



the BRUNSWICKAN

Volume 130 • Issue 22 March 21, 1997 Second Class Mail #8120
Canada's Oldest Official Student Publication • University of New Brunswick, Fredericton, N.B.

SU fee will be \$99.50

JOSEPH FITZPATRICK
THE BRUNSWICKAN

Next year, for the first time in over five years, the Activity Fee for the UNB Student Union will be lower than the previous year.

The third reading of the UNBSU Budget for 1997-98 went off without a hitch. Not a single item was brought up for discussion, in stark contrast with previous years, leaving the fee at \$99.50, down from last year's \$102.

In 1997-98, the new Vice-President (Finance & Administration) Jeff Clark will administer a budget of some \$727,345.

However, this reduction may only be

a one-year respite. Unless spending is reduced sharply next year, current spending levels could see the fee jump back to \$102 or even beyond. In fact, if the accumulated surplus of \$23,880 had not been carried forward, projected spending would have increased the fee \$1 to \$103.

Other challenges which will face Clark as VP (Finance) will be the terms of the repayment agreement with the Cellar Pub. Although over \$100,000 has been spent on the bar located in the basement of the SUB, only the initial \$30,000 is covered by a written contract. The remainder, consisting of advances, is listed as an "unsecured" loan in the 1996 audit of the UNB SU.

You never thought you'd miss the GST

No HST rebate for students

KURT PEACOCK
THE BRUNSWICKAN

When the new harmonized sales tax comes into effect on April 1, University students will be among the hardest hit by the new policy, and the least likely to benefit from any tax savings. While officials from New Brunswick's Finance Department were quick to minimize any negative effect that the HST will have on the working poor or the province's universities, university students have been left out in the cold.

Announcing the new tax last October, New Brunswick's Finance Minister Edmond Blanchard was quick to assure the public that his government would fix any problems the HST imposed on low-income earners. "We have said repeatedly we know there is a modest number of New Brunswickers in the lower-income categories who will not experience the full benefit of harmonization. A higher percentage of their income is spent on items that will see an increase in tax rate: electricity, heating fuel, gasoline and clothing under \$100," said Blanchard. "I am personally committed to see a tax credit in place to ensure that those on low incomes will not be harmed by harmonization."

In actual fact the government did move in their December Budget to minimize the effect the tax had on low-income families and universities, but ignored the financial plight of university students. When tabling his Budget, Blanchard said "I am pleased to announce that the government has decided to implement a program to compensate universities for the provincial portion of the HST paid on research and development equipment." Speaking in front of the Senate Committee looking at the HST on

March 4, Blanchard boasted "To guard against any negative impact on low-income families, New Brunswick has introduced two programs, a Child Tax Benefit and a Working Income Supplement. These programs, which focus on low-income families with dependents, will more than compensate eligible families for any negative impacts they might experience."

Nowhere has the government boasted about compensating students hit by the negative impacts of the HST. This is because after April 1, when UNB students get their GST tax credits in the mail, they will be receiving a mere 7% tax credit when they are actually paying out 15% in sales tax. While the federal government will continue to minimize the effect of the GST on students through the continued issuing of GST credits, the Provincial Finance Department has thus far decided not to "harmonize" the GST credit with a provincial version, despite the fact that the two governments have harmonized their sales taxes.

While cars, boats and hotel rooms are all cheaper in price under the proposed new system, the HST will actually mean an increase in the goods and services that students use most often. Among the things that students will have to pay more for are: haircuts, shoes, taxi fares, gasoline and electricity. Since the majority of students will not be able to seek taxation relief under the Province's Child Tax Benefit or Working Income Supplement, the HST will represent a further financial burden instead of a reduction of the cost of living. While students can still look forward to their GST credit four times a year, this credit represents only the federal portion of a 15% harmonized sales tax. With the Provincial Government pocketing the rest, students may be little less happy when their 7% GST cheque comes in the mail.

