

Report on Budget & Finance Committee Meeting of 7 Sept. 2023

The Budget & Finance Committee met once in September (09/07/2023).

1. Meeting called to order: E. Kondratieff (3:48 pm).

Attendees:

Eric Kondratieff, Chair (PCAL)
John Erickson (GFCB)
Sean Kinder (Libraries)
Jeremy Maddox (OCSE)
Kurt Neelly (At-Large)
Julie Shadoan (At-Large)
Provost Bud Fischer (non-voting)
Faculty Regent Shane Spiller (non-voting)

Absent:

Martha Day (CEBS)
Daniel Boamah (CHHS)
Danilo Tolussa (CHHS Alternate)
Ben Dinan (At-Large)

Positions currently unfilled:

SGA representative;
Alternates for CEBS, GFCB, PCAL, SGA

2. Chair Report – E. Kondratieff

- A. Minutes from 04/13/2023 meeting – approved

3. New Business:

- a) Discussion of membership (spots to fill, need for alternates)
- b) Discussion of potential committee work for AY 23/24. Committee would like to meet with Bruce Weisman, director of Internal Audit. Discussion of some of the work in Office of Internal Audit.

4. Old Business

- a) Follow up on question asked of committee last spring about whether a study has been done on administration salaries compared to benchmarks. After due consideration to various factors, including WKU's recent switch to a new consulting firm (Mercer) that would need to provide the data and benchmarks, the committee decided to set that aside for the immediate future in favor of projects more relevant / useful to faculty (and staff).
- b) Discussion of topic from Spring 2023 on whether to formulate a statement or resolution about increasing the number of faculty representatives not also in administrative positions. Provost Fischer explained how the OAC and BEC, which had very similar roles, were merged after the first year of RAMP; the new (combined) BEC — a two-year experiment — is just now starting its second year in its enlarged/combined form (23 voting members from all across campus divisions, 3 of whom are non-admin. faculty, and 6 non-voting members, Provost included), and is starting to work well and efficiently. While the B&F committee members feel that greater faculty representation on the BEC is desirable (given the proportion of faculty vis-à-vis the total number of employees), it decided to review the latest BOR Budget Approval meeting (6-2-23) first to get a sense of the strategic challenges facing the university before moving forward.

NB: Kurt Neelly, a member of the Senate Budget and Finance Committee, has replaced Anthony Paganelli of the Libraries as one of the faculty representatives on the BEC.

5. Faculty Regent – Shane Spiller

Reappointed to B.O.R. Budget and Finance Committee (and Academic Affairs committee). Next B.O.R. meeting in Oct. Offered to have Susan Howarth and others meet with the Senate B&F Committee over questions we might have re: WKU budgetary matters, including the recently (June) approved budget.

6. Provost – Bud Fischer

No additional report (already shared report on BEC in the “Old Business” section).

7. Open Discussion

Question about current hiring, including some searches on pause; Provost Fischer responded that only jobs posted and approved after Aug 1 are still going forward; those posted afterward are on pause until current budget finalized with enrolment numbers, state appropriations info, etc.

8. Meeting adjourned (4:45 pm).