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Regents want to improve

By Matthew Walte
Senior Reporter

An NU Board of Regents subcommittee met Thursday to discuss how the board could work better and faster.

The governance subcommittee, which reviews the way the regents do business, spent the most time discussing a proposal to limit the number of business items that come before the regents.

Regent Don Blank of McCook said that the session was held to present and discuss ideas, not to make any formal decisions.

There were questions about whether the regents were delegating enough authority to the president and the chancellors, Blank said. He said that because of an information log-

jam, the regents may be missing some major strategic issues.

The regents currently examine all items that cost more than a set amount. That amount varies depending on the issue.

James Van Horn, associate NU vice president for business and finance, said the regents should raise the set amounts.

In a written statement, Van Horn, along with NU General Counsel Dick Wood, proposed changes in regent approval of business items. During regent meetings in 1992-93, 335 business items were discussed.

Under current regent policy, any construction project that costs more than \$100,000 must come before the board. Regents also must approve statements of need, program, schematic design, design development

and the lowest bid from the contractor.

Under the proposed policy, regents would approve the above statements and a budget for the project. Administrators would then take bids and select the lowest. If the bid came in below the regents budget, the board would not have to approve the contract.

Regent Nancy O'Brien of Waterloo questioned that proposal, which did not include regent approval of the schematic design, during early discussion on the matter.

"Under this plan, we wouldn't see what a building looks like," O'Brien said. "No way."

After some discussion, the members of the committee agreed that regent approval of the four statements and the budget was necessary.

Regents hope to stress policies

By Chris Hain
Senior Editor

The agenda for the NU Board of Regents' meeting today is the type that its members would like to avoid in the future, regents said Thursday.

At its monthly meeting, the regents will discuss an agenda dominated by administrative and business items, with a few items of interest.

"There's not a lot on this agenda," University of Nebraska spokesman Joe Rowson said.

The board would like to change the focus of its meetings. The governance committee on Thursday considered a proposal that would restructure meetings to eliminate some procedural elements.

"We want to see if we can minimize management issues and put

more emphasis on policies," Regent Chairman Charles Wilson of Lincoln said.

The board will decide if NU should purchase the Beta Sigma Psi Fraternity house, 2224 U St., for conversion into family housing units.

An informational item on the agenda concerns the proposed mandatory purchase of individual computers by students in the University of Nebraska-Lincoln College of Architecture.

The computer issue had the potential of putting significant financial strain on architecture students, Wilson said. However, it probably can't be avoided, because architecture students need to have computers available almost 24 hours a day.

NU President Dennis Smith also will discuss the engineering task

force at the meeting. Rowson said the president probably would clarify the goal of the task force.

Regent Robert Allen of Hastings has requested that the regents discuss the task force's forthcoming report. According to a note on the agenda, Allen has raised questions about the expected report.

The regents also have been setting aside a portion of their meetings to discuss strategy items. This month's item is student recruitment.

"There has been some press about top students from the state who leave the state to attend college," Wilson said.

"We want to see what the University of Nebraska can do to recruit students to the campuses."

Committee to enforce parking laws

By Andrew Lucas
Staff Reporter

A new citizen committee will be ticketing cars parked in handicapped spots, a Lincoln police spokesman said.

Capt. Doug Ahlberg of the Lincoln Police Department said the volunteer program was another step to enforce handicapped parking laws.

The Americans with Disabilities Act requires owners of property open to the public to make improvements to assist the disabled. Property owners must build sidewalk ramps and install signs warning illegal parkers of possible fines.

"Lincoln wanted to address this issue, so Mayor (Mike) Johanns set up a committee in February,"

Ahlberg said.

The city also raised the fine for parking illegally in handicapped spaces, Ahlberg said. The fines went from \$37.75 for each offense to \$97.75 for a first offense. Within the same year, the second offense fine is \$197.75, and the third offense fine is \$297.75.

The committee is taking applications from interested volunteers. Anyone older than 20 can contact the Lincoln police for an application before Oct. 1. When the applications are in, the police will complete background checks and interview prospective volunteers.

The 10 chosen volunteers will go through a training program that will teach department procedures. That includes how to write a citation and how to fill out an activity sheet.

Volunteers also will take a course in conflict resolution.

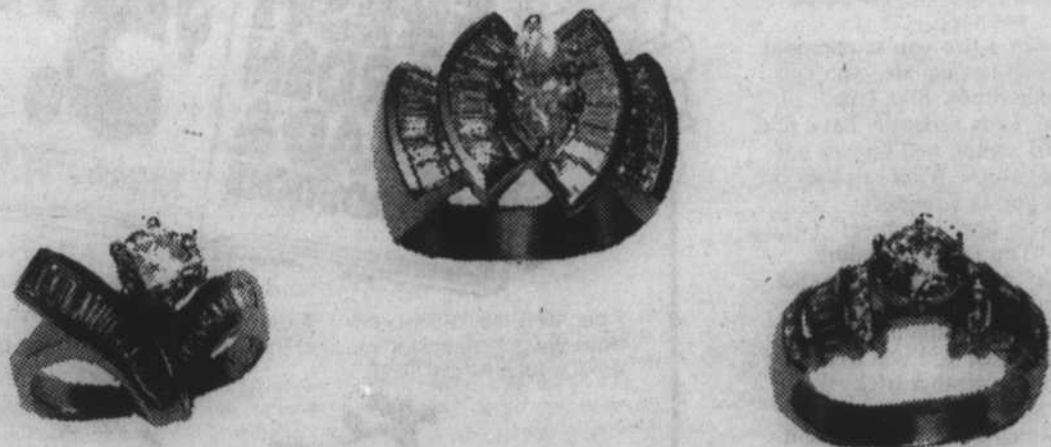
"The volunteers will work within the policy and procedures of the police department," Ahlberg said.

The volunteers will be scheduled to work a set number of hours. They also will be expected to provide their own transportation. They will be given a vest and an identification card.

"[The volunteers] will have direct communication with the police department in the form of cellular telephone," Ahlberg said.

A recently passed Lincoln city ordinance gave the volunteers the power to assess fines. The state passed a similar statute that gave them the power to patrol private parking areas but not to give tickets.

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