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Dear FEC Members,

My treatment at OHSU was rescheduled to Friday so I am unable to make today's FEC meeting as planned. I was looking forward to talking with you all, and there were a number of things on which I wanted to update you, so I decided to write you a brief letter.

First, I want to let you know that things are proceeding as planned with the new building. All contracts for "**New Peavy**" are signed and we are making good progress. They are pouring the foundation this week and the structure will start to take shape next month. As you know, we experienced cost overruns due to the hot construction market, but we have good options to meet our obligations. We will be consulting you at a special FEC meeting in a couple of weeks before deciding upon which option we want to undertake. You will have some pre-read materials regarding the choices prior to the meeting and I appreciate your best thinking on this.

I also want to update you on the Provost's Council Retreat and some of the budgetary changes that are occurring at OSU. Prior to the retreat I went through Sherm's **Responsibility Centered Budget Model** pretty carefully to find out what impact this will have on the college's finances. I was able to discuss it in detail with the Provost and other deans at the retreat. The model, as you know, bases funding for colleges primarily on credit hour production and graduates. The bottom line is that if we were funded strictly by the model we would take a \$400,000 budget cut. There are no plans to actually cut our budget by this amount, but we will be expected to address the deficit over time. I looked at the increase in enrollment and class size that would be required to eliminate the deficit and I can tell you that it is significant. We need to think very carefully how to proceed, and I know this will be the subject of future FEC meetings. We do have choices other than doubling class sizes.

At the retreat, I was asked to present what I think are the most significant challenges for our college as we move forward. I said they were:

- 1) a changing demographic of our donor base,
- 2) USDA/Forest Service research budgets are shrinking,
- 3) the rising cost of educating students in a professional program, and
- 4) replacing skilled administrators.

Our college is different than others at OSU and we must respect that difference. We have very high-cost education programs, which our stakeholders demand, so we depend on external funding from large donors and harvest taxes. We are the top forestry research engine in the country, and we have to be careful as we move forward to preserve our ability to maintain our #1 research status AND turn out high quality graduates. It is a tough challenge. Now is the time for careful thought about the type of college we want to be. I look forward to your thoughts on this as the year progresses.

The COF Deans, Department Heads, and Directors met in early September to review the **strategic goals** I submitted to the Provost this year, which we will discuss later in the agenda today. I believe that these goals will help us maintain our leadership position in education and research, and will move us toward a college that respects diversity and where everyone feels included and valued. We had a long discussion about internationalization, and we agreed to proceed prudently, but this is an important goal for a college of our stature around the world.

I truly believe that these are the right goals for us. Today, I'd like FEC to focus on:

- 1) how to achieve these goals,
- 2) who has a part in crafting pathways forward, and
- 3) how we will measure the outcomes we achieve.

Another topic we have discussed is how to **revamp FEC** to make it a more productive and useful body. We have made some significant changes and we would really appreciate your thoughts after we have had a few meetings with the new format. We may even try a new day and time!

I want to make you aware that we will be hosting a ***Forestry Leadership Speaker Series*** and there should be a handout in today's packet. We plan to have distinguished lecturers from both academia and industry visit the college to speak about what's new in forestry and to best address our challenges and opportunities. I hope we get good turnout for the series.

Lastly, I wanted to let you know that we are planning for a **Fire Summit** to be held early in the New Year. The idea behind the summit is to have a discussion between key policy makers and scientists to determine how forest management can help address the forest fire and climate change issues we are dealing with in the Western US. We hope also to discuss the need for future research. This fire year was a major wake up call for many urbanites – especially in Oregon. Policy makers want to do something, but the science is not clear. Some are saying “let the fires burn”, and others want wholesale thinning without environmental review. We think it is a perfect time to introduce some of our latest science and for OSU to play a leadership role in this public discussion.

There is a lot happening at the college these days and nearly all of it is good. We have some great new programs to recruit into, our research is world class, and we have a lot of new students to inspire us. I'm looking forward to another great year.

Thanks everyone,

Thomas