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House Budget Committee to vote on new state budget revisions Wednesday

By Zach Murdock

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COLUMBIA — The Missouri House Budget Committee will mark up a new state budget for the next fiscal year Wednesday.

Last week, committee chairman Ryan Silvey, R-Kansas City, announced a new budget proposal that would end a state program providing support for the blind to help restore Gov. Jay Nixon's proposed cuts to higher education.

At its hearing Wednesday, committee members will discuss changes to the proposed bill and can vote to send it to the House floor for approval.

Silvey's proposed budget would allocate \$379 million — \$31 million more than under Nixon's proposal — to the University of Missouri System.

"We are going to value higher education — we are going to make it a priority — and we're going to balance the budget," Silvey told the Associated Press last week.

But President Pro Tem Rob Mayer said Monday that the Senate disagrees with Silvey's proposed cuts to funding for the blind and is unlikely to compromise when it reviews the budget.

UM System spokeswoman Jennifer Hollingshead said no matter what happens in the legislature, the UM System makes its plans based on the governor's recommended budget and will only make revisions to the plan after Nixon signs a final state budget in June.

"As always, the University of Missouri System appreciates the governor's and legislature's recognition that funding for public higher education should be a top priority," said Hollingshead, according to a statement issued last week.

Over the past two months, system administrators have made several trips to testify in front of the committee and make the case for adding funds to the higher education budget.

Hollingshead said Monday that there are no plans for system administrators to testify in Jefferson City this week.

In February, the UM System Board of Curators voted at a special meeting to limit tuition increases for in-state undergraduate students to the rate of inflation, 3 percent, while increasing tuition for out-of-state undergraduate students at three of its campuses by more than 7.5 percent.

MU spokesman Christian Basi said it's too soon for the university's budget office to have any definite answers in response to a possible change in the higher education budget but that MU will continue to watch the process closely.

Nixon had originally proposed cuts of \$106 million to higher education but added \$40 million back into the budget after Missouri joined a settlement with the nation's five largest mortgage companies.

"We face many challenges in ensuring that our state's budget is balanced, and we've had to make difficult decisions," Nixon said in a statement Thursday. "This proposal is just plain wrong."

The new budget plan takes into account \$10 million more in lottery sales than what the governor initially projected and a \$5 million cut in local school district funding that Silvey said would have only been worth \$5 per pupil.

It also makes changes to the governor's proposal for a pay raise for state employees. Nixon originally called for the raises to take effect in January instead of July. Silvey's plan pushes the start date for the raise to July, but only for employees earning less than \$70,000 a year.

The Associated Press and Missouri Digital News reporters Jordan Shapiro and Matt Patane contributed to this report.



Professor details role as climate consultant

By Janese Silvey

A University of Missouri professor has been caught in the cross hairs of a national scandal involving leaked documents from the Heartland Institute.

The institute is a think tank that, among other things, explores claims that humans cause climate change. Last month, environmental activist Peter Gleick admitted to stealing someone else's identity to obtain internal Heartland documents, which included records showing that the institute pays six university professors to provide consulting services.

Tony Lupo, department chair and professor of atmospheric science at MU, is one of the six. He receives \$750 a month for eight hours of work, according to his disclosure forms on file with the university. Lupo describes that work as helping Heartland better understand scientific journal articles.

Like the institute, Lupo has challenged theories that humans are causing global warming.

"There's no doubt the climate is changing; that's a given," he said. "But the question is: What's causing it. Is it mankind alone, which a lot of people say? Is it some mix of man and nature? Or is it nature? I would say nature is mostly responsible. There may be a role for man in there somewhere, but how much, I don't know."

Although his views align with Heartland's, Lupo said the work he does is not directly related to causes of climate change. He translates scientific journal articles on climate models into more readable summaries.

"A lot of times, journal articles are not very understandable to the public," Lupo said. "I take articles that talk about climate change issues, more or less how climate models are handled, and I interpret them in a form that somebody can understand and digest."

Lupo's summaries, along with other reviews, are posted on a website maintained by the Nongovernmental International Panel on Climate Change. Craig Idso is lead co-author of that panel.

