

THE OFFICIAL MINUTES

The Big Bend Community College Board of Trustees held a Special Board meeting on Friday, February 17, 2012, 1:00 p.m. in the Hardin Community Room in the ATEC Building on the Big Bend Community College campus.

1. Call to Order

Present: Mike Blakely
Jon Lane
Stephen McFadden
Mike Wren
Angela Pixton (absent)

President Bonaudi announced his decision to retire last week to the Trustees and the campus. His retirement is effective at the end of his current contract June 30, 2012. He stated he has worked for five different colleges and BBCC has been the best and most dynamic.

Trustee Mike Wren stated the purpose of this special meeting is to set the tone with staff. He said the Board understands the result of the hiring process has very real implications on the daily work of employees. The Board will search for the most qualified person who is the right fit for the BBCC family and service district. The central point of the discussion today is the search process and the biggest driver of that process will be timing. There will be a presentation by Cindy Hough on Presidential Search processes next week during the Board Study Session.

Trustee Wren asked for comments from people who were involved in the 1994-95 search and general input. He also said he will talk about future information flow between staff and the board.

VP Moos was involved in the search resulting in Dr. Bonaudi's hiring in 1995. She reported that the process worked well and the screening committee was made up of a cross section of employees and community members. She also said the Interim President, Dr. Gene Schermer was involved in the process.

Trustee Jon Lane inquired if the previous nine-month process could be condensed to a four-month process. VP Moos responded that she felt most of the process could be completed by July 1, 2012.

Trustee Stephen McFadden asked about significant changes and the differences between hiring a consultant and using a screening committee. VP Moos stated she has not had experience with a consultant.

Some of her colleagues in human resources around the state have reported HR does the bulk of the work even when a consultant is used unless the RFP is written very specifically. Often consultants have a current list of viable applicants, however; Interested people will be looking at the advertising.

Trustee McFadden said he likes the internal screening committee process because there is strength in local folks recognizing a good fit for their community college President.

VP Moos recommended one change; conducting full background checks and she commented a firm can be hired to do that.

Trustee Blakely stated he felt BBCC could do a better job than a search firm. He said quality is more important than meeting the timeline. Finding a candidate with the right combination, like when Dr. Bonaudi was hired, is important and in house people can keep BBCC going until we find the right person. All staff should have input on the list of expectations. He also commented the single most important factor in the right person for President is the ability to grow with the institution and view employees as family; the same qualities Dr. Bonaudi possesses.

Trustee Jon Lane stated Dr. Schermer was hired as an interim President and he was not a candidate for the position in 1995. The SBCTC helped find Dr. Schermer who was a retired community college administrator. There were no internal candidates during the last Presidential search.

Trustee Wren discussed the timeline, the 1994-95 search took nine months, can the same quality search be compressed into four months? He asked which pieces of the search cannot be compressed? VP Moos stated advertising can begin after the Board develops a recruitment brochure based on characteristics gathered through the campus and community survey process. She suggested advertising on websites and The Chronicle of Higher Education. The position could be posted for only one month. Modern technology allows for a faster response. A Presidential Search web page on the BBCC website would also be helpful to candidates.

VP Moos shared survey questions regarding desired qualities for a President that she received from Bellevue College. Trustee McFadden stated he is concerned about compressing the timeline based on the breadth of the 1994-95 search. He said sometime between four months and nine months would be appropriate.

Trustee Mike Blakely stated it's important for the schedule to be flexible.

Trustee Jon Lane stated the schedule should be set with a note that if a good fitting candidate is not found within the timeframe then an interim President should be appointed or hired. Trustee Mike Wren stated he would like to meet with VP Moos to map a four month process.

The group discussed appointing an internal person who is not applying for the position as interim President if the right person is not hired and on campus by July 1. They also considered if the campus could continue to function for one to two months with no one in the President's position. VP Mohrbacher stated it will be important for the Board to be clear about who has authority on campus if the position is not filled and there is no interim July 1. Trustee McFadden stated leaving the campus adrift would not be wise. If a President is not hired by July 1 a plan should be in place for an internal person to serve as interim President. Trustee Mike Wren agreed.

