

CAPITAL PROJECTS STUDIED

BY USI BOARD OF TRUSTEES



NEWS RELEASE

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A student cultural life center, a new telephone system, and an energy management system are included in an estimated \$3.8 million in capital projects requested Thursday in the July meeting of the University of Southern Indiana Board of Trustees. Board action was delayed pending further review in August.

The Board also held its annual meeting and re-elected officers -- Robert J. Fair of Princeton, chairman; Joseph E. O'Daniel of Evansville and William E. Brooks of Vincennes, standing committee chairmen as Board vice chairmen; and Carole D. Rust of Mount Vernon, secretary.

The Board authorized the Long Range Planning Committee to act on the capital projects proposal at a meeting August 4 -- when University computer facilities and projected needs will be studied -- and report back to the Board at the September meeting. The action will include authorization for Dr. David L. Rice, University president, to seek the necessary state approvals, including approval for the estimated \$1-million state share of project costs. The rest of the funding would come from University funds and private sources.

The \$1.5-million student cultural life center would expand the space available for student activities. The proposed site at the east edge of the campus is adjacent to student housing.

Byron Wright, vice president for Business Affairs, told the Board the modernization of facilities would tie in with the classroom building now under construction. "The new building gives us the impetus and opportunity to put in an energy management system that will pay for itself in the short term and also give us state of the art equipment," Wright said.

The current University telephone system does not have adequate capacity to serve the new building. The \$800,000 system upgrade would expand capacity and modernize USI's telephone-computer linkage capability. The \$432,000 microcomputer-based energy management system, compatible with that being installed in the new building, would replace an obsolete campus system that is expensive to maintain. It also would convert the fire-alarm system to a computer-monitored operation. In addition, a \$126,000 water project would install a secondary feed to bring the campus system to fire safety code requirements. (MORE)

Among other items in the capital projects request are \$250,000 for a new parking lot between the Physical Activities Center and the Engineering Technology parking lot, and \$370,000 for major equipment purchases needed for science, computer, and engineering technology instruction.

The capital projects make up most of the short-term (1989-91 biennium) request in a 10-year capital plan that must be submitted by August for consideration by state officials and the Indiana General Assembly. Medium-term (1991-95) proposals include a \$12.5-million Health Professions Building, a \$3-million addition to the University Center, \$2 million for a new entrance road, and \$1 million to upgrade the chiller and boiler plant. Long-term (1995-99) proposals include a \$3.8 million Performing Arts Building and \$180,000 to expand student parking lots.

In other business Thursday, the Board:

* Discussed a policy statement setting forth the University's plans to educate students, faculty, and staff about Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS). It establishes the University's policy to protect the rights of those affected by the disease as well as to protect the working and learning environment. The Indiana General Assembly enacted a comprehensive bill aimed at combatting the spread of AIDS. It imposes reporting obligations, confidentiality protections, requirements for disposal of infectious waste, and training for employees in handling blood and body fluids. The USI policy complies with provisions of the bill.

* Approved a resolution accepting transfer of the former New Harmony-Harmony Township School property to USI, enabling the University to raze the structure and turn the site into a park. A primary goal has been to save the school's doorway which contains the only remaining Harmonist golden rose sculpture, dating to 1822 when Father George Rapp and his Harmonist followers lived at New Harmony. The door and sculpture have been part of a church and two schools in their journey through history.

* Approved revised grade requirements for continued University enrollment, reducing the number of categories, increasing the grade point average minimum required for good standing, and establishing a probationary period for those who do not meet the requirements. Dr. Donald Bennett, vice president for Student Affairs, explained an anticipated result of the new system will be earlier identification of at-risk students, who will be required to contact counselors for assistance. Statistics show that a greater success rate is possible with at-risk students who maintain close contact with counselors, Dr. Bennett said.

* Approved a modified fee-waiver policy for University employees, their spouses, and dependent children that will allow varying fee waivers for those pursuing baccalaureate or associate degrees.