

VVC board calls for special meeting

Board of trustees to vote on O'Hearn's future

May 02, 2013 8:40 PM

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VICTORVILLE • Victor Valley College trustees called a special meeting for Friday night to discuss renewing the contract of Superintendent/President Christopher O'Hearn, who some critics in the community have accused of poor leadership.

The meeting, publicly announced Thursday, was called by three of the five board members: Dennis Henderson, Michael Krause and John Pinkerton. It is scheduled for the West Wing Conference Room at VVC at 6 p.m.

Board member Joe Brady, who cannot attend the meeting due to a prior commitment, said he is against the meeting because he believes trustees should not be giving out a new contract while the school is still on probation.

O'Hearn said he did not want the meeting either.

"I have attempted to reach out to the board members to say I don't want a special board meeting," O'Hearn said Thursday.

The special board meeting will address the renewal of O'Hearn's contract, which expires in June. The board decided not to renew O'Hearn's contract in December with a 4-1 vote. Henderson voted yes.

The college faces accreditation scrutiny and has been on probation by the Accreditation Commission for Community and Junior Colleges since 2011.

Brady said he believes other board members are harming VVC's reputation by calling a special meeting on a Friday night.

"It's beyond sneaky," Brady said.

Brady said he heard talk last week that Henderson, Krause and Pinkerton were planning to call the meeting. Brady said he "pleaded" with O'Hearn to ask the rest of the board to hold off on the meeting due to his prior business and family obligations.

O'Hearn is on vacation and will not be at the meeting, according to VVC.

Krause said the reason the meeting was called at the last minute was because trustees could not get the issue on an agenda before O'Hearn's contract deadline will expire in June.

O'Hearn has come under fire recently for his leadership at the school.

Earlier this week, a group of community members concerned with the college's accreditation problems gathered at a so-called "Call to Action Meeting" conducted by Diana Carloni, a Victorville attorney.

Carloni said she is skeptical about the timing of the special meeting. She said she is also concerned about the meeting because O'Hearn will not be there.

"Being presidential and being a leader, he could ask the board to not vote while he is not there," Carloni said. "It's (O'Hearn's) contract. Shouldn't he be there?"

O'Hearn said his vacation had been planned long before the meeting had been called.

Carloni stated in a second "Call to Action" letter that it is her belief that Krause would resign from the board after tonight's meeting due to a conflict with another job — which O'Hearn helped him get.

Krause denied that he would resign.

"No, absolutely not," Krause said. "Why would I resign if I'm going to be board president in December? I'm vice-president of the board now. Logically it doesn't make any sense."

Krause said O'Hearn only wrote a character reference for him "a long time ago," while he was looking to get a job in a different school district and that he never made a promise to help O'Hearn in return.

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