Trustee Mike Wren asked about who is in charge when Dr. Bonaudi is on vacation. Dr. Bonaudi rotates the administrator in charge between the Vice Presidents when he is off campus. If one of the Vice Presidents is named interim can that person complete both jobs? Vice Presidents Mohrbacher and Hamburg both agreed they could hold the interim President position for two months through the summer.

Faculty Association President Mike O'Konek expressed concern about finding viable candidates during an off cycle search. Unemployed candidates may not be the best choices. VP Mohrbacher stated several community colleges are in various stages of hiring Presidents. There is probably an active pool of applicants.

Trustee Mike Blakely stated an internal person may be more capable than outside person to serve as interim President. Someone from outside will need to learn the culture of BBCC. During the ACCT Presidential Search session in Washington DC they were emphatic that an internal candidate for President should not fill the position as an interim.

VP Holly Moos advised not to begin the search at this time if planning to hire an interim for an entire year. Trustee Wren stated they would consider that while determining a reasonable timeline during the February 23 Board meeting. Trustee McFadden asked if Vice Presidents Hamburg and Mohrbacher would be willing to work as interim President for extended period longer than 60 days. VP Moos stated it would be very difficult to maintain a VP and interim President position longer than two months.

Trustee Jon Lane stated Cindy Hough may have an idea about applicant pools during her presentation at the February 23 Board Study Session.

VP Mohrbacher stated he would be happy to do what is in best interest of the college. He also said that through the summer both positions could be managed; in September external issues will start ramping up. In the fall a VP in the interim position would have to choose between addressing internal or external issues.

The Bellevue College survey questions could be used electronically and that would expedite the process. Faculty Association President Mike O'Konek stated the 1994 survey more clearly defined the traits. It included questions regarding desired: level of education, experience, personal characteristics, management style, leadership, and community involvement.

Trustee Mike Wren asked the Trustees to consider the survey option and be prepared to make a decision during the February 23 Board meeting. One option is to use the Bellevue College survey for community members and the 1994 survey to gather a broader, more holistic response from BBCC employees. PIO Doug Sly could distribute press releases directing community members to complete the online survey on the website. This input will provide key pieces for development of the brochure and the evaluation of candidates. The 1994-95 search brochure listed minimum qualifications and desired characteristics and qualities in eleven bullets.

Trustee Mike Wren asked what VP Moos had found regarding system wide presidential salary range and contract duration. VP Moos reported the state board current average was not available. The average one year ago was \$174,012.

Trustee Wren started the screening committee structure discussion. The 1994-95 screening committee had 12 members with 9 voting members. Voting members included: one Vocational/Technical Faculty, one Academic Transfer Faculty, one Exempt Staff, two Administrators, one Classified staff, one student, two Board members with one chairing the committee. The non-voting members in 1994-95 included Foundation representative, local industry representative and K-12 educator representative. Trustee Mike Blakely stated an equal number of vocational instructors and academic instructors should be on the committee and the Foundation representative should be a voting member. It should also include community members from outside the Moses Lake area.

VP Moos stated a larger committee makes it difficult for scheduling meetings. Trustee McFadden emphasized the importance of confidentiality within the committee. VP Moos suggested Trustee Emeritus Felix Ramon, who served as Vice Chair during the 1994-95 search, would be helpful to the committee.

Faculty Association President Mike O’Konek said the 1994-95 committee included one vocational instructor, one academic instructor and representatives from all of the employee groups. He also said he agrees with having a Foundation member and an at large member. He has no opinion on who are voting members. VP Moos stated if the committee is not finished by the end of June it may be difficult for a student to continue to serve. Committee members need to be committed to attend every meeting.

Trustee Emeritus Felix Ramon agreed to serve on the committee. He also said it is important that two Board members serve on the committee and one of the Board members needs to Chair the Screening Committee. He emphasized the importance of establishing that the Presidential appointment is a function of the Board and can’t be delegated to anyone else. The Board of Trustees must lead the Presidential Search process. The Board needs to consider the goals of the college, input from the Screening Committee and hire someone compatible with that. It is imperative that the Board hire a President that they can work with.

