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The New York Times

Missouri Moves Closer to Joining SEC

By PETE THAMEL

The University of Missouri is heading down a path to join the Southeastern Conference, said a university official with direct knowledge of the situation.

The person said that Missouri's decision to apply for membership to the SEC was "inevitable and imminent," although a specific timeframe has yet to be set. Missouri's Board of Curators will meet on Thursday and Friday at the University of Missouri-Kansas City, where the process of withdrawing from the Big 12 and applying to the SEC is expected to begin. Expansion is not listed on the agenda, but there is a private session scheduled Thursday afternoon and Friday morning.

After it applies, the person said that Missouri expected "no problems" with gathering enough votes among SEC presidents for it to become a member.

Although the interim Big 12 commissioner, Chuck Neinas, said last week that he expected Missouri to play in the Big 12 still in 2012, it was possible that it could start play in the SEC as early as next year. Missouri would become the SEC's 14th member; the league added Texas A&M in September. The SEC would prefer 14 members, as scheduling is a much simpler process with two seven-team divisions.

It is expected that the SEC presidents will tie the same caveat about legal entanglements to Missouri's application that they did to Texas A&M's. The SEC has made it clear that it wants no part of any legal problems, which held up Texas A&M's admission for more than a month.

Missouri has emerged as an unlikely linchpin in expansion, considering it has never won a Big 12 title in football. But the futures of the Big 12, the SEC and the Big East were tied to Missouri's decision.

This news dampens some optimism for the Big East, which appeared to be gaining momentum toward reviving its football fortunes. The exits of Syracuse, Pittsburgh and Texas Christian have the league struggling for survival, and Louisville and West Virginia are considered strong candidates, along with Brigham Young, for Big 12 expansion.

The Big East has made it clear that it would like to add Boise State, Air Force and Navy in football and Central Florida, Southern Methodist and Houston in all sports. The potential problem for the Big East is that it needs stability to remain attractive to potential new members.

Neinas said recently that if Missouri left, the Big 12 would settle at 10 or 12 teams. The Big 12 chairman Burns Hargis, the president of Oklahoma State, said Saturday that he would prefer a 12-team league, but acknowledged that his preference might not matter.

The loss of Missouri would leave Big 12 membership at nine, meaning a likely expansion of one or three universities, prompting more uncertainty and shuffling on the collegiate landscape.

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

Upcoming meetings could pave MU's way to SEC

BY VAHE GREGORIAN • vgregorian@post-dispatch.com > 314-340-8199 | Posted: Tuesday, October 18, 2011 12:00 am

COLUMBIA, MO. • With no stop signs surfacing since the University of Missouri two weeks ago made several bold moves to distance itself from a future with the Big 12, the next phase of an apparent intention to embark for the Southeastern Conference could be known by the end of the week.

The school's board of curators has a regularly scheduled meeting at UM-Kansas City on Thursday and Friday that actually will commence Wednesday night with a session on the presidential search.

While realignment isn't specifically on the schedule, the agenda features a closed session at 3:45 p.m. on Thursday and another at 10 a.m. Friday.

That would be consistent with the time frame for a next step that the Post-Dispatch was told of last week.

If approved and if no one at the helm is wavering, each less than 100 percent certain, then the measure is likely to be along the lines of a request to the Big 12 to clarify the process should MU elect to withdraw from the conference — just as Texas A&M formally began its move to the SEC.

The New York Times on Monday evening quoted a source with direct knowledge of the situation that Missouri's decision to apply for membership in the SEC was "inevitable and imminent."

After MU applies, the Times quoted the source saying, the school expects "no problems" with gathering enough votes among SEC presidents to become a member as soon as next year.

Missouri's Board of Curators meeting this week could reveal SEC intentions

By MIKE DeARMOND

COLUMBIA | Missouri's Board of Curators on Monday released an agenda calling for a closed executive session for 3:45 p.m. Thursday in Kansas City.

That closed session — if it mirrors a similar one held by the curators on Oct. 4 in St. Louis — could produce the next public step in the process of whether Missouri remains a member of the Big 12 or moves further toward joining the Southeastern Conference.

A story released early Monday evening by The New York Times quoted an unidentified college official with direct knowledge of the situation as saying Missouri's application to the SEC was "inevitable and imminent," though the source did not provide a timeline for that.

For nearly a month, The Star has reported a shared interest from Mizzou and the Southeastern Conference. Recently that interest has been publicly acknowledged by interim Big 12 commissioner Chuck Neinas.

