

## **Finance and Operations**

### **Division-wide meetings May 6 and 7, 2008**

Three one-hour meetings were held at which about 210 attended in total.

Doug True, Senior Vice President and Treasurer, welcomed all those in attendance and thanked them for attending.

#### **Current Events**

True reported that he had just attended the May Board of Regents meeting in Cedar Falls. The Board has good leadership, and the University is being supported well by the Governor and Legislature. He encouraged staff to attend a portion of a Regents meeting when it's on our campus or browse the Board of Regents website <http://www2.state.ia.us/regents/> for agendas and minutes of meetings. The next Board meeting will be June 11-12 on the Iowa State University campus.

The UI Foundation Board meeting was held last week as well. The Foundation Board not only assists the Foundation in raising money, but they are loyal in their support of the University across the country and around the world. This year Lynette Marshall, President of the UI Foundation, invited Tom Brokaw (former NBC news anchor and UI student) to campus. True gave a sampling of Brokaw's speech in which he compared and contrasted the harsh economic realities today to the political and economic uncertainties between 1968 and 1974. The Viet Nam War was at its peak in 1968, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Robert Kennedy were assassinated. At the end of 1968 Apollo 8 circled the moon and gave the first photographs of the earth from outer space. The point was that as bad as time can seem, we need to stay focused and keep moving forward no matter what.

There are many capital projects on the horizon. The planned addition to Carver-Hawkeye Arena will be taken to the June Board meeting, the Campus Recreation and Wellness Center at the corner of Burlington and Madison is now visibly rising, several projects on the Oakdale Campus are underway (University Hygienic Lab, Data Center, utilities), and UI Hospitals and Clinics is planning a massive expansion in facilities. The University is also purchasing St. Thomas More church. Possession won't occur for two years.

#### **Budget**

The budget letter just went out May 5 to deans and departmental executive officers. Budgets have to be done by early June. Salary budgets are submitted to the Board of Regents in June and operational budgets will be approved in August. Every year the Board of Regents mandates a 1% reallocation of resources. The effective reallocation, however, is 1.2% since some units are exempted from reallocation, such

as student financial aid, library acquisitions, and utilities. The reallocations are becoming more difficult each year. For the division of Finance and Operations that amount is \$670,000. The reallocated dollars help fund salary policy and benefits.

### **Salaries**

Funds equal to 4% of non-union P & S staff salaries plus fringe benefit costs will be allocated to the general education fund supported budgetary units. The salary increments to individual P & S staff should be distributed on the basis of performance.

### **Smoke-Free Air Act**

The Governor signed into law the Smoke-Free Air Act which goes into effect July 1, 2008 and bans smoking in or on public places – indoor and outdoor. Judie Hermsen at one session and Joni Troester at the other two sessions explained the current ambiguities of this law. Joni and Jonathan Carlson, Senior Associate to the President, are co-leading the implementation of the smoking ban. The current signage on campus will have to be replaced. Clearer boundaries for the campus will need to be communicated so that smokers will know where smoking is banned, and enforcement issues need clarity. A campus-wide mass email went out May 5 providing most of the information available at that time. The implementation committee will communicate with the campus as new information is learned.

For those who want assistance with smoking cessation, call UI Wellness at 353-2973 or go to this website <http://www.uiowa.edu/homepage/smoking/education-draft.html>

### **Threat Assessment**

Teresa Kulper, Assistant Director, Human Resources described recent actions being taken in assessing potential violent behavior on campus. In the past students have been assessed through student health and the VP for Student Services office; faculty, through the Provost's office; and staff through Behavior Risk Management in Human Resources. There is now a concerted effort to communicate among the various offices since sometimes students are employees and employees are students. The need has been identified to have a coordinated response to those in need of assistance. More training and coaching will be done on campus. Two threat assessment managers will be hired – one with a police background, and one with a mental health background – who will develop procedures and training. The core threat assessment team will include representatives from each of the offices above plus Public Safety, University Counseling Services, University Housing staff, UIHC Safety and Security, and a faculty advisor from the College of Public Health, Dr. Corinne Peek-Asa.

