

SUN, field house win early tax support bids

By Lori Demo

The new UNL field house and the State University of Nebraska (SUN) project Monday won round one in their bids for state tax support when the Unicameral's Appropriations Committee approved money for them.

However, while the two appropriations are being sent to the floor of the Legislature, the Athletic Department must face the scrutiny of an appropriations subcommittee that has been formed to look into the department's fiscal operations.

The Appropriations Committee approved for consideration to the floor \$200,000 for operation of the new field house on an 8-1 vote, and \$125,000 for delivery of SUN courses to enrollees on a 5-2 vote.

Both votes were reconsiderations of the committee's decision last week to finance the two only with self-generated cash or revolving funds.

Money must be spent

The money for operation of the field house is in addition to the \$250,000-\$50,000 in cash funds from renting the field house and \$200,000 from the revolving fund of the Athletic Department's programs—that the Committee approved last week. According to terms of the appropriations, the cash and revolving fund money must be spent before the tax money can be spent.

Committee Chairman Richard Marvel of Hastings was the lone dissenter on the field house vote and was joined by Sidney Sen. Robert Clark in voting against the SUN appropriation.

Marvel said the problem with the \$12,000 field house, construction of which is to be financed by a special tax on cigarettes, is that no one is sure who is going to administer it.

"Assuming the Athletic Department is (going to administer it) and that we are putting in public money because the Athletic Department says it cannot afford to operate it," he said, "then we need to begin contact to examine their records. It is the right of the taxpayer if he is going to subsidize it."

Marvel said the subcommittee of Clark and Sen. Harold Simpson will meet with Athletic Department, UNL and NU officials for suggestions on administration of the field house and how more money can be brought in to help finance its operation.

'Real problem'

Simpson said he would be looking for "what the real problem is in the supposed lack of money which the Athletic Department claims."

An Athletic Department financial projection shows a possible loss of \$81,000 in all sports during the year in which first operational costs of the field house will come. This figure does not include the expense of operating the field house.

"The legislature has never looked into athletic funds," Simpson said. "We feel this might be the time we should. I have some idea of what will happen: we'll look at the figures, at all the freebies, the whole picture. Then we'll make recommendations first to the Appropriations Committee and then to the entire Legislature."

Simpson said the study will happen "rather quickly," possibly before the appropriation comes up for vote on the floor of the Legislature.

Public knowledge

Athletic Director Bob Devaney said all the department's fiscal records are public knowledge and the look into them is "not anything that will bother us."

However, he said, he does not understand why the Legislature is questioning the use of money for athletes when it never has questioned the use of money for such areas as science or law.

"We're not a different part of the university," he said.

While Marvel opposed the appropriation for the field house, he said, he objects even more to the SUN funding.

"If we begin to use tax money to subsidize that project in which we had no input in the first place," he said, "we begin to water down the effect of the tax dollar."

Takes money away

SUN takes money away from UNL, the University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO), the University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC), state colleges and community colleges, he said.

Marvel said he thought these two bills were reconsidered because of additional public demand and because of contacts by "interested people, both paid and unpaid," with the senators.

"All I know is I was opposed to them at the start and I am still opposed," he said.

Simpson said the field house issue was brought up for reconsideration because many senators "got a lot of flack" concerning how the field house would be maintained.

Both Marvel and Sen. Shirley Marsh said they expect the bills to meet some opposition when the Legislature takes action on them.

Marsh said this opposition must be assumed because Tuesday Sen. Frank Lewis mentioned on the Legislative floor that the Appropriations Committee had changed its mind. The way he said it was "discouraging," said Marsh, who favors both bills.



U.S. Attorney General Edward Levi

Attorney General to speak

The new East Campus NU Law College Building will be dedicated Thursday. The ceremony will begin at 4 p.m. in the lecture hall of the new building.

U.S. Attorney General Edward Levi will receive an honorary Juris Doctor degree and later will speak at the Law College-Law Day banquet. The banquet is co-sponsored by the College of Law and the Lincoln Bar Association.

Levi is the former president of the University of Chicago and former dean of the University of Chicago law school. He was a member of the White House Central Group on Domestic Affairs and the White House Task Force on Education.

After the afternoon ceremonies, law students will conduct tours through the new \$3.2 million building.

Plant science building study funded

By Ron Wylie

University systems personnel will prepare planning and use studies for two new NU projects in an Appropriations Committee decision which may set a precedent in future funding.

Unicameral budget committee members allocated \$40,000 for planning costs of a plant science building and \$10,000 for a use-study on a proposed mid-city education center in Omaha. But in each case, the committee voted to direct the NU Systems Office to prepare studies.

Committee Chairman Richard Marvel of Hastings said he thought the systems office could provide a more impartial analysis of needs and expenditures than the unit involved—such as UNO.

In debate over the UNO Education Center, Omaha Senators John Savage and Glenn Goodrich said the state needed to clarify its position regarding the mid-Omaha project.

Commitment asked

Currently, plans for the center call for a \$10 million project, with a private Omaha donor providing \$2.5 million, the Omaha business community adding \$2.5 million, and the state contributing the other \$5 million.

Omaha businessmen and the anonymous donor want some type of commitment, Savage said, adding "I hate to see us lose \$5 million that has been pledged."

Goodrich asked for the \$10,000 use-study grant to determine if "Omaha is really going to use this building."

If the use-study shows a need for the center, Goodrich said, UNO can present plans next year for some type of bond financing of the project.

The study appropriation passed the committee by a 7-2 vote, but Lincoln Sen. Shirley Marsh reminded Goodrich that

funding the planning study was not a commitment to go ahead with the project.

Hospital purchased

Appropriations Committee members also passed a quarter million dollar authorization for the University of Nebraska Medical Center to purchase Omaha's Good Shepherd hospital facilities. The funding amendment, sponsored by Omaha Sen. Savage, also appropriated another \$700,000 from next year's state general funds to make the balance of the purchase.

Savage said the medical center addition was "absolutely necessary for the

development of the medical school."

He told committee members the university had already used the facility for over a year.

"People who own this property and are selling it to us, have been waiting two years to get their money," Savage contended, "The Legislature voted 42-2 to accept the acquisition; they must believe in it."

Savage said if the state didn't take the property now, "Clarkson Hospital can and will sell it to someone else."

Ambulatorium

The Savage amendment specified that the purchase was

to be completed within the next year.

Earlier in the week, the committee granted \$2.5 million in state funds, to be matched by \$5 million in federal funds, for a Med Center ambulatorium. The facility will serve as an out-patient teaching and care center.

In its last day of budget hearings, the committee failed to fund a \$290,000 addition to the university's Life Science Bldg. The motion to fund the addition, sponsored by Sen. Marsh "to make it complete," lost 4-2, with three abstentions.



Photo by Ted Kirk

Hastings Sen. Richard Marvel, Appropriations Committee Chairman