Citing a conversation Neinas said he had with SEC commissioner Mike Slive, Neinas said: "I said basically, if you're going to extend an invitation to Missouri, let me know."

Neinas said Slive "didn't indicate one way or another" whether Missouri would be offered membership in the SEC.

After a four-hour closed session of the curators in St. Louis, the board authorized MU chancellor Brady Deaton to explore conference options.

If Missouri has decided its best option is outside the Big 12, and it decides to announce that on Thursday, the MU timeline would closely shadow the one Texas A&M used in announcing it was at first looking around and then conditionally withdrawing from the Big 12.

Texas A&M's withdrawal — conditional on being granted membership in another conference — came 16 days after the A&M regents authorized A&M president R. Bowen Loftin to look at other conferences. A&M withdrew from the Big 12 on Aug. 31. It joined the SEC on Sept. 26.

The agenda of the Missouri Board of Curators issued Monday begins with a meeting of the University System presidential search committee at 7 p.m. Wednesday at The Raphael Hotel, continues with meetings Thursday and ends Friday morning.



Curators to discuss conference decisions in Kansas City

By Dave Matter

The University of Missouri System Board of Curators will hold a regularly scheduled meeting over three days later this week in Kansas City and is expected to discuss options regarding conference realignment, specifically withdrawing from the Big 12 and joining the Southeastern Conference.

The board will first meet at 7 p.m. Wednesday at the Raphael Hotel to discuss the UM System presidential search and will reconvene Thursday morning. The curators will then move to the student union on the campus of the University of Missouri-Kansas City and gather for a public session Thursday afternoon. At 3:45 p.m., the board is scheduled to go into closed executive session and reconvene Friday morning before going into another closed session at 10 a.m.

The curators last met Oct. 4 in St. Louis, during which they unanimously voted to grant Chancellor Brady Deaton the authority to explore conference affiliation outside of the Big 12. Deaton is expected to update the board on his findings during Thursday's round of meetings, a university source told the Tribune.

According to the UM System bylaws on intercollegiate athletics, the UM president — in this case, interim President Steve Owens — and the curators shall approve any proposal by a campus to withdraw from one intercollegiate athletic conference for the purpose of affiliating with a new conference. Any proposal to withdraw would be proposed by the campus chancellor. A decision to leave the Big 12 and join the SEC could hinge on what Deaton shares with the curators since their last meeting two weeks ago, a source indicated.

An anonymous college official told The New York Times that Missouri's decision to apply for membership to the SEC was "inevitable and imminent," the newspaper reported on its website Monday evening. The report did not indicate any timetable for Missouri's decision.

Missouri athletic department spokesman Chad Moller declined comment on the report.

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ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

Chinese-Americans have low debt

BY JIM GALLAGHER • jimgallagher@post-dispatch.com > 314-340-8390 | Posted: Monday, October 17, 2011 3:04 pm | [\(6\) Comments](#)

Chinese-Americans don't borrow much, according to a new study from the University of Missouri-Columbia. They have mortgages, but little other debt.

"This result may reflect some unique aspects of the Chinese culture," said Rui Yao, an assistant professor of personal financial planning. "Credit and debt are relatively new concepts to the Chinese," she said, noting that most things in China are bought with cash.

Yao found that 72 percent of Chinese-American households hold a mortgage, but only five percent have auto loans and only three percent other consumer debt.

Yao surveyed Chinese-Americans, both immigrant and American-born, in ten Midwestern cities.

Thirty-one million Americans skip breakfast every day due to lack of time or appetite

Males aged 18 to 34 have the highest incidence of skipping breakfast.

Monday, October 17th 2011, 3:33 PM

A new report shows that 31 million Americans skip breakfast, mostly due to lack of time or appetite.

Thirty-one million Americans skip breakfast every day.

Not enough time or lack of appetite were cited as the top reasons so many skip the first meal of the day.

In a food market research study by NPD, analysts found that males aged 18 to 34 have the highest incidence of skipping breakfast -- 28 percent -- while adults aged 55 and older were the most likely to eat the most important meal of the day.

Among kids, teens aged 13 to 17 also had the highest incidence of going to school hungry, with 14 percent skipping breakfast.

NPD's Morning MealScape 2011 study was based on the answers of 27,180 participants who answered an online questionnaire between January and March of this year.

It's been well established that the risk of obesity rises among those who don't begin the day with a meal. Researchers at the [University of Minnesota](#) found, for instance, that teens who started their day off with a balanced breakfast were more likely to lead healthier, more active lifestyles and less likely to gain weight years later than those who skipped breakfast.

