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Athletic fee debate reaches impasse

By Dane Claussen
Of the Emerald

After months of meetings, ASUO officials and the University athletic department appear to have declared an impasse in negotiations over student incidental fee support of athletics for next year.

A May 28 letter from E.M. Easterly, the athletic department's business manager, says that the department wants to stand firm on an incidental fee subsidy of $15 per student per term.

Representatives from both sides will meet today in an effort to come to an agreement.

Easterly's letter was written in response to a May 20 letter from former ASUO Pres. Rich Wilkins and Karsten Rasmussen, former Incidental Fee Committee chairer, which says the ASUO is standing firm on $14 per student per term.

The $1 difference would mean about a $40,000 difference to the athletic department, which has already cut its budget for next year by $60,000, according to Dave Gibson, ASUO vice president for administration and finance and a member of the ASUO's negotiating team.

Gibson said the position of Easterly's letter was "expected."

"It's a tight issue because they (the athletic department) are having problems all the way around," he says.

The athletic department has not asked for as much money as in the past because it has been receptive to the idea that many students believe it receives too much incidental fee support, Gibson says.

"We basically feel that it's still too much," he says.

Easterly says negotiations with the IFC have been "fruitful and helpful" but the ASUO and athletic department decided to involve a third party — the administration.

"Everyone has been amicable and forthright all the way around," he says, adding that this is especially true in light of past relations between the department and the ASUO.

The exchange of letters between the ASUO and athletic department was the only major development in the negotiations since May 3 when the IFC approved an overall subsidy of $563,586 and a policy that the ASUO will assume no responsibility for underrealized student ticket sales. The figure is up 3.5 percent from this year's base subsidy of $544,066 — or a total of $14 rather than this year's $12 per student, per term — but excludes this year's guarantee of an average of $5 per student, per term in student ticket sales.

This year that additional $5 guarantee cost the ASUO $130,000 from surplus funds because of low attendence at athletic events — making the actual ASUO subsidy about $15 per term.

Gibson said at the May 3 IFC meeting that "at $15, they'd (the athletic department) actually make a profit of $10,000 (next year)."

MOSQUITO!

Control switch means bites

By Marian Green
Of the Emerald

Lane County residents will be slapping and scratching away at more mosquitoes and bites this summer than in 25 years, says a county mosquito control supervisor.

A switch from synthetic pesticide methods to natural methods of mosquito control is the main reason for the increase, says John Callicrate, vector (disease-causing organisms) management supervisor at the county Environment Health Department.

Two years ago, the county controlled 22 different species of mosquitoes "because that's how many there are in Lane County," Callicrate says. But public concern caused the county to examine the pros and cons of synthetic control and to switch to alternative methods, such as using bacteria and mosquito-eating fish to combat the disease-causing mosquito population.

"Lane County is sort of unique in that a large portion of its citizenry is interested in doing this," Callicrate says.

"This summer there will be more mosquitoes than we've had in 25 years," he says. "It's the first time in 25 years that we've used natural controls."

For the past 10 years, the county has used helicopters to spray malathion over thousands of acres at a cost of $1 an acre to combat the various mosquito species.

THE ALTERNATIVE METHODS are much more expensive, costing $12.50 to spray each acre, which means the department can control only those mosquitoes that cause malaria and encephalitis, Callicrate adds.

The county still will retain the spraying ability in case of a major outbreak of disease-carrying mosquitoes.

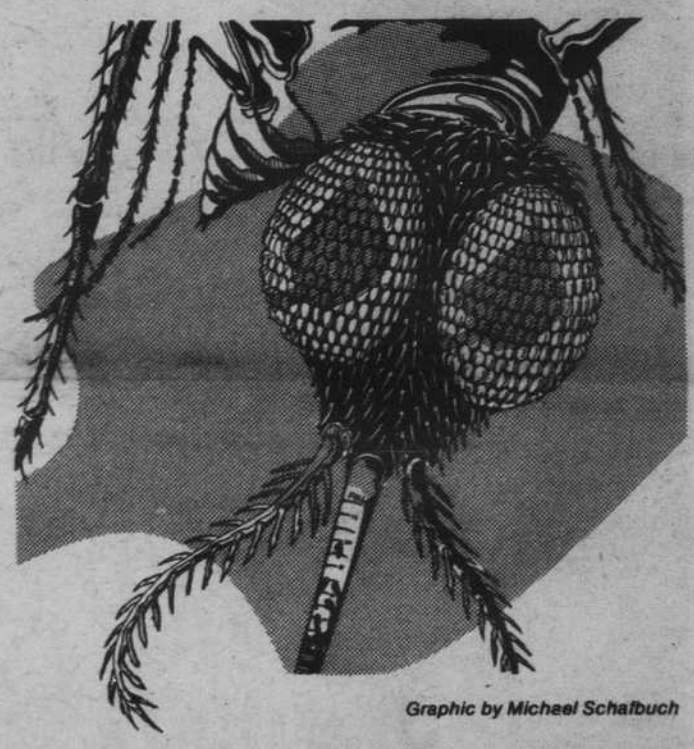
"If we had more money, we could control more, but we don't. Nobody's got money now," he says.

