The University of Rhode Island  
Strategic Budget and Planning Council  
November 14, 2013  
1:30 pm – 3:00 pm  
Thomson Board Room, Ballentine Hall

Members in Attendance:
Chair Don DeHayes, Vice Chair Christina Valentino, Faye Boudreaux-Bartels, Ray Wright, Patricia Morokoff, Ann Morrissey, Mark Higgins, Ellen Reynolds, Kim Washor, Sharon Bell, Linda Barrett, David Byrd, Thorr Bjorn, Tom Dougan, Naomi Thompson, Gerald Sonnenfeld, Annu Matthew, Scott Martin

Members Absent:
Michael Smith, Ken Kermes, Matt Kilduff, Steve D'Hondt

1. Announcements
   a. Tom and Nancy Ryan made a $15 million donation to the University to fund a new Institute for Neuroscience. The donation will fund a professorship for the Director of the new institute, as well as discretionary spending and an endowment. The donation was about a year in the making and is one which can really make a difference. So many will be affected by brain diseases and so this creates hope, even for those who are not directly involved in the field of neuroscience. This is the largest gift in the University's history.
   b. A report on the economic impact of URI on the State of Rhode Island has been completed by an external party and captures the return the State receives for every dollar invested in the institution. A one page summary of the report was distributed to all committee members to serve as background information for future council work.
   c. Each year, after the work of the council is completed, there are always aspects of the process which are identified to be improved. Last year, a committee was formed to look into these tweaks and revisions. Their work was presented to the council and was well-received. At the next meeting, the new process approved by SBPC last spring will be distributed.

2. Fund Balance Review
   a. Linda presented Fund 100 Fund Balance final amounts. The timeline calls for recommendations from Senior team to SBPC; discussion by SBPC; comments back to Senior Team (finalized at December SBPC meeting) and final decision by President in December 2013/January 2014. Projects previously approved include Student Athletic Development Center, Advertising and A&E for LGBTQ. A write-up of four projects (LGBTQ Construction, Admissions Welcome, Visitor & Presentation Center, Active Learning Classroom, Campus Wide Security) was distributed to Council members. These projects will be discussed at the December meeting and a recommendation will be forthcoming at that meeting. It was noted that a responsible management position provides a contingency from 2.5%-4% and as such there is a contingency being reserved from the June 30, 2013 fund balance. The source of the fund balance emanates from budget balances throughout all divisions and accounting adjustments.
   a. Provost: This year, there may be an opportunity to strategically spend a portion of the unrestricted Fund 100 fund balance. The council will work to determine if a new carry forward process is appropriate.
   b. Provost: Each year, the Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) is presented to the SBPC by
Vern Wyman, Tom Frisbie-Fulton and Ryan Carrillo. Last year, one item on the CIP was a new Admissions Welcome, Visitor and Presentation Center. There was a discussion which followed the CIP presentation and a universal sentiment amongst council members that the University needed to address this particular item sooner, because admissions is such an integral aspect of URI's largest revenue stream, undergraduate tuition and fees. The President was made aware of the Council's stance on this issue and there is now an effort to make this a more urgent priority of the CIP, rather than an item to be addressed four or five years in the future.

c. Provost (On the CIP, after the recommendations of the SBPC): The Engineering building will be on the FY15 bond, the Fine Arts building will be on the FY16 bond and, in the interim, RICAP funds will be used in FY15 to advance the Fine Arts project, so the Engineering and A&S projects can progress simultaneously. It is not up to URI administration to decide when a project is put on a bond, that is ultimately up to the Governor. The Governor's budget is available in January, will reflect recommended projects and the sources of funding for the projects.

d. One issue which emerged during a campus-wide discussion on arming campus security, was security cameras on campus.
   i. Vice Chair: Further complicating the matter, there is no campus standard for security cameras, so there are various models of security cameras spread across campus.

e. Provost (On campus wide security): Over the last several months, there have been intrusions through the URI Firewall from foreign countries. Faculty work, which was thought to be of intellectual value, was affected by the intrusion. There is technology available which detects intrusions and identifies the source of the attempts. The University has been able to successfully use this technology on a trial basis and it may soon be purchased.

3. Subcommittees
   a. At the conclusion of the last meeting, committee members were given the option to serve on one of two subcommittees and asked to submit a preference. A charge has been drafted for each subcommittee. The work of the two subcommittees will take place outside of the standard meetings of the council. The work will then be reported back to the full council and deliberations will ensue. Provost DeHayes will chair the subcommittee drafting a carry forward policy and Vice President Valentino will chair the subcommittee exploring long-term budgeting practices.
   b. Vice Chair (On the charge of the long-term budgeting subcommittee): Campuses all over the country are exploring very similar policies. Many public universities are moving away from incremental budgeting toward long-range planning. The subcommittee will look at this and then report back to the full committee. The charge is brief, but the work of the subcommittee will be far more detailed. The subcommittee will look to develop a process map to begin long-term budgetary planning.
      i. Chair: Each subcommittee is in an exploratory phase. There is no mandate from the President to report to him with something new. Should either subcommittee produce a policy which is believed to be a clear upgrade over a current university practice, implementing the new process would then be put to a vote of all SBPC members. Each subcommittee will produce a report of findings. Even if it is decided that no change to current university processes is needed, a report will be generated to validate the current practices. The members of the SBPC have gained a unique understanding of URI policy and are now in a position to
potentially do more than simply analyze new budget item requests.

c. Provost (On the charge of the carry forward subcommittee): The carry forward subcommittee is charged with drafting a full policy because it was felt that the idea of creating a carry forward policy could not be accepted or rejected unless a full policy was drafted. It was fully understood that a policy could be drafted and subsequently not endorsed by the full committee.
   i. Revision to charge: "Draft a policy" will be changed to "prepare a draft policy"
   ii. Revision to charge: "Fully understand" will be changed to "fully understood"
   iii. The scale of implementation of a carry forward policy will be important to consider. It will not be efficient to have administrative time spent on analyzing carry forwards of near-negligible amounts. There is also the consideration of whether units which overspend their budget will be forced to carry forward the negative balance.
   iv. Vice Chair: There is potential for the subcommittees to have their work overlap. Carry forward funding could certainly influence how a unit decides to plan for long-term budgeting.
   v. Provost: The current policy is that money which goes unspent falls to the bottom line. This can create an incentive for a business manager to spend, perhaps inefficiently, at the end of each fiscal year.
   vi. Many years ago the State of Rhode Island mandated that URI needed to have a $0 balance at the end of each fiscal year. The Appropriations Bill since 2006 allows URI to carry forward unused funds.

d. The AMRC will have a public report ready in early December.

e. Provost: Each subcommittee’s goal is to fulfill the charge by March 1, 2014. This is a tentative date. Subcommittee meetings will be two hours in length.

4. Approval of October 10, 2013 Meeting Minutes
   a. Minutes approved unanimously
   b. Meeting adjourned at 2:57pm.