

**COGS General Assembly Agenda Minutes**  
**Thursday, October 18<sup>th</sup> 2007**  
**President's Room, Coffman Union @ 5-7pm**

5:00– 5:15 Dinner (Burrito Loco)

**1. Approve September GA Minutes**

- Meeting minutes were formerly approved with no oppositions

**2. P&R Councils and Senate**

- Seats to be filled:
  - University Senate: Mandy Stahre volunteered to be a senator
  - Health Sciences P&R: Starr Sage volunteered, still need (1)
  - Social Sciences P&R: Tom Johnson and Monica Moore volunteered, still need (1)
  - Physical Sciences P&R: Vladimyr Gidzak and Benny Xin volunteered, still need (1)
  - Biological Sciences P&R: Brian Fewell and Dare Odumade volunteered, still need (1)
  - **Still need (1) Language, Literature, and Arts P&R volunteer**
  - Please spread the word around you department, we really need to represent COGS on the P&R Councils

**3. Officer reports**

- Status of committee positions (Carol Powers, COGS President, in place of Bryan Gordon, Executive VP, who was sick)
  - UDS Advisory Committee: Tom Johnson volunteered
  - GA Health Insurance Committee: Starr Sage volunteered
  - Still need IT Library Committee member (1) – this person must be in a program within the Institute of Technology

**4. Resolution**

- GAPSA Central Corridor Resolution (Geoff Hart, Biological Sciences P&R Chair)  
“Support for the Central Corridor Light Rail Line to go Through a Tunnel on Campus” (*see below*)
  - Voted on resolution, majority passed, 1 abstention, 0 nays

**5. Issues for Discussion**

- Definition of GAPSA membership (Carol Powers, COGS President)
  - Proposed change to the GAPSA Constitution reads that membership is defined by payment of the GAPSA fee
  - After much discussion, it seems this issue has great interest and COGS reps are encouraged to participate in further discussion at the next GAPSA meeting in November (*see GAPSA and COGS Proposals on the COGS website*)

- Changes in TA Responsibilities in CLA ( Eli Meyerhoff, Social Sciences P&R Chair)
  - General discussion and interest in finding out more about TA related policies across colleges University wide, possible dept.-specific surveys or added piece to the next COGS survey to improve these sort of questions
- Technology availability (Carol Powers, COGS President)
  - Ask around your dept. to see if wireless and computer lab access are issues, also will be addressed in next COGS survey
- Film/Social Committee (Geoff Hart, Biological Sciences P&R Chair)
  - Interested reps are encouraged to sign-up to create this new committee to develop a film series
- TA resources and Public Safety (Matt Kaplan, VP Exec for External Relations)
  - Grad instructors often feel under-prepared to teach, online forum was suggested and may be brought up again in the near future
  - President Bruininks recently hired new security officers on campus
  - In discussion “neighborhood watch” type of group/organization was proposed
- Campus-wide smoking ban possibility (Elissa Hansen, Student health advisory committee)
  - Campus-wide smoking ban generally opposed with many abstentions. Questions such as civil rights came up, may need to revisit this issue again in the near future

# RESOLUTION

## *Council of Graduate Students – University of Minnesota*

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Date: September 26<sup>th</sup>, 2007

Author: Kristen Denzer, GAPSAs President; Bree Richards, GAPSAs Vice President for Student Affairs; Kristi Kremers, GAPSAs At-Large Director; Geoff Hart, COGS Senator

Topic: Support for the Central Corridor Light Rail Line to go Through a Tunnel on Campus

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**WHEREAS**, the Central Corridor Light Rail Line will be going through the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities Campus on Washington Avenue; and

**WHEREAS**, a considerable percentage of the ridership on the Central Corridor Line will be University of Minnesota students, employees, and visitors; and

**WHEREAS**, according to the Federal Railroad Administration, "deaths in grade crossing accidents are the second-leading category of deaths associated with railroading"<sup>1</sup> and "elimination of at-grade crossings...offers the greatest long-term promise for optimizing the safety and efficiency of the two modes of transportation"<sup>2</sup> (trains and motor vehicles); and

**WHEREAS**, the benefits of a tunnel appreciably outweigh the added upfront material costs; and

**WHEREAS**, a tunnel under Washington Avenue for the Central Corridor cannot be added once the line is completed without significant cost and construction; therefore

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Council of Graduate Students supports the plan for the Central Corridor Light Rail Line to go through campus via an underground tunnel on Washington Avenue.

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Railroad Administration, *Federal Railroad Administration Action Plan for Addressing Critical Railroad Safety Issues*, 16 May 2005, p. 9, <[http://www.fra.dot.gov/downloads/safety/action\\_plan\\_final\\_051605.pdf](http://www.fra.dot.gov/downloads/safety/action_plan_final_051605.pdf)> (10 September 2007).

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Railroad Administration. Federal Railroad Safety Accountability and Improvement Act (proposed), p. 10, <<http://www.fra.dot.gov/Downloads/Counsel/legislation/2007RailSafetyBill.pdf>> (10 September 2007).