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October 30, 1996

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

BOT TO VOTE ON TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICE, LABOR AGREEMENT

CHARLESTON -- Eastern Illinois University's Board of Trustees will consider approving the purchase of telecommunications services and lease or purchase of telecommunications equipment through the year 2002 at a cost of \$8,028,500.

The new contract would raise the monthly charge for local phone service by approximately \$1 per phone line, but would reduce the cost of long-distance calls for the university as well as for individual students utilizing the campus service.

The trustees will meet in a regular meeting on Monday, Nov. 4, beginning at 8:30 a.m. in the University Ballroom, Martin Luther King, Jr. University Union, on Eastern's campus.

"The State Department of Central Management Services, which oversees telecommunications for state agencies and institutions, has recommended we pursue this agreement with Consolidated Communications of Mattoon," said Eastern President Jorns. "After extensive research into our options, CMS consultants have concluded that this proposal is the best possible contract we can

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get in this competitive marketplace."

Consolidated Communications of Mattoon and its subsidiaries currently provide all telecommunication services to Eastern but the contract is due to expire on June 30, 1997. The new proposal contains some cost increases to Eastern, such as the replacement of 10-year-old telephone instruments and a \$1.08 per month line charge increase. However, long distance rates would drop for the university itself and for students utilizing campus long distance service, an advantage that led Eastern to negotiate the right for the new contract to kick in early on January 1, 1997.

In other business, the board will consider approval of a tentative wage agreement with approximately 201 building and food service employees at Eastern. The agreement with AFSCME Local #981 calls for salary increases of 3 percent across-the-board and an additional .4 percent to be distributed at different rates among employees whose salaries are currently below the average rate as determined by the State Universities Civil Service System.

Other business includes the recommended approval of a resolution granting the authority to settle lawsuits and other claims to the treasurer of the Board of Trustees, in accordance with the university's bylaws. The current treasurer is Eastern Vice President for Business Affairs Morgan Olsen.

Under the resolution, the treasurer will have the authority to settle causes of action or other claims in an amount not to exceed \$10,000, with the approval of

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BOT MEETING

the president, board counsel and university legal counsel. The proposed change is intended to reduce the need for review and action by the board on some legal matters considered routine.

The board will also consider approving the purchase of a \$67,000 property located adjacent to campus and needed for expanding parking space near the University Union and Fine Arts facilities. Any non-instructional capital improvement must be approved by the Illinois Board of Higher Education as well as by Eastern's Board of Trustees.

Other purchases before the board on Nov. 4 include a \$118,023 payment to the State Universities Risk Management Association for Eastern's contribution to the liability self-insurance fund for fiscal year 1997. Trustees will also consider approving an addendum to Eastern's FY 1997 capital projects plan, adding \$300,000 for upgrading the central fire alarm panel.

The board will hear two presentations at the meeting. James Hanna, chief advancement officer, will make a presentation on future plans for fundraising to benefit the university. Eastern's housing department will present an overview of the housing opportunities at Eastern and the contributions to collegiate life.