He said in an email that Lupo generally selects the papers he reviews, although on a few occasions, Idso has sent him papers in his area of expertise. Idso estimated Lupo reviewed one or two of the roughly six he sent him last year.

At no point has Heartland directed any of its scientists, including Lupo, to review a specific paper or alter any writings, Idso said.

Gleick leaked the Heartland documents without revealing his identity in mid-February, then issued a confession Feb. 20 on the Huffington Post that he used someone else's name to access the materials. He called it a "serious lapse of my own and professional judgment and ethics."

The Heartland Institute, on its website, says Gleick used the name of a Heartland board member to email requests for the documents.

Heartland denies the authenticity of one of the most controversial documents leaked — a memo that outlines supposed plans to undermine the teaching of global warming in public schools. The New York Times reported that the memo was in a different format and type style from the rest of the Heartland materials.

Greenpeace, an environmental group, referenced that memo in a letter sent to UM System President Tim Wolfe questioning whether Lupo's consulting work poses a conflict.

It does not, MU spokesman Christian Basi said. Lupo has filed the proper paperwork with the university and did not consult while receiving federal grant money, Basi said. Several sources confirmed it is not unusual for professors to provide consulting services to not-for-profit organizations.

Lupo is a certified consultant through the American Meteorology Society and also reports his consulting activities to that group. He said he doesn't expect the recent scandal to affect his work.

"I'm completely within all my guidelines and follow the rules for consulting," Lupo said. "There's no reason to discontinue doing this so long as I'm within all of the guidelines."

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News-Leader.com
Springfield, MO

MU research: People would buy sustainable cotton

COLUMBIA, Mo. (AP) - Researchers at the University of Missouri-Columbia say they've found that people would be willing to pay extra for clothing made from sustainably grown U.S. cotton.

The researchers surveyed 500 people nationwide. They found consumers preferred the sustainably produced U.S.-grown cotton over apparel made in unknown locations using conventional practices. Additionally, consumers were willing to pay up to \$5 more for a \$30 cotton shirt produced sustainably in the U.S.

Researcher Pamela Norum says many U.S. cotton farmers are using sustainable practices but aren't communicating that fact well enough to the public. She says the research shows how important it is to promote those sustainable practices.

The research has been published in the Journal of Consumer Marketing and in the Clothing and Textiles Research Journal.

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Columbia Regional Airport connecting to the SEC

Mayor Bob McDavid unveils his '40 in 2020' plan, with the Columbia airport servicing 40 percent of travel for Mid-Missourians.

By Daniel Shapiro

Columbia Mayor Bob McDavid unveiled the Columbia Regional Airport's decision to have a new connection to Atlanta via Delta Airlines in a conference call Friday.

McDavid opened by stating that during the past few months, MU and the Chamber of Commerce have been working on an initiative called "40 in 2020." By the year 2020, the Columbia Regional Airport would host 40 percent of all airline travel for mid-Missourians. This would require several hundred passenger jets traveling to major airline hubs each day.

"I am excited to announce the first success in our Columbia Regional Airport initiative," McDavid said, according to a transcript of the conference call.

McDavid said the airport will begin daily non-stop flights to and from Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport beginning June 7.

Hartsfield-Jackson is the busiest airport in the world with the largest airline hub in the world, for Delta Airlines.

McDavid explained the benefit of linking Columbia to the heart of the Southeastern Conference.

"This direct Atlanta connection gives mid-Missourians and particularly University of Missouri faculty, staff and students direct and immediate access into the heart of SEC country," McDavid said in the call. "Expect mid-Missourians to travel to SEC country in droves. And we expect our SEC partners and competitors, in turn, to visit mid-Missouri and have the times of their lives. Except on the playing field."

MU sophomore and Atlanta resident Michael Doudna looks forward to the expansion.

"Being from Atlanta, it will make going home just so much more convenient," Doudna said in an email.

The airport is very excited about the new service, said Jill Stedem, Columbia Public Works Department spokeswoman.

“We’re very excited about the new addition of Atlanta airports and what it will do for Mid-Missouri residents,” she said. “440,000 people reside in our catchment area and there are a lot of businesses that will benefit from this new service.”

Stedem also said the new Atlanta flight will replace the mid-day flight to Memphis, so that each day there will be a morning and evening flight to Memphis and a mid-day flight to Atlanta.

