

COMMITTEE ON PLANNING & BUDGET
MINUTES
MAY 23, 2023

PRESENT:

Peter Atkinson, Entomology, Chair
Dana Simmons, History, Vice Chair
Reza Abbaschian, Mechanical Engineering
Juliann Allison, Gender & Sexuality Studies
Subramanian Balachander, Business
Roger Lake, Electrical & Computer Engineering
David Lo, School of Medicine
Bronwyn Leebaw, Political Science
Hiroki Nishimura, Economics
Ayala Rao, Microbiology & Plant Pathology
Frances Sladek, MCSB

ABSENT:

Yadong Yin, Chemistry

Chair Peter Atkinson called the meeting to order at 11:00am.

The committee unanimously approved the May 16, 2023 minutes.

MEETING WITH PROVOST, VCPBA, & VCRED

Provost Watkins, VC Bomotti, and VC Torres addressed P&B's concerns: including how the decision was made that all \$47M go to the OASIS building which appears to benefit just one small subset of climate researchers on campus; how the Administration and Senate can move forward to mitigate the impact of what may be perceived as a narrow decision-making process with respect to the outcome (design, usage etc.) of the OASIS building through proper consultation; and what process can be put in place so that there is not a circumvention (or a perception thereof) of the principles of shared governance.

Provost Watkins, VC Bomotti, and VC Torres shared the following regarding the OASIS project: The OASIS project has been listed in the UCR Capital Financial Plan, and after the 2021 legislative allocation of \$15M in one-time funds for moving some of CE-CERT facilities to a location in proximity to CARB. It was expected that additional funds would be needed.

As part of the AB2046 bill (which was initially drafted by the UCOP Provost and was an initiative to have major investments in both UCR and UCM), UCR used its capital financial plan to list out \$790M worth of capital needs (which was a number derived by the legislative sponsors of the bill). In that list, UCR included the UTLF, but also a major academic building for CNAS (originally listed as Natural Sciences priority), an Engineering building, along with renovation funding for campus buildings and the OASIS Park project (originally called OASIS Clean Tech Park), included at \$80M (which was the figure UCR was carrying in the annual capital financial plan). The OASIS

project has received significant interest, from the City, County and at the statewide level, for its great potential relative to climate actions but also economic development for the IE region.

In parallel to this, Theresa Maldonado, UC Vice President for Research was asked by the Office of the Governor to put together a proposal for what became the Climate Initiative. UCR put together a very large proposal that included \$100M for research on climate related areas and \$85M for “innovation hubs and workforce development hubs” also related to climate change. UCR saw the opportunity and advocated for the OASIS Park which has also been envisioned as such a hub to receive some of those funds, something it was well received by; but a competition process was thought to be implemented. There were some informal discussions to have one hub in the “north” possible at UC Merced and another in the “south” at UC Riverside.

When final funds were received by UCR in the 2022 legislative session, the UCR legislative capital priorities went to UTLF and OASIS Park. Of the proposal submitted to the Office of the Governor by VC Maldonado, only \$185M were funded: \$100M for the research Climate Initiative, on which a competition was run; and \$85M for UCM, UCR, and UCSC. The majority of that, \$47M, were for UCR and it was many times communicated to all the VCRs that the funding would be in UCR’s case used for the OASIS Park.

The “clean energy tech park” first appeared in the UCR **Capital Financial Plan** in 2018. It has appeared in each of the four subsequent CFPs. These are presented each year to faculty in the relevant Senate committees, who then have an opportunity to ask questions (about funding and function) and provide feedback.

The OASIS tech park fulfills key aspects of UCR’s **Long Range Development Plan** (finalized and accepted by the regents in 2021), which was produced over the previous few years with multiple opportunities for faculty input.

The OASIS project is moving forward with the assumption that UCR will have to build what it can afford with the funds available, and UCR will continue to pursue external support for the project. It is planned to be a ~50,000 sqft building with only about 20,000 for CE-CERT. UCR will be submitting an Inflation Reduction Act request for solar funding for the OASIS project, along with many other campus projects, in an effort to try and compete for these federal funds and add to the campus solar infrastructure. Additionally, UCR will continue to seek opportunities to fully develop the OASIS Park project, as this first building is viewed as a phase 1 project. The lease levels are planned such that UCR can cover the operation and maintenance costs for the facility.

It is the intent that this facility be a self-supporting activity, and UCR expects this building to qualify for an “off-campus” F&A rate (as do the current CE-CERT facilities off campus), in part meaning the campus would not be submitting these costs as part of its F&A rate negotiations. All occupants of the building will pay the maintenance costs. The companies will also pay lease.

The OASIS Park Phase I building was always thought of as an innovation hub with some research facilities for CE-CERT to take advantage of the synergy with CARB, and as a space for the co-location with start-up and established companies. The prospective companies would be in any area related to the broad OASIS pillars. The most promising candidates so far who have already

showed interest in locating there are in the agriculture sector: Eurosemillas (master licensee for the international commercialization of agricultural IP) and LampLighter (a builder of green houses for smart agriculture). In addition, UCR always envisioned having a workforce component through the presence of UNEX and a convening space for the community. This has been communicated in numerous presentations to campus through public forums, a Senate division meeting, numerous Senate committees, executive committees of some colleges/schools, and meeting with some departments. The OASIS Park Phase I was never presented as a Research Building to address the valid needs for space of many units.

With respect to the concerns voiced by the P&B Committee: Provost Watkins, VC Bomotti, and VC Torres indicated Administration does wish to work with the P&B Committee/Senate to see how improvements can be made in the shared governance and communications process. Administration shares these goals and looks forward to talking more to the P&B Committee/Senate about how they can partner in achieving them. Although Administration has shared specifics of UCR's capital financial plans, AB2046 planning/proposals, etc., if the faculty continue to have questions about this process and have not seen it as effective: Administration concedes there is clearly an opportunity to learn from this OASIS example and make improvements going forward.

CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chair Atkinson attended the May 22 Executive Council meeting, in which VC Bomotti spoke and conveyed that all input from the Senate with respect to the proposed research lab guideline/policy is being carefully considered.

Also, at the May 22 Executive Council meeting: UCR Staff Assembly President, Erika Leon, and Staff Assembly Immediate Past President, Agam Patel, spoke about what they perceive as understaffing at UCR. Leon and Patel stated that too many UCR staff members are working long hours, evenings, and weekends to keep up with a workload that is exploitative and unsustainable. They are concerned about poor working conditions and disrespect that burdens many staff members. They indicate that understaffing and poor working conditions have pushed many staff at UCR to quit, transfer out, or retire early.

Chair Atkinson indicated that he, along with Professor Steven Axelrod and Senate Chair Lee, will help draft a memo on behalf of the Senate, expressing and reinforcing that faculty have identified multiple ways in which understaffing and undervaluation of staff at UCR have affected the university's mission, harming in particular faculty's ability to carry out both research and teaching.

ACTION ITEMS: FOLLOW-UP TO MEETING

Based on the meeting with Provost Watkins, VC Bomotti, and VC Torres, the committee decided to draft two memos:

- 1) A memo which captures follow-up questions, to include outstanding questions pertaining to the OASIS building.
- 2) A memo which proposes a more optimal framework/process for future "shared governance" between Administration and P&B/the Senate.

The meeting was called to a close at 12:55pm.