REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE RESOURCE PLANNING AND PRIORITIES COMMITTEE held on Monday, November 21, 2011 at 2:10 p.m., Room 3214 William G. Davis Building


Regrets: D. Saini, D. Crocker, G. Anderson,

In attendance: D. Mulllings, B. McFadden, A. MacIsaac, S. Borg

1) Approval of Minutes of the Previous Meetings (October 24, 2011)

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

2) Reports of Committees and Officers:

The Chair reminded members about keeping their discussion points on the ancillary budgets rather than on customer service issues, which should be raised with the individual heads of the ancillary operations outside of the current meeting. Professor Bailey called on Mr. Donoghue to explain the University of Toronto budget guidelines.

a) Ancillary Budgets and Financial Plans: Introduction and Overview of SARG process - Paul Donoghue, CAO

For Approval

The CAO provided a handout and gave a presentation of the University of Toronto budget guidelines for ancillary operations. He noted that the Service Ancillary Review Group (SARG) reviews and monitors compliance with these guidelines and recommends the ancillary operating plans for approval to the University Affairs Board.

   ii. Parking Services – Alex MacIsaac, Manager, Parking and Transportation

Ms. Capewell introduced the parking budget by noting that over the last 12 months UTM has confirmed a new growth plan, one that could see an enrolment growth of approximately 25% over 5 years. In addition, the related growth plan for faculty and staff will cause an increase in demand in parking, which in turn will require an expansion of the existing parking deck. The parking office estimates that UTM will eventually have a shortage and would like to address that. She proceeded to present the 2012-13 parking operating plan and management report,
which is attached hereto as Appendix A.

It was duly moved and seconded,

THAT the Parking Services Operating Plan and Management Report for 2012-13 be recommended to Erindale College Council for approval. (C. Capewell/P. Donoghue)

The Chair opened the floor to discussion.

A member noted that the proposed 3% increase seems reasonable.

The CAO commented that the increase would allow for the buildup in the capital reserve that would be set aside for the future parking deck, which given current growth figures would likely be needed either in the fall of 2015 or 2016. The proposed 3% per year increase would allow the university to accumulate $2.6M, which would in turn help UTM obtain an internal loan from the university to cover the rest of the cost of such a deck, which is estimated to be $8M. The money would be retained in the ancillary itself. He noted however that even with this capital reserve, there would be no guarantee that UTM would be able to borrow the rest of the funds needed to build the deck.

A member asked where the funds would go if there was no capital project such as the deck. The CAO explained that in the highly unlikely event that capital needs within the ancillary did not materialize, the funds would not just be put into the operating budget, but rather into meeting the campus’ huge capital funding needs. He further explained that student expansion and the corresponding need for additional faculty would drive the need for more space, a shortage of which is a current very serious problem.

In response to a member asking about the kinds of increases in rates that could be expected in future years, Ms. Capewell explained that current calculations are based on a 3% increase in rates per year, unless something very unexpected happens in the ancillary.

The motion was put to a vote. The motion was carried.

ii. Food Services – Bill McFadden, Director of Hospitality and Retail Services

The Chair called on Mr. Bill McFadden, Director of Hospitality and Retail Services to present the Food ancillary budget.

Mr. McFadden introduced the budget by noting that the ancillary was maintained within the framework of SARG guidelines and that several short and long-term enhancements were planned for food services. He presented the 2012-13 Food Services operating plan and management report, which is attached hereto as Appendix B.

It was duly moved and seconded,

THAT the Food Services Operating Plan and Management Report for 2012-13 be recommended to Erindale College Council for approval. (B. McFadden/A. Mullin)

The Chair opened the floor to discussion.
A member expressed his serious concern about meal plans at UTM, and wondered why they were structured the way they were, which in his opinion were hiding the true cost of items, since the full balance on account isn’t shown dollar for dollar. Mr. McFadden explained that the meal plan brochures that explain these details do not misrepresent the model. Ms. Capewell noted that this model was chosen based on a significant amount of research based on the experience of other universities, which showed that students were happy with this kind of model.

In response to a member’s question about whether price audits are done, Mr. McFadden explained that the ancillary benchmarks all items and referred members to the presentation, which showed UTM meal plans continue to benchmark exceptionally well against peer institutions as follows:

- UTM Group A meal plan average is ranked 7th out of 13 Ontario peer institutions
- UTM Group B meal plan average is ranked 2nd out of 4 Ontario peer institutions that offer a partial meal plan
- UTM overall average meal plan is the second lowest of 13 peer institutions when factoring in the Group A and Group B meal plans together

The motion was put to a vote. The motion was carried.

iii. Conference Services – Bill McFadden, Director of Hospitality and Retail Services

Mr. McFadden presented the 2012-13 Conference Services operating plan and management report, which is attached hereto as Appendix C.

It was duly moved and seconded,  
THAT the Conference Services Operating Plan and Management Report for 2012-13 be recommended to Erindale College Council for approval. (B. McFadden/U. Krull)

The motion was carried.

iv. Residence – Dale Mullings, Director Student Housing and Residence Life

The Chair called on Mr. Dale Mullings, Director Student Housing and Residence Life to present the Residence ancillary budget.

Mr. Mullings presented the 2012-13 Residence Services operating plan and management report, which is attached hereto as Appendix D.

It was duly moved and seconded,  
THAT the Residence Operating Plan and Management Report for 2012-13 be recommended to Erindale College Council for approval. (D. Mullings/P. Goldsmith)

The Chair opened the floor to discussion.
A member asked why the occupancy rate was maintained at 95%. Mr. Mullings explained that there has to be a balance in occupancy and that the current number is in line with general practice and with other universities. He noted for example that if major maintenance had to be done on a suite of rooms, students occupying those rooms would have to be placed in the vacant areas, which were reserved for that purpose. In addition, some prospective students put a deposit down on residence fees to hold their place, but then change their minds and default on that deposit, leaving some rooms vacant. This year that resulted in almost 40 such instances. Another unpredictable factor is that students, for various reasons, decide to leave throughout the year.

A member commented that off campus housing was cheaper and that both rates and quality of accommodations would need to be improved on this campus.

In response to the Chair’s question, it was confirmed that the Student Housing Advisory Committee voted to support this budget.

The motion was put to a vote. The motion was carried.

There was no other business.

The Chair announced that the next meeting was scheduled for Monday, January 16, 2012.

The meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.