Callicrate says that unlike most county operations, his budget received an increase from $100,000 to $150,000. "Even in the midst of these budget-cutting times, in order to do this reduced level of control requires that our budget be increased 50 percent."

He says the environmental health department legally has "the responsibility to protect the community from disease" but is not responsible for allergies and infections resulting from scratching mosquito bites.

"It would become a political issue far in advance of a legal issue," he says. "There's always this hassle between what the technician wants to deliver, what the bureaucrat wants to pay for, and what the people want."

LAST YEAR the department began cutting back on spraying synthetic pesticides at Fern Ridge, Dorena and Cottage Grove reservoirs, says Callicrate. Those areas will "probably be worse" for mosquitoes because the larvae laid there last year probably will hatch this summer.



Graphic by Michael Schafbuch

By next summer, the county could have "by far, the largest mosquito population that anyone can remember."

Callicrate says the trend to switch from synthetic to natural controls is just "evolution." The United States first banned the pesticide DDT, using malathion and similar pesticides instead, and now natural controls gradually are replacing the synthethic pesticides, he explains.

What can residents do to keep from being eaten alive?

Callicrate says the repellent business is booming, with a host of items ranging from home remedies, such as taking certain vitamins and eating garlic to expensive electronic devices, which emit a high frequency noise that repels insects.

"The problem with a lot of these is you end up repelling everybody else," says Callicrate, who does not endorse the electronic or home remedies.

Callicrate recommends a mosquito repellent his department uses called Muskol, which has the highest concentration (95 percent) of an effective ingredient called "Deet."

RESIDENTS CAN PREVENT mosquito reproduction by ridding any containers of standing water, changing water in troughs or wading pools and stocking ponds where mosquito production is likely to occur with Gambusia minnows — "mosquito fish."

Mosquitoes reproduce in standing water, free from wind or wave motion and can hatch in as few as four days during a hot summer.

Free Gambusia fish are available from the environmental health department, 125 E 8th Ave. from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. weekdays. Residents must provide their own containers, preferable one or two-quart jars.

For the business minded, Callicrate has other advice.

"If you had stock in some repellent company, you'd probably make a killing this summer."

Pesky bugs plague nation

From Associated Press Reports

"It doesn't look like it's going to be a very good year for humankind," says state entomologist Marius Wasbauer in California, where flocks of chickens have been enlisted in a battle against the bugs. "We've got a bumper crop of mosquitoes."

An unusually wet spring has brought similar warnings from officials across New England, the Midwest and down into Texas, where some areas had their wettest May on record and the state health department is predicting an insect population boom unparalleled in recent years.

An April blizzard that dumped a foot of snow which quickly melted is blamed for encouraging heavy breeding of mosquitoes in Connecticut.

Money is part of the problem in California, where Proposition 13 cutbacks have slashed the mosquito control budget by 50 percent to $8 million.

All of California's 63 mosquito control districts have been alerted, and a statewide surveillance program has been put into operation. In 1981, 582 cases of malaria were brought into California, although the disease has been eradicated inside the state.

Texas authorities said the a "psorophora," or floodwater mosquito, which breeds in puddles, will be one of the most prevalent species there. Texans also can expect to see another type, Culex pipiens, which carries the dreaded St. Louis encephalitis. The Culex pipiens likes to breed in water that contains sewage and in water standing in containers such as flower pots, old tires and pet dishes.

In some areas, such as the marshes of coastal South Carolina, a war against mosquitoes is waged with airplanes, helicopters and four-wheel-drive vehicles.