

ASUO enters computer age

Incidental Fee Committee provides funds

By Jim Moore
Of the Emerald

If computers are indeed the wave of the future, then the ASUO stepped into tomorrow when the Incidental Fee Committee voted 4-3 Jan. 25 to provide nearly \$10,000 to put the executive on-line.

The ASUO Executive presented the IFC with a proposal for a microcomputer system that included estimates from three firms, Information Management, DATCO and Computerland. The lowest bid, \$9,832.68, came from Information Management.

Most of the money, \$6,822, will come from ASUO surplus and was held by the IFC until the executive's travel account was unfrozen. The committee had frozen that account because it showed a deficit.

However, the account was owed money by the University Foundation and the ASUO reports the account is now in the black and steps are being taken to purchase the microcomputer system.

"It looks like everything but the printer will be here and fully operational in two weeks," Bill Hallmark, the ASUO coordinator of program administration and finance and one of three people who prepared the ASUO proposal, said Wednesday.

The "everything" Hallmark mentions includes a central processing unit with the capacity to store 10 million bits of data, three video display terminals, a modem and assorted software. The printer outlined in the proposal would be of letter quality.

According to the request, two terminals would be placed in Suite 4, one for the ASUO Executive and the other for ASUO programs to use, while the third terminal would be in the IFC office for the committee's use.

Foremost among the executive's arguments for the proposal was the cost saving benefits of a microcomputer system.

In October of 1983, ASUO Vice-Pres. Kevin Kouns, who helped prepare the proposal, said such a system could pay for itself in two years. And ASUO Executive Coordinator Susan Sowards, who also worked on the ASUO request, repeated that belief at the Jan. 25 meeting.

"We feel it's more like a short term loan over a couple of years," she told the IFC.

Still, the request met with strong opposition from some members of the committee.

One dissenter, Marc Spence, was not opposed to the computer system and says he would have voted for it as part of a budget package. However, he expressed concern about using surplus money for such a purchase.

"I think it's irresponsible for an IFC to reach into surplus money to fund something when it could be budgeted for next year," he said.

That process, though, is what prompted one favorable vote.

"I didn't think it was a good idea to put it in the budget process and have fees pay for it when there is enough money in surplus," said Sheila Schain, IFC vice-chair.

Another opposing view was expressed by IFC member and dissenter Mary Shrauger, who voiced fear that the computer equipment might have to be changed to become compatible with other computers in the state system.

The state system of higher education is planning to require all computer equipment in the state accounting system to be compatible.

The third dissenting IFC member, Leslie Dewson, was noncommittal throughout the meeting and originally abstained. She said she changed her vote to no because she agreed with the arguments of both Spence and Shrauger.

Sowards outlined several reasons why the present is the best time to make such a purchase, saying computer prices are not constant, and if the purchase price exceeds \$10,000 the purchase would have to go through the state system open bid process, which could mean loss of local control.

Also, the current administration is geared up to put the system into use and Sowards is available to provide training and prepare a training manual, she said.

But the strongest selling point appeared to be the money saving potential.

"It's obviously necessary to save costs," said a pro-computer IFC member, Laurie Abraham.

In its proposal, the executive indicated that more than \$1,000 could be saved the remainder of this academic year on printing costs alone.

The modem will allow the ASUO computer to link with the University Press by going through the University's computer center and cut typesetting costs approximately in half, according to the proposal.

Another advantage of the system will be a savings of time and money keeping the ASUO program's books, Hallmark said.

Included in the software will be a spreadsheet program that will enable a user to make accounting entries and have them automatically reflected in the total budget, saving much time and eliminating errors, he said.

The other two committee members supporting the proposal were IFC Chair Julie Davis, who delivered a statement endorsing computerization just prior to the vote, and Lois Day.

SUAB questions basketball entrance rules

More Duck athletes than the 10 basketballers suited down for Don Monson were in Mac Court early for the Oregon-OSU basketball game Feb. 2, according to a grievance filed with the Student University Affairs Board by a student.

SUAB member Gordon Mallon received a grievance after the game that questioned whether the athletes should be

allowed to enter McArthur Court before the public.

Thursday SUAB decided to offer a proposal to Athletic Director Rick Bay to place one of its members, Mallon, in the complex to ensure that it doesn't happen again.

In other business Thursday, SEARCH director Steve Meyer asked the board its support of charging a fee for some SEARCH

courses.

"We are trying to stay alive and keep our own authority within our department," Meyer said.

Also, SUAB announced it is continuing its voter registration campaign, taking forms to greek houses and the residence halls, and its survey on what students think about switching to a semester system.

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