

# VVC policy change could block Henderson

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## [Brooke Self, Staff Writer](#)

VICTORVILLE • The Victor Valley College Board of Trustees introduced a policy change this week that could effectively block Trustee Dennis Henderson from becoming the next board president.

The proposal to switch the process that decides board officers from a rotation to an election was added to the agenda by board President Lorrie Denson at the suggestion of Trustee Joseph W. Brady, according to Brady.

VVC Faculty Association President Lisa Ellis and Academic Senate President Tracy Davis criticized the proposal in public comments at Tuesday's meeting. Each said it appeared to be a strategic move in order to block longtime trustee Henderson from taking his turn as the next president in line in December.

After the meeting, Brady denied that the change was proposed with Henderson in mind, saying he wanted to give Denson the opportunity to lead with a "fully functioning board." But he also called Henderson a "gameplayer" and disapproved of the fact that several attempts to contact him outside of meetings were unsuccessful.

Henderson and Denson were sick and were not in attendance at Tuesday's meeting. Henderson said by phone Wednesday morning that he may end up voting for the election system, although during his 16-year tenure on the board he saw that it could be a "corrupt" system. He said two board members in the past frequently got themselves voted as president and vice president in a continual rotation by offering promises to other members for votes.

"I've lived under both systems," he said. "The other system can be corrupted. We changed it because this is the most fair. There's no shenanigans, nothing, there's no chance."

Henderson also said he had responded to Brady on occasion but he could not respond to "six emails a day" from him. Brady later said his correspondence has never been that constant and said he has only sent him about 50 emails in the past 2 1/2 years he's been a trustee.

Though the teachers' union has backed Henderson in the past, Ellis said the union had not backed Henderson's election bids for at least his last two runs. She said they supported Denson and Michael Krause two elections ago, and later John Pinkerton and Joe Range.

"I think he's fair and has a lot of experience, and I think they made a commitment that he would be the next president when they voted the rotation in," Ellis said about Henderson. "And because we didn't support him (in the election) doesn't mean that we don't support him as being the president on the board, or that we won't in the future."

The rotation policy was first implemented in 2009, she said.

Trustee Brandon Wood motioned to table even the first reading of the agenda item, stating it would be "really unfair" to address the policy without the person it would impact the most — Henderson — in the room. The board's legal counsel Jeffrey Morris said tabling the first reading for the next board meeting in November would mean that if the change was approved in December, it would not be made in time to impact the closest appointment. The motion to table the vote then failed with only Wood in support.

The item will be brought for a second reading and a vote at the next regular meeting on Nov. 8.

A board policy modification regarding public comment cards was also presented for a first reading on Tuesday. Brady said he wanted to give working and commuting members of the public a bigger window to submit the cards before the meeting begins, including possibly submitting them throughout the meeting. The board also discussed the timing of when public comments are made during the meeting.

The standing policy allows cards to be retrieved online and submitted via email and fax and in person immediately before the meeting begins, Morris said. Cards may not be submitted during closed session. Morris suggested the board make a revision to a separate board policy to extend the timing and bring it back for a first reading.

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