

'Summer of the Budget' afflicts CCC

By Happie Thacker
Of The Print

This summer was the "Summer of The Budget Election" for most of the faculty, staff, administration and students at Clackamas Community College.

After the failure of the first two budget elections in May and June, the decision about whether or not the school would open for classes fall term hinged on the success of the Aug. 9 budget election, thus putting enormous pressure on all those involved.

A publicity campaign was initiated by the board, administration and students in order to get voter approval for CCC.

Board members were encouraged to arrange speaking engagements throughout the school district at least once a week, press conferences were held, mailings were sent out by students and staff informing the public about the college, telephone calls were made to urge people to vote and door-to-door canvassing was done by CCC students and students at other community colleges in the area.

The results of this mass publicity campaign are by now apparent. The budget passed overwhelmingly, by a better than two-to-one margin and the college will run another year-- until the next budget election, at least.

"One thing we learned is that we must communicate closely and continuously with all the residents of the district," said Dr. Howard Fryett, Assistant to the college president, "I think when people realized our plight they responded positively."

"We shouldn't wait until the third election to work as hard as we did," said Tonya Tucker, assistant to the Associated Student Government (ASG) President, Mike McCarty. "We should do it the first time around and make people aware of what's going on."

Another thing that became apparent was the need for alternate funding for the college.

"These (budget elections) take time and money," said Fryett, "and as an institution we need stability."

"I think we should not let this opportunity pass of having the community interested in the college," said Dr. John Hakanson, president of CCC. "I've had people tell me that they're tired of seeing us expend so much time and energy on budget elections every year. We now have a real opportunity to pass either one or the other (alternative funding measures)."

One of these alternatives to the present system is a tax base, which is a fixed amount that can be increased by 6% every year without going to the voters.

"I personally prefer a tax base," said Fryett, "the major problem with that is that it becomes obsolete, especially with a growing institution and inflation."

The only other alternative is a rate based serial levy. This means that the school would have the option to ask voters to approve the tax rate base for two to three years and would only have elections when there was need for a new rate base.

The drawback with the serial levy is that it is a brand new concept, according to Fryett, and will take a great deal of public education as to what it means.

"An advantage is that it only lasts three years and can go back to the people for a revised amount," said Fryett.

"Right now, within the next 60 to 90 days the board must make a decision about what they're going to propose to the voter's" said Hakanson. "We want a lot of student input on the subject, either to me, the student body president, the paper or to the board members."

"I want to get a lot of ideas and thoughts and feelings from the community because either alternative will be a vast improvement over what we now have."

Community involvement is very important to college funding, said Hakanson, especially after the results of the last budget election.

According to a computer analysis of the CCC election the budget was not passed by students like one might expect, since they are the most directly affected by the college's continued operation or lack of it.

On the contrary, the budget was passed by voters over the age of 65, including many 80 and 90-year-olds.

According to the computer there were more ballots cast by persons over 65 than by all of the under-30 group put together.

"I think it's most unfortunate that young people aren't aware of the connection between their vote and the quality and even the continuation of CCC," said Hakanson.

"The reason we lost the first two budget elections is apathy," said Mike McCarty, Associated Student Body president, "nobody's involved or concerned."

ASG seeks involvement

Getting people involved will be the goal of the Associated Student Government at Clackamas Community College this year, according to Mike McCarty, ASG president.

"I don't know how to overcome it (apathy) as a whole," he said, "but we will be making more contacts with students and faculty and seeking more publicity for our programs."

In the past, said McCarty, there were 20 ASG senators with nothing to do but come to meetings and participate in them. He hopes

"They act as if it were a drive-in car wash kind of like a hamburger stand, where you come in, get what you want, and leave and don't get involved until there is a crisis situation," said McCarty.

"People have to stand up and get involved because everything that goes on does affect them," he said.

According to Hakanson, the reason for the high turnout among older voters is that they realize the benefits the college brings to the community, especially to the business community.

Anybody owning a business benefits from the money brought in by the college, he said. These people (the students and faculty) are consumers and spend most of their money in the college district.

"Seventy-five to eighty per cent of the money goes for personal services, especially salaries, and ninety-five per cent of our lives in the district. They are buying groceries, clothes, etc."

"The college also means a higher level of education in the county in general. This means people are better qualified for better jobs that pay more money so they can spend more."

to change this by giving each senator a specific job to do.

Senators will each be assigned a particular department where they will go once a week to meet with faculty and students to find out what they are doing and hear complaints. They will also meet with administrators to discuss specific problems.

McCarty also intended to give some senators entertainment assignments. They would help set up and promote activities and give information and feedback from students.

"Since we're older (McCarty is 26 and some of the senators are in their 40's)," said McCarty, "we are aware of the costs of programming exhibits and activities and plan to schedule fewer things, but to have those of better quality."

His main concern, however, is to make ASG more responsible and inspire more students to get involved.

"Unless there is a crisis situation or a major issue no one votes or even cares," McCarty said.

He feels that if students get involved with what is going on at school this might carry on into the community and create more aware and interested citizens.

McCarty is also planning more elaborate activities for CCC, such as starting a legal aid program for students. He worked with other community colleges last year in discussing a program that would cost students \$5 for legal insurance. This would entitle them to legal help in all civil matters such as divorce and landlord/tenant disputes. It would not cover criminal charges or suits against the school, he said.

"The biggest problem seems to be getting the students to pay the \$5," McCarty said. "But this seems a small price to pay for legal insurance."

The ASG president also would like to see a campus-wide video system installed at CCC. This network would show messages, advertise events and help people locate one another in emergencies, he said.



Mike McCarty

... overcoming apathy

