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Rogue Community College to vote on \$60 million bond for November ballot



By James Kelley (Jefferson Public Radio)

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The Rogue Community College Board of Education will vote on whether to approve a \$60.3 million bond on Tuesday, which would show up on the November ballot if passed.

The proposed bond would fund a handful of different projects at the college’s Jackson and Josephine county campuses. Some of these include providing more resources to existing manufacturing, welding and nursing programs, the addition of an automotive program at the Table Rock campus and new EMT and diesel mechanic programs at the Redwood campus.

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The Rogue Community College campus in Medford on March 1, 2024.

Erik Neumann / JPR

The funds would also be directed toward improvements to the Riverside campus' student success center and classrooms, and safety, accessibility and lifespan improvements at all campuses.

If the Board passes the bond, it will be sent to the Josephine and Jackson County elections offices, where it will be placed on the ballot come November.

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Since both Josephine and Jackson counties are lumped together as one district voting on the bond, it needs a 50% plus-one majority to pass.

While the new bond would be implemented in both counties, a 2005 RCC bond in Jackson County is set to expire. The new bond would take its place.

Because the bond would be levied on property taxes, it would not increase rates in Jackson County. However, because Josephine County already has a 2016 RCC bond in place until 2036, the new bond will raise property taxes by an amount equal to \$36 per year for a property worth \$400,000.

President of RCC Randy Weber said part of the reason for the bond is the community’s desire to have the community college serve as its workforce provider.

“The programs that are targeted for this bond initiative are the ones that have been growing and have tremendous community need,” Weber said.

He added that the bond is in response to some of the challenges posed by the pandemic that the Board has been faced with in recent years. Still, while the college’s enrollment has rebounded to pre-pandemic numbers, the programs which the bond will target are achieving record enrollment.

“Some of them we will have to try to find ways to do regardless of a successful bond campaign or not,” Weber said. “However, the extent of this work would not be able to be accomplished, absent the support.”

In addition to the \$60.3 million raised by taxpayers, the District would receive \$15 million in matching funds from the state. That means the District must raise that money before it will be matched.

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