Cabrillo adopts preliminary budget

Eight positions cut, including head of classified union

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SCOTTS VALLEY — Nearly eight classified employee positions at Cabrillo College were eliminated or reduced at Monday’s Board of Trustees meeting.

Among those whose positions were eliminated is Stephanie Stainback, an instructional assistant and president of the Cabrillo Classified Employees Union.

Cabrillo’s president, Brian King, previously said he had hoped some concessions could be made during contract talks to prevent additional layoffs. One of the concessions sought was pension costs. Cabrillo pays the entire cost of the classified union staff pensions. Both sides remain in negotiations.

Ahead of the vote, Eireann Del Bonta, a union representative and public safety program coordinator — whose hours were also cut — told the board they were “losing more of our union” than at any other time. Stainback did not attend the meeting.

Board member Gary Reece said Stainback was not targeted, rather her position “was identified as less critical than other positions.”

Another board member, Susan True, added that all employee groups, including faculty, have had to make concessions at a time when the college was tasked with trimming more than $2 million from the 2011-12 budget to keep from entering 2012-13 with a roughly $5 million deficit.

“Even if Brian, on his worst day, was cut to get (the union) ... it wouldn’t get us to our budget reduction goal,” she said.

The board also adopted a preliminary budget that goes into effect July 1 and has a $3.2 million deficit. A fourth round of layoffs will be discussed when the board meets in August.

The preliminary budget is based on the assumption that voters approve Gov. Jerry Brown’s tax hike initiatives. Neither have qualified for the ballot, but if voters approve them, those funds will help the state’s struggling schools.

But King cited a recent poll that showed only marginal support for the measures, adding that 52 percent approval “before any negative campaign has even begun is a very low watermark.”

The board will adopt a final budget in September that assumes those initiatives will fail, but that the state will come up with another way to raise funds. Under that scenario, Cabrillo’s budget could be cut $3 million starting in January.

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