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News Release

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Accountability Measures on U of I Board Agenda for Thursday 'No more business as usual,' Board Chairman says

The University of Illinois Board of Trustees, at a meeting in Rockford on Thursday, is expected to endorse a series of measures to further streamline administration, provide more accountability in the University budget and limit trustees' travel expenses.

"Given the difficult fiscal climate and the public's interest in the stewardship of America's institutions, the bar has been raised for universities and their governing boards, and the University of Illinois intends to meet the challenge," U. of I. Board Chairman Lawrence Eppley said. "We take to heart the notion of 'no more business as usual,' and we will redouble our efforts to operate more efficiently without jeopardizing our high quality."

The Board of Trustees will act on three resolutions during its regular scheduled meeting on the campus of the U. of I. College of Medicine at Rockford.

One of the resolutions calls for an examination of existing administrative structures with an eye toward "consolidation, streamlining and simplifying" non-academic administrative operations, and for President James J. Stukel to make a progress report at the Board's meeting in July.

A second resolution directs the University to prepare its budget to show how funds are spent according to objects of expenditure, such as salaries, services, equipment and so forth. Such line-item accountability is important in the current fiscal environment.

According to the resolution, "It is imperative the University demonstrate to all audiences, both internal and external, government and taxpayers, that it is managing its resources wisely and with full oversight from, and accountability to, the Board of Trustees. It is at the level of the Board that proper oversight and accountability can be achieved most fully while maximizing operational efficiency."

The third resolution will place stricter reimbursement limits on trustees to reduce expenses for travel to Board meetings and other University-related activities. The resolution directs trustees to comply with guidelines of the Higher Education Travel Control Board and instructs the U. of I. comptroller to manage compliance with the regulations.

In other business, the Board will hear a presentation on the College of Medicine at Rockford's highly regarded Rural Medical Education Program, which trains students for the unique challenges facing rural physicians and addresses the need for medical care in underserved regions of Illinois.

The University of Illinois enrolls some 70,000 students on its three campuses in Chicago, Springfield and Urbana-Champaign. The state's top educator, the U. of I. awards more than 15,000 degrees each year and is in the Top 10 nationally among universities that educate U.S. corporate leaders. More than 68,000 Illinois jobs are directly tied to the University.

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Reporters/Editors/News Directors: Agenda items No. 1, 2 & 3 were emailed or mailed to you recently as part of the Board agenda packet, or can be transmitted at your request. The Board of Trustees will be meeting at UIC College of Medicine at Rockford, Room E120 UIC College of Medicine at Rockford Building, 1601 Parkview Avenue, Rockford, Illinois, beginning at 10:00. For more details, contact the Office of University Relations at 312-996-3772 in Chicago, or 217-333-6400 in Urbana.