

**Southern Oregon University Board of Trustees
Finance Committee Meeting**

**For Meeting Held on Monday June 22, 2015
2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.**

DeBoer Boardroom, Hannon Library, 3rd Floor, #303

MINUTES

Dennis Slattery called the meeting to order shortly after 2:00 p.m. Paul Nicholson arrived a few minutes late; upon his arrival, he chaired the meeting.

Introductions and Roll Call

Present:

Paul Nicholson (arrived at 2:17)
Lyn Hennion
Jeremy Nootenboom
April Sevcik
Dennis Slattery

Absent:

Les AuCoin
Steve Vincent

Guests:

Craig Morris, Vice President for Finance and Administration
Mark Denney, Associate Vice President for Budget and Planning
Steve Larvick, Director of Business Services
Roy Saigo, SOU President
Sue Walsh, Provost
Jason Catz, Associate General Counsel
Ryan Brown, Head of Community and Media Relations, Marketing and Public Relations
Shane Hunter, Senior Financial Management Analyst
Kathy Spain, Schneider Children's Center
Amanda Bans, Adjunct Instructor
Larry Shrewsbury, SOU Faculty Senate
Dave Coburn, Oregon Student Association
Kathy Park, Administrative Assistant

Public Comment

Kathy Spain, the interim director of the Schneider Children's Center, wanted to see how the SOU Board's conversation went regarding the center and to be there in support of the center.

Amanda Bans, an adjunct faculty member, has been involved in organizing conversations regarding the Schneider Children's Center and was there to provide any additional information if needed.

May 28, 2015 Minutes

There were no changes or corrections to the minutes from the May 28 meeting. April Sevcik made a motion to approve the minutes. Lyn Hennion seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Budget Forecast

Steve Larvick presented the budget forecast, indicating there will still be some substantial changes following the OUS breakout.

Steve covered the Education and General figures, highlighting the fact that revenue is roughly in line with what was reported in the previous quarter. Personnel costs are still in line with last quarter's figures. There is a relatively minimal increase in Supplies and Services spending.

The \$750,000 figure on the transfer line is from OUS.

In response to a question from April Sevcik, Steve clarified that the figures shown were where SOU was expected to be through June. SOU is doing better than what was budgeted.

Jeremy Nootenboom asked about the 8.1% fund balance figure and how the figure would differ if they went back to old accounting principles. Craig Morris stated the percentage would be a couple of points higher. Dennis Slattery explained that they must comply with standard accounting principles and cannot pick and choose between differing methods of reporting certain expenditures.

Steve then covered Auxiliary Enterprises, which includes the North Campus Village although technically it is not an auxiliary. Revenues are still holding in line with prior estimates.

The enrollment figure includes student incidental fees and health center fees.

Sales and Services includes parking and other fees but the lion's share is housing revenues, excluding food service. The revenues from Sales and Services are adjusted down slightly from prior projections.

Steve addressed Service Centers and Designated Operations funds. Revenues are largely in line with March projections. Jefferson Public Radio (JPR) is a big factor in Sales and Services. The Sales and Services figures are down, largely in part due to internal banking changes.

Transfers out are slightly down. This is partly due to additional resources being transferred into the designated operations area and the employment of peak students.

The ending fund balance of approximately 10% is pretty much in line with where we were in prior years.

Craig Morris stated that SOU was currently in period 12 of the budget cycle. Steve will open period 14 (there is no period 13) and close it around July 23 or 24. Then we will know the Education and General Fund balance and other closing fund balances. There are unusual fund adjustments involved that we have never dealt with before. It is all good news at the moment.

Dennis Slattery recommended that if the SOU Board was going to need to refer to numbers from the last report, it would be good to include the numbers in a column on the charts or provide a copy of the last report.

Craig Morris said the 10.2% figure does not get us off the hook. The retrenchment plan is based on the Education and General Fund balance. We are well ahead of targets and are going in the right direction.

Budget Update

Mark Denney provided the budget update. He gave a preliminary expenditure budget at the last committee meeting and preliminary revenue at the meeting before that. They will adjust the revenue figures based on the spring term revenues and will have them for the July meeting.

Craig Morris stated that they do not have the proposed budget yet. Mark's office is behind because of an unanticipated long-term employee absence.

The Supplies and Services figures are significantly higher than forecasted during retrenchment. They are currently going through each major division's figures and digging into the variances and costs to come up with smaller numbers and/or explanations. After they finish that, they will focus on personnel costs, which are much more in line with the retrenchment plan.

Paul Nicholson asked Mark, at the next meeting, to walk the SOU Board through his thinking regarding the figures in relation to the retrenchment plan. Mark said he will go through the major budget areas and not SOU as a whole, addressing assumptions in the retrenchment plan and what has happened in the preceding three years that has gotten us to a slightly different point.

