

**SPECIAL MEETING**  
**BOARD OF ILLINOIS COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT NO. 519**  
**Counties of Stephenson, Ogle, Jo Daviess and Carroll**

**CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL**

A special meeting of the Board of Illinois Community College District No. 519 was called to order by Mr. Jim Endress, Chairperson, at 5:30 p.m. on February 18, 2020, in room H-206 in the Highland Community College Student/Conference Center, 2998 West Pearl City Road, Freeport, Illinois in said district.

The following members were present: Mr. David Shockey, Mr. Doug Block, Mr. Jim Endress, Dr. Steve Jennings, Mr. Blake Musser (arrived 5:33 p.m.), Ms. Pennie Groezinger, Mr. Shawn Boldt, and Ms. Payton DeMichele

The following members were absent: None

Also present: Mr. Tim Hood, President; Ms. Chris Kuberski, Executive Vice President; Ms. Jill Janssen, Vice President, Administrative Services; Mr. Scott Anderson, Vice President, Business, Technology and Community Programs; Ms. Liz Gerber, Vice President, Student Development and Support Services; Ms. Leslie Schmidt, Director, Marketing & Community Relations (departed 5:39 p.m.; returned 6:16 p.m.); Mr. Steve Mihina, Faculty (departed 5:39 p.m.; returned 6:16 p.m.; departed 6:29 p.m.); Ms. Kate Perkins, Faculty Senate President (departed 5:39 p.m.; returned 6:16 p.m.); Mr. Alan Nowicki, Faculty (departed 5:39 p.m.); Mr. David Esch, Faculty (departed 5:39 p.m.); Mr. Dan Dick, HCC Foundation Major Gift Officer (departed 5:39 p.m.); Mr. Brad Hart, Big Radio (arrived 6:16 p.m.); and, Ms. Terri Grimes, Board Secretary

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Mr. David Esch, Physics Instructor, provided public comments, stating that he is in favor of a national search for the next College president, which enables the College to have more choice. He encouraged trustees to look at the position of president during the review process. Mr. Esch described a miscommunication between the President and Foundation Executive Director, when funds were raised for oscilloscopes, which became awkward with the current roles.

Mr. Alan Nowicki, Biology Instructor, Ms. Kate Perkins, Faculty Senate President, and, Mr. Steve Mihina, Math Instructor, also provided public comments. (See attached written statements.)

**CLOSED SESSION**

Mr. Musser moved and Dr. Jennings seconded the motion to move into Closed Session for the purposes of discussing the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees, specific individuals who serve as independent contractors in an educational setting, or specific volunteers of the public body or legal counsel for the public body, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee, a specific individual who serves as an independent contractor in an educational setting, or a volunteer of the public body, or against legal counsel for the public body to determine its validity; and, collective negotiating

matters between the public body and its employees or their representatives, or deliberations concerning salary schedules for one or more classes of employees, pursuant to the Open Meetings Act, and to return to open session for possible action. The roll call on the motion was as follows:

AYES: Block, Endress, Jennings, Musser, Groezinger, Boldt, Shockey, DeMichele  
NAYS: None

At 5:40 p.m., the Chairperson declared the motion carried and the meeting in Closed Session.

Dr. Jennings moved and Mr. Musser seconded the motion to end the Closed Session. The roll call on the motion was as follows:

AYES: Endress, Jennings, Musser, Groezinger, Boldt, Shockey, Block, DeMichele  
NAYS: None

At 6:15 p.m., the Chairperson declared the motion carried and the Closed Session ended.

**OLD BUSINESS**

There was no old Business

**NEW BUSINESS**

*Presidential Search Process* (Handouts #1, #2, #3, and #4)  
Mr. Endress distributed the letters from Ms. Kate Perkins and Mr. Steve Mihina that were referenced earlier in the meeting. He also distributed the current job descriptions for the President and Executive Vice President, noting that the President's job description should be reviewed to see if it matches up with the expectations for the position. Trustees shared their thoughts on the process of selecting a new College president, and Mr. Endress stated that selecting the next College president is the job trustees were elected to do. He believes it is in the Board's and College's best interest to move along as expeditiously as possible. Mr. Endress challenged trustees to think about what the process should be, and he expressed his hope that a plan could be in place at least by the end of March.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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Terri A. Grimes, Board Secretary  
Illinois Community College District No. 519

**My name is Alan Nowicki. I'm a biology instructor here at Highland Community College. I'm also a taxpayer and the parent of a Highland student and graduate.**

