

Ceal Barry asks Colorado Buffaloes to cut sports budget by 10 percent

By John Henderson *The Denver Post* *The Denver Post*

Posted:

DenverPost.com

Each program in Colorado's athletic department has been asked to cut 10 percent of its discretionary costs to help make up for a \$7.5 million shortfall this year, interim athletic director Ceal Barry said Wednesday.

Barry, appointed after the firing of AD Mike Bohn in May, said the cuts will not affect tuition, room and board, salaries or game guarantees, among major expense areas.

"It's the peripheral sort of things," Barry said. "Who's traveling on trips? How are we doing searches? Little things. It may sound trivial, but it's more culture responsibility."

Barry said CU's \$7.5 million shortfall for the 2012-13 fiscal year, which ended June 30, is primarily the result of paying off salaries to terminated coaches. She said the cuts won't affect salaries, or staffing, for instance. But she has asked every department from the football program to the sports information office to find ways to trim its budget by 10 percent.

"It came from me," Barry said. "We operated at a deficit this last fiscal year. If nothing changes, we'll be at July 1, 2014, sitting in the same position. That's why we had to identify patterns on how we spend money."

The decision comes at a critical time for the CU athletic department, which is bleeding red ink. The department is working to pay off \$20 million in previous debt, mostly from a costly transition moving from the Big 12 to the Pac-12. CU officials also are trying to raise \$50 million toward a \$170 million facilities upgrade while at the same time searching for a new athletic director.

During his news conference announcing Bohn's firing, chancellor Phil DiStefano said the CU athletic department had to start making better business decisions.

"We don't have to wait for a new athletic director to make better business decisions," Barry said. "Having been a coach, if I go to DIA and I'm gone for seven days, do I park in covered parking for seven days? That's \$24 a day. Do I take the toll road? There's a whole lot of decisions for a staff of 145 people."

"We have to be more responsible with tax dollars and donor dollars."

Barry said the 10 percent cut is a request, not an order. But, she said, "I'll certainly watch how they behave and watch their expense reports."

Coach Tad Boyle has guided the CU men's basketball team to consecutive NCAA Tournaments for the second time in school history. He said the requested cuts don't upset him.

"Everybody's looking at where they can tighten their belt," Boyle said. "It's not a major thing to me. It's a short-term choice we have to deal with."

Boyle has some built-in cuts working for him. He has only two scholarships to give this next year, meaning he won't need to travel as much for recruiting. Also, assistant coach Tom Abatemarco accepted a job with Loyola Marymount on June 13 and Boyle won't replace him until Sept. 1, saving his department money because of the gap in hiring.

"Hey, if it was a permanent 10 percent cut and it's never going to come back, yeah, I may have a different feeling about it," Boyle said. "But that's not the case. When we get a new AD and the football program gets going — and I have a lot of confidence it will — this will be nothing."

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