SUGGESTIONS FROM THE MAY 23rd, 2011 PLANNING AND BUDGET FORUM

At the May 23rd Forum, Administration solicited budget ideas from the campus community. Some suggestions were provided at the forum and a number of additional suggestions were provided afterwards.

These suggestions, along with a response to each, is provided below.

These suggestions were provided to, and discussed by, the Planning and Budget Committee and the President’s Leadership Team.

1. Ideas about using the Theater for fundraising

One of the ideas that has been on the list and was discussed at the forum was the use of the theater for fundraising. The following comment was received after the forum and passed to the Dean responsible for the theater.

I am intrigued by the suggestion to raise money for the ARTS department by engaging in more productions, since that’s the area of my first career (and all of my subject postgraduate degrees).

I am sure the excellent Theater faculty is aware of all of the possibilities and potential pitfalls to the suggestion, including an accurate idea of the expenses involved in production. Expenses for any in-house production include keeping the facility open (with HVAC & electrical), including for either build or load-in, hang & focus, and dry tech/wet tech, plus fees for performance rights, paying for consumables (paint, theatrical gels & lamps, anything needed for construction of new scenery), paying for personnel for house management etc., as would be already done for BC productions.

In any case, it jogged my mind into thinking of other possible options that you might explore that might minimize some of those:

1) renting the facility out to Chico and area performing groups to do their own productions (you have no doubt thought of this already), including either providing or paying Butte College facilities rental plus any extra for help with load-in and load out, tech, stage & house management

2) seeing if it’s possible to “tag along” when a performing artist (especially a musician) of some stature is planning to perform at Laxson Auditorium by engaging them for an earlier or later day/evening performance at Butte. There’s already a lot of precedent for this, and you may also have already thought of it. For example, the small but highly successful Palms Playhouse in Winters, California routinely gets “moderately big name” acts in that are on the road between
performance in the Bay Area and Sacramento, and many small venues in the Bay Area do the same. The performers are often willing to tuck in another performance (and money) into their tour as long as it is en-route from here to there, and often well-known local bands are willing to serve as opening acts. A few performers that I can think of that I know come to Laxson, and have seen do local venues in Winters include Richard Thompson and Kevin Burke. These folks are a big enough draw, with cult followings, that fans are happy to do a little driving to somewhat “out of the way” places to see them.

2. Allegation that serviceable flat panel displays were sent to Computers for Classrooms

Facilities reviewed the information about the flat panel displays and determined that there were 8 or so that came into surplus from an upgrade to PSTC training equipment. Scot Gordon was contacted and was able to recycle three back into the college inventory. The others needed repair and were sent to Computers for Classrooms for possible refurbishment.

The college will consider ways to make faculty and staff aware of items that are in surplus and how to request these items.

3. Use the amphitheater for outside events

Recently, the college reviewed its fee schedule for the use of college facilities by outside groups and the fee for using amphitheater was included in this schedule. As was discussed at the forum there are a number of issues involved with using the amphitheater for outside events. These include:

- The attractiveness of the amphitheater as a venue (ADA compliance, slope, etc)
- The potential cost and risk implications to the college for hosting large events (security, clean-up, etc)

Another concept, once the central park is complete, would be to look at using this space for smaller events such as weddings. The smaller amphitheater that is being constructed as part of the central park may be a more attractive for smaller scale events.

4. Look at charging for all outside groups – youth groups, soccer, etc.

Recently, the college reviewed its fee schedule for the use of college facilities by outside groups. In nearly all cases the fees were raised consistent with the limitations in the Civic Center Act.

The Civic Center Act mandates that fees to certain groups must be set at no more than the actual cost to support the event. During the discussion an allegation was made that certain events were being misclassified to avoid making groups pay the appropriate fee. This is being investigated.
5. **Look to advertise for different vendors on campus to generate revenue**

There are exclusivity agreements in some of our contracts that prohibit competitive advertising on some products (e.g. we have a contract with Pepsi and can’t advertise for Coke). These exclusivity agreements, however are very limited and the college will look for additional opportunities consistent with maintaining an environment supportive of learning on the campus.

6. **Eliminate athletic events and programs**

At the forum there was a significant amount of discussion about the positive impact of athletics both on our FTES and in the lives of the athletes. That said, the number of athletics programs at the college is not fixed and is sometimes changed based on a number of factors to include the college’s budget situation, FTES requirements, cost of the programs, facilities, community support, Title IX requirements, etc. For example, over the past decade the college has eliminated men’s tennis and added men’s soccer. Currently other athletic programs are being reviewed and one is being considered for possible elimination as part of the 5% budget reduction for Student Learning and Economic Development. The Athletic Department is working with the Vice President for Student Learning and Economic Development to determine if the program under discussion should be eliminated or if other options should be implemented to achieve the required savings.

7. **Ask alumni for contributions**

The Butte College Foundation maintains information on Butte College alumni, tracks them as best they can, and actively solicits donations from those who are able. The process for soliciting large donations is managed on a close-hold basis by the President, the Board of Trustees, and the Foundation.

8. **Ask outside groups to come to campus to share their successful entrepreneurial ideas**

This college leadership, at any given time, participates in a number of committees and task forces in the community. It also has a Foundation Board, consisting primarily of community members, that has actively been engaged in developing and implementing entrepreneurial ideas. The Roadrunner Community Marketplace is an example of an idea that came from the Foundation Board.

As part of the new president’s orientation process she will meet with many community leaders. This will be an ideal time to solicit entrepreneurial ideas.
9. **Hold a fund raising dance.**

The college already has a fund raising dance – the Spring Gala.

In the past these kind of events have been targeted to raise money for a specific purpose (e.g. Diversity Committee or Leadership Butte). That group is then responsible for managing and organizing the event. Given the budget situation, many groups on campus have seen their budgets reduced. Perhaps an option would be to do an all-campus fundraising event and to distribute the proceeds to the groups based on the number of volunteer hours donated by members of these groups.

10. **Use an alternate bottled water distributor.**

Received a suggestion and contact information for a water vendor that offers a more competitive price than the vendor most of the offices are using for large water jugs. Information on the alternative vendor has been passed to the administrative staff.