

Russi to be named OU's fifth president

BY SANDRA ARMBRUSTER
OAKLAND COUNTY EDITOR

Oakland University trustees are expected to approve a contract with interim President Gary D. Russi when the board meets at 3 p.m. Thursday in the Gold Room of the Oakland Center on campus.

Russi was appointed April 11, 1996 in a surprise move by trustees after a search was halted. His appointment came in the aftermath of a lawsuit challenging whether the board of trustees could conduct the search in private. Some trustees hoped that the Legislature would alter the Open Meetings Act to permit closed interviews of presidential candidates.

The motion, made by Louis R. Ross, named him the university's fifth president, pending resolution of the contract. If Russi is appointed as permanent president, he will succeed Sandra Packard, who resigned to take on consulting duties in Washington D.C. before returning to a teaching role at the university.

"I was surprised, pleased and honored, all at the same time," Russi said, following his appointment. He had served the preceding 15 months as interim president. Previously, Russi served since July 1, 1993 as OU's vice president for academic affairs. Before coming to OU, he was vice president for research and strategic planning at Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa.

The contract, which has been reviewed by the finance and personnel advisory committee, is a recommendation to the board of trustees. If approved, Russi's appointment would become effective June 6, with his term at will. If terminated without cause or he chooses to resign, he may become a tenured professor of health sciences. If terminated for cause, Russi would be ineligible for both positions of president and professor. Contract disputes are subject to binding arbitration.

Salary is initially at \$155,000, continuing through the 1996-97 fiscal year. Fringe benefits, vacation, holidays and sick leave are consistent with the executive group. An automobile is to be provided. Russi will reside at Sunset Terrace and moving expenses are limited to \$7,500. An automobile will be provided.

At the August meeting, Russi is expected to recommend a candidate for appointment as interim vice president for academic affairs, while a search for a permanent replacement is made.

Bill will ban gay marriage

The House voted 74-28 on May 29 to approve a bill sponsored by Rep. Deborah Whyman which she called "a pre-emptive" strike so that Michigan wouldn't have to recognize homosexual and lesbian unions, if and when Hawaii recognizes them.

Male representatives were 73 percent in favor of the bill - 59 voting yes, 16 no and five not voting. Females were 50 percent in favor - 15 voting yes, 12 no and three not voting. (Because 56 votes are needed to pass a bill, political analysts consider a missed vote the equivalent of a no vote.)

The bill goes to the Senate, where routine approval is expected.

Some lawmakers and the American Civil Liberties Union challenged Whyman's bill as unconstitutional.

A companion bill in the Senate will ban same-sex unions in Michigan.

Here is how area lawmakers voted on House Bill 5662:

Yes - Willis Bullard, R-Milford, Barbara Dobb, R-Union Lake, John Jamian, R-Bloomfield, Shirley Johnson, R-Royal Oak, Greg Kato, R-Rochester Hills, Tom Middleton, R-Orionville.

No - Maxine Berman, D-Southfield, Penny Criseman, R-Rochester, Jan Dolan, R-Farmington Hills.



Gary D. Russi, interim president

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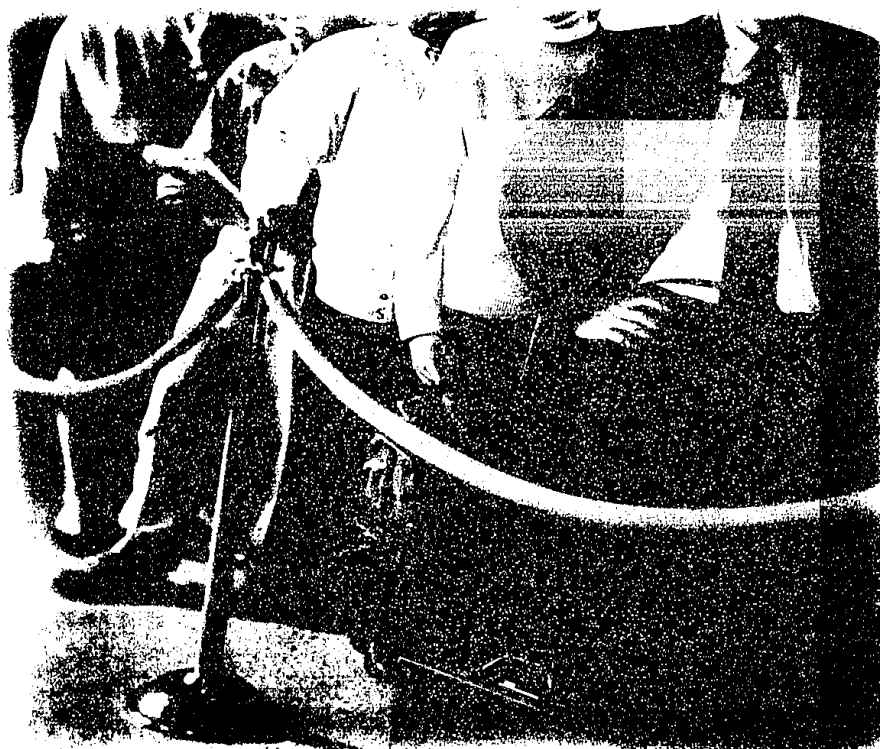
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