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Date: 11/25/2013 3:20:50 PM
Subject: IA: Regents to freeze tuition if legislature approves new funding

Regents put second tuition freeze in legislators' hands
Board asks state for 4% hike, to add \$10M to UNI budget

Nov. 19, 2013
Written by
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Iowa City Press-Citizen

If all goes as planned, the Iowa state Board of Regents is expected next month to freeze Iowans' undergraduate tuition at the state's universities for the second year.

But don't start celebrating yet.

The freeze for the 2014-2015 school is contingent on two things: the Iowa Legislature approving a 4 percent increase in appropriations to the state's three universities and permanently adding \$10 million to the University of Northern Iowa's base budget for fiscal year 2015.

If the Legislature can come through with the needed money, it will mark the first time since 1975 that regents have kept in-state, undergraduate tuition the same for three consecutive years.

Last month, Gov. Terry Branstad voiced support for the tuition freeze. "It would certainly be something we'd love to be able to do," he said.

Under the plan, nonresident undergraduates would see a tuition jump of no more than 2.5 percent: \$460 at UI, \$334 at Iowa State University and \$402 at the University of Northern Iowa. Fees for undergraduates would increase \$18 at UI, \$5.80 at ISU and \$64 at UNI.

In other business, the regents are expected to approve the schematic design and \$8.3 million budget to finish 20,000 square feet of shelled-in space on the fifth floor of University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics' Iowa River Landing facility in Coralville. The project, which is scheduled to begin early next year and be completed by the end of 2014, will be paid for using University Hospitals Building Usage Funds.

In February, UIHC officials asked the regents to waive the requirement that they put out a public call for proposals because they want to hire local design firm Neumann Monson, the architect on record for the rest of the building, for the project. At that time, UIHC estimated the project would only include 14,000 square feet and cost \$7.4 million.

UI spokesman Tom Moore said the scope and price of the project increased because the design team decided to combine two projects "to ensure that the waiting room space was ideal.

"When all is said and done, the two projects together will be the same size and the same cost as originally planned," he added, "only the process used to reach the end goal has changed."

Finally, UIHC officials will request permission to proceed with a \$3 million project to renovate medical laboratories. The project would modernize about 5,000 square feet of research laboratories and offices. A mouse metabolic phenotyping core facility is needed to support increased diabetes-related research resulting from the establishment of the Fraternal Order of Eagles Diabetes Research Center.

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<http://www.press-citizen.com/article/20131120/NEWS01/311200028/>

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