



Community college expands presidential search committee

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Rowan-Cabarrus Community College has expanded its presidential search committee to involve more people from the community.

The search committee will go from a core group of trustees to a larger, 27-member committee consisting of representatives from area businesses and schools. The committee will also include RCCC trustees, staff and students.

"This is an important decision for both the community college, but also for the community at large," said RCCC spokesman Jeff Lowrance. "The board wants to make sure there is enough participation as possible in selecting those candidates."

A series of community forums in November prompted trustees to consider forming a larger search committee, said Ray Paradowski, chairman of the RCCC Board of Trustees.

Meanwhile, the college's consulting firm, National Search and Education Associates, is screening applications and weeding out those that don't quite fit the criteria outlined for the next president, Paradowski said.

Those include a master's degree, three years of senior-level community college experience and 14-point list of desired traits and characteristics.

Around 20 people have applied so far to be the next RCCC president, according to search consultant Donny Hunter. That bodes well for RCCC, Hunter said, considering the application deadline isn't until Feb. 18.

"Applications tend to trickle in slowly until you get close to the deadline," Hunter said. "As far as searches go, the response has been on the high side."

Hunter said he has no problem working with a larger search committee. He said RCCC's actions show it's committed to involving the faculty and different facets of the community.

The search committee will be invited to attend a short meeting on Feb. 19 to go over their responsibilities, as well as sign letters of confidentiality, Paradowski said.

Members will be given a window of time to review the applications at their convenience, Paradowski said. Their feedback will be used to rank the top dozen candidates, who will be asked to submit more in-depth information for the committee to consider.

Trustees will ultimately narrow the field to three finalists, so the State Board of Community Colleges can weigh the pros and cons of each candidate. RCCC trustees will be presented this analysis to help them decide who they want as president.

The final selection will go before the state board for approval. Trustees hope to have a president in place by June, which is when Brownell has set his retirement after 30 years at the college.

RCCC has launched a Web page with application materials and search updates. It's at www.rowancabarrus.edu/presidentsearch