**In England there is a saying "Pennywise and Pound-foolish" It refers to making decisions that save small amounts while at the same time losing or foregoing much larger sums. In the long run, cutting corners now may cost much more later.**

**Among the most important processes at the college are those by which we select and promote employees. Some employees are self-motivated and seem to have our mission in their DNA – "to bring quality educational opportunities to northwest Illinois. On the other hand, some others sit in their offices and collect salary (and benefits) for 30 years without making a noticeable impact. Money spent on search committees is seed money. Without a robust, open and competitive search we shortchange our future students and the people of our district. The last thing we need to do is to waive criteria, accept degrees from second rate institutions or overlook a mediocre work history.**

February 13, 2020

Dear Mr. Endress and Members of the Board of Trustees:

On behalf of the Highland Faculty Senate, I am writing to you to ask that the whole campus community be given an opportunity to provide input on the succession plan that will take effect after Tim Hood leaves on June 30, 2020. There is nothing more important to the health and well-being of the institution than the selection of a new president. Therefore, creating a collaborative advisory process to determine succession will signal that the Board of Trustees recognizes that all campus groups are stakeholders in this issue and that it seeks to provide a transparent, inclusive process for determining the vision for the future of the College.

Given the recent PACE survey results, the campus community would benefit from a renewal of trust and a spirit of shared investment in our future. This renewal can begin with campus-wide forums to discuss the succession plan. The forum discussions should include opportunities to discuss the current administrative structure and how it impacts the college's operation, necessary qualifications for the next president, and a nation-wide search.

Our new president will be looked upon to bring new perspectives, ideas, and vision to the Highland Community College community and can be the catalyst for our future growth. The Board has an excellent opportunity to begin fostering a culture of trust by seeking input regarding the College's next president from all campus groups and constituents. Providing forums for giving input will signal the Board of Trustees' support for the concept of shared governance, which HLC mentions as part of the 5<sup>th</sup> Criterion: "The institution's governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable the institution to fulfill its mission."

We recognize that the Board is bound by the Open Meetings Act, so perhaps the forums could be publicized and open to the wider community, as well. It is likely that constituents in the community will have valuable opinions to add to the conversation.

Currently, morale among Highland employees is tenuous, staff turn-over is increasing, and student enrollment is low. A strategic, inclusive process for determining the next president is essential to the future of the college. This could be a turning point for our institution. We ask that you please seek and consider as many voices and opinions as possible, ideally via open forums, before finalizing the plan for succession after Tim Hood leaves.

Thank you for your consideration,

*Kathrine L. Perkins*

Kate Perkins  
Faculty Senate President  
Highland Faculty Senate, Local #1957

February 14, 2020

Dear Board of Trustees:

With the pending retirement of Highland president Tim Hood, determining the direction of the College is the most important decision presently facing the College.

As a long time employee, a donor to the Highland Foundation, and a local taxpayer, I am writing to urgently ask you all to return Highland to its roots with the selection of the next College president.

When I was hired in the mid-1990's, Highland was in the midst of embracing Servant-Leadership under Dr. Ruth Smith, and the Highland Leadership Institute, which had been initiated only 2 or 3 years earlier, was flourishing.

The focus of the College was students, people, and leadership.

Employees were viewed as assets to the College.

But after Dr. Ruth's passing, the College seemed to lose its way.

The roster of ensuing College presidents seemed to be more interested in bending the College to their own demands, than bending themselves to the demands of the College.

The College hasn't had a true leader since Dr. Ruth's passing.

And there are no leaders waiting in the wings among the ranks of the Highland Vice-Presidents.

Currently, except for the high school Servant-Leadership program, Servant-Leadership is almost non-existent on the Highland campus.

Yet, Highland Policy 4.00, part C, states, "Servant-leadership is at the core of Highland Community College. It is infused in the governance structure up through the Board of Trustees."

Importantly, as the College looks to the future, the principles of inclusiveness, participation and voice, which are part of the Servant-Leadership model, create a positive organizational culture, and seem to mesh well with the values expressed by the Millennial generation and Generation-Z, the age groups which represent the future employees of Highland Community College.

So, I encourage all of you, when crafting the succession plan for the next Highland president, please strongly consider conducting a national search for a Servant-Leader, and re-introducing Servant-Leadership as the College's cultural model and leadership model.

Thank you for considering my request.

Sincerely,



Steve Mihina