



## SEWARD COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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1801 N. Kansas Ave., P.O. Box 1137, Liberal, KS 67905-1137 ☎ 620-624-1951 or 1-800-373-9951

**News Release** For more information, contact Rachel Coleman, Executive Director of Marketing & Public Information, 620-417-1125, [rachel.coleman@sccc.edu](mailto:rachel.coleman@sccc.edu)

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### **SCCC/ATS board continues presidential search**

#### *Four finalists scheduled for interviews*

Seward County Community College/Area Technical School board of trustees approved four sets of minutes at the regular June meeting Monday night. All the extra meetings served as work sessions for the College's Presidential Search Committee. With four finalists and a busy schedule of interviews and receptions to include the public in the search process, board members joked that this summer sets a record for time spent working on college projects.

Candidate Dr. Brett Andrews, Executive Vice President and Dean at Tabor College in Hillsboro, interviewed June 16 and 17. Dr. Bruce Exstrom, Vice President for Instructional Services at Garden City Community College, interviewed Tuesday and Wednesday. Dr. Ken Trzaska, Dean of Instruction at Gogebic Community College, Ironwood, Mich., interviews Thursday and Friday. Dr. Alan Punches, Associate Dean and Chief Operations Officer at Ohio University, Zanesville, interviews Monday and Tuesday.

The public is invited to attend meet-and-greet receptions for each candidate. The final receptions are set for 4:30 p.m. Friday in room SW229 (Trzaska), in the student union on campus, and 4:30 p.m. Monday, in the same location (Punches).

In the meantime, the college has filled eight open positions. The SCCC/ATS Board of Trustees heard and accepted personnel reports at the regular monthly meeting Monday night.

New employees include Assistant Tennis Coach Chase Ashley, Head Tennis Coach Joseph "Greg" Owen, Agriculture Instructor Dr. Abdullah Aqeel, Director of Research and Assessment Adam Borth, surgical technology instructor Ashley Davis, Allied Health Division Chair/Director of Nursing Jennifer Landis, and healthcare occupations instructor Luisa Volden. Food Science and Safety Instructor Christopher Guyer, who had previously submitted a letter of resignation, requested approval to rescind that decision and continue in his current position. The personnel report included resignations of Instructional Designer Jay Castor, CIS Instructor Mindy Holder, Adult Learning Center Instructors Andrea Rangel and Maira Regalado and Assistant Women's Basketball Coach Kelli Willingham.

Positions currently open include the following: Adult Learning Center Instructor, Assistant Women's Basketball Coach, Director of Admissions, Instructors in Automotive Technology, Computer Information Technology, Diesel Technology, Healthcare Occupations, and Nursing, Sustainable Agriculture Technician, and part-time Wellness Center Evening Assistant.

Information about open positions is available on the college website, [www.sccc.edu](http://www.sccc.edu).

The board reviewed and amended the policy for Professional Development Grants, which offer the opportunity for professional employees to submit an application for grant funding to pursue bachelor's degree studies. In the past, such funding has been limited to instructors who wanted to begin graduate-level work. However, regulations now require all instructors, including industrial technology instructors and adjunct instructors, to hold higher-level degrees. The board voted to approve the change, with the understanding that funds are limited, and applicants will be evaluated and awarded on a case-by-case basis.

Incoming Dean of Academics Dr. Todd Carter presented a brief report on his doctoral dissertation, which examined how the designation "Hispanic Serving Institution" affects community colleges. Carter was able to complete the doctor-

ate thanks in part to professional development grant funding from SCCC/ATS.

In other business, the board approved entering a service agreement with GI Group for consulting and services in database administration and programming. The cost over a five-year period, ranges from \$70,000 to \$81,000 per year. The service agreement won out over a more costly contract with Ellucian, primarily because a legal review uncovered conflicts between that contract structure and state regulations governing such agreements.

Trustee Sharon Hobbie noted that the savings of \$30,000 was a huge benefit, provided that outgoing IT director Mark Merrihew felt the arrangement would work.

Merrihew, who retires after more than 30 years at SCCC/ATS, said he feels the plan will work well.

Outgoing Dean of Academics Cynthia Rapp thanked the board for positive leadership that, she noted, far exceeded the experiences of many of her peers across the state.

“You all have been great to work with,” she said. “You’re very supportive and I appreciate that.”

Departing Dean of Career and Technology Education Dr. Janese Thatcher echoed Rapp’s remarks in her final report to the trustees.

Dean of Student Services Celeste Donovan reported about her trip to the NISOD conference in Texas earlier this spring. Donovan also brought copies of an article about the NISOD-affiliated “Diversity” magazine award, which lists SCCC/ATS among the “Most Promising Places to Work 2015” for its commitment to diversity through employment, education, and community service.

Dean of Finance and Operations Dennis Sander, who is serving as acting president until the Presidential Search process concludes, combined both his roles in one report.

According to information provided by Seward County Clerk Stacia Long’s office, Sander said, the college’s assessed valuation as of June 18 is down by \$30 million. The decline is primarily due to a decrease in oil and gas values, along with a \$6 million judgment to refund money to Exxon Mobil as part of a statewide settlement.

“I wish I had better news,” Sander said. However, the hope is that state budgeting concerns will not result in drastic cuts, he noted, because Kansas Board of Regents has already given the state nearly \$2 million of unspent funds from higher education and GED programs.