AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

1. NAME OF ITEM: Advanced Structures and Composites Center Expansion, UM

2. INITIATED BY: James H. Page, Chancellor

3. BOARD INFORMATION: BOARD ACTION: X

4. BACKGROUND:

The University of Maine is requesting authorization from the Board of Trustees to expend as much as $6.4 million from grants and University funds to construct an 11,000 gross square foot expansion of the Advanced Structures and Composites Center in Orono.

The Advanced Structures and Composites Center is dedicated to research, education, and economic development focused on the material science and structural application of hybrid composites.

This specific project will construct a facility to house a research pool approximately 100' x 30' x 15' deep for testing wind turbines and their reaction to wind and waves. The pool will have a crane overhead to move the structures in and around the pool. The pool, enclosure facility, crane, wave machine and wind generator are included in the cost of the project as well as instrumentation for recording the data.

The University describes this as the only facility of its kind in the country and expects it to spur additional research and development in related marine applications from tidal energy to ships. This particular approach to construction of the testing facility in a dedicated space is a modification of the project as envisioned in the original grant and is being supported by the granting agency, the U.S. Economic Development Administration.

The exact location of the proposed facility at UM is not finalized. The ultimate site may precipitate additional costs either as part of this project or as a separate project if, for example, the project disrupts existing parking that must be replaced. Any such costs would be administered in keeping with Board policy 701.

Current funding for the project is broken down as follows:

$2,900,000 – U.S. Economic Development Administration Grant
$3,500,000 – University funds
The $3.5 million University share may be reimbursable by general obligation bond proceeds that are authorized and not yet issued. The University is requesting authorization to proceed at this time irrespective of potential bond reimbursement. The project is ready to proceed with design. The project is scheduled to be and needs to be completed by September 30, 2013 in order to meet the requirements of the EDA grant.

At its October 30, 2012 Finance/Facilities Committee meeting, the Committee approved the following resolution for submission to the Consent Agenda at the November 4-5, 2012 Board meeting:

That the Board of Trustees authorize the University of Maine to expend as much as $6.4 million, including $3.5 million in University funds, to expand the Advanced Structures and Composites Center in Orono for a wind and wave testing facility.

10/25/2012