The University of Rhode Island
Strategic Budget and Planning Council
January 29, 2015
10:00 am - 11:30 am
Thomson Board Room, Ballentine Hall

Members in Attendance:
Don DeHayes (Chair), Christina L. Valentino (Vice Chair), Sharon Bell, Thorr Bjorn, Faye Boudreaux-Bartels, Wendy Bucci, Lori Ciccomascalo, Tom Dougan, John Kirby, Trish Morokoff, Bahram Nassersharif, Ellen Reynolds, Gerry Sonnenfeld, Ann Morrissey, Naomi Thompson, Kim Washor

Members Absent: Devon Swanson, Joseph Maynard, Steven D'Hondt, Ken Kermes, Rachel DiCioccio, Linda Barrett (Cheryl Hinkson attended in her absence)

See the complete list of member information at the Strategic Budget and Planning Council website at: http://www.uri.edu/budget/sbpc.html

1) Announcements
   a) New members - Wendy Bucci, COO, URI Foundation replaced Mike Smith and John Kirby, Dean CELS replaced Mark Higgins, Dean who left the University in December 2014.
   b) The minutes from the December 18th meeting will be approved at the next meeting

2) Administrative/Process Streamlining re: Academic Strategic Planning goal 6
   a) The next version of the Academic Plan is scheduled to be finished by the end of this calendar year. The Joint Committee on Academic Planning (JCAP) was formed to update the current academic plan. This committee consists mostly of faculty. The JCAP recently completed a workshop to do environmental scanning on literature available on academic planning. Institutional effectiveness is a goal of the Academic Plan that was not completed. This goal pertains mostly to administrative process streamlining. The AMRC has commented on URI's need for streamlining and JCAP has re-identified it as a priority. Administrative functions cut across all areas of the institution. The SBPC might be able to identify actions and ideas to facilitate administrative streamlining. There are members of the council that have voiced ideas for improvement in the past. These can be revisited.
   b) Vice Chair: There were nine URI task forces appointed in 2010. Eight of the nine were comprised entirely of faculty. The ninth focused on administrative functions and stopped meeting after several months. Recommendations did not come out of this task force.
   c) The method for developing the academic plan can be used as a model for implementing more streamlined administrative practices. The URI Academic Plan has been followed meticulously and the progress of URI's ability to adhere to the plan has been monitored on a regular basis. A group needs to monitor the progress of streamlining.
   d) Chair: The idea is to reduce bureaucracy. No one department on campus creates bureaucracy. Once priorities are established, the university can invest accordingly.
   e) VP Sonnenfeld: The Division of Research has taken the recommendations of the AMRC seriously. Creating a group to monitor the progress of following up on the recommendations can have value. The important thing is to not have multiple groups doing the same thing. One group should be assigned to monitor progress.
   f) The AMRC was not staffed properly and so the focus of the work quickly narrowed. The AMRC was not able to work as broadly as perhaps could have been possible.
g) Chair: There are appropriate recommendations that came out of the AMRC. There has not yet been as much work done to take the next steps in implementation. The Academic Summit touched on five of the six issues that will go into shaping the next academic plan.

h) A number of the processes the AMRC commented on have been explored over the last 30 years. If the President were to authorize the SBPC to give recommendations on change and implement change, perhaps the SBPC can succeed where others have failed in the past. Student Affairs has made changes since the AMRC report. This is a time of change within the State of Rhode Island and so URI can be aggressive in pursuing change on campus.

i) Chair: Planning is part of the charge of the SBPC, so process streamlining is within the scope of potential undertakings. There is not a need to specifically ask the President for the permission to explore change in administrative processes.

j) Vice Chair: There are people in each department that can identify inefficiencies and offer potential solutions. The Governor has put together task forces to eliminate inefficiency. There is an opportunity for positive change with this Governor's Administration.

k) Chair: The opportunity, aside from potential cost savings, is in employee morale. If things operated more smoothly on campus and the University did not save a single penny, employees would still take notice and positive outcomes would be the end result. Many processes have been put in place to promote cross-department dialogue and many current and former council members deserve credit for this. There is no division on campus that operates in isolation.

l) Administrative processes perhaps were not improved upon as quickly as subjects of other priorities of the JCAP task forces because academics were not experts in improving these functions. The SBPC has more expertise in these areas.

m) Chair: The board does not need to review the particulars of new majors offered by URI. There is need for the board to acknowledge them, but the subjects studied should be reviewed by the experts. Others have run into problems where micro-managing by the State can introduce politics into the way URI does business that are not necessary.

n) The SBPC will further explore this priority.

