

daily nebraskan

NU Regents, governor see need for budget meeting

By Craig Nelson

Regent Robert Simmons of Scottsbluff, who has recently criticized NU President Ronald Roskens for the 15 percent increase in the university budget request over last year, said he welcomes a meeting between the governor and the regents to discuss the proposed budget.

Simmons, reached in his Scottsbluff office Tuesday, said he looks forward to, and sees a need for a meeting with the governor.

In a letter to Simmons, dated Sept. 4, Gov. Charles Thone said he could not recommend such an increase, and asked for a meeting with the regents to discuss the budget request.

"There certainly are some areas of the budget which need to be cut," Simmons said.

"I don't think there will be any problem in cutting the proposed budget. I am sure we (the regents) can come to some sort of agreement with the governor in regard to the size of next year's budget," he said.

Thone, who labeled the budget request as "too high," is on a trade tour in Europe.

Another regent who received a copy of the letter, Ed Schwartzkopf of Lincoln, said that a meeting between Thone and the regents is "an excellent idea."

"Anytime you can have a dialogue involving an agency of the state that is as important to the economic and educational life of the state as the university is, you ought to take advantage of the opportunity," he said.

Neither Simmons, Schwartzkopf, nor NU President Ronald Roskens were surprised by Thone's decision not to support the 15 percent budget increase.

NU has requested a 1980-1981 budget of \$133.2 million from state tax sources. The 1980 session of the Legislature will make the final decision on the budget.

Thone's decision not to support the 15 percent budget increase is based on his attempt to limit the overall state tax budget to annual increases of 7 percent.

In the letter, Thone said he believed the university has been sufficiently funded, in comparison with the rest of state government and post-secondary education, over the past several years.

"It is also clear that, in terms of general tax support for post-secondary education, Nebraska taxpayers have nothing to be ashamed of in comparison with other

states," the letter said.

Newspaper clippings outlining attempts by the State College Board of Trustees and the State Department of Education to trim

their budget requests were attached to the letter.

"Their discussion of the need for fiscal restraint is heartening," Thone said.



Photo by Tom Geaner

This dog may be looking for a way out of the Humane Society. The possibility of cremation awaits many of the 1,000 animals that are brought each month to the Humane Society. For more details, see page 6.

ASUN agenda

ASUN Senate will meet Wednesday night in Room 202 at 7 p.m. Here is the agenda.

- I. Call to order/roll call
- II. Approval of minutes
- III. Appointments—Electoral Commissioner; Student Court
- IV. Open Forum—Nathan Wesely, Pam Fritz, Bob Gleason
- V. Executive Reports

VI. Committee Reports—Academic Policy, Budget & Fees, Campus Life, Special Topics, Constitutions, Internal Affairs, CFA

VII. Old Business—Amendment to Organic Act No. 1, minority recruitment committee

- VIII. New business
- IX. Announcements
- X. Adjournment

Koefoot: Regents' letters caused conflict with lawmakers

By Cindy Coglianesi

Four members of the NU Board of Regents say the board's relationship with the Nebraska Legislature is in good standing.

One member disagreed, saying that misunderstandings between the two bodies have caused problems in the relationship.

Board Chairman Robert Koefoot of Grand Island



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Regent Robert Koefoot

said misunderstandings developed through "letters of communication by two of the regents."

Speaking of the letters sent to the Legislature by Regents Robert Simmons of Scottsbluff and Robert Prokop of Wilber, Koefoot said it is "unfortunate that this (letter writing) happens but they do not represent the board in whole."

Simmons sent a letter to some legislators after the regent's July meeting. In his letter, Simmons criticized the board's acceptance of an operation budget request of a 15 percent increase. He also criticized NU President Ronald Roskens in his letter.

PROKOP, WHO often has sent letters to state senators, sent a letter last spring charging that the university had covered up issues concerning faculty consultantships, fees for veterinary diagnostic testing labs on East Campus and legal fees at Eppley Institute of Cancer Research.

"I have met with a number of state senators in the past and I will meet with some in the future to try and solidify the relationship," Koefoot said. "But if one continues to receive letters from the other that try to disrupt and change everything, you can't accomplish what you want to accomplish."

Koefoot went on to explain that the regents are the governing body of the university and are elected by their constituents to represent them. He said it is the Legislature's responsibility to "control budgetary aspects of the university."

"We have never strived to control the Legislature," he said. "We ask what we think is necessary and leave it to them."

"I am looking for improvements in the bad relationship because there are a number of younger state senators who are open-minded concerning the state and education as a whole and they are willing to listen to both sides of the coin."

REGENTS KERMIT Wagner of Schuyler, Robert Raun of Minden, Kermit Hansen and James Moylan of Omaha, all agreed that the current relationship between the two governing bodies is good.

"It varies from time to time but I think the relation-

ship is normal at this time," Raun said.

Hansen said the good relationship exists because "we have excellent administrators working with the Legislature on a day-to-day basis." He added that it is a dynamic relationship that depends on the needs and position of both the state and the university.

"The basic area of tension and misunderstanding involves those who appropriate the funds," Hansen said. "Sometimes they feel it is their prerogative to establish priorities, but the State Supreme Court clarified what the constitutional law of the board of regents is."

Hansen added that the regents are accountable to the Legislature for "fiscal soundness" and to taxpayers and the university community to ensure academic quality.

Moylan said at times the Legislature is reluctant to trust the regents. He cited the incident last semester concerning the purchase of an air conditioning unit for East Campus without legislative approval beforehand.

"There were a lot of legislators complaining about the chiller, but we've learned our lesson," Moylan said.

Wagner said that the Legislature has been "very cooperative in taking care of college needs." He added that in the nine years that he has been a regent, the relationship has always been good.

Regents Robert Prokop of Omaha, Robert Simmons of Scottsbluff and Ed Schwartzkopf of Lincoln could not be reached for comment.

inside wednesday

Sharing the pie: The UNL Faculty Senate passes a resolution asking that part of a proposed tuition increase be allocated to the Teaching Council. . . . Page 11
Showing off: Comics, musicians and acts climb upon the Open Stage to make their Lincoln debuts. . . . Page 15
Familiar team: Beatrice high school graduates together as UNL volleyball players. . . . Page 16