



SALISBURY — Rowan-Cabarrus Community College is better off than most colleges when it comes to this year's budget, but funds for equipment were hit hard, said Robert Keeney, the chief financial officer said Monday.

The community college approved its \$62 million budget for the 2009-10 fiscal year at the board of trustees meeting on Monday.

"The financial state of things has been rather bleak, but we are in a better situation than many other community colleges because we cut costs early on," Keeney said.

The budget is more than last year's \$48 million, but Keeney said that increase is mostly due to funds for construction and financial aid. The college also has \$2.1 million in reversions it will have to give to the state, and was told to hold another 1 percent, or \$270,000. After reversions, the budget will be about \$60 million.

Keeney said earlier this month that funding from the state was better than he expected, although equipment cut about \$600,000.

Those funds pay for computers, laboratory equipment, cosmetology equipment and furniture, among other items, Keeney said.

"The long-term effect for us is we are beginning to see we can't rely as much on state funds," Keeney said.

Jeanie Moore, vice president of continuing education at RCCC, agreed.

Applying for grants through private foundations is one way of finding other avenues for funding, she said. Another way to make up for lack of funding is to be more efficient with classes and equipment.

"We just have to learn to be better stewards and learn how to share," Moore said. "We don't have the luxury of dedicating an area for a single use."

Moore said the college also uses its partnerships with businesses to borrow equipment.

While these are short-term solutions, Moore said she worries about the long-term effects of a lack of equipment funds.

"We don't want to train students with equipment no longer viable in the working world," Moore said. "We are going to have to address it long-term so our students get what they need."