CRO calls for election reform

JOSEPH FITZPATRICK
THE BRUNSWICKAN

Chief Returning Officer Matt Tingley believes revamping the electoral process should be on top of the list of things that next year's Student Union Council should do.

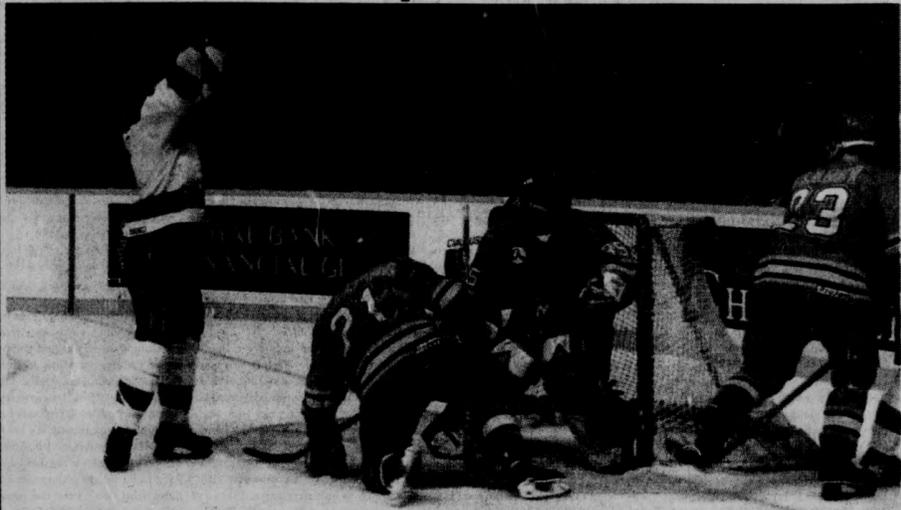
"I feel that it is absolutely imperative that this [review] be the first priority of the new Council," he stated emphatically in his official report, which he presented at Tuesday's Council meeting.

"We must analyze our internal strengths and weaknesses, and our external opportunities and threats," he argues in his report.

Although he sees an immediate need for strategies to improve balloting and voter turnout, he believes that it is also important to develop "a three to five plan for both the elections and the Student Union."

"We must start now planning for the future now, so that the mistakes made now are never repeated in the future," he concluded.

So close and yet so far - UNB's



Seconds after fifth-year centre Toby Burkitt scores UNB's third goal at 14:20 of the third period. Turn to page 10 for more coverage of UNB's first CLAU playoffs in Hockey since 1984. JUDSON DELONG PHOTO

\$2.59 million, eighteen thousand square feet

SUB Expansion plan tabled

GORDON LOANE
THE BRUNSWICKAN

A \$2.59 million dollar, eighteen thousand foot expansion of the Student Union Building on campus could begin in 1998, if a proposal being discussed by the SUB expansion committee is finally adopted.

A preliminary list of construction costs and possible financing for the project was presented to the committee last week by UNB's Associate Vice-President Campus Services and Planning Mike Ryan.

A preliminary construction budget would be in the order of 2.1 million, according to Ryan's proposal, a copy of which has been obtained by *The Brunswickan*.

Some \$240,000 would be needed for such things as architectural, structural, mechanical and electrical work, site work and rock excavation/Geotech surveys.

The expansion, on the east side of the current SUB, would require a further \$150,000 for furniture and equipment.

A contingency fund of \$100,000 would also be established to meet any unforeseen expenses.

The present proposal would expand the present Student Union Building by some thirty percent.

Financing for the project would come almost solely from UNB undergraduate students.

Some \$540,000 has already been collected for the expansion project from a \$25 per student fee initiated in 1994-95.

A further \$180,000 would be collected next September as the \$25

fee continues for a fourth straight year. The project also received a \$250,000 boost sometime ago from the Venture Capital campaign.

Just over \$1.6 million would be borrowed, to be repaid over 25 years with a continuing \$25 per year student levy (depending on interest rates at the time the loan is made).

The size of the project and possible financing are preliminary and are by no means set in stone, according to UNB SU President Joe Hellmeister.

