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Brock University Senate

MINUTES OF MEETING #5 (2010-11)

SENATE BUDGET ADVISORY COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, APRIL 5, 2011, 10:00 AM

13TH FLOOR BOARD ROOM, SCHMON TOWER

PRESENT: Professor David Vivian (Chair), Professor Christine Daigle (Vice-Chair), Mr. Riaz Akseer, Professor Maureen Connolly, Professor Sandra Felton, Dr. Greg Finn, Professor John Lye, Mr. Luke Speers, Professor Susan Sydor

Ms. Joanne McKee, Ms. Margaret Thompson (Administrative Support)

REGRETS: Professor Tansu Barker, Dean Thomas Dunk, Dean Philip Kitchen, Professor Felice Martinello, Professor Paul Zelisko

Professor Vivian welcomed members and called the meeting to order. He was pleased to introduce Mr. Riaz Akseer who had recently been appointed as the new Graduate Student representative on the Committee.

1. Approval of Previous Minutes

[The minutes of Meeting #4 (2010-11) held on March 2, 2011 had been distributed with the meeting materials.]

MOVED (Speers/Sydor)

THAT the minutes of Meeting #4 (2010-11) held on March 2, 2011 be approved.

CARRIED

2. Business Arising from the Minutes

The Chair noted that he continues to provide Reports to Senate on the activities of the Budget Advisory Committee.

Due to the scheduling of the Budget Advisory Committee just prior to the Financial Planning and Human Resources Committee of the Board, written financial reports would not be available until after the Board Committee meeting. The Chair noted that Ms. McKee was in attendance

and had related that she would be pleased to provide an oral update on the reports to be presented next week to the Board Committee.

With respect to the development of the 2011/12 budget, Ms. McKee noted that meetings have concluded with budget developers, target submissions have been received, and the submissions are being summarized for review. There were no significant variances from the projections. Ms. McKee noted that a communication was recently forwarded to Unit heads which commended budget developers for meeting the target submission of 1.8%.

Base funding grants from the Provincial Government are expected to remain consistent with expectations, with a few notable small reductions (e.g. Accessibility). The ministry communicated this information on April 1, 2011, unusually early in the process. In response to a question, it was related that in 2010-11 the intake target was 3900 and for 2011-12 the intake target is 3980.

Ms. McKee then provided an oral update on the results of the projections of the 2010-11 budget noting that budget developers had been fiscally prudent. Under spending is reported mostly in administrative and student services. During discussion, it was noted that administrative departments may put in a request for consideration to carry forward a portion of their unspent funds. Surpluses are automatically carried forward for Faculties.

The Committee engaged in a comprehensive discussion during which concerns were expressed regarding the level at which Faculty Deans engage faculty members in decisions regarding the allocation of the Faculty budget. It appears that there are inconsistencies across the Faculties, some members being more engaged in the decision making process than member of other Faculties. Decisions made may be based on the University's strategic plan, Faculty strategic plans (currently being updated), and current base needs. It was further noted that as the University moves to toward a new Brock resource allocation budget model, there is a desire to promote further transparency and accountability of the allocation of funds.

The Chair noted that with respect to the scheduling of future annual Budget Advisory Committee schedules, he would include a recommendation in the Committee's Annual Report to Senate, that meetings of the Budget Advisory Committee be scheduled approximately one week following a meeting of the Financial Planning and Human Resources Committee to assist in the timely sharing of financial reports.

3. Communications

[A Memorandum from the Chair of the Department of Physical Education and Kinesiology to the Interim Dean of the Faculty of Applied Health Sciences regarding the PEKN Part-time Budget 2011-12 dated March 3, 2011 had been distributed with the meeting materials.]

The communication was received for information.

4. Planning Item: The consultative process in order to prepare for the upcoming report to Senate about the proposed budget

Professor Vivian questioned if the Committee required additional information to assist with its future recommendation Senate regarding the operating budget's consistency with academic policy and its consonance with the goals of the University. With respect how budgetary decisions are made at the Faculty level, it was suggested that it may be beneficial to invite the Faculty Deans to a future meeting to provide information. Dr. Finn noted that he would be providing a summary of the academic implications, as has been done in past years, to the Committee.

5. Reporting qualitative and quantitative impact of the measures taken in the last two years and issuing from the debt-reduction plan

[Memorandums to the Chair of the Budget Advisory Committee dated May 19, 2010 and May 4, 2009 regarding Academic Implications of the Budget Exercise had been distributed with the meeting materials.]

The documentation regarding academic implications of the budget exercise in 2010 and 2009 had been distributed for the information of the Committee.

6. Pedagogical and research accounting: alternative strategies to budget development

Due to time constraints, the item would be placed on a future agenda.

7. Planning Item: The challenges of scheduling BAC meetings

The item had been briefly discussed earlier in the meeting, under agenda item 2.

8. Other Business - None

9. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:00 a.m.