

SEPTEMBER 18, 2007 MINUTES

At a meeting of the Advisory Committee on Socially Responsible Investing, held on Tuesday, September 18, 2007, in the Burden Room, 206 Low Library, the following members participated:

Geoffrey Heal, Faculty (Chair)	Richard Levine, Alumnus
Mary Ellen Bianco, Alumna	Shearwood McClelland, Alumnus
Anna Couturier, Student	Jack McGourty, Faculty
Burton Edelstein, Faculty	Shahid Naeem, Faculty
Alex Feerst, Student	Sidney Small, Student
Peggy Kauh, Alumna	Caroline Yao, Student

The meeting was called to order at 6:15 p.m. The Chair led a round of introductions for new and returning members.

The Chair discussed the background of the Committee and what is expected of its members. He explained that there are basically two functions of the Committee. The first is to address ad hoc issues that arise when someone within the Columbia Community suggests that Columbia is holding shares in a company that is inappropriate for us to be holding shares in. The second is to vote the social issue shareholder proxies that arise at the annual meetings of the public companies Columbia holds in its portfolio.

Call to Order and  
Introductions  
Summary of the Committee's  
Function and Structure

The Chair addressed the overall structure of the year, noting that during the fall the Committee takes time to gather information and brief itself on the issues that are likely to be hot topics during proxy season, as well as to deal with any ad hoc issues that arise, and during the spring the Committee focuses on voting shareholder proxies. The Chair noted that this fall the Committee would also undertake a process to monitor the Sudan divestment list.

The Chair spoke briefly about the ad hoc issues that had faced the Committee in the past, namely divestment from Sudan two years ago and the Chevron issue last year.

The Chair took a moment to address the Sudan divestment policy, how it came about through a student petition brought before the Committee, and the subsequent monitoring process now required. He noted that the Committee recommended divestment from companies meeting very specific criteria, namely foreign companies operating in Sudan that

Sudan Divestment Monitoring  
Process

provide substantial revenue to the Sudanese government. He emphasized that the Committee deliberated carefully to set the principles and then instituted a process by which to apply those principles to companies trading in Sudan. This consisted of setting up a subcommittee to review Columbia's investments, as well as to review the lists of companies doing business in Sudan. The subcommittee then drew up a list of companies Columbia should not invest in. It was determined that each year going forward that list would be reviewed for accuracy.

The Chair explained in some detail what goes into the monitoring process and asked for volunteers to serve on this year's Sudan Divestment Monitoring Subcommittee. He named its three members; two returning and one new member.

The Chair explained that the Annual Agenda would have to be set and presented to the University Senate on December 13, 2007. He explained that this would entail the Committee deciding on what issues it will attempt to address throughout the year in addition to the proxy review. This item will be tabled until later in the semester when the Committee has a clearer picture of the issues it will face.

The Chair explained that members have previously found it helpful to bring in guest experts from the Columbia community and the outside to address the Committee on topics that members are not familiar with in order to aid in the evaluation of issues they will face during proxy season. Members felt that it would be useful to have someone from a shareholder activist group come in to explain where proxy statements come from and what the organization hopes to accomplish by filing them. Other areas of interest were animal welfare issues and genetically modified organisms. One member also raised the issue of sub-prime lending and it was decided that Committee members could possibly do a presentation on this for other members closer to proxy season.

A student member of the Committee spoke on the proposal brought before the Committee by a student group to host a conference on the Columbia Campus to coordinate amongst colleges and universities that have committees, as well as to encourage those that do not have committees to develop them. Students are looking for the Committee to support or be affiliated with the conference in some way. The Committee has requested further information before agreeing to any sort of involvement.

The Investment Management Company has raised concerns about the number of companies screened for tobacco involvement and about the lack of a written policy to follow regarding tobacco screening. They have asked that the Committee review the practice as it has been and institute a formal screening policy. The Committee has unanimously agreed that the policy should filter out manufacturers, but not distributors or suppliers of equipment or periphery items. The next step will be to evaluate the list of companies that would result from applying the screen in this manner.

The Committee received a proposal from a student group to divest from companies which supply munitions or contracting services for the war in

Annual Agenda

Guest Speakers

New Business: Conference

New Business: Tobacco  
Screening Policy

New Business: Iraq  
Divestment Proposal

Iraq and whose profits depend substantially on the continuation of the war. The proposal was distributed to Committee members and it will be discussed at the next meeting.

The Committee approved the proposed 2006-2007 Calendar. The remaining meetings for the fall will occur on Tuesdays October 16, 2007, December 4, 2007 and December 11, 2007. The annual Town Hall will take place on Tuesday, November 13, 2007, and the Chair will address the Senate on Friday, December 13, 2007.

Calendar

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

**Katie Sherwin**  
Senior Manager, SRI