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**First Decisions Made in Search for Next Highline College Leader**  
Trustees Vote to Use External Search Consultant and Form Subcommittees

DES MOINES, Wash. — The Highline College Board of Trustees held a special meeting on campus today to consider options for recruiting and selecting the college's next president. This was the board's first public meeting since July 27, when Dr. Jack Bermingham announced his retirement as Highline's president.

The five-member board voted unanimously to engage an external search firm to aid in the search process.

The trustees formed two subcommittees, one to develop recommendations on the request-for-proposal (RFP) process to solicit bids from prospective search firms and the other to make recommendations on the formation of a presidential search committee.

Presidential search committees often review candidate applications and advise the board in areas such as desired attributes of the next president.

The two subcommittees will bring their recommendations back to the full board for a vote at a meeting to be scheduled in September.

The timeline for the presidential search process has not been determined, but board members said their goal is to have a new leader in place no later than July 1, 2018.

The process will be an open one, where students, college employees and community members all have the opportunity to provide input and feedback on Highline's next leader.

Bermingham, 68, had been on leave from the college since December 2016 while recovering from open-heart surgery. He had served as president since 2006, only the sixth in the college's history, which dates back to 1961 when Highline was founded as the first community college in King County.

Dr. Jeff Wagnitz, Highline's Vice President for Academic Affairs, is serving as acting president.

The board is responsible for selecting and employing the college president. It is composed of community members from Highline's service area of South King County: Dan Altmayer and Bob Roegner, both of Federal Way; Debrena Jackson Gandy, Des Moines; Fred Mendoza, Normandy Park; and Sili Savusa, White Center.

Highline annually serves approximately 17,000 students, making it one of the state's largest institutions of higher education. It is located in Des Moines, 20 minutes south of downtown Seattle.

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*With more than 70 percent students of color, Highline College is the most diverse higher education institution in the state, reflecting the diverse and multicultural nature of the communities it serves. The college offers a wide range of academic transfer, professional-technical education, basic skills and applied bachelor's degree programs. Alumni include former Seattle Mayor Norm Rice, entrepreneur Junki Yoshida and former Washington state poet laureate Sam Green.*