

Capital Project to Adjust the Planning Scope for Student Wellness Services

JOINT FINANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE AND BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS COMMITTEE

February 16, 2016

In March 2014, the Board of Visitors approved a \$200,000 planning authorization to expand and improve student health and counseling services at the Schiffert Health Center. In June 2015, the Board of Visitors approved a supplemental \$2.871 million for construction to build a 3,500 gross square foot one-story addition to the east wing of McComas Hall (Schiffert Health Center) and to renovate 1,700 square feet of interior space of the existing facility. At the time of construction approval, the project was in the preliminary design phase with an expected construction bid date of December 2015.

As design progressed and working drawings were underway, the university conducted an updated program review that showed the capacity provided by the project underway would not be sufficient to accommodate the foreseeable demand for counseling and health services. The rising demand for services within the current population and projected enrollment growth require more than double the approximately 5,200 square feet of scope in the existing project.

In consideration that the existing project does not meet foreseeable student needs, the university halted design work in November, the project has not been bid, and alternatives are being considered. One potential solution includes more intensive work to McComas Hall with a scope of approximately 33,000 square feet with an order of magnitude cost estimate of \$22.5 million. The scope and costs of this solution are relatively high compared to the program space requirements because the existing McComas Hall requires substantial core space, circulation space, and structural improvements to support an addition on the east side and interior renovations.

While the revised program would effectively accommodate the foreseeable program needs, given its relative space inefficiencies, high cost, and three-year implementation, the university is exploring other alternatives, including space in other facility locations. To better meet student demand for health and counseling services in the near term, the university is working on a temporary space solution, three to four years, until a permanent solution is identified and can be implemented.

Under the 2006 Management Agreement between the Commonwealth of Virginia and the university, the Board of Visitors has the authority to approve the budget, size, scope, debt issuance, and overall funding of nongeneral fund capital outlay projects. To fully explore alternatives and prepare design documents for an appropriate solution for student wellness services, this request is for approval to use the \$2.757 million available balance from the \$3.071 million authorized Health Center Improvements project to support planning work on a comprehensive student wellness services project. A subsequent request for construction funding may be submitted after designs are underway and a firm scope and cost are determined.

RESOLUTION ON CAPITAL PROJECT FOR PLANNING OF STUDENT WELLNESS SERVICES

WHEREAS, the Board of Visitors previously approved \$3.071 million for improvements to McComas Hall to accommodate student demand for health and counseling services; and,

WHEREAS, during design work and prior to construction, the university conducted a program review update, including considerations to accommodate enrollment growth, which shows improvements substantially larger than the currently authorized project are necessary to meet foreseeable student needs; and,

WHEREAS, the university halted the existing project prior to advertising for construction bids and is exploring alternatives to meet student demand for wellness services; and,

WHEREAS, the university requests approval to utilize the \$2.757 million available balance from the \$3.071 million authorized for the Health Center Improvements project be used to plan a new and comprehensive solution for student wellness services; and,

WHEREAS, permanent solutions for wellness services, particularly health and counseling services will likely take three to four years to implement and the university is exploring temporary solutions to meet student demand for services until a permanent solution is available; and,

WHEREAS, under the 2006 Management Agreement between the Commonwealth of Virginia and the university, the Board of Visitors has authority to approve the budget, size, scope, debt issuance, and overall funding of nongeneral funded major capital outlay projects;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the university be authorized to move forward with using the \$2.757 million available balance from the \$3.071 million authorized for the Health Center Improvements project to plan a revised and comprehensive solution for student wellness services.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the resolution authorizing Virginia Tech to use the remaining budget from the Health Center Improvements project to plan a comprehensive student wellness solution be approved.

March 21, 2016