

BUDGET COUNCIL MINUTES
MONDAY, MARCH 24, 2025, AT 2:30 P.M.
DON Lecture Hall Meeting

BC MEMBERS:

- ☒ **Cari Schwen**, Exec. Director of FS (CHAIR)
- ☒ **Sandra Bauman**, Dean/CEO
- ☒ **Jessie Pate**, Director of IR & Effectiveness
- ☒ **Jason Grimmis**, Director of Crisis & ER
- ☒ **Amy Kong**, Director of eLearning & FD
- ☒ **Mel Ewing**, CIO
- ☒ **Robyn Kiesling**, Exec. Dir. Gen Ed/Transfer
- ☒ **Tod Dumas**, Aviation Instructor
- ☒ **Larry Taylor**, Anatomy & Physiology
- ☒ **Patricia Pierson**, Librarian
- ☒ **Paige Payne**, Executive Assistant (recorder)

BC Mission: *The Budget Council utilizes broad stakeholder representation to carry out responsible and realistic budget planning that aligns with the strategic goals of our campus and the Montana University System. We strive to foster a culture of financial integrity and collaborative governance, ultimately contributing to the sustained growth and success of our institution.*

Helena College Mission: *Helena College supports our diverse community by providing the paths and tools necessary to assist learners in achieving their educational and career goals.*

Mastermind Discussion Agenda

Review 3/10/25 Minutes

Students approved and endorsed the fee table. Cari will ask for a 3% raise in tuition. All but one budget has been submitted.

Budget Update

- HC will receive an addition to our base (allocation) of \$250,000 for Banner. The total cost next year is \$355,115 so HC will have to cover \$105,115 of our operating budgets. Cari has some ideas on where the funds to cover the deficit.
- The allocation will be revealed next month.
- The tuition increase decision is delayed until May.
- HB2 – Allocations will be rebased due to the RMTD holiday. This will amount to approximately \$106,000 for Helena College. Some highlights include a \$16 million request towards base building appropriations, \$1.5 million for 12Free (excluding tribal and CC funding), and \$3.5 million for MT 10. Some of the proposed funding could still be cut or reduced. Present Law Adjustment (PLA) heads to the appropriations committee this Friday.
- HB13 – Pay plan is also headed to appropriations this week and is expected to pass. Legislative pay increases are tied to the plan. This includes increases in salary (\$1/hr. or 2.5%), group insurance (\$26/month), and per diem (70% of GSA). This increase would take the current in-state per diem from \$33.50-\$44.10 per day. PLA will cover approximately 50% of salary increases, 55% of group insurance increases, and 0% of the corresponding benefits increases. I project the per diem and pay plan increases will have an approximate impact to the CUR of \$2,500 and \$251,814 respectively.
- HB 5 – LRBP hit the appropriations committee this morning.
- Tuition – No good advice here. We have been told that it is still in the wind. We are welcome to submit our fee tables with a projected 3% increase but be prepared to be disappointed. They are anticipating an argument from

the Regents and have stated that we could see anything from 0-3%. I will submit a 3% increase on the fee sheets.

- Timeline – Tuition and fee tables are due by April 4th. It will be at least another month before we see the planned appropriation for the next biennium. This has a significant impact on budget work. System wide we are in the dark and most campuses are delaying any budget work or position changes until solid numbers can be obtained.

Budget Discussion Highlights:

Energy Increases:

- Unsure how to budget or predict the increase.

Disability Services Increases:

- Expecting a special hearing needs student next year.
- TRIO's future is uncertain.

Professional Development:

- If a department has PD that is required, it should be in the departmental budget.
- The PD committee has a line item in the Dean's budget. The PD committee would like to know who has PD allocated in their budget.

Budget Review Suggestions:

- Look for significant increases that do not have a reason for the increase.