

The University of Rhode Island
Strategic Budget & Planning Council
February 25, 2011
1:30-3:30 pm
Thomson Boardroom

Members/Staff in Attendance:

Chairman Don DeHayes, Bob Weygand, Abu Bakr, Faye Boudreax-Bartels, Winnie Brownell, Trish Casey, Tom Dougan, Nancy Eaton, Cheryl Foster, Glen Kerkian, Ann Morrissey , Trish Morokoff, Jack Szezpanski, Linda Barrett

Members Absent:

Peter Alfonso, Bob Beagle, Thorr Bjorn, Steve D'Hondt, Ken Kermes, Ron Jordan

See the complete list of member information at the Strategic Budget and Planning Council website at <http://www.uri.edu/budget/sbpc/Membership%201-11.pdf>

Meeting Minutes:

1. Meeting called to order @ 1:40 pm by Council Chair DeHayes.
2. Chair DeHayes – With the exception of Tom Rockett, a new Board of Governors has been appointed; no date scheduled at this time for Senate confirmation. The delay in the confirmation process is a challenge to URI as we try to request that time sensitive items be addressed. The new Board has five URI alumni; a depth of experience and has begun asking for benchmarking data. Strategizing about process and approach is likely the best use of our time as we await their approval.
3. Minutes of 2.11.11 – approved with modifications.
4. How do we create an open process to address reductions? Need clear justification for reductions.
 - a. Budget Reduction Principles. Additions would have different set of principles. Reductions must be strategic. We need to manage the message; minimize impact on integrity of the university and maintain morale.
 - b. Approval of tuition increase could minimize the need for reductions
5. SBPC needs to function at a global level rather than a detail level a college or departmental level.
 - a. Suggestion to recommend contingency plan when the Budget Request is reviewed and recommendations are made by SBPC. The contingency would compensate for the requested increase in State Appropriation should that not materialize. Chair DeHayes mentioned that some directives on what to include or exclude from the Budget Request were received late in the process.

- i. Vice Chair Weygand pointed out that when the Council was created it was for the purpose of determining how to develop a budget. Perhaps in moving forward, the Council should address what to fund and what not to fund. We are at a point now where we have to discuss the principles for making reductions.
 - ii. Chair DeHayes mentioned that when reduction targets are given in the Academic Affairs budget process, the Deans are allowed to determine where they will reduce; however, guiding recommendations are useful.
 - iii. Not all units would need to be given the same percentage reduction target. Chair DeHayes pointed to his division's area where the Provost subsidy applied to a portion of the Admissions reduction target.
 - iv. Request for Fall 2010/Spring 2011 enrollment data.*(1)
 - 6. Draft Budget Reduction Principles Discussion :
 - i. "Ensure a quality education experience for all students." Remove economic development to the state.
 - ii. Dependability of course offerings to allow students to stay on track is important.
 - iii. Diversity should be a part of the principles.
 - iv. Compliance to federal and state regulations should be included; however, it is appropriate to review this area in relation to efficiencies.
 - b. The draft budget reduction principles originated during the last administration. The Provost, Vice Presidents, Director of Athletics and Budget Director met and developed the principles and utilized them to determine reductions.
 - c. Consider how the budget principles relate to the President's strategic plan In order to protect and continue to advance strategic priorities.
 - d. In the Academic Affairs budget process, Chair DeHayes has requested that each Dean identify their lowest priority funded item. Those funds, if not applied to a shortfall, could potentially move to the highest priority items.
 - e. Vice Chair Weygand would prefer to use "promote, sustain, enhance, etc" and not the word "Protect.
 - f. Consideration was given to the kinds of budget cuts that would be appropriate for the Council to consider and whether those would be based on recommendations from the Divisions for the Council to consider. Further discussion ensued about the level of specificity of those cuts in relation to the role of the SBPC.
 - g. The issue of how to whether as area or unit is over/under funded was discussed. Often areas do not realize they might be over funded or have the potential to gain efficiencies.
- 7. Discussion ensued about the best way to approach budget cuts including determining what to cut and whether to minimize, eliminate or reduce.
 - 8. Last year, each division presented their request, they went through a ranking process; however, the Council did not provide any qualitative feedback to them. This year, the Council may want to consider providing qualitative feedback.

9. Chair DeHayes referred to Faculty positions slide from Faculty Senate. It reflected all faculty hires, including Lecturers. Chair DeHayes expressed his concern that some departments do not include Lecturers in department meetings. He indicated that we need to get out of the habit of not acknowledging the importance of lecturers. Lecturers should not be discounted. They are full-fledged members of the faculty.
10. It was noted that perhaps, rather considering where we stand in position counts relative to where we were at some historical point, what is most important is to determine what is needed to effectively operate presently and in the future, given the future and current environment. Consideration of peer data may be helpful and the role of the other two state schools relative to URI.
11. If we have appropriate and consistent budget processes within divisions, SBPC could look at benchmarking/peer data; the breadth of things at URI as compared to other Universities and ask the question: What do you need going forward? SBPC needs to rely on each division doing their best, most effective work. SBPC's job is then to take the recommendations for cuts, question them. Using benchmarks, peer and aspirant data will inform the process of decision making. An effective budget process within each division will help to ensure good data and recommendations coming forward from the divisions to the SBPC.
12. Can we continue to operate the way we have, knowing that it is not sustainable?
13. Chair DeHayes mentioned Ken's comment from 2.11.11." Scaling the University to quality." What does this statement mean?
 - a. Quality of students
 - b. Quality of education
 - c. Quality of services, dining, maintenance of grounds
 - d. This would move us way from the land grant mission and towards a private mission. If we act like a private college, would that limit access?
 - e. Discussion ensued about what it means to rescale to quality
 - f. A point was raised about whether to continue to fund all things outside of the university
 - i. We have programs outside the University that are an expense (incarceration, high/middle schools, etc). Good causes, but we are losing dollars.
 - ii. We may want to look at peer benchmark data about the services we provide and the relative costs.
 - iii. Some members support rescaling, however, outreach programs fulfill our role as a flagship in the state.
 - iv. URI generated millions of dollars to make these programs workable. They are win-win. They enhance our ability to obtain grants, outside funding.
 - g. Consider opportunities for consolidation of some processes between RI's 3 higher education institutions.
 - h. We should look at unfunded/underfunded mandates that have occurred, they can affect other units with workload, etc.
 - i. Quality. URI is trying to support too many expensive programs. The metrics range from a hundred to several hundred. Not an affordable model.
14. "Rescaling" is the important work; operating differently.

15. SBPC would like to be informed about major financial items prior to reading it in the newspapers. Better communication, especially with the URI Foundation, Glen Kerkian and Bob Beagle. Items having budget implications are important to the Council.
16. Meeting was adjourned at 3:30

Next Meeting Date:

March 18 from 1:30 pm to 3:30 pm, Thomson Boardroom, Ballentine Hall

Information Requested:

- 1) Retention Data
- 2) Peer data relative to URI resources and services

Minutes by: Caroline Natale, Business Analyst, Budget & Financial Planning 2/25/11.