

Vet school decision has been delayed

By Barbara Lutz

A decision to locate a five-state veterinary medicine school at UNL was postponed Monday by the Old West Regional Commission (OWRC) until April 20.

At the same time, members of the Nebraska Legislature said they cannot give support to the proposed school until they have more information from the OWRC.

OWRC is a committee of governors from Nebraska, South Dakota, North Dakota, Wyoming, and Montana plus a President-appointed co-chairman.

John DeCamp, vice-chairman of the Legislature's Agriculture Committee, said OWRC "has proposed nothing to the committee." The veterinary school proposal has been around for a long time, but little action has been taken on it, he said.

Because the governor and OWRC "haven't kept us informed," he said, agriculture committee members have introduced a resolution requesting the governor and the OWRC to tell the committee what they want, the cost and

the reason in a specific request.

Concept approval asked

"Game playing time is over," DeCamp said. "If they want a school, they can come tell us."

Don Nelson, Gov. J. James Exon's alternate to the OWRC, said Exon will ask the Appropriations and Agriculture Committees to give their approval or disapproval of the OWRC veterinary school concept.

Old West governors said they want legislative reaction before spending \$457,000 of the commission's money to plan the school, Nelson said.

If the school is built in Lincoln, the legislature would appropriate \$2.6 million to \$3.2 million, its share of the total \$14 million bill, said Howard Ottoson, acting vice-chancellor of the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

Students from the other four states would have to pay an additional \$2,000 annual fee, from which Nebraskans would be exempt. Estimated tuition for nonresidents will

be \$6,000 annually.

No prediction


"The location is not a point of contention," Nelson said. "No one seems especially concerned about the site, and every governor is positive."

Appropriations Committee Chairman Richard Marvel said he would not predict any legislative action on the school because "we haven't received any invitation to any briefing yet, and we don't know all the details."

"If we are talking about \$14 million to build a veterinary school, it is impossible at that rate (of information briefing)," he said.

Ottoson said that currently all five states contract with other institutions to accept their veterinary students.

Nebraska veterinary students must attend out-of-state schools with the state paying the \$4,000 to \$11,000 difference between the non-resident and resident tuition rates.



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