

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
LEGISLATIVE SUB-COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS FOR EDUCATION

February 27, 1979
8:20 a.m.
Room 104
State Capitol Building
Subject: Budget of Western
Montana College

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; Carl Knutsen, Lee Sphuler, Tom Briggs, George Bandy, Linda Meyer, and Dr. Dale Tash.

President Tash began the meeting stated that he will make a few points and then have the other members at WMC carry out the presentation. The first point he made was thanking the committee for the opportunity to speak. The second point he said that he hoped the committee won't judge the adequacy of our budget by our presentation. Third, he stated he didn't see the enrollment audit.

Dr. Tash feels that what bothers WMC is that sometimes the rules are changed in the middle of the year and they would like to have a set of guidelines to go by.

ENROLLMENT AT WMC

The enrollment at WMC decreased from 1070 to about 700 and their faculty decreased from 60 to around 31. The low enrollment hurts the academic quality and the moral of the teachers. This can be blamed on WMC low budget. WMC budget has always been the lowest, it has been a no frills budget. In addition to the problem budget, we have to expand our programs at WMC.

INTREGRATION

On March 23, 1976, the Board of Regents mandated WMC to undertake this integration process. We were told to do this, to make a giant step forward to make one university system. They finally decided that WMC and UM would be the easiest to manipulate. We are trying to expand our integration with Tech. As far as helping the UM we have brought graduates interns from UM to WMC to teach there.

UM professors come down to use our facilities for research.

ACCREDITATION

President Tash stated that if you want to find out about a school, go to the accreditation board. We had our accreditation last year by north west, they examined us in great detail. We received accreditation for 10 years. It was the best report I have ever seen.

BUDGET PRESENTATION

Mr. Tom Briggs gave a handout to the committee relating to the budget of WMC. He stated that WMC's operating expense budget was being kept within the appropriated amount, but it has only increased by 6%. Utilities took 30% of the appropriated money from the operating budget. There has been a significant increase in gas and electricity. The point he made was a request for a 6% increase for operating expenses is a minimal request in view of the increase rate of inflation. The most critical aspect is in revenue estimating over the next biennium.

Chairman South requested what student enrollment did you use for your student fee revenue. Mr. Briggs said that he didn't use a specific enrollment. Instead I used a estimated increase of about 3% and ran it at the same rate of tuition and fees.

Land grant revenues are somewhat less than WMC received in 1978, but it averages out in the last three years. WMC is currently using the land grant revenue income as follows: half goes to the current operating expense; and the other half goes to servicing bond indentures.

Chairman South stated that given the fact the WMC's enrollment is up this year could we not increase the revenue. Dr. Tash said that from the time WMC submitted this budget they did not know what their enrollment would be.

Chairman South asked if WMC would have any objections to the committee using the rolling average to build the fee structure.

Dr. Tash said if that was going to be the committee's decision than WMC would abide by it. In view of the enrollment issue at WMC, we have no way of knowing what our enrollment will be.

Chairman South stated that when WMC pledges half of their land grant income to the bond indenture, there is more than enough money to service the bonds and build up the reserve requirements. If so, how do you anticipate using this other lawful purpose money.

Dr. Tash said that the excess is only in reserve. Some small percentage above the total amount of bond indentures requirements. Anything in excess of that is going to be used for other lawful purposes. This excess will go to replace furniture for the dorms and new kitchen appliances.

Rep. Bengtson asked how much is the fee waivers for athletic and how much is for academic. Dr. Tash said the total fee waivers is 55, but he didn't have them separated.

Chairman South asked whether or not this money will be available in 1980 and 1981 and was it available in 1978. Dr. Tash said it was available and will be available during the years of 1980 and 1981.

Mr. Briggs went on with his presentation about tuition and fees. The primary difference between our estimated increase in tuition is from the original analysis is due to an error made in these figures.

Chairman South asked what is WMC's faculty count now. Dr. Tash answered 36.12, no additional faculty were added during the past 4 years.

TITLE IX

Chairman South stated that WMC has no request for Title IX, does this mean that WMC is in compliance with this. Dr. Tash said that they did have a request but it was turned down.

Sen. Fasbender asked how many students are on academic fee waivers. Mr. Briggs was not sure, but he figures 15 or 16. The majority of the fee waivers go to athletics instead of academic purposes.

Mr. Bandy stated that WMC is an athletic college, more or less. They are well-known for training coaches, so it is only natural for the majority of the fee waivers to go to athletics.

Dr. Sphuler testified about the value of the new curriculum WMC is requesting. (A handout was given-Exhibit A) Basically he had people show and testify on three programs.

HUMAN SERVICES

This program is basically a training program to train professionals to work at Warm Springs and Boulder. The need for this program has existed for some time. The program was developed through a series of meeting of State Hospital staffs.

Dr. Higgins, Superintendent, Galen Hospital, stated that Human Services was a very practical program to have. It gives a lot of people the chance to improve themselves. They get a chance to get somewhere in life. Dr. Sphuler noted that approval of this program is still pending by the Board of Regents.

RESORT MANAGEMENT

This would be a two year degree program designed to give students the necessary skills and knowledge for employment at the mid-management level, in a broad spectrum of resort management careers.

Linda Meyer testified in favor of this program. She stated that WMC did a survey of those who would like this program. WMC came

up with 94 students from around Montana who would be interested in this program. WMC sees a real need for this program. Students can have a background here and then go on the job already trained.

RURAL EDUCATION

This program is designed to provide both pre-service and in-service training for students entering the teaching profession and presently employed teachers with small school assignments.

Carl Knutson testified in favor of this new program. He stressed that rural Montana is here to stay. Over the last couple of years we had a significant decline in enrollment. The main point I would like to bring out is the justification of smaller schools. I think people will continue to pay for them. They don't have problems with mill levy votes or strikes. He feels the trend is for supporting rural schools.

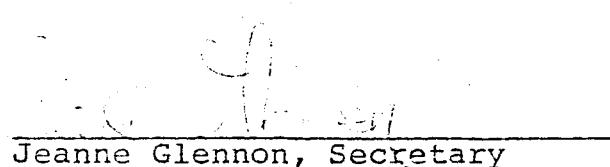
Sen. Fasbender felt that there aren't jobs in the rural areas for our children and not that many people are going to go back to the rural areas after graduating from college. Linda Meyer said that this is the point they have been trying to make. With rural education and resort management programs, this will enhance more jobs for our children in the rural areas.

Sen. Fasbender stated that if we are training kids to work in the rural areas, I think we are doing something wrong.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 a.m.



CARROLL V. SOUTH, CHAIRMAN


Jeanne Glennon, Secretary