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College faces levy

By David J. Hayden
Of The Print

For the third time within five months, the College Board will present a tax proposal to district voters March 31 in a special election.

If passed, the levy would authorize a tax rate of \$1.14 per \$1,000 true cash value for three years beginning July 1. It

would provide a substantial cut in comparison to the current serial levy, which will expire July 1.

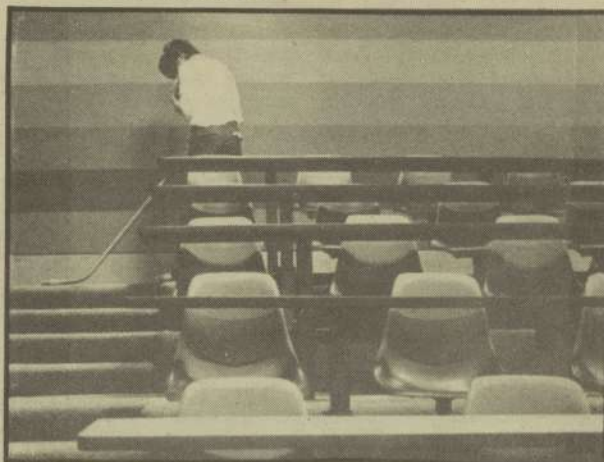
On Nov. 4, a proposal for a permanent tax base was soundly defeated by the voters. On Feb. 17, two three-year serial levies, one to cover operating costs for the College and the second for future con-

struction costs for the College, were both defeated. The operating levy went down by a margin of 2,200 votes, and the construction levy lost by 2,071 votes.

"If everyone who was enrolled in classes at that time had voted yes, both of the levies would have passed," College President John Hakanson commented on the last election.

The College Board has decided that, at least for the present, all construction will be suspended. "We concluded that, at this time, people are so concerned with the economic situation that College growth, even to meet demand, will have to be delayed," commented Dr. Hakanson. "We will wait until we can show a need great enough to gain their support."

Previously the College had plans for several buildings on campus, and one in the North Clackamas area. With the suspension of construction, the



AFTER—This March, a different employee vacuums up the dirt left in the Science Building.

board is considering moving eight trailers that are now on campus to the North Clackamas area to meet the needs of the growing population in that area.

Concurrent with the serial levy problems is a reduction in state aid. Within a two-year period, state aid has been cut by approximately 20 percent.

"The state funding problem is not going to go away next year, or the year after. It is something that we're going to have to deal with on a long-term basis," commented Hakanson.

The cut in state aid has caused the board to look closely at enrollment procedures. "The lack of funding may very well mean we have to stop our growth and close enrollment," Hakanson said. Under a closed enrollment system, only a limited number of students would be admitted.

"I think some people have the impression from the three-year serial levy that the College has a tax base," Hakanson said. "It doesn't. If we fail to pass a levy by May, the summer session will be cancelled. If we haven't passed it by August, the closure of fall class is likely."



Staff photo by Ramona Isackson

BEFORE—Last March, an employee works on what might be the last new building constructed on campus. Namely the Science Building.

College funding reaches critical level

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During the past year, the College's funding problem has gone from bad to such a critical level that the College Board will soon be determining whether funds are available for the upcoming summer session, if staff will need to be laid off and, eventually, if classes will be held next fall.

The current financial problems have had three major causes: the expiration of the current serial levy, the defeat of two tax proposals and repeated cuts in state funding.

The College's current serial levy will expire July 1. Two attempts at securing funding, the Nov. 4 tax base proposal and the Feb. 17 bid for an operating levy and a construction levy, both failed. Without a replacement for the current levy, the College will be 50 percent under funded.

At an Oregon Community Colleges Association meeting on Feb. 20, the College administration received the latest in a series of discouraging news from state officials: all agencies should prepare for an additional 10 percent cut in state revenue. According to the State Department of Educa-

tion, that would mean a loss of \$405,000 to the College for the 81-82 year.

According to Tony Van Vliet, state representative, this action follows three previous cuts in state funding to community colleges.

The first limiting of funds came in the 1979-80 state appropriations. It allowed for a maximum growth rate of 2 percent in enrollment for each of the two years. The College experienced an actual growth rate of 8 percent in 1979-80 and an estimated 9 percent in 1980-81. Any growth over the state's limit has had to be supported by the College without the usual assistance from the state.

The second reduction in aid came in September 1980, when state revenue shortages caused a \$300,000 cut in funds for the College in the 1980-81 year.

The final cut carries the governor's 1981-83 budget. It allowed for no growth in community college enrollment, even though they are the only segment of education officially expected to increase.

The state's revenue to the College is currently budgeted at \$3,799,000. With the propos-

ed 10 percent cut, the College will be left with approximately \$3,394,000 in funds from the state.

"If the state continues to cut community college funding, it may very well mean that we will have to stop our growth and close enrollment," commented College President John Hakanson. "We would then be forced to turn students away."

The first effects of the revenue shortage will be felt almost immediately. Dr. Hakanson outlined a nine-step plan to cut all possible expenses in a Feb. 27 letter to College staff.

—The cost-cutting plan's first step is to freeze all staff positions that become open. Positions will be filled only if the department dean and the College president approve them in writing.

—Second, all expenses except those necessary to the daily operation of the College are suspended unless approved by the department dean.

—Third, all out-of-state travel is suspended except those trips approved prior to Feb. 24.

All classes with an enrollment of less than 15 students

will be cancelled unless there are extenuating circumstances and it has been approved by the Dean of Instructional Services Ron Kaiser.

—Fourth, the library will remain closed during the weekends despite student and community requests that it be kept open.

—Fifth, no equipment will be purchased unless approved by the department dean and the College president in writing.

—Sixth, the spring in-service day is cancelled.

—Seventh, the College Board will discuss the possibility of halting the mall construction project.

—Eighth, all department deans are requested to prepare lists of staff positions which will

have to be eliminated if the College has failed to pass a tax levy by the end of May.

—Ninth, all deans were asked to show at the March 3 President's Council meeting how the College can cut \$410,000 from the 1981-82 budget.

"You can cut things back so far," continued Hakanson. "If people want to close the College, they will. We hope to convince them that the College is a worthwhile part of the community."

If the board fails to pass a levy by May, the summer session will be cancelled. If a levy is not passed by August, fall term classes will have to be cancelled.

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