AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

1. NAME OF ITEM: Wells Commons Dish Room Renovation, UM

2. INITIATED BY: James H. Page, Chancellor

3. BOARD INFORMATION: BOARD ACTION: X

4. BACKGROUND & JUSTIFICATION:

The University of Maine requests approval to expend up to $1,300,000 of Dining Reserve funds to provide an expanded dish room function at Wells Commons to accommodate greatly increased meal service at this location following changes introduced in 2012 to increase diner satisfaction.

The customer-focused meal service changes resulted in an increase of more than 70 percent in the number of meals being served, to a current daily total of approximately 2,200 meals across breakfast, lunch and dinner.

This request is pursuant to Board Policy 701 which requires projects with a total cost of more than $500,000 to be considered by the Board of Trustees or its Finance, Facilities and Technology Committee. In this case, the request is to approve and to forward to the Consent Agenda of the Board of Trustees.

For diners, the project includes renovating the existing convenience store and coffee service area. By rearranging this area, the project will improve the dining experience further with a single, centrally located beverage station.

For effective and safe operations, the project will create a new full service dish room with a pass through drop off area, trayless accumulator and dish machine. This is needed because of both the increase in diners and a change from disposable to non-disposable dishware that occurred as part of the customer-focused meal plan changes in 2012. The current dish room which dates to 2007 is only 130 square feet and was intended only to handle incidental dish wares in a facility which, at that time, used primarily disposable dish wares.

From 2008 to 2011, the low volume in meals being served prompted the additional changes in 2012 to attract customers. The subsequent increase in meals being served has caused a tremendous strain in keeping the dining area clean and clear and has created safety concerns because of the challenges that staff face each day in the limited space. This renovation will provide the much needed larger dish room with the capacity to handle the increased number of wares.
The proposed schedule for the project is to complete design during the fall and early winter of 2014 followed by construction during the summer of 2015.

This project does not increase the amount of space at UM. Wells Commons has an estimated renovation age of 7 years and an estimated net asset value of approximately 90 percent. Due to the reduction in waste and the efficiency of the new equipment a reduction in operating costs of approximately $0.30 per meal, or more than $150,000 per year is expected. The reduction in waste is also in line with the Green Campus Initiative.

The Finance, Facilities and Technology Committee approved this recommendation to be forwarded to the Consent Agenda for Board of Trustees approval.

5. TEXT OF PROPOSED RESOLUTION:

That the Board of Trustees approve the recommendation of the Finance, Facilities and Technology Committee to authorize the expenditure of up to $1,300,000 from Dining Reserve funds to renovate the Dish Room at Wells Commons and to make associated improvements.