I hope your summer is off to a great start! In this issue you will find some recent updates on a number of projects and services either underway or in the planning stages in Administration and Finance.

- The demolition process of Helen Ferris Hall has begun. Housing and Residential Life has moved to the first floor of Cramer Hall. The Transfer Center has relocated to the Student Recreation Center. The current schedule calls for some police and fire training in Helen Ferris Hall on June 8. The actual demolition of the building is scheduled to start around June 18. The site work will continue after the demolition and will be complete by early to mid-August.

- The renovation for the new faculty offices on the south wing of the automotive building are complete and the new furniture is being set up. Once faculty are relocated into these new spaces the north side of the south wing will be renovated for a new fuels lab. The lab is scheduled to be complete and ready for faculty and student use at the beginning of the fall semester.

- Business building auditorium room 111 is getting renovated this summer with the scope to include new paint, carpet, and technology. The seats are scheduled for re-upholstery. This renovation will also be ready for the start of classes in the fall.

- The university went through a Michigan Department of Ed Disability and Accessibility review of its two year programs in the fall of 2014. One of the outcomes of this review was that a few physical improvements to the campus were identified. Our intention is to make significant progress on these issues during the summer. A couple of the more prominent examples include changing all the door knobs and hardware in Swan to be more handicap friendly. Other examples of projects in this initiative for this summer include adding more ADA van accessible parking spaces, installing new ADA compliant signage in some buildings, and relocating some hand towel and soap dispensers to meet current barrier free standards.

- As you probably know it is a continual process to maintain our buildings and grounds and to make improvements to them. One of the areas of focus this summer is to replace a significant amount of broken sidewalks around the campus with the primary focus being east of State Street. Thank you in advance for your patience with this process as it is and will continue to result in a number of sidewalk areas being torn up over the course of the summer. To give you a sense of the magnitude of this initiative our current rough estimate is that the volume of this will be about four times the normal summer sidewalk replacement activity.

- When we moved from Lotus Notes to Office 365 we lost the functionality of the leave time-off system. Our IT staff has been working over the last year to identify the most appropriate
replacement solution for leave time requests and approval. The system that has been identified and selected is TimeOffManager. The current target go live date for this new application is July 2015.

✓ Securing university information is one of our highest priorities and encryption is one of the initiatives in the Information Technology Security Plan to protect confidential and restricted information in our university systems. The encryption solution is called WinMagic and will encrypt hard drives and removable media like USB flash drives on university owned desktops and laptops. The current implementation of encryption is underway in our Health Care areas and is scheduled to be complete this summer. In addition to device encryption the solution also provides file and folder encryption that will be used in the future to encrypt information on shared network drives for departments.

✓ One of the annual processes that the academic area goes through each fall is the hiring of new regular and adjunct faculty. The reason for noting this here is to encourage departments that are bringing in new faculty in August to please submit key requests as early as possible so that our staff is not rushed at the end of August and so that we can try to have keys available for academic departments and incoming faculty in a timely way. Thank you for your consideration!

✓ We have received a number of questions about the future of Taggart Hall. This building is closed indefinitely and we are still refining the timing for the demolition and replacement housing. We are currently focusing on the new housing vision for the redevelopment of housing on the southeast part of campus. The housing visioning process should wrap up in June or July which will help inform the decision about the replacement beds. The current thinking is that Taggart Hall will be razed in the spring or summer 2016.

✓ The preliminary work is underway as part of the planning process for the construction for three or four new apartment buildings at West Campus Apartments. These new buildings will be part of the Finch Court, immediately south of the West Campus Community Center. The final schedule is still being developed however the earliest the construction would start would be late fall.

✓ One of the new developments Dining Services will be offering this fall is the creation of a departmental charge opportunity in the University Center food court. It was brought to our attention that it is difficult for employees taking university guests to eat at the retail food court because of the multiple cashiering stations. The departmental charge opportunity will give employees a convenient option for the departmental host to provide a ticket to each participant so that they can make their own selections and have it automatically billed to the university department rather than having the host have to go with each guest and pay for their meal individually at the respective cash registers.

✓ We received reports late in the spring semester that FerrisConnect was operating very slowly or was experiencing some slowdowns in performance. IT is working diligently with Blackboard to determine the root cause of the performance issue(s) and will implement measures this summer to bolster the performance prior to the fall semester.
I am very appreciative of all the work by our staff and student employees, who make the difference in the projects and services we provide for you every day. I want to extend a big thank you to the many dedicated employees in Administration and Finance who work hard each day, throughout the year to provide quality services to the campus!

Jerry L. Scoby

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