

VVC to begin search for new president

O'Hearn will not have contract extended

June 02, 2013 2:45 PM

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Jose Quintero, Staff Writer

VICTORVILLE • Dr. Christopher O'Hearn will not return as the president/superintendent of Victor Valley College, the college's board president confirmed after a special board meeting Friday night.

VVC Board of Trustees President Lorrie Denson called for a public board retreat at the school's staff office Friday to discuss the school's challenges — including ending the school's accreditation issues and finding a replacement for O'Hearn, whose contract expires June 30.

Moderator Bill McGinnis, a member of Butte College's Board of Trustees, told the board members they must resolve their internal disputes and work together. McGinnis asked the board, with 37 openings in the state, why any quality candidate would come to a school with so many problems.

"I'm sorry, I'm just being honest with you," McGinnis told the board. "If you can bring in a good interim (president), and you can show that you're a workable board and you can heal your problems, and come together to resolve accreditation, that word will get out. And you will get a better candidate."

Denson said she has received several resumes and intends to compile a list of the best candidates.

"I believe that we need a leader that understands how important student success and our employee partners are," trustee Joseph W. Brady said. "But most importantly, how important results are that the taxpayers and voters can bank on to help revive the success that VVC enjoyed many years ago."

Trustee John Pinkerton said the board must come together to find the proper replacement for O'Hearn, who came under fire for his perceived failure to correct the accreditation problems. O'Hearn went out on sick leave last month and said he was seeing a doctor for exhaustion.

Pinkerton said he hoped his differences with Brady could be put aside for the school's best interest.

Denson called for the public retreat because she wanted to "bring the board together."

"I'm hopeful that this is the beginning of breaking some unhealthy cycles," Denson said. "I had said to the other trustees, if this meeting helps one of us, it helps all of us. If one of us can be better and do things differently, then it's going to help us become better."

Board Vice President Michael Krause did not attend the retreat, marking the third consecutive public board gathering he has missed. Krause submitted a letter of resignation last month, effective June 30.