A recent study out of the University of Missouri found that a breakfast high in protein also reduced food cravings and overeating throughout the day.

Using breakfast-skipping teens as their subjects, researchers divided them into two groups. For three weeks, the first group ate 500-calorie breakfasts containing milk and cereal, with normal quantities of protein, while the other half consumed a breakfast higher in protein content, consisting of waffles, syrup and yogurt.

Brain MRI scans and a series of questionnaires later, researchers concluded that protein-rich breakfasts were more effective at curbing overeating throughout the day.

MU's statistics department receives \$2.85 million grant

By Jessika Street

October 17, 2011 | 5:04 p.m. CDT

COLUMBIA – The MU statistics department has received the largest grant in the department's history in order to improve the ways that data from the American Community Survey is interpreted.

The department received a \$2.85 million, 5-year grant from the National Science Foundation Research Network for this data research on the national survey of the U.S. Census Bureau, said Scott Holan, an associate professor in the department.

Holan and Chris Wikle, professor and director of undergraduate studies, began the process of applying for the grant in November 2010 and officially submitted a grant proposal in February.

Demographic data collected every 10 years is used to decide how more than \$400 billion in federal and state funds will be distributed. Information is also used to help make decisions about things like school lunch programs and new hospitals, according to the Census Bureau's website.

In order to increase the usability of the collected data, MU's statistics department plans to develop statistical models that will help improve estimates and lower uncertainty in the application of survey results. Students will look for relationships over space and time to apply findings to areas that are not studied, Holan said.

Undergraduate, graduate and postdoctoral students will put data into usable forms and create models. MU students will have the rare opportunity to participate in research as undergraduates.

One of the goals of the science foundation network is to train the next generation of statisticians through university grants, Holan said.

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

A look inside MU's new biomass boiler

By Emily Garnett

October 17, 2011 | 1:30 p.m. CDT

COLUMBIA – MU's new wood-burning boiler, supplied by Babcock & Wilcox Power Generation Group Inc., is a bubbling fluidized bed boiler. Gas is piped in to ignite a boiling bed of sand to 1,500 degrees Fahrenheit, which in turn ignites the wood, which is fed into the boiler through gravity.

Once the wood is ignited, the gas can be turned off, and the wood will continue to burn itself and produce heat. This heat is used to boil water and produce steam, which is used to generate electricity. The steam will also be used to heat and cool the campus using a process called combined heat and power.

Combined heat and power allows the plant to utilize up to 60 percent of the wood's stored energy, which is more than double the efficiency rate of producing only electricity from burning wood.

"We chose a technology that gave us a lot of flexibility with fuel," said Gregg Coffin, superintendent of the MU power plant.

The boiler is able to burn a variety of fuels, such as corncobs and grasses, and can even use natural gas if necessary, Coffin said.

It will be able to use some components of the old coal boiler structure, such as the water system, steam pipes and filtration devices.

"It made good economic sense," Coffin said.

Forest protections for MU fuel called national model

By Emily Garnett

October 17, 2011 | 1:29 p.m. CDT

COLUMBIA—Starting next fall, up to a quarter of MU’s energy will come from the trees of Missouri.

Foster Brothers, a wood products company in Auxvasse, will supply 100,000 tons of wood chips yearly for a new wood-burning boiler under construction at the power plant.

The six-year contract with Foster Bros. has been described as a national model because it includes conditions designed to protect the health of the Missouri forests that will be supplying the wood.

Missouri has no logging restrictions, and several other wood-fueled power plants in the works across Missouri would put additional pressure on timber resources.

It’s not the first time Missouri forests have faced the potential for a dramatic increase in timber cutting. In 1997, two chip mills were built in southeastern Missouri to grind up large quantities of wood for the manufacture of paper and other products. State officials put a hold on any new chip mills to keep clear-cutting and deforestation in check.

Hank Stelzer, an MU Extension forestry professor who helped develop the contract for wood to fuel the MU plant, believes these same issues could emerge with the wood-powered electricity industry.

“Just take the chip mill reports and take out the word chip mill and replace it with bioenergy, and the same issues are there,” Stelzer said.

The MU boiler joins other potential proposals for wood-fueled power plants at Perryville, Viburnum, Ellington and Fort Leonard Wood, said Hank Dorst, a member of a watchdog environmental group called Mark Twain Forest Watchers. Each of these plants would require between 100,000 and 400,000 tons of wood waste yearly.

Dorst said MU's contract with Foster Bros. was an opportunity to set the tone for responsible timber cutting.

