Students thank board for holding line on tuition

“Thank you” was the message delivered by student government leaders Sarah Bacon and Steve Monroe to the Rogue Community College Board of Education and President Peter Angstadt.

“A month ago we delivered letters protesting against raising tuition,” said Monroe at the May 17 board meeting. “Now we’re back with letters expressing appreciation and gratitude. Your decision will make it possible for many more students to attend RCC in the future.”

Monroe, associated students commissioner of representation at Redwood Campus, and Bacon, commissioner of representation at Riverside Campus, also presented each member with a helium filled balloon reading “Thank you.”

The RCC board voted unanimously last month to maintain the current rate of $59 per credit. Angstadt expressed optimism that state legislators will come through with adequate funding for community colleges. By keeping tuition at current levels, RCC would help support lawmakers’ efforts, he said. Tuition increases result in lower enrollments, Angstadt added, and RCC must strive to remain affordable and accessible.

The board did retain the authority to revisit the tuition rate depending on the outcome of state funding.

Also on Tuesday during a budget hearing, the RCC Board and Advisory Committee approved RCC’s proposed 2005-06 budget. At $28,276,629 the proposed budget is just 2.1 percent more than the current year’s budget of $27,688,826. Final step in the budgeting process is board approval at the June 21 meeting.

Not all the news was cheery, however. Even if the Legislature approves the $440 million community colleges are seeking, RCC stands to lose approximately $300,00 to $600,000 in state revenues next year due to a new funding formula being proposed, Angstadt said.

The Oregon State Board of Education wants to retool the formula so that students at all community colleges are funded at the same level. However that means property taxes (over)
from some community college districts, RCC included, would be redistributed to other
districts with lower taxing authority in order to achieve equalization.

A hearing on the issue is set for May 20 in Salem. Angstadt said RCC officials will take a
proactive approach and propose an alternative formula that holds harmless the seven
districts that stand to lose state resources.

In other business the RCC Board:

• Granted faculty emeritus status to Patti Kramer who retires this spring as
  coordinator of the college’s 2+2 Early Credit program. Emeritus status may be
  granted to employees with more than 15 years of distinguished service.

• Accepted the early retirement of Betsy Fuller, director of Planning and
  Organizational Development, who has worked at RCC since 1979 in a range of
  positions.

• Approved a proposal by Kenneth Kuhns & Co. to continue providing independent
  auditing services of RCC. Estimated cost for next year is $34,950. RCC has
  worked with the company for the past five years on the annual audit of financial
  records.

• Heard a second reading of a resolution revising board policy related to contractual
  authority. Revisions are being proposed in accordance with the Oregon
  Cooperative Procurement Agreement and in response to board recommendation.

• Heard a second reading approving the fee schedule for 2005-06. Three changes to
  the fee schedule are proposed: a 5 percent (of account balance) penalty for non-
  payment, a $5 fee for an official transcript plus $1 for each additional copy, and a
  $45 late registration fee.

###

Contact: Denise Swafford, assistant to the President and RCC Board of Education, (541)
956-7001.