

Governor's budget short University funds cropped

By ANN PORTAL
Of the Emerald

The University has been dealt yet another financial blow — it must pick up an additional \$1.3 to \$1.4 million for faculty and staff benefits not included in its original budget.

The amount is the University's share of \$8 million that must be extracted from the state higher education budget as a result of the Oregon Public Employees Union contract that was ratified last week.

The \$8 million figure is based on the assumption that higher education faculty will receive the same increase in benefits awarded to OPEU members, as the faculty has in previous years.

University Pres. Paul Olum says he considers the additional budget burden "significant," but he says he will make no predictions on how the University will deal with what amounts to an additional 1 3/4-percent budget cut over the biennium.

"At this point all we can do is wait to see what the final budget is," he says.

The extra \$8 million that must be paid out of the current budget is the result of a complicated system of funding state salaries.

Classified staff salary increases are not included in the higher education budget, but are funded by a separate bill that was included in Gov. Vic Atiyeh's budget package. But Atiyeh allowed for only a 6 percent increase in OPEU salaries for each year of the biennium.

After nearly seven months of negotiations, the final contract includes a large increase in fringe benefits on top of the 6 percent annual raises. Although the central negotiating team approved the benefit package, it did not indicate

where the money would come from, says Bill Lemman, state board vice chancellor for administration.

In effect, higher education is "now committed to pay some money for which there is no apparent source," Lemman says.

"We are often underfunded in small amounts. We were not anticipating anything of this order of magnitude," he says.

Vice-pres. for administration and finance Ray Hawk says the University had been led to believe that the 12-percent salary increase in the governor's budget would include salary and benefit increases.

Now the University must assume the responsibility of paying for something over which it had no control, he says.

Olum says the effect of the OPEU contract came as a surprise to the University, which had no representative on the central negotiating committee and learned of the contract agreement only after negotiations were completed.

"If we'd had someone there, I can't imagine we wouldn't have been jumping up and down," he says.

However, Olum says he feels it was the classified staff's job to negotiate for the best deal possible.

"I'm not mad at the classified staff — the salary increase is a minimum one for them.

"I do feel that when a salary and fringe benefit package has been negotiated, it is extremely difficult for us to provide additional funding."

Phone company ups dorm rates

Pacific Northwest Bell will be able to "reach out and touch" the University for unpaid student dormitory phone bills beginning July 15, 1982, the Oregon Public Utilities Commission decided recently.

The decision was just one part of a new billing policy requested by PNB to counteract more than \$1 million the company claims it lost on student telephone bills at Oregon universities last year.

Housing Director Dan Williams says the University resisted PNB's request, insisting that student telephone bills are the business of the telephone company and students.

"We have lost on our difference of opinion," he says.

OPUC agreed to hold the seven universities equipped with PNB's Centrex telephone system responsible for all unpaid student dormitory telephone bills.

PNB says it lost \$400,000 at the seven universities during the past two years because of "basic fraud" — problems identifying students who placed long-distance calls and accepted collect calls in dorm rooms. Students refuse to pay for calls that they did not make, and the

phone company absorbs the loss, says PNB representative Joanne York.

Because all dormitory phones are part of the University's Centrex system, the University ultimately should be responsible for the bills, York says.

The second part of the new billing system requires students with phones in their dorm rooms to pay 30 cents for each operator-assisted call and 65 cents for collect calls and calls billed to a third number.

Before the OPUC ruling, students were not charged extra for operator-assisted calls because all long-distance calls made from dorm rooms had to go through the operator. The operator charge has been added because PNB estimates that students previously received more than \$272,000 worth of free operator assistance, says OPUC representative John Clay.

The new system requires the University to be responsible for policing dorm phones in the future, and it should be easier for the University to stop abuses, Clay says.

Williams is not so sure. "We don't know how to wrestle with the problem yet."

Campus tunnels contain algae, pipes, cockroaches

By MATT MEYER
Of the Emerald

Sometime during your freshman year, someone told you about the tunnels.

"My brother used to go down into the tunnels during summer and play cards," you were told. "It's a lot cooler down there than up here."

So you and a bunch of your pals dressed up in dark clothes, took flashlights, found a coil of rope, and prepared for a descent into the tunnels.

About an hour later, after exploring three or four mucky storm drains, you decided that there are no tunnels at all, and that the whole thing was a myth perpetuated to keep freshmen away from their studies.

You were wrong.

There are, in fact, about three and a half miles of tunnels five feet under the University campus, connecting all the major buildings and the physical plant.

The tunnels house miles of pipes carrying steam, chilled water for air conditioning, compressed air, and power and communications lines.

According to Harold Babcock, director of the physical plant, the tunnels allow maintenance workers easy access to leaking pipes or other faulty equipment.

The city of Eugene, unlike the

University, buries its steam and utility lines under pavement. This makes it difficult to repair leaky steam pipes, Babcock says. The escaping steam makes its way to ground level, resulting in billows of steam rising from manholes during winter.

"We're very fortunate to have this system, I think," says Babcock. "It makes maintenance much easier, because you can get out and actually see the problems."

Yet, the tunnels hold more than just utility lines — namely vandals. Babcock says trespassers have broken locks and grates and used hacksaws to get through heavy-duty locks and gates.

Once in, they usually don't stay long. Although heavily insulated, pipes carrying steam for heating and cooking, heat the uncirculating air in the tunnels to temperatures up to 120 degrees.

Physical plant worker Earl Hemenway says a maintenance worker usually can last only about an hour in the hot, muggy air of the tunnels.

The extreme heat isn't the only uncomfortable feature of the tunnels. Most of the floors of the tunnels have more than an inch of mud caused by condensation and rain water. Orange algae grows in heaps along the

warm, moist cement walls.

Although orcs or goblins have yet to discover the University's tunnels, squirrels and other rodents visit the tunnels occasionally.

But the main animal problem in the tunnels is cockroaches. "There's a colony of cockroaches down here that'll fight you," Hemenway says.

Despite the extreme heat and cockroaches, curiosity usually brings a few students into the tunnel system each year. Although little is generally said about the tunnels, Babcock claims that the physical plant never has denied their existence.

"We've never tried to keep it secret. We'd just rather that it wasn't a challenge for people to break in. I very strongly feel that there are hazards down there that are very serious.

"We don't even go down there alone. It's damn dangerous if you don't know where you're going or what you're doing."

High voltage cable in older sections of the tunnels has released an odor that indicates that the lines are dangerously overloaded. Most of the cable has been replaced, Babcock says, but some hazardous areas still exist.

Continued on Page 2



Photo by Bill Wack

Physical plant director Harold Babcock tours one of the tunnels that lies five feet beneath the University. He says the tunnels, which contain water pipes and utility lines, are explored by squirrels, cockroaches and a few adventurous humans.