RCC board implements bus user fee, endorses library measures

Rogue Community College students and employees will soon have the option of purchasing a $5 per term pass that provides use of public bus transportation systems in Jackson and Josephine counties.

The RCC Board of Education approved Tuesday setting the new $5 fee. Beginning fall term the pass, along with a current student or employee ID, will provide access to the transit systems.

The fee, which will only be charged to those wanting to use the systems, was implemented following a recent rate increase to RCC by Rogue Valley Transit District. Those hikes could potentially double the cost to the college said Lynda Warren, chief financial officer.

RCC has budgeted approximately $70,000 to help subsidize regional bus lines, including RVTD and Josephine Community Transit, and encourages student and staff use of public transportation, Warren said. The number of passes purchased will also provide data for the college to more accurately determine how many RCC students and employees use public transportation, she added.

Board members also voted unanimously to endorse the library ballot measures in Jackson and Josephine counties. The Josephine County proposal would establish an independent library district. County commissioners have said that county support of the current library system will end June 2007.

For Jackson County, the proposed levy would go for operational costs. It would last five years, generating close to $10 million during its first year and increasing to almost $12 million in 2011.

The board also voted unanimously to oppose two measures that will likely appear on the Oregon ballot in November, saying they would result in deep funding cuts to education and other services. The measures include a proposal that would change the Oregon tax code by allowing income tax deductions equal to federal exemptions deductions to substitute for state exemption credit. The other proposal calls for an Oregon constitutional amendment limiting state spending based on population growth and inflation.

(over)
In other business the board approved a $20,000 Distance Learning Incentive grant from the Oregon Department of Community Colleges and Workforce Development. The grant will be used to equip Early Childhood Education lab school classrooms with video and audio recording equipment that will allow activities to be distributed to sites throughout Oregon.

The board also approved continuation grants including:

- A $10,500 grant from the state Department of Education to fund the 2007 Women in Trades Fair.
- $60,119 from the JOBS Program for student employment.
- $493,597 in federal Perkins Basic program grants.
- $82,665 from the Oregon Small Business Development Center and $30,250 from the Small business Administration.

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