

Council denies sister city funding

By David Ryan
Oregon Daily Emerald

City Council passed up the opportunity to facilitate greater world peace Monday night.

At least, greater world peace is what Councilwoman Betty Taylor said having sister cities contributes to.

"I think the benefits of sister cities, in addition to the cultural and economic benefit, we are contributing to world peace," Taylor said.

Taylor spoke in support of Sister Cities International, a group of volunteers who run Eugene's sister cities programs and events. The group came to the council Monday night to ask for funding

beyond the end of the 1999 fiscal year, when city funding for the group expires. But group members didn't stop there. They wanted funding to increase the number of Eugene's sister cities beyond the four it has.

But council members were skeptical of the sister city program.

Councilwoman Nancy Nathanson criticized the way sister city programs were run. She said that she was disappointed that many one-day visitors from Eugene's sister cities were not given meaningful tours of the city but were instead taken to shop at Valley River Center. She was also worried that many Eugene resi-

dents were unaware that the program exists.

"What sort of statistical information do we have that say people in Eugene are aware of our sister city program?" She said.

Councilman Scott Meisner was critical of the way the group planned its budgets. Meisner also expressed dismay at the way he felt social groups viewed the city as "the first and last funding source."

"We are now the social service safety net," he said.

Council members talked about funding the group enough to survive. Mayor James Torrey also suggested the group ask the Rotary Club for funds.

Report hails University's budget cuts

The General Accounting Office commends the school for saving millions

By Tricia Schwennesen
Oregon Daily Emerald

The University caught the attention of the U.S. General Accounting Office by efficiently cutting \$7.7 million of its administrative budget.

"The GAO concluded that the University of Oregon exemplified success in running a tight ship and included us as one of only three examples nationally," University President Dave Frohnmayer said in his State of the University address Thursday.

The GAO report, released Sept. 30, spotlighted the University for implementing a new on-line financial information system and eliminating paperwork from manually processing checks and purchase orders thereby saving the University money.

In the early 1990s, the State Board of Higher Education mandated that all universities organize a Board Administrative Review Committee to examine administration costs vs. the cost of education, said John Moseley, provost and vice president of academic af-

fairs.

The committee's goal was to reduce administrative costs and implement more efficient processes to combat rising tuition.

The budget was then about \$150 million. Of that, \$50 million went toward administrative cost, including the operation of the business office, the physical plant, buildings and the grounds, he said.

With the help of an outside consultant, the committee had to come up with a plan to cut costs.

The University then reduced the number of vice presidents from four to three, reduced the number of administrative positions, streamlined bookkeeping and switched from a paper purchase order system to credit card purchasing, he said.

"We were typical of most state bureaucracies," Moseley said. "More paperwork and more approvals were needed to guarantee we were getting the best deal."

While the University was compiling the requested report, Measure 5 reduced the number of state dollars each university received.

The climate had already been created to hold down the cost of administration, but now the University had to raise six dollars to

every one state dollar.

"The irony of this particular situation is that tuition at the UO increased tremendously, which had nothing to do with administrative costs but the reduction of state funds," Moseley said.

The challenge in reducing costs was to make sure that the same services were still available to students.

One way the University has found to reduce costs while keeping services is the new matriculation fee that was implemented this fall, he said.

The fee is \$150 for new students and \$45 for returning students and covers the cost of such things as IntroDUCKtion, transcript requests and processing graduation applications.

Moseley said state funding may increase but that he hoped the tuition freeze will continue.

If the University doesn't receive more state funding, then tuition may have to increase or educational services may need to be cut to keep a balanced budget, he said. "We are continuing to fight the battle," Moseley said.

The GAO report is available online at www.gao.gov/new.items/he98227.pdf.

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- Wednesday, October 14, from 6:00-7:00pm in Univ Inn - Lobby
- Wednesday, October 14, from 7:30-8:30pm in EMU - Metolius Room
- Thursday, October 15, from 6:00-7:00pm in Moore Dining Room

If you are unable to attend, but are still interested, please contact Corey Rasmussen at (541) 346-9584 or come by our office in the EMU Century Rooms between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.

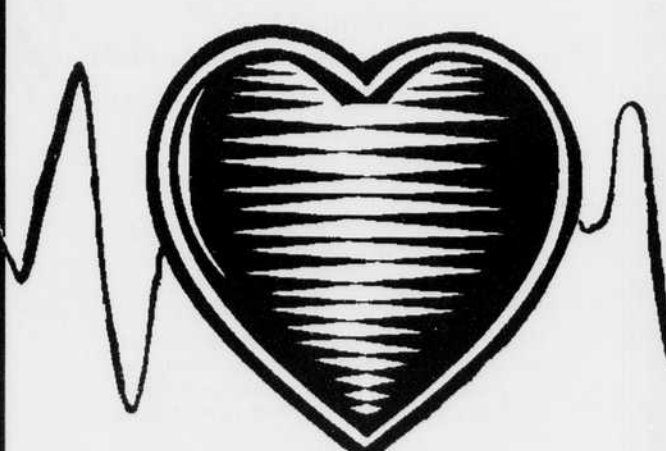
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