

Union Board ups arrangement fee for organizations

By Mary Jo Fitzl.

Organizations requiring special meeting arrangements in the Nebraska Union will pay \$5 more beginning July 1, the Union Advisory Board has decided.

The board voted 6-2 to increase the current \$5 service charge to \$10. Enforcement of the service charge for student organizations will be delayed for this academic year, according to Union Director Allen Bennett.

"We won't bring down billing of student organizations during this year until July 1 (the beginning of the 1976-77 fiscal year)," Bennett said.

Faculty and administrative organizations paying the current \$5 service charge will continue to do so until the increase goes into effect July 1.

The service charge applies to any organization with more than 20 members requiring meeting arrangements beyond those normally provided in the Union. Union operating policy states that those groups are charged extra for time and labor of the Union staff to make special arrangements.

Fees vary

The amount of the charge is determined by a fees schedule. Student organizations are subject to a smaller fee than administrative and non-university groups. Standard service charge to student organizations for special set-ups will be \$10, the Advisory Board ruled.

An earlier proposal by Bennett set the service charge at \$25.

ASUN President Bill Mueller attended the Oct. 20 meeting to express his opposition to the service charge. ASUN Senate meets in a conference-style arrangement subjecting them to the fee.

"When you're talking about a compromise (between the current and proposed charges) a fee of \$5 or \$10 is not a compromise," Mueller said. He told the Advisory Board he was concerned with the principal of the service charge, rather than the increase.

Bennett explained that service charges have existed since the Union opened in 1938. "It's not a question of whether (to have the increase or not), it's a question of how much," he said.

"The fee has deterred other groups from using that type of set-up (an irregular arrangement)," Bennett said. Five dollars is as much a deterrent as a \$10 fee when working with the limited budget of the Union, Bennett said. "The deterrence needs to stand, in my opinion."

Fee would help expenses

An increase in the service charge would generate about \$700 a year, Bennett said. If the charge was dropped, the Union would lose about \$7,000 in income because it would have to absorb labor costs and time spent on preparations, he said.

A proposed amendment to the proposal exempted ASUN from the service charge because it is the most broadly-based organization on campus and represents the entire student body. The Advisory Board voted down the amendment.

The board discussed criteria to determine which student groups should be exempt from the charge. Currently, ASUN, Interfraternity Council and Panhellenic Association are the only student organizations with meeting arrangements requiring the service charge.

Advisory Board President Mike Shanahan proposed having the Fees Allocation Board (FAB) help determine which groups need special set-ups. If the irregular arrangements were needed, he said, FAB could allocate extra funds to the organization to cover service charges.

Shanahan said the Advisory Board will prepare a final statement on the service charge before its Nov. 3 meeting.

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