

Despite cuts, OCC seeks to balance the books

By TIM RICHARD

Oakland Community College expected the state aid cut ordered by Gov. William Milliken late in May and can "live with it," said President Robert F. Roelofs.

"While not ringing the crisis bell, we will not by any means be able to add to our budget or make any expenditures not planned for, and will have to examine the need for everything we do," Roelofs told trustees last week.

When state income tax revenues fell a heavy 6 percent this April compared to April 1979, Milliken ordered state spending cut \$97.5 million to balance the state budget, as required by the constitution.

Half the cuts were made in state aid to schools, community colleges, four-year colleges and local government. Community colleges were cut \$2 million.

"OUR NEW aid figure will be about the same as in the current year," Roelofs said.

OCC will receive about \$9.1 million, the same as in fiscal 1979-80 but some \$750,000 less than anticipated due to the state aid cut.

"Economies and efficiencies" will help the two-year college balance its budget, along with some greater revenues from other sources.

To save on expenditures, Roelofs said OCC will:

- Carefully screen the need for replacements of faculty and staff. This does not mean a hiring freeze, however.

- Improve deployment of faculty between campuses.

- Use a higher student-faculty ratio where possible.

On the revenue side, he said, OCC is helped by:

- New construction, which will bring in more property taxes.

- Higher enrollments and more tuition income.

- Better interest earnings on short-term investments of college funds.

"WE STARTED this budget evaluation process in January," said Roelofs, a former executive in the steel industry, which is familiar with a cyclical economy.

"We had already recognized that expenditures would be up and income down (at the state level)."

OCC's anticipated budget, approved in May, is more than \$27 million. Enrollment at its four campuses is in the range of 20,000. The fiscal year begins July 1.

BOARD CHAIRMAN Lila Johnson appointed a board committee of three to begin background work for Roelofs' annual review and contract negotiations, scheduled for October.

Roelofs, 62, has been president of OCC since October of 1978 and last calendar year was paid \$53,017.

Mrs. Johnson appointed Gordon Henderson, due to retire from the board July 1; Earl Anderson, a trustee since the mid-1960s and now board vice chairman; and herself.

When Trustee Suzanne Reynolds objected that only the board's senior members were on the committee, the board decided to replace Henderson when his term is up with Sandra Ritter, who was elected in 1978.

No more than three of the seven board members may serve on a committee. Four members would constitute a quorum, and the group would then have to observe the state Open Meetings Act, with posted meetings, public agendas, public attendance and public comments.

"Unfortunately," said Mrs. Johnson, "the law hampers us as to how many we can have."

SHE SAID the committee will review the literature on how to evaluate a president.

OCC voc-tech gets equipment

Hospital equipment, four diesel automatic transmissions and three bench lathes have been purchased for vocational-technical programs by Oakland Community College.

The purchases brought praise from Earl Anderson, board vice chairman, who has long prodded the two-year college to offer more voc-tech programs.

THE ALLIED health department of the Southeast Campus System will get \$39,835 in hospital and medical equipment. It will be housed in OCC's new building in Southfield.

Among major purchases are: six electric hospital beds, with innerspring mattresses, side rails and overhead tables, \$4,800; two infant cribs for \$500; a wheelchair, \$600; a dozen stethoscopes, \$312; a skeleton, \$3,065; and a baby scale, \$50.

Four firms will supply the purchases — Medical Care Products Co., Medical Supply Co., Randolph Surgical Co. and Medical Plastics Co. The purchase is reimbursed 45 percent by a state-administered federal grant.

THE AUBURN Hills campus east of Pontiac will get four Allison automatic transmissions for student use in the diesel laboratory.

They will be purchased for \$8,699 from Peninsula Diesel, Inc., of Dearborn, lower of two bidders.

Machine trades students will have three new bench lathes, purchased from Howard & Smith of Royal Oak for a total of \$9,300.

William O'Mahoney, dean of applied sciences and arts, said the new equipment "will allow more machine time and increase the capacity of the program. It will allow more hands-on experience and improve the quality of education."

Both purchases are 45 percent reimbursable from federal voc-tech aid.

IN OTHER business, the board approved a sabbatical leave for the fall of 1980 for Mary Comden, a book store supervisor on the Auburn Hills campus.

An OCC employee for 15 years, she wants to complete work toward a master of arts degree in guidance and counseling.

Thursday, June 12, 1980

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