



TOPIC: University of Maryland, College Park: Sale of Property to Washington County, Maryland

COMMITTEE: Finance

DATE OF COMMITTEE MEETING: September 29, 2015

SUMMARY: The University seeks Board of Regents approval to sell a 55-acre parcel of land located in Washington County, Maryland to the Board of County Commissioners of Washington County, Maryland (the "County"). The property is located, generally at Maryland Route 65 and Keedysville Road; the County operates the Washington County Agricultural Center on the property. This land is currently subject to a long-term lease dated March 16, 1994, between the University and the County. The County pays nominal (\$1 a year) rent to the University. The term of the lease, including extensions, runs through July 31, 2074.

The property—due to the existing long-term lease with nominal rent—has an appraised value of only \$4,700. The County (through an agreement with Washington County Agricultural Education Center, Inc.) operates and maintains recreational and other public facilities on the property, serving the citizens of the County. The County has agreed to accept title pursuant to a quitclaim deed which will require the County to continue to use the property for public use as an agricultural and heritage center or for any public use that may be approved, in the future, by the University.

In order to dispose of State-owned property, the University must engage in a specific process of reviews and approvals. This is conducted through the Maryland Department of Planning Clearinghouse for Intergovernmental Review. This process includes agency review and comment (DGS, DNR, MDE and MHT); Board of Public Works (BPW) approval to declare the property surplus to the University's needs, followed by a 45-day legislative budget committee review and comment period. This must be completed prior to requesting BPW approval to sell the property. This process may take up to four months or longer. The University will begin this process with the Board's approval to sell the property to Washington County.

ALTERNATIVE(S): As an alternative, the University could elect not to sell the land and continue, through 2074, the existing landlord-tenant relationship with the County.

FISCAL IMPACT: Although the County pays all operating and other costs associated with the Washington County Agricultural Center, the University, from time to time, is required to complete administrative paperwork (*e.g.*, for grant applications, permit approvals, etc.) arising from its role as owner of the fee simple title to the property. Upon a sale, this administrative support would no longer be needed.

CHANCELLOR'S RECOMMENDATION: That the Finance Committee recommend that the Board of Regents approve for the University of Maryland, College Park the disposition by sale, for \$1, of approximately 55 acres of University property known as the Washington County Agricultural Center to the County; and, delegate to the Chancellor the authority to execute, after appropriate legal review, all documentation required for the disposition, consistent with applicable University System of Maryland Policy "Acquisition and Disposition of Real Property."

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: RECOMMEND APPROVAL

DATE: 9/29/15

BOARD ACTION:

DATE:

SUBMITTED BY: Joseph F. Vivona (301) 445-1923

Washington County Agricultural Education Center-Concept Plan

