ASSOCIATED STUDENTS OF
IDAHO STATE UNIVERSITY
FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING, SPECIAL MEETING FOR LINE ITEM HEARINGS
CLEARWATER ROOM, PSU
5:30PM
MARCH 4, 2014

CALL TO ORDER
The meeting was called to order at 5:00pm by Finance Officer Tingey.

ROLL CALL
ASISU Secretary, Zara Sivertsen, took roll. All Finance Committee Members were present except Senators Hudson, Valencia, James, and Johnson. MOVE TO APPROVE THE AGENDA. Jensen/Bodily. Unanimous called. MOTION CARRIED.

CHAIR’S REPORT

ANNOUNCEMENTS & CORRESPONDENCE

OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS
1. Samantha Chaffin and Jerry Miller, The Bengal- Jerry thanked the Finance Committee for being flexible with his schedule. He has seen the paper get better each year. In the last issue, there were articles on the gun law, smoke free initiative, ASISU budgets, and more. Other stories have included abortion, student government elections, the Gender Resource Center, and the new online scholarship system. They deal with issues important to the student population. He thinks that the students do a great job. Samantha Chaffin thanked the Finance Committee for their time. Student media plays a huge role in defining a community. Students come from various backgrounds and have different futures. Student media helps to bring all of these people together. The paper’s independence allows them to be a watchdog. Journalism is the only career protected by the constitution. The students deserve someone to be a watchdog and act in their interest. The Bengal is focused on Idaho State’s campus. They infuse and diffuse controversy. They don’t tell people what to think about an issue but what issues to think about. The point is to get students thinking and get students involved. They are the link from ISU to the outside world. Alumni are able to connect back to ISU through the online newspaper. Alumni donors might become more involved if they see the issues affecting campus. The paper has been pushing social media since the beginning of the year. They have doubled their Facebook likes since the start of the school year. She noted that perspective students can even look at the newspaper to see what ISU is like. The Bengal helps students get experience which will help them get a job after ISU. They are teaching students how to work in a media environment. She hopes to expand to allow other students to publish their work. She wants to work with alumni and send them reminders each week when the new issues come out. Vice President Jensen asked how the cuts would affect The Bengal. Samantha feels that the cuts would affect their ability to grow. They need someone with a specific skillset to make the changes to the online newspaper. She noted that it is hard to sell online advertising. She would also like to send her team to conferences, and she wouldn’t be able to if their budget was cut. She wants to add freelance writers and cuts would decrease the number of stories that could go in the paper. Senator Bodily likes that they have expanded into social media. He asked about what it would take to get the online newspaper to where she wants to see it. Their current website doesn’t allow them to put up a PDF newspaper, which would give readers the experience reading a more realistic newspaper. To make the online newspaper, she would have to go to a new website, which would be more expensive. She would also need a student who has the skills necessary to create the new website. Jerry noted that equipment wears out. This year, they had to buy some new computers. Idaho Falls Vice President Thompson asked about readership and advertising. Samantha stated that they have increased web traffic and have fewer print issues returned. Currently, they are under their advertising
goals. A switch in ad managers contributed to that. It would be hard to increase advertising if they don’t have an increase in online or print newspapers. Samantha is creating a survey that she wants to send to students. She hopes to send that out around spring break.
2. Jerry Miller, KISU-FM- Jerry Miller noted that KISU has been around since 1999. The station started small. Now they can reach up to 200,000 people. The station has been ranked in the top 7 stations in this market by an Eastland Marketing phone survey. They have been able to build a solid listening audience. They air public service announcements from areas around ISU. The radio is on 24/7. Creating digital work stations for students has been put on hold. If they get full funding, they will move ahead with those plans. The work stations will allow mass communication students to get experience. If there are cuts, they would also have to cut from marketing and promotions. They have put up billboards. Locally produced programs include ASISU Speaks, Marshall Public Library programs, and local music shows. Senator Son loves listening to NPR. He asked about student listenership. Jerry doesn’t have numbers for student listeners. There aren’t as many listeners in the 18-30 bracket, but he doesn’t know if those surveyed are students. There are more listeners for the nighttime programs, especially local programs. He can provide the age demographics, but he doesn’t have the student numbers. They also broadcast women’s athletic events. They have weekly ads in the Bengal. He is always open to new ideas on how to promote the station. Senator Son asked about possibly broadcasting live events. Jerry noted that staffing is a concern when recording live events. Senator Jensen asked about the student work stations. Jerry plans on two or three workstations, which is about all that will fit. They would have to do a little remodeling to fit those in. Senator Hall asked about tailoring the broadcasts to students. Jerry noted that their funding is almost back where it was 15 years ago. Students want different things. They don’t broadcast music, because they wouldn’t be able to compete with their limited library and amateur announcers. Students would rather listen to the other popular music stations. Working in radio is more difficult than students realize. Students could have their own show if they were willing to commit to 3-6 months of training. The station tries to balance everyone’s needs.

OTHER
Senator Son noticed that some of the radio’s numbers were off. There were increases in some areas. Senator Jensen noted that ASISU doesn’t control how the line items spend their money.

ADJOURNMENT
MOVE TO ADJOURN. Jensen/Bodily. Unanimous. MOTION CARRIED. Meeting adjourned at 5:56pm.