

PFC increases Emerald budget in tense hearing

After an hour-and-a-half of debate, PFC voted to raise the Emerald's budget by 1.2 percent for 2004-05

By Moriah Balingit
Freelance Reporter

A feeling of tension dominated the Rogue Room on Monday as the Emerald weathered an hour-and-a-half ASUO Programs Finance Committee meeting where the ASUO Executive urged for a \$12,000 decrease from the previous year's allocation.

The Emerald's request of \$121,025 was met by a \$106,503 Executive recommendation. PFC allocated \$120,407 for the Emerald, a 1.2 percent

increase from 2003-04.

Emerald General Manager Judy Riedl said the Emerald raises more than three-quarters of a million dollars through advertising and other activities. The amount the Emerald requested from PFC is the projected deficit, Editor in Chief Brad Schmidt said.

"It's the amount that's vital to the Emerald because it's the amount that will be required (for us) to remain solvent," Schmidt said.

The Executive used a formula to calculate its recommendation that mostly took into account readership numbers taken from an Emerald survey, the student population and cost per paper, among other things.

ASUO Vice President Eddy Morales said the Executive recommendation

was "generous."

Riedl severely objected to the proposed budget cuts, citing increased production costs and a larger student population.

"Given that we provide the same level of service to a larger student body, why should we get cut?" she asked.

A large part of the hearing was devoted to debating exactly which formula should be used to determine the Emerald's allocation and the validity of the readership survey the Emerald provided.

"A readership survey should be part of (determining the allocation) ... but I don't think this should be the one," PFC Chairman Adrian Gilmore said.

His and other PFC members' skepticism with the readership survey was

because the survey was based on only 300 readers, which, according to Gilmore, is not sufficient in determining an accurate campus-wide readership figure.

Other PFC members were concerned that the allocation would be funding papers for non-students, thus disrupting what ASUO President Maddy Melton described as "the spirit of what (incidental fees are) for — for students."

PFC member Michelle Rose voiced her concerns on providing non-students with papers.

"I don't think it's fiscally responsible," she said.

Another concern was that too many papers were being printed, but PFC member Toby Piering defended the

Emerald, saying, "It's not in their best interest to waste money by printing too many papers."

PFC member Colin Andries formulated the final figure that PFC eventually agreed on by taking the readership survey out of the formula. The budget passed by a slim one-vote margin, 4-3-0.

ASUO spokeswoman Taraneh Foster did not comment on how ASUO felt about the final decision, but said that the large discrepancy between the Executive recommendation and the final allocation was "interesting."

"(ASUO) strives to be as accurate as possible and protect the incidental fee," she said.

Moriah Balingit is a freelance reporter for the Emerald.

COUNCIL

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The standards the group are proposing — which support complaints regarding weatherproofing, structural integrity, heating and plumbing — would not interfere with state standards and would be enforced on a complaint basis, group officials said.

Ward 3 City Councilor David Kelly,

the University-area representative, said that in all likelihood there would not be any public hearings on housing standards until the fall, given the usually lengthy process the city goes through to explore a new issue.

"I truly found the prioritizing experience a little bizarre tonight, that we couldn't give a priority to (housing standards)," Kelly said.

The City Council had been prioritizing issues for the Planning and Development

Department to address.

Nathanson — along with Ward 6 City Councilor Jennifer Solomon, Ward 5 Councilor Gary Papé and Ward 4 Councilor George Poling — said that though they thought housing standards were an important issue to address, they wanted more time to gather information about the standards.

Taylor said that city staff is already in the process of surveying West University neighborhood renters

and local property owner organizations to see what their housing concerns and priorities are.

He added that given the volume of input from students and the support from city councilors and Mayor Jim Torrey for public comment, it is unlikely that public hearings will take place during the summer.

"I assure you that the city manager and myself, who set the agendas, will not allow these hearings to take

place until students come back," Torrey said.

Melton said she was encouraged by the councilors' words but was still dissatisfied.

"I feel like issues such as the enforcement of housing standards cannot be put off," she said.

Contact the city/state politics reporter at nikacarlson@dailyemerald.com.

UNDERDOGS

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In Tennessee, Edwards blamed free trade for the decision by Carrier, the air conditioning giant, to close a plant in McMinnville, Tenn., and move 1,300 jobs away. Edwards was unmoved by the fact that only some of the jobs are being moved to Mexico; the rest are going to Texas and his home state of North Carolina.

