seconded by Nate. Approved unanimously.

i. Community Outreach & Social Action subcommittee

VII. OPEN DISCUSSION

Having attended some of the CSG meetings. They have a very active announcements and matters arising section of their agenda where they go around the table where anyone can say what they want. It might be a good practice to consider. There is a lot of information that is put out.

Phil: I think that’s a good idea, please treat open discussion like that.

Kyle: Move to adjourn. Seconded by Hand.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT at 8:08pm.