

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF

LEGISLATIVE SUB-COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS FOR EDUCATION

February 2, 1979

8:15 a.m.

Room 104

State Capitol Building

Subject: BUDGET FOR
COMMUNITY COLLEGES

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Carroll South with the following members present:

Sen. Larry Fasbender
Sen. Harold Nelson
Rep. Oscar Kvaalen
Rep. Jack Moore
Rep. Esther Bengtson

Also present in the meeting were, Judy Rippingale, Fiscal Analyst; Vern Kaily, President of Miles Community College; Dr. Dwight Milan, President of FVCC; Dr. Hoffman, President of Dawson Community College; Dean Flower, Dean of Instruction; and Don Kettner.

Chairman South opened the meeting by introducing the presidents of the community colleges.

Mr. Bandy stated that the relationship between the Regents and the Community Colleges are a little different from that of the University system. Nevertheless, we do have an interest in the community colleges and we would be hopeful that we could have a good discussion today on this issue.

Chairman South said the Legislature must maintain control of the amount of mandatory mills to be levied. The Legislature would establish a budget for the Community Colleges the same way as the other six units in the University system. The smaller the percentage of the fees the more the mandatory levy will be. It's not going to be long until the mandatory portion of this budget is going to surpass the budget for the city of Miles City and when we reach that point we are going to have a tax rebellion that won't quit. The state legislature has been asked to put restrictions on city, county, and on almost any governmental unit we have. We will establish a maximum ceiling, within state law and we can only levy that many mills and no more. In the case of Community Colleges, with the approval of the Board of Regents, they can have any taxing authority that the Regents concurrence would give them.

Chairman South asked for comments of the bill.

Vern Kaily asked Chairman South if it was his intent to set the limits of the budget. We are concerned that within the contexts of this bill you are lowering the scope of Community Colleges. Miles City Community College courses are not intended to transfer to the University units. We have been trying to direct the divisions of community service not to be over the 65/35 budget.

President Hoffman spoke next on the bill. He found 2 things of concern. 1. Funding on the base of courses being transferable to a university unit. Transferring is only 50% of the college's activity. 2. Page 3, line 24 - this clause in the bill imposes the same funding structure on the county treasurer and Community College. We are not a state agency and this dictates and changes our whole funding structure to conform to state standards. It imposes procedures on our county treasurer inconsistent with her present duties.

Mr. Milan stated the Presidents feel that Chairman South's intent of this bill is not to redefine the role and scope of the Community Colleges. As a Community College we are sponsored by our district. We would like to suggest that community service courses would include courses which have no formal evaluation system; do not require attendance records, and would not be subject to academic evaluation. In counting students we would like to have some changes made towards the full-time equivalent, 45 regular instructional units earned by students during a fiscal year. This assures that a part-time student is included in the FTE, because we get an enormous amount of students in part-time courses. The way the bill is written, it includes full-time students only.

Bob Barthamus, Miles City Community College - board of trustees, stated that he had been exposed to the wishes, needs and demands of a conservative and responsible portion of our tax paying community. I am questioning the acceptance of the current concern as a responsible concern.

Dean Flower, dean of instruction, stated that at Miles Community College we have 23 full-time faculty and a few part-time faculty which raise our FTE faculty to around 25. Of those 25 faculty, 11 are involved in other programs. So this really leaves us with 12 full-time faculty to cover all college enrollment. If we were to cut 4 faculty it would be a loss of 4 programs, which would be a serious injury. It is difficult to come close to the 19:1 student faculty ratio.

Chairman South asked if they had to under pay their faculty because of introducing so many programs. Dean Flower, stated that this was not the reason, we had faculty to cover the new programs.

Chairman South asked why are budgets increasing so rapidly. Dean Flower stated that Montana utilities have increased also faculty salaries have been keeping pace with the cost of living.

Chairman South stated that any loss in revenue to the state, any limit in state spending, is going to have a ripple effect and eventually it's going to have an effect on the Community Colleges. As I see the request from the Miles Community College, 31.3% increase this biennium, I see a real problem if the Community Colleges don't tighten their budget.

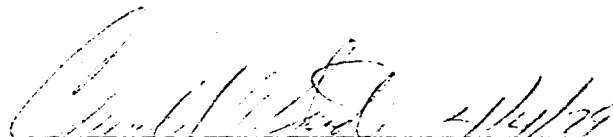
Jim Lucas spoke of night programs. He feels that this program is very important and there has been a large increase in this area.

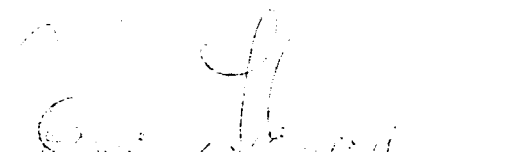
Don Kettner addressed the budget. He stated that community service has not been shown in the enrollment figures. Our president at Dawson, has tried to make the school more accountable. He cut 3.5 faculty members because they could not make courses accountable.

Mr. James gave a few requests to the committee. They are as follows:

1. Make repairs and maintenance of equipment.
2. Fund Doctor Milans and my position on a 4 year basis.
3. Make a final payment on the loan we took out in 1976 for the general renovation of our facilities.

Chairman South thanked everyone for coming. The meeting was adjourned.


CARROLL V. SOUTH, CHAIRMAN


Jeanne Glennon, Secretary