What is clear is that both Hellmeister and incoming SU President Anthony Knight want to get the project firmly in place and soon.

Hellmeister particularly notes comments and questions from students who participated in a recent plebiscite on Student Union Services.

"Students wanted to know when the expansion would take place or if they were going to get their money back," Hellmeister told *The Brunswickan* earlier this week.

"They want to know what is going on with SUB expansion," she said.

What is also up in the air is whether Saint Thomas students or UNB graduate students will participate in financing the expansion project or whether UNB undergraduates will have to go it alone.

It should be noted that the Saint Thomas Student Council will not undertake a referendum on SUB expansion in conjunction with their General Elections this month.

"We are still hoping once a definite plan is in place that next year STU students will get on board and join the SUB expansion project, because it is an important part of university life and

we all share the same building," Hellmeister emphasized.

"We still don't know if UNB graduate students are getting on board this project as well," she added.

Hellmeister also confirmed that a number of ideas aimed at coming up with more money for the project from outside sources are being discussed, perhaps alumni sources, for example.

But the next step for Hellmeister before leaving office on May 1st is to formulate a list of what student offices are needed in the expanded SUB.

She also believes operating expenses for an expanded SUB will need to be recovered somewhat by revenues from commercial tenants.

In that respect Hellmeister has received preliminary e-mail inquiries from one individual in Ontario and another in British Columbia.

"Both have expressed interest in renting space in the new SUB, so word is getting around that we are considering the expansion," Hellmeister said.

For incoming SU President Anthony Knight preparing a SUB expansion project over the summer of 1997 will be a major priority.

"I campaigned on it and I intend to follow through on it," Knight told *The Brunswickan* this week.

"We intend to prepare a proposal that is concise and accurate and meets the needs of students both at UNB and Saint Thomas as well as UNB Graduate Students."

It will have to be a plan that also accommodates the UNB administration but does not compromise the needs of students, according to Knight.

"I'd like to see some sort of plan

prepared and in place by September," Knight vowed.

As far as students getting antsy about SUB expansion and where the \$25 annual levy is going, Knight is in complete agreement.

"I don't blame students for being concerned."

"I'm concerned and worried about where my money is going and I've only been paying the \$25 fee for two years, he said.

"I think we have to take some leadership and give the project some direction and that is certainly what the UNB SU Executive will be doing this summer."

Knight hopes that when the summer work is completed both Saint Thomas and UNB Graduate Students will want to support the project.

"We hope to have the proposal ready for the new Council at STU to look at in the Fall," Knight said.

"I would then love to see the issue go to a Fall referendum at STU, but that is certainly up to them."

As for financial support from the UNB Graduate Students' Association, Knight remains optimistic, emphasizing that relations between the SU and GSA have been quite good over the last year.

He notes that the GSA has expressed interest in SUB expansion.

"But there are large sums of money involved over the long term here and I would be a little leery to just jump right in with both feet if I were them too," Knight said.

"So, I don't blame the GSA for wanting to see a formal and concise proposal about what their money would be going toward," Knight concluded.



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Day Care Administrator responds to SU - News, page 3
- Debating team at the Nationals - News, page 4
- Hockey Reds go far, but not all the way - Sports, page 10
- How does "Measure" measure? - Entertainment, page 12
- Book focuses on homeless in Victoria - Books, page 14
- Presidential Mansion bought - Campus, page 18



Maple Leaf Gardens Sports, page 10

Editorial	6
Sports	10
Entertainment	12
Distractions	15
Viewpoint	17
Campus	18
Classifieds	19



The Management and Staff of the College Hill Social Club and the 600 or so patrons who showed up for the games wish to congratulate the Varsity Red Hockey Team on their outstanding effort this season. Also special thanks to Moosehead Breweries and Cox TV and Stereo



Where Friday Afternoons are always drafty

\$3.50 per pitcher
2:30 - 3:30



Social Club
Est. 1970

For members and guests only

Home of the \$2.00 Double Friday & Saturday Night