

**Council of the University of Idaho Business Officers  
Summary Notes  
February 13, 2014**

**Service Centers, Mary George, ITS**

Rate proposal forms are coming in now for fiscal year 2015. These forms are required from units bringing in \$10,000 or more a year for the University to be in compliance with the federal government which is necessary specifically for research institutions that receive grant funding. Information on the definition of a Service Center is available on the [Controller's website](#). University of Idaho policy is in the APM, policy number [20.20](#). To complete these forms, it is helpful to look at revenue from FY13; or prorate data from the first 7 months in FY14. These are not easy forms to fill out, so anyone having difficulty is encouraged to contact Mary or another member of the Service Center Committee to answer questions or provide assistance.

**Comp Time, Dan Stephens, Controller**

The University has not yet heard back from the IRS. When it does, the communication will be in writing. In the meantime, a steering committee with between 10 to 12 members has been formed. The committee does have representation from across campus, and General Counsel is involved. A member of Staff Affairs is chairing the committee. The UI will also bring in an outside tax firm to provide guidance. The goal of the steering committee is to gather input and information from all employee areas. The steering committee's responsibility is to gather information only; the final outcome will be determined by the Controller's office and will likely result in a policy change. Any change in policy will be reviewed by General Counsel and go through the proper channels to be implemented. There will be a notice in the near future regarding the committee and its goals.

**Budget Office Updates, Trina Mahoney**

**Benefit Actuals:** Those who are under the benefit cap can contact Trina.

**Fringe Benefits:** Trina is working on Quarter 2 numbers to come up with the GNA rate. Hopefully this will be the last year the Budget Office has to do this. Budget wants to get things consolidated so the fiscal officers will have one charge for fringe benefits, rather than five different charges.

**The GNA Rate:** It is not yet known how much this might change. It may increase a little bit. The Budget Office will let everyone know after the Quarter 2 analysis has been done. Hopefully the rate will be announced in the next couple of weeks.

**Pay increases:** It looked like the state budget was going to allow for a 1% rate increase plus a one-time 1% increase in pay for UI employees, then things changed and it looked like there would not be a pay increase. Now it looks like there will be some form of CDC for FY15, but as far as a decision goes, that's still down the line.

**Student Fees:** A Student Activity Fee committee is working on dedicated activity fees. The committee will be making recommendation on February 20<sup>th</sup> to both President Burnett and President Staben, due to the leadership transition. March 5<sup>th</sup> is the date when the Budget Office will publish what will be recommended to the SBOE.

**Budget Hearings:** A question was asked about budget hearings this year. The hearings will be held on one day, February 24<sup>th</sup>. The budget framework is abbreviated, as is the hearing process, because of the work already done by the Focus for the Future process. The draft was very short, so the final version – when it comes out – is expected to be short as well.

It is not yet known what the fringe benefit rate be for next year. If everything stays the same, the rate would be approximately \$9700. Trina is also waiting to hear back from the Actuary to help estimate the cost. The FY15 rate for the State of Idaho was recently announced: \$10,550.

#### **Audit of UI Vehicles, Brad White, Internal Audit**

Internal audit is currently looking at UI vehicles and the Facilities repair shop. This is also a good example of a UI Service Center, and how everything has to be in line to comply with federal government requirements. Incorporating the future replacement cost of equipment in vehicle rental charges is not allowed, unless there is a need to replace the vehicle within the next fiscal year and there is substantial documentation to back up the future purchase. This restriction does not apply to figuring in depreciation of equipment – unless the equipment was purchased on a grant. If a vehicle was purchased on a grant budget, or purchased partially with a grant, that equipment cannot be figured in.

#### **Accounts Payable Updates, Linda Keeney**

**Independent Contractors:** Accounts Payable has not yet heard what is required for independent contractors, so the office is still approving invoices for payment.

**AP Docs E-Mail:** Submitting documents will be changing to an AP Drop Box. ITS is working with Accounts Payable to set up the “AP Docs” drop box, where scanned documents are uploaded and automatically enter AP’s workflow process. This will allow AP to make updates and catch problems before transactions are posted to the system.

#### **Purchasing Services Updates, Valerie Bollinger**

Purchasing is moving forward working to get service contracts online. The goal is to have all departments using the system at the start of FY15.

The Office of Sponsored Programs is concerned with the issue of grant funded equipment. Every year the institution needs to independently verify all equipment over \$5000 that was purchased through a grant.

**Suzanne Aaron, College of Letters, Arts and Social Sciences**

The new dean of this college is starting in July.

**Updates, Dan Stephens, Controller**

Dan updated the group on Lana; she and baby Bennett are doing well.

Focus for the Future: There are no decisions yet, and a lot of work still needs to be done. The process already completed is just the first round. The UI has not yet received descriptive guidance. Although hopeful that there would be a process in place to fix the problem for FY15, it looks like changes to the whole process won't be until FY16, or possibly FY17. Because there is a research component at the UI that makes it different than other institutions of higher education in the state of Idaho, we don't have any institutions to compare with.

March 1<sup>st</sup> is the official first day for President Staben.