

OCC board candidates highlight qualifications

BY TIM RICHARD

STAFF WRITER

The oftener they meet, the more candidates for the Oakland Community College board sound alike.

They agree that student activism should be nourished; that liberal arts shouldn't be crunched in the race for new technology; and that students should continue to be the focus of the 32-year-old, two-year college with the \$100 million budget.

Six of the nine candidates for two trustee posts answered Student Coalition questions Monday before an audience of fewer than 50 on the Royal Oak Campus in their final appearance before the June 10 election.

Their only disagreement came when they were asked: "If you should finish a close third in the election, would you run again in two years?"

John Wangler, retired OCC faculty member and administrator from Beverly Hills: "I'm a one-term candidate."

Jeanne Towar, publisher from

Royal Oak: "Two years from now? You bet I would." She and Wangler are a slate seeking to unhorse incumbent trustee Sandra Ritter.

Ellen Ferguson, Pontiac teacher and coach who lives in Bloomfield Hills: "I don't think I would. I'd rather raise money and be behind the scenes."

Lawrence D. Kohl, Royal Oak attorney who lives in Farmington Hills: "I'd consider running again. I'm here for the indefinite future. I have young children."

James Doyon, U-D Jesuit High teacher and former Oakland County commissioner from Huntington Woods: "Am I committed? You better believe it." He promised to take part in OCC cultural and fundraising activities but added, "I don't know if I would run."

Dr. Thomas Sullivan, Bloomfield Hills dentist who lives in Oakland Township: "My impetus is what's happening this time. I want to correct something that needs correcting," he said, referring to the incumbent trustee's leadership in last fall's firing of Chancellor Patsy

Calkins.

Incumbent Ritter, target of many candidates, missed the first part of the 90-minute session to attend a special board meeting. Two other trustees came to the Royal Oak Campus after the board meeting, but Ritter didn't show up.

Other no-shows were Marguerite Fitzsimmons-Walker II, Royal Oak attorney and resident who appear to have discontinued campaigning, and Jan Mack, Waterford mother and property manager who has missed all the candidate forums.

Here is how candidates characterized their own possible contributions to the seven-member board:

Doyon: "A peacemaker. Not part of any slate or faction. I'm

appalled that it's becoming very political. . . I know the distinction between making policy and micro-managing. . . When people come to you, you learn about the bureaucracy."

Ferguson: "I've been an educator 28 years. I have three children I sent through medical school. . . We need a quality educational program, a quality staff, research, the buildings and grounds kept up."

Kohl: "I would like to provide public service to the county that has given me so much for many years. . . Students are here to advance themselves occupationally. We need to assist students going on to four-year institutions."

Sullivan: "Next Monday is time for a change. . . The board

should set policy and focus on outcome. . . I have good planning skills. . . It's my responsibility to make the budget of the Michigan Dental Association insurance corporation of which he is treasurer."

Towar: "I've served 10 years on the OCC Foundation. I'm a business person. . . there is a gap between the demand for skilled workers and the supply. We need to continually assess programs, provide affordable programs and build relationships with business and industry."

Wangler: "We need to repair existing buildings, bring about new programs, make sure the

latest technology is available for students. . . I moved here in 1959, coached little league, organized adult ed at Berkley, was assistant director of community ed at OCC, then spent 35 years as a teacher, (department) chair and bargainer. . . The situation (over the firing of Calkins) is appalling."

Candidates are quoted in the order in which they spoke. Two persons will be elected June 10. To see a one-hour program conducted by the League of Women Voters, contact your local cable TV company and ask it to show the May 30 videotape made by Continental Cable of Southfield.

Probate court offers seminars on estates

Oakland County Probate Court Citizens Alliance will present "Removing the Mysteries of the Probate Court" from 1-3:30 p.m. Tuesday, June 11, at the Troy Community Center, 1-75 and Big Beaver.

The Troy Senior Citizens Center will co-sponsor this free public event.

You'll learn why you need a will and how to obtain forms to start probate proceedings. You'll also learn about estates that

must go through probate, disposition of small estates, steps in probating an estate, trusts and guardianships/conservatorships for minors.

A similar program, in cooperation with Southfield Senior Citizens, will be presented from 1:30-3:30 p.m. Thursday, June 13, at the Southfield Civic Center, 26000 Evergreen, Room 115, Parks and Recreation Wing.

Call (810) 858-0053 for more information.

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