The airport is planning on opening more services in and out of Columbia, which McDavid touched on in the conference call, Stedem said.

“I believe mid-Missouri has a large, unmet demand for air service,” McDavid said in the call. “Our group continues to speak with and negotiate with other air service providers. We need to tap the Chicago market for Chicago’s growing base of University of Missouri students and Chicago’s Asian flight connections. Dallas would provide connections west, increase our international reach, and allow the University of Missouri to focus on Dallas area recruitment.”

Snubbed by coaches, Haith gets AP honor

By Steve Walentik

Frank Haith's résumé, which received so much scrutiny when he was hired by Missouri last April, now includes an award for coach of the year.

The Associated Press named him the Big 12's coach of the year after he guided the surprising Tigers to a school-record 27 regular-season victories and a second-place finish in the league standings.

Haith deflected credit when notified of his award on the Big 12 teleconference this morning.

"It's about our guys. It's about our staff. They did a hell of a job," Haith said. "We've had a great year, a great run — 27 wins, most in school history in the regular season, 14 league wins, most wins in a year" during Big 12 play. "So I'm really proud of these young men, and it's about the people that are around me.

"I really believe this: We just didn't mess it up. We got good players, and I got a really good staff."

That staff, with Haith in the lead, helped transform Missouri into one of the nation's most efficient offensive teams. It did so by managing a seven-man rotation and relying on a four-guard lineup made necessary after senior forward Laurence Bowers, last year's second-leading scorer and top rebounder, suffered a season-ending knee injury less than two weeks before the start of practice.

Many considered it a snub yesterday when Haith wasn't the Big 12 coaches' choice for the league's coach of the year. That honor was shared by Kansas' Bill Self and Iowa State's Fred Hoiberg.

Self won the award for the fourth time — passing Texas' Rick Barnes for most all-time — after leading the Jayhawks to an eighth consecutive Big 12 regular-season title.

Hoiberg won his first coach-of-the-year award in his second season on the bench at his alma mater. He led the Cyclones, predicted to finish eighth in the Big 12 in a preseason poll of the league coaches, to a third-place showing and has them on the verge of securing their first NCAA Tournament berth since 2005.

Haith wouldn't reveal whether Self, Hoiberg or someone else earned his coach-of-the-year vote.

"I'm not going to say that," he said. "Both guys, both guys that won it, are deserving, and they both did a hell of a job. I think Fred, the job he did, being picked eighth or seventh and to finish third — outstanding job in meshing that talent. Then, obviously, Bill, the team losing all the guys he lost ... and to get the guys to play the way he got them to play this year to win the league for the eighth time.

"Both guys are deserving of the award, and I can't remember who I voted for."

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ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

Pinkel expects backlash as 'M' comes off helmets

BY VAHE GREGORIAN STLtoday.com | Posted: Tuesday, March 6, 2012 12:50 am | (8)
Comments



Coach Gary Pinkel will lead the Missouri Tigers into the Southeastern Conference, whose schools have won the last six national titles. (AP Photo)

COLUMBIA, Mo. • At its spring game April 14, Mizzou football will unveil new uniforms and helmets, which will ditch the block "M" that has adorned the headgear for 40 years.

Without giving details on the change, which Mizzou was studying before the SEC move, coach Gary Pinkel said the uniforms are "off-the-charts" and have resonated with recruits.

"They went crazy," he said. "Those are 18-year-old kids, and (those concepts are) what we're recruiting against and what we're playing."

As for the helmets, he seems to have a sense that traditionalists will be a hard sell.

"I would like to think people know that I have a deep respect for Missouri football, OK? I know the history of that helmet, I know everything about that helmet," he said. "But we chose to take the `M' off the helmet."

That's because studies showed that MU's most distinct icons are the word "Mizzou" and its Tiger-head logo. And nationally, he added, the "M" is easily confused with Michigan or others.

"Who knows what it is?" he asked.

Noting MU's successes in the 1960s with numbers on the side of the helmet, he added, "I have great respect for everything (that's happened) here, but I'm going to do the right thing for the University of Missouri, not what's popular. As long as you win enough, that takes care of itself."