

VVC trustees still split

July 19, 2013 10:52 AM

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VICTORVILLE • A special election that would cost Victor Valley College \$150,000 could be on the horizon if the college's board can't agree on the appointment process for a new member.

The VVC Board of Trustees remained split on how to appoint someone to a vacant trustee position after a special board meeting Thursday. Another special meeting on the topic was scheduled for Monday.

During the meeting, the board split a vote 2-2 on appointing a trustee by interviewing applicants for the position that was left vacant when Vice President Michael Krause resigned June 30.

The trustees were given a 60-day window to fill the position. College attorney Jeff Morris said the earliest date possible for the special election would be Jan. 17 if the board cannot agree on a provisional trustee before the Aug. 30 deadline.

Board President Lorrie Denson and Trustee Joseph W. Brady said interviewing applicants is the best possible choice, while trustees Dennis Henderson and John Pinkerton think appointing former trustee Joe Range to fill the vacancy would be the best option.

Several citizens including Holly Noel voiced their opinion to the board during the meeting. Noel, a Victor Valley resident for more than 40 years, said she's disappointed in the outcome because of the amount of money that could be spent on the special election.

"Selecting a new board member from applicants throughout the community is a best practice within the educational community and within most governing bodies," Noel said. "It only makes sense that you would want the best candidate a community can put forth. This is a great community with many capable leaders."

Trustee John Pinkerton said just because there is a small number of citizens who regularly attend the meetings and voice opinions, he cannot override more than 31,000 voters who voted for Range in last year's election.

Pinkerton said if there was a special election there would be a low turnout, because people don't tend to vote unless it's a Presidential election.

Henderson said 31,000 people spoke during the last election and wanted Range on the board.

"The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges says we need continuity," Henderson said. "Continuity says you don't hire anybody that doesn't have any experience. You don't want somebody with a new learning curve that is going to take about year to come up to speed. We need somebody to hit the deck now. We need a person who is experienced.... Not somebody who wants to be on the board because they have some friends on the board who might appoint them, and that could happen."

Denson said if there can't be an agreement, the county will mandate that the college run a special election.

After the meeting, Denson said she refuses to be bullied into appointing the only other person who ran in the last election.

Brady was not surprised by the outcome and said he was disappointed after the meeting because tax money will be spent on the special election.

"You have to have consistency, that's what voters want," Brady said. "The voters spoke last year and Range finished last. Range should be advocating the same policy he approved in 2005 and 2009, he has just as good a chance as everybody else. This is an absolute waste of time and taxpayers' money. It makes this process look like a joke and I don't think that's what my fellow trustees are trying to do. I'm pleading with them to do what's right."

Monday's meeting will be held at 5 p.m. in the board room of VVC, located at 18422 Bear Valley Road.

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