"Most of these jobs that are leaving this country aren't going to Charlotte, North Carolina. They're going outside our borders," Edwards said. "We need to have a different

trade policy in this country."

James Mears, 49, one of those losing his job, walked out of a closed-door session in a barbecue restaurant with Edwards considering switching his vote from Kerry.

"I think I may vote for him," Mears said. "Bush doesn't have any concern about the American worker."

Added Kathy George, a quality coordinator at the Carrier plant whose husband, Randy, is also losing his job there: "Because his father worked in a mill, he's more in touch with reality. We've got to have a change of power in Washington."

Clark spent a gray and rain-splattered Monday boasting of his humble

roots and his proposals to cut middle class taxes as he campaigned through the economically depressed towns of Union City, Dyersburg and Ripley in West Tennessee.

"I spent my life rolling up my sleeves," Clark said.

Responding to a question, he said he opposed gay marriage, but that "it's a matter that the states have to decide." He also compared his record with that of President Bush: "I've forgotten more about national security than George W. Bush has ever learned."

In several towns, voters Monday raised the question of Bush's own service in the Air National Guard

during the Vietnam War.

The allegation of "Bush not reporting to the Guard is a big issue to veterans," said Gary Paschall, 47, a real estate appraiser in Union City. "It's offensive. Did you see Bush on 'Meet the Press'? He did terrible. I'll vote for whatever it takes to beat Bush."

Kuhnenn, with Kerry, reported from Tennessee. Hull, with Clark, reported from Tennessee. Tom Fitzgerald, with Dean in Wisconsin; Tim Funk, with Edwards in Tennessee; and Steven Thomma in Washington also contributed to this report. (c) 2004, Knight Ridder/Tribune Information Services.

CAMPUS BUZZ

Tuesday

Belsky Lecture featuring a talk by Science and Environmental Health Network Executive Director Carolyn Raffensperger, entitled "The Public Trust and the Precautionary Principle: Visionary Tools for the Environment and Public Health," Alumni Lounge, Gerlinger Hall, 7:30 p.m. Reception follows.

CORRECTION

In the guest commentary "OS-PIRG should account for funds" (ODE, Feb. 9), Colby Reade's name was spelled incorrectly. The Emerald regrets the error.

"Greasers and Gringos"

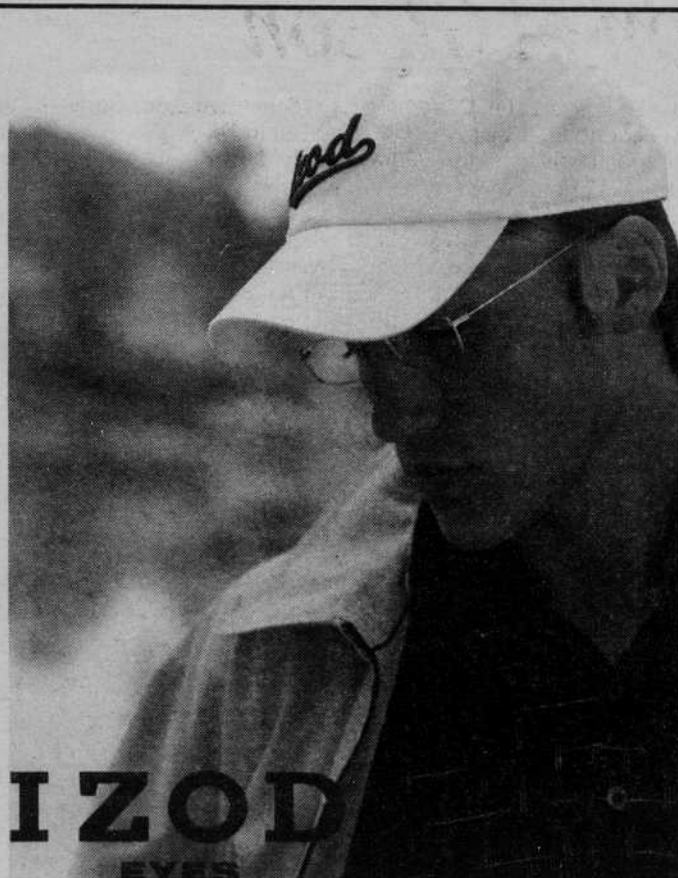
Latinos, Law, and
The American
Imagination

Author
Steven Bender

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