

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF  
REGENTS OF HIGHER EDUCATION  
MONTANA UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

CONFERENCE CALL  
December 31, 1975  
Helena, Montana

Participating in the call were: Chairman Ted James, Regents Lewy Evans, Jeff Morrison, Sid Thomas, Commissioner Pettit, and Deputy Commissioner Noble (Regent Peterson in an earlier conversation with Commissioner Pettit had given his assent to the decision reached during the conference call.)

Commissioner Pettit explained that the conference call was necessary in order to secure authority to move expeditiously on the study for implementation of a uniform accounting system. He said that he had received that morning a letter from Jack Crosser, Director of the Department of Administration, expressing concern that the study was not moving along rapidly enough and that it may not be possible to implement the new uniform system in time for next biennium's budget cycle. Dr. Pettit explained that the Arthur Andersen company had been contacted by Mr. Dore and Mr. Ness, who are coordinating the study for the Board, and that the Andersen company had submitted a proposal for \$45,000. They would begin work, he explained, January 8th and would finish their portion of the project by the end of March. He explained that the \$45,000 fee represented about half of what the normal fee would be for a project of that magnitude. Dr. Pettit explained the potential financing of the study as follows: His office had budgeted \$70,000 for the entire study. Mr. Dore and Mr. Ness have estimated that after their fees and travel expenses are paid, there will be \$25,000 to \$30,000 remaining. In addition, he explained, the Council of

Presidents on December 8, 1974, had formally agreed to underwrite the entire cost of the project. The campuses could, therefore, be assessed, he said, but one of the problems in proceeding that way would be that the campuses would regard his office and the Board as beholden to them and may be less cooperative than they otherwise would be. Other methods of financing were discussed.

Mr. Morrison expressed the opinion that none of the \$1.3 million contingency fund should be tapped for this purpose. On motion of Mr. Evans, seconded by Mr. Morrison, the Board voted unanimously to authorize the Commissioner to proceed with engaging the Arthur Andersen company and to return to the Board to discuss the details of financing the project.

Dr. Pettit reported that the next regular meeting of the Board of Regents would be February 6 at 1:30 p.m. On motion of Mr. Thomas, seconded by Mr. Evans, the meeting adjourned.