Search narrowed to 5 candidates

By BONNIE HORGOS
bhorgos@santacruzsentinel.com

APTOS — After interviewing Cabrillo College presidential candidates for 16 hours last weekend, the Cabrillo President Search Committee has narrowed the search to five people.

The candidates, whose names are expected to be released later this week, will be at open forums with the Cabrillo community on May 22-23 in Aptos and Watsonville.

“We certainly have a diverse group of candidates,” said Trustee Margarita Cortez.

Lafayette resident John Hendrickson has served as interim president since Feb. 1. He’ll serve in the position for up to six months or until the college names a new president.

The college’s former president of nine years, Brian King, took over as chancellor of Los Rios Community College District in Sacramento on Feb. 1.

The new president will take on the role of dealing with $700,000 in restoration funding from the state in light of Prop. 30, which was approved by voters in November. The $98 billion state budget proposed by Gov. Jerry Brown, to be revised this month, includes $197 million for the state’s 112 community colleges.

The additional funding allowed Cabrillo to lift a hiring freeze for the school year’s budget. The hiring freeze had been in place since 2008.

The nursing, psychology, anthropology, chemistry, computer and information science, computer science, accounting, library and math departments will be recruiting faculty, Hendrickson said.

Prop. 30 funding also helped the college add 24 classes to the summer 2013 schedule and 50 classes to the fall 2013 schedule.

Hendrickson also addressed a suspicious package found on campus April 18, which turned out to be a student’s class project that had been left to be recycled, according to Santa Cruz County sheriff’s deputies. Before the package’s contents were known, the upper campus was evacuated about 10 a.m. The Santa Cruz County Bomb Team destroyed the package about 12:50 p.m. The campus was reopened about 2 p.m.

“There seems to be something in the air about suspicious packages,” Hendrickson said. “I believe that it was the absolute best drill we could hope to have. It gave us a learning experience.”

Follow Sentinel reporter
Bonnie Horgos on Twitter
at Twitter.com/bhorgos