

# Clark plans 'deliberate' search for president

## Trustees want permanent campus leader by fall '08

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Yes, Clark College will hire a permanent president. He or she should settle in just about the time Americans choose the next White House occupant.

Clark's board of trustees has agreed on a lengthy executive search that would bring a successor to interim chief Bob Knight by autumn 2008.

Monday night, trustees affirmed the increasingly obvious: They've ruled out a hasty search.

"We aren't formally going to start the process until April," said trustee Addison Jacobs. Campus input will be gathered, but trustees won't really get

serious until after the 2007 summer break, she said. "We want to pace this, be deliberate."

College president searches are somewhat seasonal. Generally, trustees solicit applications in the winter and zero in on their preferred candidates by late spring, so that the new president can be on the job for the beginning of the school year.

Jacobs and trustee Kim Peery led a brief interim presidential search before the board decided to promote Knight from his administrative vice president post. Pleased with Knight's direction, the pair see no reason to rush a painstaking search, they said.

"We have good leaders. Let them work," Jacobs said. "We're going forward. We have a president. We have a great guy who's in an interim position."

The slow pace should give Clark faculty and staff members, students and other community members ample chance to weigh in. Jacobs brought to Monday's board meeting a thick binder of materials from the 2002-03 search, which produced former Clark president Wayne Branch. In that job search, an advisory committee had already convened by October 2002.

"We would've been very far behind," Peery said of jump-starting a new search this winter.

Instead, the trustee board has scheduled four workshop sessions over the next half-year. Topics include setting a legislative agenda, budget and fundraising reforms, planning for Clark's satellite campus in east Vancouver and a recently purchased building on Fort Vancouver Way, and reviewing instructional and enrollment plans.

Clark administrators are just entering months of wearisome accreditation work and don't need further distraction, Jacobs added. New priorities should emerge from the work that might shape the type of president Clark needs, she said.

Older goals were largely met during Branch's three-year term, trustees noted. They include increased teamwork with Washington State University Vancouver, a strategic plan update and new work force training programs.

"Some good work is already done," Peery said.

Facing scant resistance on the Clark campus and little outside pressure, the trustees are inclined to take their time finding the best possible next leader, Jacobs said.

"It's sort of our prerogative," she said.

## Update

### ■ Previously:

Clark College trustees promoted administrator Bob Knight to interim college president on Sept. 28.

### ■ What's new:

Trustees on Monday said they want a permanent president in place by autumn 2008.

### ■ What's next:

Early presidential search work will begin in April. An advisory committee will start its work next autumn.