

Committee on Priorities and Resources

Meeting Minutes – March 14, 2012

In attendance: Assistant Director Carol Allman-Morton, Prof. Rob Benedetto, Dean of the Faculty Gregory Call, *ex officio*, Technical Services Associate Mark Fiegenbaum, Associate Treasurer/Director of the Budget Shannon Gurek, *ex officio*, Alex Hurst '12, Prof. Nasser Hussain, chair, Prof. Jagu Jagannathan, Luke Lavin '13, Director of Human Resources Maria-Judith Rodriguez, *ex officio*, Prof. Karen Sánchez-Eppler, Treasurer Peter Shea, *ex officio*, George Tepe '14 and Sarah Barr, recorder. Guests: Director and Chief Curator of the Mead Art Museum Lizzie Barker, Benefits Administrator Ernest LeBlanc, and President Bidy Martin.

Not in attendance: none.

The meeting was called to order at 4:03 pm.

1. Introductions – Members of the committee introduced themselves to Lizzie Barker.
2. Mead Art Museum Request – Lizzie presented the budget projections for the Mead Art Museum.
 - a. The budget projections include a 9.8% increase in spending over FY 2012. The increase comes from the following areas:
 - i. Security Guard Positions – The net incremental cost for regularizing 4 of the museum's 10 security guard positions is \$56,000. Four Security guards would become part-time employees with benefits; 6 would remain casual employees.
 - ii. Events – The museum requests \$7,500 for student staffing at events co-sponsored with academic departments (usually scheduled after the fiscal year has begun, and part of the museum's mission of academic service).
 - iii. Transportation – Expenses for art shipping can come as a sudden expense when the college receives a gift. It is easier to accept gifts when funding for transportation is not an issue, especially since the college's insurance company requires special shipping and handling for art.
 - b. The committee had several questions related to previous requests and the budget projections beyond FY 2012.
 - i. Assistant Director – Previously the museum requested funding for an Assistant Director, which was not funded. Lizzie hopes to promote staff within the department to accomplish the same end.
 - ii. Art Conservation – The FY2012 budget for art conservation is significantly lower than previous years because the museum has completed a grant-funded multi-year conservation project and exhibit of the thangka collection.
 - iii. Building Maintenance – In FY 2012, the museum lobby and loading dock were remodeled to make room for lockers, publications and a small office for the security guards.
 - iv. Amphoriskos – In FY 2014 the museum hopes to display a very rare silver amphoriskos that was in storage. The college is currently collaborating with experts to learn more about the piece and begin the conservation process.

3. Provost Position – President Martin presented the CPR with her case for the Provost position.
 - a. Planning – The college does not have the capacity to make planning an ongoing priority. The Provost, whose primary responsibility would be planning, would think strategically and implement initiatives that cross the student/staff/faculty divide.
 - b. Staffing – Given the changes in the student body and faculty, the Dean of Students Office, Dean of the Faculty’s Office, Finance, and Administration are understaffed. More needs to be done to support the students and their varying levels of preparation.
 - c. Title and Duties – The title of the position and the exact duties have not been finalized. The Provost would report to the President and collaborate with the Dean of the Faculty. He or she would have a diverse portfolio of responsibilities but the direct reports have not yet been decided. The Dean of the Faculty will continue to have autonomy over academic budgets and the Provost will probably be an ex officio member of the CPR so he or she has a sense of the entire college budget.
 - d. Diversity – The college has achieved student diversity but it has not taken advantage of the benefits that come with a diverse community. The Provost would work with existing offices to implement curricular and co-curricular planning and programming that would support diversity.
 - e. Budget Implications – The exact budget implications of the new position are not known at this time but it may be possible to create the position without cutting costs elsewhere through the use of open positions. It is clear that the college is losing opportunities because it lacks the administrative staffing it needs.
4. Minutes – Minutes from February 29, 2012 were approved.
5. 2012 Medical Plan Rate Summary – Ernie LeBlanc presented information about the 2012 medical plan.
 - a. Cost Increases – The medical plan is expected to have a 1.4% rate increase with no plan design changes and the dental plan is expected to increase by 2.3%.
 - b. New Low Cost Option for HMO – The college is considering offering a third health care plan that features a lower employee contribution, higher copays, an annual deductible, and the same network of doctors. The new plan will likely appeal to those who do not typically have a high number of claims and want to save on the premium costs. The new plan will probably not be attractive to lower income employees because the participants in the sliding scale program can have the benefits without the higher copays and annual deductibles, generally at a lower cost. When considering the new option, employees should take into consideration the out-of-pocket risks associated with the plans that have the higher copays and annual deductibles. Employees will receive information about the new plan this spring and can choose to enroll effective July 1, 2012.
 - c. Dental Coverage – The CPR discussed increasing the calendar year max from \$1,000 to \$1,500 and offering a lifetime \$1,000 orthodontic benefit for individuals under 19.
 - d. Recommendations – The CPR recommended that the college increase the dental benefit to \$1,500 but not provide an orthodontics benefit. It also supports a low cost medical plan option for employees but cautions that employees must be carefully informed about the plan to assure they understand the risks involved.

The meeting adjourned at 5:34 pm.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, April 4 at 4 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sarah Barr