"MU is in a position to lead the way in this industry, especially in the sourcing of wood from forests," he said.

The process of using wood to supply steam for heat or electricity isn't unprecedented in the Midwest, but the size and the sourcing of the MU boiler are, Stelzer said.

MU's wood-burning boiler will replace an older coal burner and will join four other boilers that can burn both coal and a small percentage of "blended biomass," a mixture of grasses and woody materials. Previously, these boilers have used up to 6,000 tons of wood a year. The power plant also uses one natural gas-fired boiler.

The new boiler will be replacing 25 percent of MU's coal consumption, and Gregg Coffin, superintendent of the MU power plant, expects it will supply between 20 and 25 percent of MU's yearly heat and electricity demands.

The MU Sustainability Office has calculated that the new boiler will allow MU to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by more than 20 percent by 2015, Coffin said.

Steve Foster, co-owner of Foster Bros., said his company will pull nearly 90 percent of the required wood from sawmill residues, secondary mills such as furniture plants and pallet builders, as well as "right-of-ways" waste such as tree trimming along state roads.

The other 10 percent will come from the discarded tops of logged trees and thinning projects that target diseased or undesirable trees in a managed forest. Foster expects to draw all this logging debris from within 50 miles of Columbia.

In an effort to avoid environmentally damaging practices such as clear-cutting that an increased market for wood waste could encourage, Foster Bros. has agreed to a number of conditions on the wood it will supply from Missouri forests:

- Before logging, a professional forester will review plans to help ensure that no clear-cutting will occur. The forester will also conduct on-site inspections of a randomly-selected 25 percent of the logging sites.
- At least one member of the logging crew must have completed a Missouri Forest Products Association program that teaches responsible timber cutting.

- Foster Bros. will not use sawmills that take any wood from logging efforts that clear all the high-value wood and leave only undesirable trees, such as invasive species and diseased wood.

“Right now, the sustainable harvest measures that the University has implemented that will be added to the contract regarding the biomass supplier are a national model,” said Peter Becker, a research coordinator with the Eastern Ozark Forestry Council who advocated for the inclusion of the conditions.

Becker represents the Eastern Ozark Forestry Council on the Missouri Forest Resources Advisory Council, a coalition of forest groups and conservation-minded organizations that was instrumental in the push to protect Missouri forests.

Both Becker and Stelzer admire MU’s acceptance of the conditions, especially given the additional costs.

“The power plant could easily have said, ‘No, we’re not going to do it this way,” Stelzer said. “I can’t say enough for them, Gregg and the whole team over there. It’s not the way business is usually done.”

Purchase and construction of the boiler and its infrastructure will cost about \$75 million, and Stelzer estimated that enforcing the restrictions will cost MU an additional \$6,000 to \$10,000 a year.

'It's all we've ever done'

Foster Bros., with its headquarters 30 miles from Columbia, has been in the wood products business since the early 1930s. The firm has five facilities in Missouri that chip waste wood, works with 200 to 300 suppliers and already produces between 400,000 to 500,000 tons of wood products each year.

After receiving bids from three Missouri companies and one in Florida, MU decided on Foster Bros.

“It was not a difficult selection,” Coffin said.

Steve Foster and his brother, Jay Foster, knew they were the right company for the job as soon as they saw the notice sent to potential bidders more than a year ago.

"We have more experience, more equipment, more know-how than anyone else in the state," Foster said. "It's all we've ever done."

Working with MU means the company will have to increase its wood products production by about 20 percent. Foster believes his company can attract additional logging residues by offering a higher price than many sellers receive now.

"Hopefully we can afford to pay a little more," he said. "With a steady market, you can afford to pay more."

Some of the waste wood will come from existing supplies that will be diverted from locations farther from Auxvasse than Columbia, in particular a Foster Bros. facility in St. Louis.

"If economics says it's better to send them to Columbia than to the current market, which is farther away, we will," Foster said.

The wood chips will be trucked in six days a week from Auxvasse. Coffin compared this distance to the 240-mile trip the power plant's coal supplies make from southern Illinois five days a week.

"It's significantly less transportation," he said. "It's less wear and tear on the state highways and less diesel."

Foster expects to start making small deliveries to MU in late spring for the coal burners that can co-fire with woody biomass. In the fall of 2012, Foster Bros. will begin full-sized deliveries for the new biomass boiler.

Foster said he wasn't put off by restrictions in the contract.

"They covered all their bases," he said. "I think the citizens of Missouri should be proud. It's a first, in many respects, and I think it'll work great."

