

State cuts to affect WPCC

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Western Piedmont Community College has received tentative information from Raleigh about how a state hiring freeze will affect the school.

The college's trustees heard about the effects of the hiring freeze during a trustee meeting Monday, which was the first meeting chaired by new chairman Charles T. Hen-son.

"We got tentative information back from Raleigh about the budget situation, and they're going to send us some guidelines," said WPCC President Jim Richardson.

According to the guidelines the school has received so far, WPCC can re-hire people who were teaching part-time and full-time for the fall quarter, Richardson said.

"If they had cut that out we would have lost 98 percent of Continuing Education," he said.

In order to fill a slot for any non-teaching position, the college will have to submit a request to Raleigh, Richardson said.

Also, all out-of-state travel will have to be discontinued, and only in-state travel that is determined to be essential can be continued, he said.

"That cuts your staff development out, just about," Richardson said.

Gov. Jim Martin recently announced a hiring freeze that, for the first time in history, includes not filling teacher positions.

The freeze is part of the state's effort to overcome a budget short-fall.

"The state is trying to come up with \$30 million from state agencies," Richardson said.

After asking for a reversion of state funds in the fall, the state has also mandated that WPCC revert \$118,000 in additional state funds, he said.

Also, there is a possibility that the school will have to revert even more state funding in April, said Richardson.

The state-mandated reversions come at a time when the college's enrollment has hit an all-time high for the history of the school, Richardson said.

In other business Monday the trustees approved Morganton architect Robert Salsbury for a roofing project for Patton Hall which will cost about \$86,000, Richardson said.

The trustees chose Salsbury after looking at 13 architects.

Also during the meeting, the trustees saw a final draft of responses to recommendations of the school's 2001 Committee, which examined future possibilities for the college.

In other planning, the trustees received a master campus plan survey which will be completed by staff, faculty and trustees.

The survey looks at future needs for office, classroom, laboratory, shop and storage space.

It is part of a survey being conducted by Salsbury and Larry Clark, dean of planning and research.

The trustees also gave a plaque to Mrs. John McMurray in honor of the outstanding services her late husband gave as the college attorney, Richardson said. "He's been our college attorney for years and

years."

The trustees met in executive session for about 20 minutes to discuss personnel matters and possible legal matters, he said.

In other business, Richardson announced the school had received reaffirmation of accreditation from

the American Dental Association for the Dental Hygienist Program.

Richardson also announced WPCC is in fourth place among the state's 58 community colleges for enrollment compared to the Burke County population.