

# University Budget Advisory Committee

## Minutes – 10/15/2020 meeting

Voting members present: Nabil Al-Tikriti (Chair, At-large)  
Stephen Davies (Secretary, At-large)  
Laura Bylenok (At-large)  
Liane Houghtalin (CAS)  
Kyle Schultz (COE)  
Suzanne Sumner (At-large)

Voting members absent: Chris Garcia (COB)

Non-voting members present: Michelle Pickham (Staff Advisory Council President)

Non-voting members absent: Patrick Catullo (Athletic Director)

Guests: Paul Messplay (VP Administration & Finance)

Stuart Sullivan (Senior Director of Plant Operations & Contract Services)

1. Ms. Pickham raised the question of whether the Staff Advisory Council President should be a voting member of the committee. Dr. Al-Tikriti asked all the members of the committee to consider this at an upcoming meeting.
2. The committee held some informal discussion about recent comments made in the CAS Chairs' meeting regarding whether UMW would become a "smaller institution" in the future. Dr. Sumner advised the committee that more detailed information about this issue would be forthcoming from the CAS Faculty Council October 14th meeting minutes, and that it would be wise to wait on this before forming any conclusions.
3. The bulk of the meeting was devoted to a presentation from Mr. Messplay and Mr. Sullivan about Facilities Services and related budget implications. Some specific points:
  - (a) Deferred maintenance has been a problem for many years (we don't currently have an estimate as to the total dollar amount for this) but this is actually the norm for Higher Ed institutions. The Seacobeck renovation will lower this amount somewhat, since it is now classified as an educational building rather than "auxiliary," and so the state supports new construction.
  - (b) The biggest maintenance concerns often turn out to be "hidden things" like HVAC, plumbing, steam lines, and electronic control systems.
  - (c) We're currently "catching up" on the maintenance for our residence halls. Recent improvements to Arrington mean that it has at least another ten years of life.
  - (d) The university is adjusting to the reality of having fewer on-campus residential students in the future. (This is due to both the country's upcoming "demographic cliff" of fewer college-age adults, and also more students choosing to commute for financial reasons.) We're keeping our room rates down, and having dining rates increase only very slowly, in order to attract students to live on campus. We will also be closing some of our residence halls to decrease overall capacity. Alvey, for instance, is currently unused, and may be repurposed so that it's eligible for state funding; Marshall, too, will be demolished in the next couple of years (and replaced by the new Theatre building). The UMW Apartments are owned by the Foundation, and so are not in our purview. They were built in the 1960's. Long-term, we may gradually dismantle them one piece at a time, in conjunction with the Foundation.

- (e) Dr. Al-Tikriti asked whether excess residence hall capacity could be used for housing for younger faculty, especially since the cost of living in our region is so high. Mr. Messplay said that this idea has been floated in the past, but for whatever reason hasn't yet taken off. It could be revisited.
  - (f) An important \$9 million infrastructure project, 90% of which is funded by the state, is coming up soon. This will tear up campus walk for a while.
  - (g) High on the priority list for renovations are Simpson Library and George Washington Hall.
  - (h) Recent turnover has left Facilities understaffed. This is not currently a major problem, but could be on the verge of being so.
  - (i) Our housekeeping workforce is a combination of contracted staff and in-house employees. Contractors are more expensive than permanent employees, but they allow the university to be more agile in adjusting the size of the workforce. Too, there is a limit on how many full-time employees the university can have. Anecdotally, full-time housekeeping does a better job because they're more invested in the community.
  - (j) Dr. Sumner asked about the safety issues with the athletic fields. Mr. Messplay noted that we do still have ADA compliance problems, part of which has to do with the fact that our campus is located on a hill, which gives us few options.
  - (k) The City of Fredericksburg has committed to funding some of the new Theatre building construction, since it will be at Sunken & William and thus provide benefit to the city.
  - (l) Dr. Al-Tikriti inquired as to whether UMW can use our campus more for events (the Anderson Center for concerts, for example). The Covid pandemic puts this idea on hold for the present, of course.
  - (m) We may be able to save some money and effort on snow shoveling this academic year because the campus is underpopulated.
4. Finally, Dr. Al-Tikriti announced that for our meeting next week (Oct. 22), Rosemary Arneson (University Librarian) would be presenting.