Schneider Children's Center

Mark Denney provided an update on the funding and future operation of Schneider Children's Center.

In October 2013, there was a \$1 million negative in the student reserve. In February 2014, the student fee committee recommended ending their support of Schneider Children's Center. However, they instead instituted a direct child care subsidy that students could use at any child care center. In March 2014, President Saigo directed Mark to identify a self-sustaining model and Mark presented a plan which included raised rates.

In December 2014, the plan was not working. They lost half of their enrollment of the preschool children. The center needs those children to balance the costs associated with the infant/toddler room. In April 2015, President Saigo directed the closure of Schneider Children's Center.

In May 2015, there were two events that caused SOU to reevaluate the closure decision: the involvement of Oregon Child Development Coalition (OCDC) and SOU added a \$13 incidental fee per term for each student. OCDC has a federal grant to expand the early head start program, which they do by buying slots in existing centers. Some SOU students will qualify for these slots.

The \$13 fee, starting in FY16-17, will generate approximately \$170,000. Mark compared the mandatory fees SOU charges with fees imposed by other universities. SOU was the second lowest in the state in FY14-15, will be the third highest in the state in FY15-16 and may be pushed to the top in FY16-17.

Schneider Children's Center has 16 slots for infants/toddlers and 80 slots (divided into two rooms of 40) for preschoolers age 3-5. They have reorganized the structure to increase the number of infant/toddler slots and deleted one of the preschool rooms, which was not filled to capacity. This allows more slots to sell to OCDC.

Dennis Slattery asked if there was a retention issue involved. Mark stated that they hope students will be happy with the services provided to infants/toddlers and will continue to bring their children to the center as preschoolers. Kathy Spain said those children who attend the center as infants/toddlers do tend to stay as preschoolers.

Lyn Hennion commented on the lack of available slots and options in the local community, especially for infants/toddlers. Mark addressed this, stating that, even though a center may have capacity, the available slots may not coincide with the hours SOU students need or want. Schneider Children's Center gives priority to students then to faculty and staff and any remaining slots can go to community members.

Lyn Hennion questioned why SOU gives students a subsidy that they can use elsewhere. Mark said SOU can revisit that issue since the students now do want to support the center. However, they do not want to complicate use of the subsidy by adding restrictions because the subsidy is already difficult to administer.

There are two different subsidies: one paid directly to the students (\$400 per month) and one strictly for the support of the Schneider Children's Center.

Mark then discussed the OCDC process. Applicants apply for eligibility in the state program. The state pays a flat amount and the parents pay the balance. For qualified parents, OCDC pays the parents' share, the part not covered by the state. Schneider Children's Center will have all parents apply for the state program. The center's costs are a little higher than the OCDC allowable amount so they adjusted some of the operating expenses (e.g., rent paid and the director's salary) to bring the costs down for the OCDC-funded slots.

The Early Head Start section at the center will be open 12 months a year and will be open 10 hours per day. The SOU section will be open 9 months and will have mostly morning slots.

Mark discussed the salary of the center's director. It is not \$23,000, as shown on the slide, because 60% of the director's salary is carried by SOU's general fund. The center has a cook

who works four hours a day. USDA reimburses 100% of the costs for food. A student also works four hours a day. There is a teacher's assistant who works .64, just over half time.

Under the current structure, head teachers are not members of the bargaining unit but the teachers are. This is being restructured so head teachers become teachers, with a slight decrease in pay, and the teachers become teacher assistants, with no real change in their salaries. All of them would then be members of the bargaining unit. Paul Nicholson asked if there might be recruitment issues related to these changes and Mark replied that he was not sure.

The collective bargaining agreement dictates how we bring employees back and how we compensate them.

OPE, which includes medical, retirement and other expenses, is about 25% of the total expense. The percentage is high because salaries are relatively low but the medical coverage is a fixed rate. The salaries of the center's employees are about equal to their benefits.

During FY14-15, Schneider Children's Center lost \$170,000. It will lose about \$100,000 next year. However, if the center is at maximum capacity, there will be a \$92,000 surplus per year, which will be used to pay its debt to SOU within a five year window.

Several factors have kept the center from reaching capacity. If they reach the point of full capacity and need to expand, that would require capital improvements. One complicating factor is the existence of the community center located in Schneider Children's Center. It actually belongs to the SOU housing section but the Schneider Children's Center uses it during the day.

Craig Morris stated that they are happy to be at a place where they can reopen the center but there are risks the SOU Board should know about.

