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Clackamas Community College

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Board votes against referring tax

By Shelley Ball
Of The Print

A disagreement with the state Legislature led Clackamas Community College's Board of Education to vote last month not to support the reference of Oregon's sales tax proposal to the public by putting it on the ballot.

The legislature is holding the College, as well as other school districts and local governments, responsible for determining if the sales tax will appear on the ballot. The sales tax issue was referred by the

Revenue Committees of both the House and Senate in a special session to the Legislature, who in turn referred the tax to the school districts and local governments. At this point enough votes have been collected to put the tax on the March 27 ballot.

The Board voted 5 no to 2 yes to "not refer it to the people," Board Chairman Larry Wright said, because he and other Board members think the task to be the responsibility of the Legislature.

Wright explained the vote is not a reflection of the Board's opinion on the sales tax, but the opinion of having them decide whether the tax should be presented to the voters on the ballot. "We're (Board) not supporting the concept that we should be the bad guys to put it (tax) on the ballot. No one objected to the people voting on it, but it really wasn't constitutional for us to make that decision," he said.

The Board meeting was held on campus in the

McLoughlin Theater, and State Representative Robin Lindquist and Oregon Community College's Association (OCCA) Executive Secretary Richard Weiss, Dave McTeague and Stephen Scheer, who were representing Citizens Opposed to Sales Tax.

If the College's Board had not had to vote on referring the sales tax to the voters, Wright said he believes the Board would have supported the tax on the ballot. Wright also said if a sales tax was passed, the College would benefit from it, but he explained the bill is so complicated he is not sure how much the College would benefit. Wright is also not certain if the public would save any money from the tax.

"I think it (sales tax) has some real glaring faults," he said, as he explained there is the possibility of levy amounts being raised after a sales tax

passage, and because the tax is so confusing, Wright said most voters will probably be voting on emotion alone.

College President John Hakanson said the College would benefit from a sales tax by making it "easier to sell or get the voters to vote on a tax levy," as it is estimated a sales tax would reduce the public's property taxes between 40-45 percent in over a year.

Otherwise, Hakanson said there would be "no direct increase in money to the College."

Although Hakanson is currently not taking a stand on the sales tax, he said "It's hard for me to think that it's going to pass," based on the past performances of the issue at the Oregon polls.

In addition to the sales tax vote, Wright said the Board decided to place Hakanson in charge of drafting a letter explaining their dislike of having to make that vote. The letter will then be sent to the Oregon Legislature.



BIRD DROPPINGS—A duck shows off with a one-leg balancing act on a trash receptacle at the recycling depot near the Environmental Learning Center. Photo by Joel Miller

Board meeting to discuss levy status

Recommendations for the March 27 serial tax levy will be discussed tonight at the Board of Education Meeting set for 7:30 p.m. in the boardroom in Barlow Hall.

It is recommended that the College propose the same levy to county voters as it did in the November election. With projected state revenues in 1984-85 and estimated enrollment for the next year, the same type of levy is still valid.

The November levy was defeated by voters by over 13 percent. The College is cur-

rently functioning on the last year of a three-year serial levy that expires June 30, 1984.

In November, the Board asked for a four percent annual increase in property taxes, which would tax each property owner \$1.39 per \$1000 of assessed value. The current rate is \$1.24 per \$1000.

If the measure is approved, \$7,610,700 of the taxes levied during the next fiscal year will be eligible for partial state funding. However, \$671,318 of the taxes levied will be financed by taxpayers without partial state payment.

