



## **Government Relations Advisory Committee Minutes**

Minutes of December 15, 2021

12:00pm-1:00pm

Zoom

Circulated:

Approved:

Present: Larry Gant (Chair), Chris Kolb (VP for Government Relations), Michael Atzmon (SACUA Liaison), Marisa Conte, Daniil Manaenkov, Renee Nguyen, Michael Thompson, Ruth Person, Nell Dority, Andrea Lewis, Elizabeth Devlin

Absent: Justin Hodge, Erin Kahle, Okeoma Mmeje, Megan Tompkins-Stange, Jacob Pearlman, Stilyana Mechkova

12:01: Chair Gant called the meeting to order and gave an overview of the agenda. The minutes from the October and November meeting were approved.

### **Topic 1: Government Relations Updates**

VP Kolb shared with the committee that the East Medical Center Bridge replacement conversation between the university and the city are moving forward. He indicated that impacting students locally is the early leasing ordinance. Qualitative examples have been given that people feel that they are being pressured or landlords aren't adhering to the new ordinance. The students feel this is an issue so the university has encouraged them to reach out to Student Legal Services that can provide guidance, as students will need to file a complaint with the city.

The feminine product ordinance has gone into effect, and this now requires products in bathrooms. The university does not have to adhere to any city ordinance because it has its own constitutional autonomy. The university had been running a pilot on the issue, but most of the gathering of data for cost evaluation occurred during the pandemic when students were not present. The university will continue to gather data as students have returned.

VP Kolb shared that they are monitoring the progress of Build Back Better that was originally planned for a vote in the fall, and that will be done before Congress breaks for the year.

He indicated another campus issue is that anti-China sentiment is in Washington D.C., regarding research security issues and how this impacts U-M Chinese students, staff, and researchers.

VP Kolb shared that there were issues regarding spending federal dollars as well as the excess state general fund dollars. They have been bringing more legislators to campus to give them a different perspective of the university and the role it could play in economic development.

### **Topic 2: COVID Policies and Guidelines**



- To what extent do UM Covid policies fall under government relations?  
VP Kolb shared that Government Relations does not set COVID policies and guidelines. There are executive officers who are responsible for interpreting, implementing, and ensuring policies are followed. VP Kolb gave a few examples of who is responsible such as the Office of the General Counsel, the provost and Michigan Medicine. Government Relations provides support and information intelligence that they may have from both state and federal guidance.
- What is the interaction between CDC/FDA/MDHHS guidance/advice, what is the university doing, and what is the university likely to do next?  
VP Kolb indicated that there have been several meetings especially with state officials who were empowered by the federal government to handle the public health issue. The frequency of meetings were varied from daily, weekly, or bi-weekly meetings with various state officials. This included bi-weekly calls with the governor's office, Washtenaw County, elected officials, and entities
- What are the risks of deviating from CDC guidelines?  
VP Kolb stated that the university has tried to follow and use CDC guidance in making their decisions and they will continue to do so with internal U-M public health professionals. The university public health and medical experts works very closely with the county and with the state to create the best policies possible. There is an ability to be flexible on an ongoing basis as needed.

### **Topic 3: Future GRAC Topics/Guests**

The committee discussed the following suggested future topics:

- Considering current events, has U-M recently revisited anything related to campus-community violence at the local and state level?
  - VP Kolb shared that there have been some initial conversations with the state on potential recommendations on school safety from the Institute for Firearm Injury Prevention. DPSS is also in communications local area law enforcement and school systems and others that do joint training. He suggested inviting either the Institute for Firearm Injury Prevention or DPSS to a future meeting for a targeted discussion on this topic.
- The political response to China.
  - VP Kolb suggested that the committee create a prioritized list of topics or questions relating to this discussion topic. His team will then reach out to the appropriate individuals to invite them to a future meeting to address those questions.

Chair Gant thanked the committee for their engagement and encouraged members to reach out with any additional topics or guest speakers.

12:57pm: The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Devlin  
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