Foundation Board Chair Katherine Swinger stated the Foundation wants to be represented on the committee. She served on the Search Committee as a community member when Greg Fitch was chosen as President. There were more than 12 members on that committee and they screened 60+ applications. She recalled it was a tedious job. VP Moos stated when Greg Fitch was hired all candidates who met the minimum qualifications went to the committee. When Dr. Bonaudi was hired, VP Moos and interim President Gene Schermer chose the top 20-25 candidates for the screening committee, 40+ applied in 1994-95.

Trustee Wren asked about choosing representatives for the Screening Committee from each group. Faculty Association President Mike O’Konek said each group would want to choose their representative. Trustee McFadden requested the employee group representatives choose tentative recommendations for representatives to serve on the Search Committee. He also suggested Trustee Emeritus Felix Ramon be added to the Search Committee as a non-voting community member.

Trustee Jon Lane stated BBCC’s priority is student success and access and the makeup of this Screening Committee reflects those priorities. Trustee Mike Wren stated the Foundation member would remain non-voting.

Motion 12-04 Trustee McFadden made a motion to establish a Presidential Search Screening Committee with the same structure as the 1994 Committee with the addition of one Board-appointed ex officio at large member. Trustee Jon Lane seconded the motion and the motion passed.

Trustee Mike Wren asked that the members be chosen by the February 23 Board meeting.

Trustee Mike Wren asked the group about what went well with the 1994-95 search process. Trustee Emeritus Ramon stated background checks and confidentiality are very important to the process. He advised that the Chair of the Committee talk with the committee about the importance of maintaining confidentiality. Any public statements should only be made by the Chair of the Committee with approval of the Board.

Trustee Mike Blakely invited Felix Ramon to the February 23 Board Study Session and Meeting.

Associate VP Candy Lacher commented that the open forums worked well for college employees to get to know the candidates. It is also helpful to stream the forums on MediaSite so all employees can view the candidates. Dean Kara Garrett stated a community option for the open forums would also be good.

Faculty Association President Mike O'Konek asked about the screening committee's involvement in interviews. VP Moos indicated that during the 1994-95 search, the committee interviewed and determined the top five candidates and the Board interviewed the top five. The top five candidates visited the BBCC campus for interviews, this included a day long process with campus forums.

President Bonaudi commented from the applicant perspective he thought the Board's visit to his Nevada campus was beneficial. He also enjoyed the BBCC campus forums and remembers that there were lots of attendees. It was a very thorough process and there were several president positions open in Washington State at that time. He also noted that when hiring an instructor it is important to adhere to the academic term, however; for other positions, especially presidencies, the academic term is not as important.

Trustee Mike Wren asked about President Bonaudi's preference for time with a new President.

He responded that he had some transition time with President Schermer. He felt an interim President could also provide that transition time with the new President.

Trustee Mike Wren advised that the flow of information from the Board to the campus and from the campus to Board is important. In order to minimize duplication of effort and confusion he stated all information requests from the Board should go through him to the President's Office. All information from the campus to the Board will also go through him from the President's Office.

Trustee Wren advised that the Board should be ready to make some timeline decisions at the February 23, 2012 Board meeting.

Attorney General Charnelle Bjelkengren commented that when the position is posted it needs to include information that information on finalists will not be kept confidential.

Trustee Emeritus Felix Ramon commented that the opportunity to hire a new President does not happen very often. He urged the Board to be aware of the budget but not to compromise the process due to finances. It's important to make an informed decision with the best input possible.

Trustee Mike Blakely stated the revenue forecast included a \$96 million surplus and K-12 is going after the money. He urged the Board and college staff to contact their legislators individually and request the money be dedicated to community colleges as we are part of the solution. The more general public responses to the legislators the more impact the message will have. VP Moos reminded employees not to use the college computers for this contact.

Motion 12-05 Trustee Blakely made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Trustee McFadden seconded the motion and the motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 2:22 p.m.

Mike Wren, Vice-Chair

ATTEST:

William C. Bonaudi, Secretary