**Western Washington University**

**Services and Activities Fee Committee
Meeting Minutes**

**Friday, May 7, 2021; 2:00-3:00 pm**

**Teams Virtual Meeting**

**Present:** Kurt Willis, Debbie Curry (recorder), Eric Alexander, Noemi Bueno, Ranulfo Molina, Raquel Vigil, Steve Card, Emma Duff, Adam Leonard, Danil Sonjaya, Caitlin Summers, Travis Cram, Kevin Harris, Ichi Kwon, Rebecca McLean, Evan Shuster

**Guest:** Megan McGinnis, Michael Sledge, Linda Beckman

**Agenda Items:** 1) Approval of Minutes, 2) Including the COLA adjustment, 3) Fee adjustment conversation, 4) Fee allocation, 5) Setting next meeting agenda

Evan Shuster called the meeting to order 2:00pm.

**Approval of Minutes**

Evan asked if there were questions or amendments to the minutes of the 4/30/2021 meeting. There were no amendments requested to these minutes. Danil Sonjaya made the motion to approve the minutes as presented. Emma Duff seconded the motion. The motion to approve passed unanimously.

**Including the COLA adjustment in the formula**

Kurt reported the (May 1) numbers he received from Shelly remained the same as what she previously provided; estimate is unchanged at 14,077. Kurt reminded the committee there may be a slight increase or decrease in the final enrollment numbers, but Shelly stands with this original estimate.

Kurt also stated the state has approved a COLA dollar increase for next year (2022), but the increase at this point is unknown (1%, 2%, 3%). All constituents have gone back to their budgets and estimated a 3% COLA for classified and exempt staff increases, and the S&A working spreadsheet has been adjusted accordingly. This has added $40K-50K to the total we already anticipated to be short, but the committee now has a better idea where we stand, and Kurt thanked the constituents for the adjusted figures.

**Fee adjustment conversation**

Evan started this conversation sharing he, Travis, Rebecca, and Megan met with DRAC departments and reached the decision that DRAC would prefer not to increase the fee to 4%, but to keep the adjustment at 0% and dip into reserves instead. Travis added DRAC had quite a few students express their preference and the consensus emerged rather quickly; students cares about their programs, but also understand students returning this fall will have enough to deal with and want to be sensitive to their financial situations and protect students from any increase.

Rebecca added with revenue loss (from lower enrollment) and no fee increase, reminded them she will be giving constituents their 10% of their S&A revenue from this year as a buffer for next year’s costs; we are intentionally tapping into reserves to keep from cutting student position or delaying needed equipment purchases. Hopefully not everyone will be tapping into reserves.

Steve announced to the committee given the projected enrollment and anticipated COLA, Athletics would like to withdraw their original $30,000 request (coach positions), leaving a total request of $38,018, which reflects only the mandated 3% COLA increase.

Eric talked about looking at actual numbers, stating that all constituents have taken calculated risks navigating through this last year, managing as well as possible, and we will all have to continue to navigate what comes our way this coming year, although he didn’t feel it would be as challenging as this last year has been; because at this point in time we don’t know what enrollment looks like for fall and winter, it’s best to focus on hard real numbers.

Rephrasing; Kurt heard Eric say that at least on paper it appears we would be short $880,000 (could be more, but it could also be less); also a call for flexibility with a focus on percentages rather than hard numbers, because we don’t know the eb and flow will be for fall, winter and spring.

Eric confirmed Kurt was correct, adding that he doesn’t expect this coming year to be worse than the last and could even be better in terms of enrollment. In terms of flexibility, we all have to live with the funds that actually come in, the budget process is the same now as it’s been for years. It can be more difficult not having the hard numbers, which is why he recommends focusing on percentages.

Returning to the fee adjustment conversation, Raquel commented that AS usually supports not increasing the fee, but this year she does recommends a full fee increase. A lower increase was possible, but that the committee needs to accommodate AS and Athletics who have a higher COLA cost.

Ranulfo responded that he feels that reserves are for use in situations just like this.

Steve cautioned the committee of increasing the fee to 4%, stating that fees rarely go backwards; suggesting instead starting with COLA increases, determining what is needed to fund those and anything beyond that we can close the gap in the coming years.

Evan asked What percent increase would cover $77,000? Kurt responded 1.25%

Adam indicated their request included the COLA increase and is asking for no other programming requests. Campus Rec does not have reserves but can cover this year with the carry forward with 6.7 or 6.6 percent.

Travis spoke in favor of Steve’s proposal and approach. It clearly identifies an easier solution to the puzzle and preserves flexibility on the back end. We will face less revenue next year, and the flexibility by program managers and students is much appreciated. It makes sense to say, if students are clamoring with no fee increase, that we fund COLA and then look to maintain percentage of distribution.

Kurt confirmed and quoted numbers for minutes: with a 1.25% fee increase, the effective rate of that increase would be 1.07%, $2.40 increase to fee; $226.38 quarterly fee for next year. This covers all COLA increases. (increase of $2.40 per quarter; $7.20 per year over the current year)

Evan called for a vote to cover the fee increase described above: Evan moved to approve the effective rate of fee increase of 1.07% to the fee to cover COLA. Danil seconded that motion. Evan asked for voting reps to vote in the chat: Motion was not approved. No other motion was made. Conversation was tabled to next week.

Evan stated next meeting will open to continue and finalize this decision, which needs to be finalized by May 22.

Kurt thanked the committee for the time and consideration they are taking in making this decision. Evan also thanked the reps for openly discussing this matter and working together. Evan also thanked Kurt and said he appreciated working with him and supporting our students.

Today’s meeting adjourned at 2:50pm

Next meeting: Friday, May 14, 2:00-3:00 pm, Teams Virtual