

OCC board ties up loose ends after firing Calkins

BY TIM RICHARD
STAFF WRITER

Now that Dr. Patay Calkins has cleaned out her desk in the chancellor's office, Oakland Community College trustees have begun tying up loose ends that unraveled during the three-month battle that ended in her firing.

The five-member majority — with Calkins supporters Janice Simmons and Anne Scott absent — on Oct. 19 scheduled two special meetings at 6 p.m.:

■ Monday, Oct. 30 — to discuss hiring a permanent interim chancellor. Dr. James Warner, vice chancellor for curriculum, is serving as temporary interim chancellor. Trustees also want to discuss an audit amid hints by vice chair Judith Wiser that "everything's going to be audited" — the trustees, the former chancellor, everything.

■ Thursday, Nov. 2 — to hear presentations by five companies for a contract as construction manager for tens of millions of dollars of renovations and repairs that voters asked for when they approved a \$25 million property tax increase in June.

Calkins had recommended the firm of Barton Malow in Southfield. But the board, at her final

meeting Oct. 10, shied aside the recommendation because it wanted more information on the other four finalists.

Those are A.J. Etkin Construction Co., Farmington Hills; George W. Auch Co., Pontiac; Turner Construction Co., a large New York firm with a Detroit office; and Albridge Aldinger Co., Detroit. All will be asked for 10-minute presentations.

Trustees will ask: What recent experience do you have with community college projects? In the report submitted by an administrative committee, only Barton Malow appeared to have recent work — with OCC itself. Its chief

executive is a former OCC Foundation member, and it has trained OCC employees.

OCC has five campuses, including three that are 30 years old. Little if any new construction is anticipated.

As temporary CEO, Warner promised that "my style will be considerably different from my predecessor's." He said he would seek "mutually acceptable" solutions.

Trustees broke a logjam with approval of a revised list of administrative, faculty and staff appointments. "Under no circumstances," said human resources director Edward Callaghan, "will

we touch contingency funds" to pay them — a sore point that contributed to Calkins' downfall.

Callaghan said four positions were dropped from the list recommended by Calkins over the last two months. An administrative assistant who had been transferred out of the chancellor's office was transferred back; a faculty transfer and a building and grounds transfer between campuses were added.

Among major personnel changes:

■ Shavi Mall All, Orchard Ridge English faculty member since 1989, was granted a winter semester sabbatical to work on a cultural diversity text in Florida and Egypt.

■ Anne C. Craigie was promoted to interim dean for student services at Highland Lakes, replacing Dean Sarah Serrah, who resigned to take a private university position.

■ Kathy Groesbeck-Moran, coordinator of cardiovascular technology at the Highland Lakes Campus, had her program eliminated this semester.

■ John Domm, director of advanced police training at the Auburn Hills Campus, retired.

OCC trustees provide final evaluation of Calkins

BY TIM RICHARD
STAFF WRITER

Imagine a student who gets three A's, 15 B's and eight C's — and then is flunked out of school.

That's what Dr. Patay Calkins' report card looked like after four of Oakland Community College's seven trustees last week gave her a performance evaluation.

Then the board on Oct. 16 fired her as chancellor on a 5-2 vote.

Her performance evaluation indicated the forms were filled out by two trustees who backed her

and two of the dissidents. Three dissidents ignored the evaluation process.

Trustees were asked to rate Calkins in 26 areas on a scale of 1-5.

She received three 6 ratings (relations with business and political leaders and collaborative projects with community leaders).

"The red head from Texas has taken Oakland County by storm," one trustee wrote anonymously.

Her lowest marks, which averaged out to 3's, were in relationships with the board of trustees — making a sincere effort to know trustees' wishes, providing them information and so on.

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ships with the board of trustees — making a sincere effort to know trustees' wishes, providing them information and so on.

"The information provided to the board is not adequate to make decisions because the best and complete information is not presented," another trustee wrote.

"Board members have to make formal motions to get pertinent information. PJFC communicates with individual board members — not with the board."

"PJFC plays the blame game; everyone is responsible for mistakes taken by the chancellor."

As an educational leader, Calkins had 16 ratings of 4 — presenting a clear educational vision, aligning the faculty to the vision, demonstrating the importance of students. On a student's report card, it amounted to a solid B average.

As an administrator she scored most 4's — organizing and scheduling time, demonstrating multiculturalism, and budgeting — with a couple of soft spots in "maintaining fiscal integrity" and labor relations.

When news broke in September of two trustees' request for her resignation, Calkins was publicly supported and praised by County Executive L. Brooks Patterson, business leaders, leaders of Jewish, Chaldean and black groups, former trustees, faculty members, staff and students. The only dissenting voice was one student.

But it was a board of trustees that hired her, and the board of trustees which fired her — not county politicians, business executives, ethnic and religious leaders, faculty, staff and students.

Appliance repair rules are urged

BY LEANNE ROGERS
STAFF WRITER

A local consumer activist is working to get laws passed to regulate the appliance repair industry.

Appliance Doctor Joe Gagnon, owner of Carmack Appliance in Garden City, wants to see appliance repair regulations similar to what exists for automotive service shops.

He has taken his campaign to State Rep. Lyn Bankes, R-Redford, who is having the proposals reviewed by the state attorney general.

"I get complaints about appliance service virtually every day," said Gagnon, who hosts a weekly call-in program on 5-JR and is also an Observer & Eccentric Newspapers columnist.

"People are asking if they get ripped off. In severe cases, I say go to small claims court and I'll go with you."

Some proposals are familiar from the automotive industry such as requiring all removed parts to be given to the customer for disposal except those which have a core charge, exchange rate or hazardous material. Any used parts installed during repairs would have to be shown to the consumer and explained in writing.

All estimates of needed work would need to be explained and approved by the consumer before work is completed with detailed bills breaking down work and charges.

Itemized bills would have to list the service call charge, labor charges, the parts serial number and the amount of tax charged.

"The rip-offs in the industry will take an invoice and say it costs \$210 but it's not broken down," said Gagnon. "For \$210 you figure the part must be expensive. It can't be all labor. But you don't know."

Without the number from the replacement parts and breakdown of the bill, he said consumers will find it impossible to be smart shoppers.

"Many companies have a labor book that tells them what to charge," Gagnon said. "One job will take more time, so they lose money. Another job doesn't take as long, so they're making it up on the next customer."

Some service companies will charge customers tax on their entire bills, Gagnon said, although they only paid tax on the wholesale purchase of their parts.

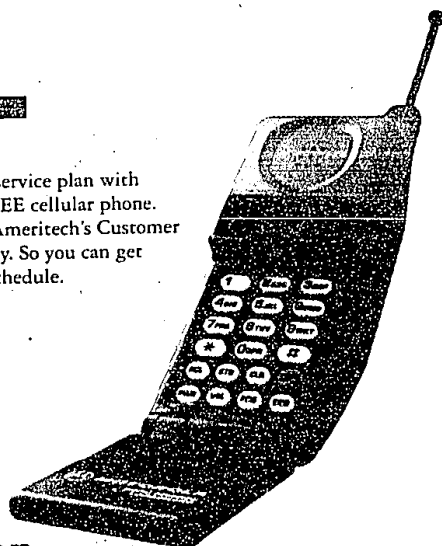
Among Gagnon's proposals is that any appliance repair company appearing in more than five small claims cases within a year would be investigated by the state attorney general.

"Consumers don't go to small claims court for no reason. I've never lost a case in small claims court (working with the consumers)," he said. "Any company that goes to small claims court more than five times in a year should be looked at."

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