

Tobacco sales fire debate

By SARAH BAKER
Staff Reporter

After a police sting operation that caught a Nebraska Union employee selling cigarettes to a minor, union officials are debating whether the university's information counters should sell tobacco products.

But discontinuing tobacco sales could cost students at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln more in union fees.

The sales of tobacco make up almost 40 percent of the income from information desks. Tobacco sales totaled \$68,464 in 1995-96 for both the Nebraska Union and Nebraska East Union. The \$21,224 in profit pays the information desk workers' wages.

Union Board Director Daryl Swanson said if the sales of tobacco were stopped, the money would prob-

ably come out of the students' pockets.

Despite this, Swanson said, the first objective of the information desks is to assist students, not sell cigarettes.

"The general function of the desks is to provide students with help. The merchandise sales are a second objective," he said.

In a letter to the board, Chancellor James Moeser addressed the issue of higher student fees.

"I do not believe we should raise student fees as a result of eliminating tobacco sales. If the board agrees to eliminate tobacco sales, I shall work with Vice Chancellor (James) Griesen and Vice Chancellor (Melvin) Jones to find a suitable alternative to higher student fees," Moeser wrote.

Swanson said he didn't know what those alternatives would be.

"We could tighten our belts in other areas, but it would not be an easy task to replace that income," he said.

Union Board member and information desk employee Saad Alavi said the university stands to lose more money than just that generated from tobacco sales.

"Most students come to the desk and if they buy cigarettes, they also buy pop and candy along with them," he said.

Board members also talked about construction efforts on the Nebraska Union. Members were concerned that fewer students would use the union once the north entrance was closed.

"The temporary west entrance is open for student use. It is important to keep the union accessible to students since they are what keeps it going," Swanson said.

Parking committee discusses solutions

By SARAH BAKER
Staff Reporter

A think tank of students and faculty brainstormed possible solutions to the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's parking problems Tuesday night at the Parking Advisory Committee meeting.

Although no proposals have been formally made, the committee developed a number of ideas to:

- Clear up campus parking lots.
- Make shuttle routes more efficient.
- Use a charge card for the new parking garage.
- E-mail parking appeals.

The group had questions about one idea that would ban students from buying a parking permit if they lived within a mile of campus. One faculty member asked if the rule would apply to staff as well as students.

UNL Parking Manager Tad McDowell said he didn't know what the specifics of the concept would be or if the university even would adopt it.

"There may be reasons as to why some people can't use alternate forms of transportation, like handicaps or health reasons," McDowell said. "None of this has been taken into consideration with these ideas as of yet."

The parking-ban concept was originally taken from a system used at the University of North Carolina. McDowell said before he seriously considered the idea, the committee would find out how the system at UNC works.

"Before seriously considering any of these prospects the university will definitely be well informed," McDowell said.

Another parking issue discussed was moving the bus shelter on the City Campus loop next to Oldfather Hall to the corner in front of Morrill Hall.

"When the bus gets in the loop, often the route gets blocked, which damages the time schedule of the pickups. The loop is also rough on the buses themselves," McDowell said.

The committee also talked about using a card access system in the parking garage being built at 10th and T streets. Students and faculty could buy parking time on a plastic card, similar to UNL's copy cards.

McDowell presented an idea to make filing parking appeals easier. Offenders will be able to e-mail their parking appeals to parking services and receive a date and time for an appeal hearing.

Despite all the ideas the committee considered, members agreed that no matter what the solutions may be, there will always be some unhappy students.

McDowell said he would rather not set limits on students, but it could be unavoidable.

"Parking is a no-win issue," McDowell said. "Any approach that we decide to take will leave some people upset. Any time we put limits on something, there are going to be unhappy people."

Academic Senate representative Linda Swoboda said she wanted the committee to start taking action on some of its ideas.

"Why should we bring up these ideas if we are not sure if they are even going to happen?"

UPC, Lied clash over budgets

By ERIN GIBSON
Senior Reporter

The historically linked University Program Council and the Lied Center for Performing Arts sparred Tuesday over the use of student fees during the 1997-98 school year.

The two groups, which usually submit a joint request for a share of student fees, requested substantially different amounts of money from the Committee for Fees Allocation at the committee's annual spring fee-user presentations.

Charles H. Bethea, executive director of the Lied, requested a subsidy of \$128,000 to cover the cost of discounting student tickets. But Jessica Curtis, president of the University Program Council, said that amount was too high.

Betheas requested an additional \$36,350, or about 40 percent more than last year's student fees allocation. Curtis said this far exceeds

the program council's 9.6 percent budget increase she proposed for programming outside the Lied Center.

The Lied's budget is considered part of the program council's budget, and the Lied should request a similar budget increase, she said.

"It's important for UPC to have a say in this," Curtis said. "We strongly support the Lied subsidy, and we're confident we can come up with a number we both agree on."

Because Bethea became the Lied's new executive director on Jan. 6, there was not time for him to run his prospective budget through UPC before this week, Curtis said.

But, in spite of program council recommendations, Bethea supported his total budget request in front of the CFA.

"This is a very, very good program," Bethea said. "No performing arts centers will ever support

itself on ticket sales alone."

Bethea said New York's Broadway productions were exceptions.

The committee will vote on the University Program Council-Lied Center's final allotment Thursday at 5:45 p.m. in the Nebraska Union.

In other committee action:

• The Association of Students of the University of Nebraska requested a total \$180,373 of student fees for the 1997-98 school year. Student government currently operates with \$172,676 of student fees.

The request included about \$2,500 to make three staff employees official university employees. Currently, these staff members receive none of the health or retirement benefits given to university employees.

• The committee voted 9-1 in favor of granting the Daily Nebraskan \$45,268 of student fees for the 1997-98 school year. The newspaper received the same amount in 1996-97.

Union's north doors to close long-term

By KASEY KERBER
Staff Reporter

The north doors of the Nebraska Union will be closed today — and they will stay that way for 18 months.

Gates encircling the entire Broyhill Plaza were locked this morning, separating students from the union's north entrance until the union's expansion is complete.

Larry Blake, UNL project manager, said workers had to fence off the union plaza for safety and security rea-

sons.

Students are now advised to use the temporary entrance on the west side of the union building.

Blake said the west entrance was now complete, following the installation of awning lighting on Monday.

However, because of an excavation project, only a 6-foot-wide sidewalk leads from the union's north side to the new west entrance.

Within the union, there will be few changes beyond the locking of the north doors.

In about a month, interior construction will extend to within 4 feet of the north entrance staircase, Blake said.

"We're hoping to keep that staircase operational so students can get to the lower level," Blake said.

In addition to interior and exterior union extension, Blake said that parking inconveniences in the union's east parking lot will be relieved in about two weeks, and the fenced-off cul-de-sac at the intersection of 15th and F streets might reappear in one week.

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