

Union Board seeking change

By Ward W. Triplett III

The Nebraska Union Board's Wednesday night meeting will give board members a chance to meet with new UNL Chancellor Martin Massengale, but more serious business will have to be dealt with as well, according to the board president.

Maynard Krantz, beginning his fourth semester as board president, said the union needs control of building vending machines.

"Students put a lot of money into those machines, but it goes right to business and finance," Krantz said. "We get a novel fee for it, but not enough."

The profits from the union's 14 vending machines goes straight to the UNL business office, therefore the union can not use that money to help reduce food costs and student fees.

"We were forced to raise the prices of our beverages this year because we can't compete with the machines," Krantz said. "If we had the volume the pop machines brought in we would never have to do that."

Although the university took control of vending machines in the early 1970s, and either owns or leases all of them, Krantz felt the unions could regain control of them.

"We have to work in volume in order to be competitive with the downtown food services," Krantz said. "The only way we can keep our prices low is either to raise fees, which we don't want to do, and we haven't done in three years, or get control of the vending machines and put the profits from those into covering some of our losses."

Major losses last year occurred in food service, although Krantz said that food service director Ron Pushcar, who took over last September, has improved the situation.

"It's another case of where the competition from downtown is hurting us," Krantz said. "That's fine in itself, but we can no longer afford the low competitive costs there."

The City Union's Colonial room lost \$20,000 over the last two semesters, which is about 35 percent of the total union losses for the whole year. Krantz said the board would have to consider closing the room.

"We need to start working to become a break-even operation," Krantz said. "If any areas are cut, our suggestion would be to cut those services that do not serve the students first."

Students don't use the Colonial room often because they feel its only for faculty use, which isn't true, he said.

Krantz said if the unions can regain control of the vending machines, the Colonial room could remain open.

The 14-member Union Board, consisting of student, faculty and staff members, serves as an advisory panel to Union Director Daryl Swanson. The board met four times this summer.

"I would say we have the most effective board since I've been here," Krantz said. "We had good attendance and the entire board has an interest in improving the Union in any way they can. It's also the first time in my memory that we didn't lose anyone over the summer, so we're coming back with an experienced group."

The first meeting is Wednesday at 7 p.m. in the union. Krantz said students and faculty are welcome, and their suggestions are encouraged.

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