

MSCF Minute



An electronic publication of the Minnesota State College Faculty

Be It Resolved

by Kevin Lindstrom, MSCF President

Every year at the MSCF Delegate Assembly delegates debate and act on proposed [resolutions](#) designed to guide the union. If you've been doing this a long time like I have, your first thought when our resolutions are mentioned may be something about talking like a pirate. While we had a lot of fun with that topic over the years, we have also dealt with some very substantive matters.

This past spring our delegates passed a number of meaningful resolutions. Included among them was one regarding our collective support for small Greater Minnesota colleges, given the unique pressures they face. Here is the exact resolution:

the Minnesota State College Faculty (MSCF) values and supports colleges and campuses of Minnesota State, regardless of size or financial resources, as integral parts of the system; furthermore, we believe the system should ensure all campuses the funding necessary to operate completely and consistently.

The spirit of this resolution stands in direct contradiction to relatively recent Board of Trustees action regarding capital bonding project debt service in the system. As you

may already know, the system bears one-third of the debt service on all capital bonding projects. Prior to the recent change, the cost of half of that one-third was paid by the system collectively, while the other half was paid by the institution where the project resides. Because the collective system money was essentially subtracted from the allocation framework, each institution's contribution toward the collective payment was based largely on its size. On the premise that a 20,000 square foot building costs the same at a small institution as it does at a large one, the old model provided collective support for small institutions when pursuing a bonding project. In short, the big (and more financially able) institutions helped the small ones.

The Board of Trustees recent action eliminated the collective portion of the debt service and moved the full cost of the one-third to the institution where the project resides. As I voiced opposition to this move, I pointed out that we were moving from a "we're all in this together" approach to a "you're on your own" one. Again, that is in direct contradiction to our resolution.

The effect of this move is vividly illustrated by the system's 2018 Capital Program Recommendation, which is found in the [June Board of Trustees packet](#). The narrative regarding the debt service change is found on page 91 (page 28 of the Finance and Facilities Committee section) of the packet and the 2018 project list is on page 95 (page 32 of Finance and Facilities). As the narrative indicates, the change is effective for projects that are newly proposed for 2018. Those projects that were "in the hopper," but not funded, in years past are serviced under the old model.

Here is the list, in order:

1. Systemwide (HEAPR)
2. Bemidji State University
3. Rochester Community and Technical College
4. MSU, Mankato
5. Anoka Ramsey Community College
6. Century College
7. Normandale Community College
8. MSU, Moorhead
9. Inver Hills Community College
10. Riverland Community College
11. MCTC, North Hennepin, and Normandale

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12. Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College
13. St Paul College
14. Northland Community and Technical College
15. Vermilion Community College
16. Central Lakes College

As the Board packet narrative indicates, those projects up to #11 will service debt under the old model, while projects #12 and below will service debt under the new model. In other words, RCTC, ARCC, Normandale, Inver Hills, etc. will get help servicing their debt, while Fond du Lac, Northland, and Vermilion, etc. will be on their own. Is anyone else concerned that all the big schools are getting collective help while all the small schools aren't? Our resolution suggests we should all be very concerned.

CIVIC SUMMIT

LeadMN in partnership with The Democracy Commitment is hosting a free one-day summit for faculty and staff. The summit will provide opportunities to learn about ways that you can integrate civics learning across curriculum.

October 20, 2017
9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Hilton Mall of America
Riverside Room

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