

\$14.1M for UIS facility OK'd

FACILITY

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paign City Council was expected to vote soon on whether to provide \$3 million in city money for the conference center.

"It's a conference venue that does not presently exist," Herman said by telephone after the board meeting. "This represents a facility that we should have built a long time ago."

The new buildings are planned for land that once was part of the university's South Farms, near where the school's sheep barns once stood.

The trustees approved other construction projects for the Urbana-Champaign campus, including a \$62 million classroom building at the College of Business and a student dining and residential programs building.

For the Chicago campus, trustees hired an architect to do a feasibility study of plans for a new medical research building.

The board also looked at designs for renovating 81-year-old Memori-

al Stadium, home of the U of I football team in Champaign. A feasibility study to be complete by the end of this month will be used to start fund raising for the improvements, which would include club seats, corporate suites and a new press box, Herman said.

Also Thursday, the trustees approved a resolution to help them decide at some point in the future what to do about Chief Illiniwek, the Urbana-Champaign campus' contentious athletic mascot.

The resolution — adopted as part of a voice vote on several other agenda items — calls for any conclusion to the Chief issue to include retaining the team names Illini and Fighting Illini. It also says the university will get American Indians involved in the efforts to resolve the debate over the Chief, including how the school can educate people about American Indian culture and heritage.

There was no specific timetable given for the university to resolve the Illiniwek debate. A group that opposes the Chief, the Progressive Resource/Action Cooperative, said in a statement Thursday that the board's resolution was "meaningless."

FROM STAFF AND WIRE REPORTS

As expected, the University of Illinois Board of Trustees on Thursday approved the expenditure of \$14.1 million for construction of a recreation and fitness facility at the University of Illinois at Springfield.

UIS officials announced details of the 60,000-square-foot center Wednesday.

The Hoogland Family Foundation, started by Family Video owners Charles and Kathleen Hoogland, donated \$1 million to the project. The other \$13.1 million will be paid through student fees.

The center will be built next to Kiwanis Stadium on the campus' south side. Completion is expected in summer 2007.

Meeting in Chicago, the trustees also approved a \$15 million, 120-room hotel and 245-seat restaurant to be built at the Urbana-Champaign campus' research park just south of the Assembly Hall in Champaign. The land will be leased to a Champaign developer who will build the complex and hire a company to run it.

The project, along with a proposed 37,000-square-foot conference center, will enhance the research park and improve accommodations around the campus, said UIUC Chancellor Richard Herman.

"I think it's kicking things up a notch," he said.

Construction of the hotel and restaurant could begin as soon as September, but trustees won't consider the plan to build the \$9 million conference center until further design and financing issues are resolved, Herman said. The Cham-

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