- (1) The state subsidy may not materialize. It is an every year funding issue, not a long-term grant.
 - (2) There may not be a student subsidy next year. If so, they would have a \$300,000 accumulated debt.
 - (3) There would be an increase in student incidental fees and it is assumed the SOU Board will approve the increase when the issue arises next spring.
 - (4) It is assumed the contract between OCDC will be successfully negotiated. It is a year-to-year contract, not a 5-year contract as initially anticipated.
 - (5) Occupancy numbers may not be hit. The SOU Board has before it a best case scenario.
- Despite these risks, Craig still recommends going forward with the plan and see what happens.

Lyn Hennion pointed out some of the positive aspects of the proposal for operating the center.

- (1) Having Schneider Children's Center, with its good reputation, will help SOU's enrollment and retention.
- (2) There is nation-wide recognition of the impact the first 1,000 days of a child's life has on cognitive development.
- (3) Employee-related day care is very dear to the Speaker of the House and she will do everything she can to make sure money is available to have employee-related day care.
- (4) There are other grants out there that may be available.

Paul Nicholson said the SOU Board does not have to take any action to go forward with the plan. It is actually President Saigo's decision whether to reopen the center, that it is within his scope of authority.

Dennis Slattery asked about the status of the center's employees. Mark stated that they have received layoff notices and were given the option to work through June 30. Some employees chose that option while others did not. Craig Morris stated that if the center's employees were brought back, SOU would have to negotiate a new contract and work with the union.

April Sevcik commented on the child care costs at the center being so high compared to other child care opportunities in the local community. Mark said we are paying for quality care and a range of employee benefits. Amanda Bans reiterated Mark's point, stating that her son attended the center and she thought the quality of the services provided was very high compared to other locations.

Paul Nicholson said the motion is that Craig will continue to negotiate the contract and ultimately it is President Saigo's decision what to do with Schneider Children's Center. Craig will keep the committee informed. Dennis Slattery asked whether the SOU Board has a decision to make or whether it can even make a decision. Jason Catz stated that the SOU Board can be involved in the decision making process if it desires.

Craig said that he can sign the contract since it is less than \$500,000. He thought it was going to be a 5-year contract and would have to go before the SOU Board for approval. However, it is going to be a 1-year contract and will not have to go before the SOU Board. Regardless, even though the contract is below the threshold, the SOU Board can still act on the contract if it wishes.

Lyn Hennion asked President Saigo what he thought about the future operations of the center. President Saigo said there were so many sources of influence and he cannot say whether we should go through with it or not. He is concerned about making a decision before having everything that fits into this collage.

Ryan Brown stated SOU and OCDC will issue a joint press release once a decision is finalized.

With the SOU Board members' concurrence, Paul Nicholson said the SOU Board is supportive of Craig continuing to explore this and negotiate the contract, with President Saigo making the ultimate decision.

Finance and Administration Office Update

Craig Morris thought it would be beneficial to update the SOU Board at each committee meeting on what his office is doing. Last week, he was in Portland working with other Technical and Regional University (TRU) Finance and Administration Vice Presidents and with legal counsel. They finalized documents to change the universities' banking relationships so the universities can have their own independent banking accounts.

They have had a bond sale for the recreation center. And SOU has received funding for the theater project and the rest of McNeal.

This is the last year that our state allocation will be funded through the Resource Allocation Model. As part of that, SOU will settle up and will see a \$102,000 gain.

Craig and Jason Catz had a conversation with US Bank about opening a \$5 million line of credit for SOU. This would be a new procedure for SOU.

An interesting concept has been suggested to include space for JPR in the theater remodeling project. The JPR Foundation will come up with \$1.5 million in cash (not pledges) to build the addition and will have to borrow the remaining \$1 million.

At the meeting of the State Board of Higher Education, SOU's tuition was approved.

The first ROAR event has been held, this one for transfer students. Comparing last year's figures with this year's figures for the same point in time, enrollment is up 7%.

Sue Walsh provided an update on the newly-hired SOU Board Secretary. There were four good candidates, two being outstanding. The selection committee sent a summary of the candidates to President Saigo and he offered the position to Sabrina Prud'homme. She accepted the position and will start on July 1.

SOU has purchased software for the SOU Board which will automate the exchange of information. There will be training on the software for SOU Board members on July 16.

Les AuCoin had requested the Board coordinate committee meetings with Board meetings. The Board meets on the third Friday of each quarter. Craig recommended that, starting in July, the Finance Committee will meet on the third Thursday of each month from 4:00-6:00 pm. The SOU Board concurred.

Other

The next meeting is on July 16 at 4:00 p.m. in the SOU Hannon Library DeBoer Room.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:59 pm.