

Runner-up gets second look at LMC

Board ponders hiring Robert Spohr as president

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NILES — Lake Michigan College board members will size up Montcalm Community College Vice President Robert Spohr as the institution's next potential leader.

LMC board Vice President Michael Lindley said Tuesday the board will spend the next several weeks doing its "due diligence" on Spohr to determine if it'll offer him the president's job, or launch a second nationwide search.

"The biggest item we're going to do differently is visit his community, and obviously, we'll check references, though we always do

that. We try not to tell everything that we do because we don't want candidates know what we do," Lindley said. "In general terms, we're going to make every effort to make sure we find a good match."

Lindley was referring to last year's presidential search, which resulted in the hiring of Jennifer Spigelvogel, whom the board unanimously voted to fire after a public hearing May 5.

Lindley said he hopes the board can finish those efforts by its next meeting June 28, but isn't making a firm commitment on that date.

"We're not going to rush the process. We're going to make sure that we get everything done first. We don't meet in July, so if we can't get it done by June 28, we may need to set a special meeting to determine where we are," he said.

Spohr was the other finalist in the search that LMC launched last fall to determine a successor to former president Bob Harrison, who retired from the job in December 2015.

Lindley broke the news during Tuesday's meeting at LMC's Bertrand Crossing campus. No other board member spoke on the issue, and there was no formal vote on it.

Lindley cited two reasons, including the absences of board Chairman Mary Jo Tomasini, and Secretary Debra Johnson, whom it wants included in any decision — and because "we didn't think that one (a vote) was necessary," he said.

"We'd (already) discussed what our next options were, so we just discussed it," Lindley said.

The board settled on those options at a special meeting last week, where it

decided to bring back Harrison as president emeritus/acting CEO — and heard a second presentation from Spohr about why he's a good fit for the LMC presidency.

How much progress the board makes in answering that question will depend on how quickly it gets the necessary information, and how much follow-up it has to do, Lindley said.

For example, "if we're trying to contact a potential reference, and they happen to be traveling abroad, those are some of the things you run into," he said.

Board members have alleged unauthorized spending and unprofessional conduct as their main reasons for parting ways with Spigelvogel, who had served as Cuyahoga Community College's vice president before taking over at LMC in January.