

OCC stands pat

New budget, no tuition hike, no new programs

Trustees adopted a "stand pat" budget for Oakland Community College — no tuition increase, no tax increase, no new programs.

But Chancellor R. Stephen Nicholson hinted at changes for 1987, when the four-campus college implements a comprehensive long-range plan.

"Starting next year when our long-range plan is finalized, we will probably head toward some major reallocation of resources," added Anthony Jarson, vice president for business. But that won't be on the agenda until April.

No one spoke at last week's public hearing, and trustees adopted the blueprint 7-0.

THIS YEAR'S budget, for a fiscal year beginning July 1, will be \$44 million. Tuition per credit hour will remain at \$26 for in-district students, \$41 for other Michigan residents and \$51 for non-Michiganians. Only minor course fee changes will be made, Nicholson said.

A "modest 1.4 percent increase" in enrollment is forecast, but the proportion of non-residents is expected to rise to a record 15 percent. A total enrollment of 70,200 across four semesters is expected.

"The new budget is increased a modest 4 percent over the current year," Nicholson said. "New educational programs are not included for the first time in many years."

"However, new ideas are included," the chancellor said, citing \$200,000 more for "staff development" — academics for retraining and upgrading faculty.

PROPERTY TAXES will provide the biggest source of revenue — \$15.9 million, up 6.7 percent due to new construction and valuation increases. Property taxes amount to 38 percent of the total.

Tuition will provide \$14 million, or 32 percent of the total.

State aid is pegged at \$12.4 million, up 6.6 percent. It will bring in 28 percent of the total.

Trustees welcomed one small budget increase as having great political significance. Board vice chair Sandra Rittor of Waterford Township was allotted \$3,000 for trips to Washington, D.C., where she will chair the joint legislative committee of the American Association of Community College Trustees and the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges.

Jobless rate edges up in March

March jobless rates in eight of Michigan's 12 major labor-market areas rose slightly along with the statewide unemployment rate, according to Richard Simmons Jr., director of the Michigan Employment Security Commission.

Simmons said normally there is little change in the statewide unemployment rate from February to March.

This year was no exception — Michigan's unadjusted jobless rate rose by 0.3 percent in March to 9.6 percent.

Two areas reported declines in their unemployment rates during the month. Benton Harbor's jobless rate edged down from 9.7 percent in February to 9.6 percent. The Flint-area rate fell by more than a full point from 11.4 percent in February to 10.2 percent.

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