THE MANEATER

THE STUDENT VOICE OF MU SINCE 1933

Ellis Library repairs continue

Renovations from the Ellis Library fire total over \$600,000.

By Lizzie Johnson Published Oct. 18, 2011

The Sept. 10 fire in Ellis Library is estimated to have caused between \$600,000 to \$1 million in damages. Renovations to the library and the State Historical Society are expected to continue until the end of the semester. Most of the repairs will be covered by insurance.

Christopher C. Kelley, an MU graduate and events assistant with the MU Police Department, was charged with second-degree burglary and second-degree arson. He admitted to being in the library after hours, but denied setting the fires, according to court documents.

“He was an events staff person with us,” MUPD Capt. Brian Weimer said in a previous Maneater article. “He worked move-in and a football game. He has worked at the job about a month. We had calls from the community identifying him to turn himself in.”

The fire occurred on the second floor of the library, causing fire and smoke damage to the first floor and water damage in other areas. The incident closed the library for three days.

The circulation office was moved, and a computer lab and study spaces were shut down due to the repairs. Visitors must navigate around partitions blocking off construction areas.

“We have to had to close off about a quarter of the first floor of the northeast quadrant,” MU Library spokeswoman Shannon Cary said. “It has affected students somewhat because we had to close a computer lab and some study space.”

Offices have also been moved to the northwest corner of the library due to fire damage to the office furniture and walls, Cary said.

The north section of the State Historical Society has been shut off from the public due to construction. Ten employees were displaced by the repairs and relocated to other offices. The area is still open for researchers.

The society suffered \$10,000 worth of damages in destroyed duplicate microfilm. Repairs to the ceilings above the microfilm newspaper collection are schedule to begin soon.

Construction has led to the cancellation of the State Historical Society of Missouri’s annual “Trick of Treat through Missouri History” event.

Administrators have plans to move the historical center to the Heinkel Building. A lack of funding has extenuated the project's timeline.

Columbia Transit drivers to start enforcing evening fares

By [Alicia Stice](#), [Steven Rich](#)

October 17, 2011 | 6:15 p.m. CDT

COLUMBIA — For two weeks, many students have ridden the city bus route running between MU's campus and several student apartment complexes on Old 63 South for free despite fare increases that technically took effect Oct. 1.

Starting Monday night, bus drivers will end their period of "leniency" and start collecting the fares, Public Works Department spokeswoman Jill Stedem said. Bus drivers did not collect the money consistently these past few weeks because some riders were unaware of the fare increase, she said.

"The bus drivers knew that not everyone knew about the changes," she said. "There was just a lot of confusion on everyone's parts. Starting (Monday) they're going to be collecting the fare."

Fares for the evening routes are supposed to be \$1.50 per ride for students 18 and older. Stedem said the city was unable to provide counts on the number of passengers or the revenue collected on the evening shuttles since Oct. 1 because it only produces those numbers month by month.

On Sept. 6, the Columbia City Council rejected two contracts that would have continued free bus service to the apartment complexes at no charge to students from 6 to 10 p.m. on weekdays. The council reasoned that the contracts fail to cover costs and that it would be unfair to raise bus fares for other users and not for students.

Campus Lodge and The Reserve at Columbia would have paid the city \$13,709 per academic year for the evening service.

Stedem said drivers were told at the end of September about the fare increases and were instructed to be lenient about collecting money from passengers for the first two weeks.

For the past two weeks, bus fares on the Gold East route have been collected inconsistently. Last week, some bus drivers checked passes and collected the new fare, while others seemed unsure about the policy change. One asked passengers what they had heard about whether the key-fob passes they received from their apartment complexes were still valid. On one night, a student offered to pay and was told she didn't have to because she had a daytime pass from The Reserve.

MU senior Haley Hoffmann said she rides the evening shuttle four nights a week and has not been asked to pay the fare since the city voted to end its contracts for free evening service and impose the \$1.50 fare. During the day, Hoffmann always shows her bus pass to the drivers, but she said she rarely has to do so on the evening shuttle.

"I've never seen anyone with a pass (from one of the apartment complexes) have to pay," she said.

At the Sept. 6 City Council meeting, Public Works Director John Glascock suggested Columbia Transit wouldn't run the routes if the contracts were rejected. Instead, the council directed Glascock to continue the evening shuttles and find out whether the city could collect enough fares to profit from them.

Campus Lodge and The Reserve still have contracts that guarantee free service to residents from 7:10 a.m. to 5:40 p.m. The contracts are good for three years starting in 2010 and 2011, respectively.