## **Public Safety**

Chuck Green, Assistant Vice President and Director, Public Safety gave an update on the Hawk Alert system. ITS and public safety keep learning new wrinkles of the system each time it is used. Connect Ed is the vendor the University uses to send Hawk Alert messages through voice, text, and email. The Iowa City schools use the same vendor. During the last tornado warning in April sending messages out to the Iowa City Schools and the University community put a tremendous load on the system. That's why some messages weren't received in a timely manner. The Hawk Alert reverse messaging system will be used only for the initial tornado warning. We will not use the Hawk Alert system to announce the tornado warning has been allowed to expire.

The outdoor warning system and tornado sirens will continue to be used. Like the county/city sirens, the UI outdoor warning system will be activated every time a tornado is spotted in the county. The sirens will sound for three minutes and shut off. If another tornado is spotted in the county, they will sound for another three minutes and repeat with additional sightings. When the National Weather Service has allowed the warning to expire for the county, the public announcement (PA) portion of the outdoor warning system will be used to announce the tornado warning has expired.

NITE Ride is being expanded to cover an academic route Sunday through Thursday for women who call from a UI building or parking lot late at night and need a ride to their residence, UI building or parking lot within the boundaries of the program. Additional funding has been provided by student government and the Parents Association. NITE Ride continues on Friday and Saturday nights as well.

## **Sustainability**

True provided information about the President's recent announcement on forming a Sustainability Steering Group, an office of Sustainability in Facilities Management, and a broad-based Advisory Committee on Sustainability that will include faculty, staff, and students. Governor Chet Culver has also instituted a Green Government Initiative – Executive Order Six – that provides for clean energy, environmental protection and resource conservation. Academically, the President announced the addition of five new interdisciplinary, tenure-track faculty positions and a faculty-led task force to focus on sustainability in the academic mission. The University has also become a member of the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education.

## **Benefits**

There have been two forums – one for faculty and one for staff – to hear discussions on pending changes in calendar 2009 regarding benefits. True said the case for change in benefits is that the costs are rising at an unsustainable rate. If costs aren't

contained, it could inhibit our ability to pay competitive salaries. It is not a matter of spending less on benefits. The University will spend more on benefits next year than this year. The Funded Retirement and Insurance Committee whose members are faculty and staff have worked for months with administrators to develop a workable plan going forward. A proposed plan will be presented to the President and Vice Presidents in the near future.

### **Questions from the Audience**

Q: What is your opinion on allowing F&O employees the option to work from home (telecommute) once a week?

True: Everything is on the table. Some jobs just can't be done from home, of course. A four-day work week was tried with custodians some time ago, but customers didn't like it and it was stopped.

Q: Morale in Facilities Management is critically low. Could this be looked into before losing more good, skilled people?

True: A person should want to come to work. I welcome any emails on how we can improve our work.

Q: Will there be more assistance offered to employees on campus on threatening situations?

Kulper: Yes. The Threat Assessment Team will be providing more training in the months ahead. Public Safety will also offer guidelines to campus on threatening people.

Q: When Hawk Alert was used for the "active shooter" alert, why didn't we lock down the campus – particularly buildings that could be locked down?

Green: It is just impossible to lock down the entire campus, and in this particular situation the information UI police had was that the person being sought was driving in a van.

Q: Can the audibility of the Hawk Alert towers be improved?

Green: We are working on that plus we are planning to add another tower to cover the Pentacrest area.

Q: When will we know more about the smoking cessation law and how it affects faculty, staff and students?

Hermesen/Troester: There is much to be done before the Smoke-free Air Act goes into effect on July 1. A mass email went out to campus on May 5, and more

communication with campus will be done when boundaries for the campus and enforcement issues become clearer.

Q: Will people be able to smoke in their cars on University property?

Troester/Green: We're not sure yet.

Q: Update on renovation of Jessup Hall.

True: We have funds (\$13 million) to remodel one building on the Pentacrest either Macbride Hall or Jessup Hall. Construction on one of those buildings will probably begin in a couple of years.

Q: A couple of years ago, you mentioned the State of Iowa had decreased funding of the general fund from 60% to 16%. Has this continued? Over what period did this occur?

True: I'm not sure about the percentages you cite, but certainly tuition has increased and state appropriations have decreased. The Governor and the Legislature over the last two years have responded well to our needs.

Q: How will the changes to benefits affect families with two spouses working that use flex benefits for dependent care?

True: The Funded Retirement and Insurance Committee (FRIC) has spent a great deal of time considering changes to the flex credit system. The University administration will ultimately need to give serious consideration to FRIC recommendations and take actions that will affect all UI faculty and staff.