3) Office of Management & Budget - New Working Group

a) Chair: In accordance with RIGL, the Governor has created six committees in the following areas: economic development, education, general government, health and human services, infrastructure, municipal efficiencies.

b) Each committee will work Jan. 12 - Feb. 12 of this year. Consulting groups are working pro-bono with the groups. Two URI facilitators are also involved. The groups are searching for potential long-lasting efficiencies. Email lindab@uri.edu with ideas you would like brought before the education task force, which will look at education at all levels.

c) Chair: Delegated authority on purchasing and having URI employees become board employees rather than state employees are two issues Linda Barrett will bring before the committee.

d) Vice Chair: Inefficiencies in construction and asset maintenance do cost the University.

e) Newly constructed buildings require more people, more utilities, more equipment, and more security. The Provost and the President acknowledge this and do budget for these expenses associated with the construction of new space. This becomes particularly important when construction is funded with gifts to URI. There are long-term costs associated with construction that need to be budgeted for upfront and donors are not necessarily aware of this.

f) Chair: When new buildings are built, others go offline. There is a net gain in square footage, that sometimes is not taken into account.

g) The CIP does and should consider not just new construction but buildings that can be taken down.

h) URI gets 25% of F&A. This agreement has been in place for at least 20 years. This could go up. The URI conflict of interest policy is such that the State of Rhode Island needs to be involved in
any conflict. The VP of Research must notify the President in matters of conflict of interest, who must then bring the issue before the State of Rhode Island Ethics Committee.

i) Chair: This Governor is someone who values being nimble and maximizing efficiency. When URI looks to create partnerships with the private sector, the speed with which URI can formalize collaboration is considerably slower than the potential partners. This hurts URI.

j) The State Personnel Review Committee. If URI were given classifications to use and were able to decide how to use them, this would be efficient. Currently, changes to classified positions must go through the State.

k) Relative to federal grants, states are generally more difficult to work with than the Federal Government.

4) CIP Update - VP Christina L. Valentino
   a) Ryan Carroll is the interim director of Campus Planning. The CIP five-year plan for 2017-2021 is underway. There are forms online that can be submitted to Ryan. The SBPC has modified the way it reviews the CIP and will focus on the most important projects and discuss them at length.

5) Performance Funding: State Level Discussions
   a) Chair: 37 States have moved to performance-based funding. The new Commissioner clearly has an inclination to do this in Rhode Island. There are others in RI Government who are also in favor of this type of change. I am in favor of a rational way of doing this. There is importance in deciding what the base budget ought to be. Performance-based budgeting is replacing enrollment-based budgeting. Enrollment-based budgeting has not been in place in Rhode Island. The Chronicle recently published an article criticizing performance-based budgeting. There are unintended consequences in performance-based budgeting. Institutional priorities need to be reflected in the metrics used. Invariably, retention and graduation rates will be amongst the metrics used in performance-based budgeting. This University is a research institution and this must be reflected in the performance metrics. URI is trending the right way in a lot of important academic metrics. Performance-based budgeting must be done in a rational way. Rhode Island has a one-size-fits-all mentality. It would be a mistake to have all the Higher Education institutions in RI subject to the same metrics.
   b) The rationale behind the current state appropriation for URI is unclear. The cost of Higher Education and the quality of the investment are at the forefront of the national discussion. Student debt exceeded credit card debt recently and this received national attention. The national graduation rate at public institutions is such that 50% of students graduate within six years. Families are in a lot of debt and not even necessarily seeing degrees as a result. Additionally, employers are concerned about the quality of the skills possessed by entry-level employees.
   c) Chair: There is a piece of legislation drafted called "Complete College Rhode Island". URI is well-positioned if performance-based budget is done the right way. If it is simply a mechanism to justify saving the State of Rhode Island money, it will be a frustrating exercise. IPEDS data is typically used for cross-institution comparisons. This does not always fare well for URI. Typically, the best URI students are in Pharmacy programs and because they graduate with doctorate degrees, the consistently phenomenal performance of these students is not counted in undergraduate and four-year metrics.

6) Reminder: FY2017 (July 1, 2016-June 30, 2017) Divisional Requests
   a) New Funding Request Proposals
   b) Due to Budget & Financial Planning Office by March 27, 2015
   c) Related link to three documents: http://web.uri.edu/sbpc/supporting-documents

7) Meeting adjourned at 11:18am.
   Minutes submitted by:
   John Olerio, Office of the Provost