SUBJECT: Stoffer Hall, Building Renovation Project

BACKGROUND:

Science instruction and the types of physical spaces needed for basic science instruction have changed significantly since Stoffer Hall was opened in 1960. Science instruction is a vital component of general education, and its advanced coursework supports students in many specialized fields, most specifically the health-related disciplines. Science forms the foundation upon which instruction in these disciplines is based.

A committee was appointed by President Farley in April 2003 to evaluate the current programmatic needs, project future needs, and balance those needs against the potential costs. The committee met numerous times between April 2003 and June 2004. In addition to the detailed local review, the committee also visited new science facilities at other universities in the region, and consulted with an outside expert. These efforts have culminated in the development of a detailed science facilities program statement.

DESCRIPTION:

The College of Arts and Sciences is undertaking an ambitious effort to update its academic program as part of the overall academic plan. As part of that plan, the College of Arts and Sciences believes improvements of Washburn’s science facilities are essential due to the following:

- Science instruction has changed significantly since the 1960’s. Modern science instruction involves sophisticated instrumentation. Students interact with these instruments, with each other, and with the faculty in ways that differ greatly from the way science was taught in the past.
- Undergraduate science students are now much more involved in research, once the purview of graduate students alone. These research activities are a core component of instruction. Student success in science research has been one of the driving forces in developing the “transformational experiences” in the Academic Plan.
- The types of physical spaces needed for basic science instruction have also changed since the 1960’s. Laboratory instruction has changed in both content and method; therefore, flexibility will be the key to meeting current and future space needs for science instruction.
- The University has more than doubled its enrollment since 1960. In addition to the growth in the sciences themselves, numerous health-related disciplines have been added. Washburn has hundreds of students involved in these disciplines.
who require science instruction beyond that provided in general education courses.

Based on the overall plan developed by the committee and the program statement for this project, the Board of Regents are asked to:

♦ Approve the program statement for the Stoffer Hall Building Renovation Project
♦ Authorize the architect selection process to begin
♦ Approve project financing plan

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

The projected total project budget is $10,000,000 as detailed in the program statement and is to be funded by University reserves and fund raising efforts.

RECOMMENDATION:

President Farley recommends the Board of Regents approve the program statement attached to this agenda item, authorize the Administration to begin architect selection, and approve the project financing plan.

Date 09/24/04 Signature
Jerry Farley, President
Science Facilities Program Statement
Summary for the Washburn University Board of Regents

A committee of natural sciences and mathematics faculty selected by President Farley and chaired by Gordon McQuere, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, met numerous times between April 2003 and June 2004. The committee was charged "to evaluate the current needs of our program, project future needs, and balance these needs against the potential costs." In addition to detailed local review, the committee visited new science facilities at other universities in the region; and consulted with an outside expert.

The attached Science Facilities Program Statement is the result of their efforts. The following is a synopsis of the program statement. Footnotes point to the relevant details in the report.

I. Science instruction has changed significantly since Stoffer Hall was opened in 1960. Modern science instruction involves sophisticated instrumentation. Students interact with these instruments, with each other and with the faculty in ways that differ greatly from the way science was taught in the past.

II. A key component of this interaction is that undergraduate science students are now much more involved in research, once the purview of graduate students alone. These research activities are not an adjunct to instruction but a core component of it. Further, student success in science research has been one of the driving forces in developing the "transformational experiences" in the Academic Plan.

III. Science instruction is not simply for potential scientists; it is for all students. It is a vital component of general education, and its advanced coursework supports students in many specialized fields, most specifically the health-related disciplines. Science forms the foundation upon which instruction in these disciplines is based.

IV. The types of physical spaces needed for basic science instruction have also changed. For example, in 1960 the concept of DNA and the transistor were both in their infancy. Both have altered forever what we teach and how we teach it. Laboratory instruction has changed in both content and method. Though no one knows the specifics, we can be certain the future holds as many surprising and significant changes. Flexibility will be the key to meeting our current and future space needs for science instruction.

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1 See page 35 of the program statement for details. The committee also included a member of the University's architectural services staff.
2 Program Statement Appendix B, pages 38-39
3 Program Statement, pages 3 & 7
V. The University has more than doubled in enrollment since 1960. In addition to the concomitant growth in the sciences themselves, none of our health-related disciplines existed on campus. We have hundreds of students involved in these professions now. These students require science instruction beyond that provided in general education courses.

VI. After 44 years of intense use, Stoffer Hall is worn out. Numerous adjustments have been made over the years to modify lab space, effect changes in heating, cooling and ventilation, etc. We have reached the limit of what minor modifications can do. Further, safety, security and environmental requirements are much different than they were in 1960.

VII. For these reasons, improvements of our science facilities are essential. Three types of changes were considered: (1) renovation of the existing facility, (2) expansion and of the existing facility, and (3) construction of an entirely new facility.

VIII. Expansion and renovation of Stoffer Hall is recommended. The expansion would largely be devoted to new laboratory space designed for current and anticipated instructional needs. Such space would have appropriate safety, security and environmental components designed in. Existing Stoffer facilities would be renovated to modernize laboratory, classroom and office space. Expansion followed by renovation would provide room to move classes during the renovation phase.

IX. Recognizing resource limitations, the committee has prioritized the needs of the building.

X. The committee has also evaluated major equipment needs.