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## Proposed appropriation to be heard Tuesday

Analysis By Dick Piersol

The Nebraska Legislature's Appropriations Committee Tuesday will have public hearings on the NU's share of LB690, the higher education appropriation bill. It will have another hearing on the bill Jan. 28.

The senators proposed Dec. 19 an NU appropriation of \$87.9 million tax dollars compared to \$77 million last year and a requested \$100 million.

The breakdown by campus was: UNL—\$35.4 million (including \$586,000 for maintenance of the new field house); University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO)—\$6.9

million; University of Nebraska Medical Center—\$21.2 million and central administration—\$24.4 million.

This is contingent upon an 11 per cent tuition increase which would increase resident tuition by about \$2 per credit hour and non resident tuition by about \$5.35 per credit hour.

The committee removed from the base budget \$2.8 million, \$1.9 million of it for UNL, to finance increased instructional workloads and is still at issue. That amount, if lost, could cost the university as many as 130 faculty positions, Interim Chancellor Adam Breckenridge told

the NU Board of Regents at its last meeting.

### Lump sum requested

NU Pres. D.B. Varner also asked the committee for a university appropriation in one lump sum to the systems office, to be distributed by the Regents.

In past years, the same request has been made unsuccessfully, with the senators eventually appropriating specific amounts to programs within each campus and the systems office.

Varner said advantages to single sum appropriations would be in long-term planning, coordination among campuses and administrative flexibility, and would require that the regents and administration assume what he called a proper responsibility for resource allocation.

UNL Interim Chancellor Adam Breckenridge said he preferred appropriations by campus. Varner said that would be some progress, but not as desirable as a single sum appropriation.

An informal poll of committee members last week showed lump sum budgeting to have slim chances of passage.

Varner also said that NU needed a 12.3 per cent increase in faculty salaries to reach parity with the four neighboring state universities.

He said all faculty salary increases should be based on merit alone, a concept Committee Chairman Richard Marvel of Hastings has endorsed.

### Committee's theme

The theme of the committee's attitude toward the university was for administrators to more clearly define the NU's mission and goals and for NU to provide a plan of accountability to the Legislature before single sum budgeting or any variable would be considered.

Marvel said the first order of business will be the question of accountability, "the method or tools the university can use to show the legislative body how the university fulfilled its mission."

He said that the NU administration cannot say its mission is to "educate kids," but must define teaching, research and extension roles. They also must show how the university's agricultural role fits in, according to Marvel, explaining that some consider the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources and agricultural experiment stations practically a separate campus division.

### Salary parity

Other university issues Marvel noted will be tax support and salary parity between UNL and UNO, salary parity with other comparable institutions and increased enrollment.

The Legislature also mandated several reports in last year's appropriations bill concerning instructional program review, program budgeting, postsecondary education coordination, enrollment, faculty development and others.

Marvel said the key to the entire operation is and always will be information. He said there must be more administration, faculty and student exposure to "those of us who have the job of throwing the money hoping it will hit the right spot."



University lobbyist William Swanson may be praying for dollars Tuesday when the Nebraska Legislature's Appropriations Committee has a public hearing on LB690, the state's higher education appropriation bill.

## New method used for budget issues

Legislative Appropriations Committee hearings on the fiscal 1976-77 state budget began last week. The committee met in preliminary sessions last month with agency heads and fiscal staff to get an early start on new budgeting procedures.

Committee chairman Sen. Richard Marvel of Hastings said the new method is intended to deal with the basic issues in each agency's budget, rather than simply arguing over how much of an increase an agency deserves.

According to legislative fiscal analysts, in past years the fiscal staff and the governor made budget recommendations, and the agencies made requests. The procedure then was to haggle a compromise from the three figures based upon what the state could afford to pay.

Marvel instructed the staff last month, to prepare computations of each agency's subsistence or base budget; that budget would allow the agency to function under statutory requirements.

Operating expenses increased six per cent because of

inflation. Workload increases were reviewed, and state replacement of lost federal funds was eliminated.

One exception was the University of Nebraska Medical Center, where new and expanded programs were eliminated. Each agency was then expected to justify their budget beyond the minimum.

Marvel stated in December that this process was to show the agencies, recipients of state services, legislators and taxpayers that an appropriation for one year does not imply a commitment to continue the same or greater budget levels in the future.

From Dec. 15 through 19, the committee met to discuss issues with the agencies, not to review dollars, according to Marvel, but to define the issues within each budget.

In those hearings, the committee tentatively agreed to grant all state employees four per cent salary increases, with another one per cent merit increase at the discretion of the agency head.

## Additional money proposed for Nebraska Academy of Sciences

A \$5,000 addition to the State Dept. of Education budget, earmarked for the Nebraska Academy of Sciences, was proposed Friday in legislative hearings by Norman Otto, administrative assistant to Gov. J. James Exon, as an alternative to Hastings Sen. Richard Marvel's LB659.

Marvel's proposed legislation called for establishment of the Nebraska Academy of Sciences as a state administrative agency. Its main function would be to finance the publishing of scientific papers by Nebraska scholars. Currently the academy is an independent agency.

Otto told the Government Military and Veterans Affairs Committee that Marvel's bill was unnecessary if funds could be added to the state education budget.

"The goal of the Academy simply is to have some way to get their material published," Otto said. "Another state agency is not needed."

Otto suggested sending a letter to the Commission of Education asking that the money be set aside for the academy.

Marvel told the committee his bill was "a vehicle to discuss funding for the academy." He admitted section six of the bill was too broad, saying he "had a reputation for making bills too far-reaching."

Section six stated that the proposed agency would be the official state agency to receive and disburse federal funds made available for state science-related programs.

Roger Macklem, science consultant for the State Board of Education and chairman of the Junior Academy of Sciences, said the budget addition was a "much better alternative" than creating a state agency.

Otto was questioned by Ralston Sen. Gerald Koch about the possibility of giving the money to UNL.

The education dept.'s budget should receive the money rather than UNL, Otto said, because "the NU Board of Regents are not in favor of that type of addition to their budget."

C.B. Schultz, academy executive secretary, said the academy, founded at UNL in 1891, includes both high school and college level scientists and teachers, with statewide members. They meet every year to discuss new findings and present scientific papers, he said.

"The object of the academy is to promote scientific investigation and stimulate research," Schultz told the committee. "This is the only place scientists have to communicate with each other."



Photo by Ted Kirk

C.B. Schultz, executive secretary of the Nebraska Academy of Sciences, smiles during one of the lighter moments at the legislative hearings on the State Dept. of Education budget.