October 31, 2019

Jeffrey Hecker  
Senior Advisor to the President  
Alumni Hall  
University of Maine

Dear Jeff:

I write to follow-up on our conversations regarding the university’s budgeting processes and to formally charge you to lead a process to transform UMaine’s budget model so that it is more transparent and better aligns resources with strategic goals. The proposed model should facilitate accountability at every level of decision making.

The transformation process should start with a description of the status-quo: UMaine’s current budget model including its strengths and weaknesses. Gather and synthesize information about alternative models for university budgets including strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and risks associated with different budget models. Provide information and guidance to support strategic decisions regarding budget model transition. Based on information gathered and analyzed, develop and recommend a budget model for UMaine including a timeline and benchmarks for transition from the current to the new budget model.

This work should be carried out in an inclusive and transparent fashion so that university stakeholders are informed and have ample opportunities to contribute. The University of Maine System’s Office of Finance and Administration should be kept informed about the work and provide input as appropriate.

Please consider the followings tasks and approximate timeline for this work.

- Define the status-quo: Write a primer on UMaine’s current budget model. (October 31, 2019)
- Gather qualitative information about current budget model from key budget decision-makers and other stakeholders (e.g., VPs, deans, research directors) (October 18, 2019)
- Form a steering committee with appropriate representation of university stakeholders to provide input and advice. (October 31, 2019)
- Gather information on alternative budget models used in higher education. (December 15, 2019)
- Present/discuss preliminary findings and recommendations with President’s Cabinet and establish goals for UMaine budget model. (November, 2019)
- Propose draft budget model. (February 28, 2020)
• Model proposed budget model with historic data. (March 31, 2020)
• Propose budget model for final decision. (April 30, 2020)
• Develop timeline and benchmarks for transition. (May 15, 2020)
• Develop communication plan for internal and external stakeholders. (June 30, 2019)

Thank you for agreeing to lead this important work.

Sincerely,


Joan Ferrini-Mundy