

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

Trustees hire search firm for \$175,000

3 public meetings will be held soon to gather input on presidential hunt

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The University of Illinois will pay a search firm \$175,000, plus expenses, to help find the next UI president.

The agreement with Parker Executive Search of Atlanta was approved in May, but trustees did not specify an amount because contract details were being finalized.

Spokesman Tom Hardy told The News-Gazette on Friday that the firm will receive a fee of \$175,000, plus up to \$21,000 for direct expenses, to help a 19-member search committee recruit candidates to replace President Robert Easter, who will retire on June 30, 2015.

The search is expected to run through the rest of the calendar year, with the brunt of the work done this summer and early fall, Hardy said.

The UI Board of Trustees launched the presidential search in March, appointing the 19-member committee that will develop job qualifications and then identify and screen candidates.

The committee will recommend finalists to the board, which hopes to name a replacement by late fall to ensure a smooth transition before Easter leaves office.

Easter became the university's 19th president on July 1, 2012, after 36 years as a faculty member and top administrator on the Urbana-Champaign campus.

He succeeded Michael Hogan, who had announced his resignation the previous March under pressure from faculty. Hogan was hired in 2010 to succeed B. Joseph

Your turn

If you've got advice for the latest presidential search at the University of Illinois, the search committee is all ears.

Town-hall meetings are scheduled later this month on each of the three UI campuses to get input from faculty, staff, students, alumni and community members.

They will feature an open-microphone format, so speakers can share their thoughts on everything from the challenges that a new president will face to the personal qualities needed for the position. Several members of the search committee will attend each meeting, and input from the forums will be presented to the full committee.

Here's the schedule:

■ Springfield: 11 a.m. June 23 in Room 3080 University Hall, on Richard Wright Drive.

■ Chicago: 2 p.m. June 24, Michele M. Thompson rooms, Student Center West, 828 S. Wolcott Ave.

■ Urbana-Champaign: 1 p.m. June 25 in the Beckman Auditorium, 405 N. Mathews Ave.. (It was originally scheduled for 3 p.m. but was moved up due to scheduling conflicts.)

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White, who had also resigned following an admission scandal on the Urbana campus.

The UI paid search firm Isaacson Miller \$160,000 for the 2010 presidential search.

The university is also using Parker for the current search for a Chicago chancellor, and the firm assisted with the hiring of basketball coach John Groce and athletic director Mike Thomas.

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The presidential search committee is co-chaired by Trustee Pam Strobel, a member of the board's executive committee, and Douglas Beck, a physics professor from the Urbana campus.

The committee has scheduled three town-hall meetings later this month to get public input on what kind of president it should be looking for. Its next full meeting will be scheduled sometime after that, Hardy said.

The ad for the job and a position description will likely be finalized within the next week or two, he said.

The panel has developed a "white paper" for the search, which describes the president's roles and responsibilities in relation to the Board of Trustees, faculty, campus chancellors, legislators, donors and others. It emphasizes "integral leadership," linking the president, faculty and board in a "well-functioning partnership purposefully devoted to a well-defined, broadly affirmed institutional vision."

The white paper also lists specific qualifications for the new president, including expertise in budget matters. Overall, it calls for a candidate who is a "distinguished leader having impeccable credentials and integrity, with a deep appreciation for the mission of a premier public university, and with experience

building and sustaining a highly ranked institution."

"She or he will be a recognized scholar and a proven, capable and successful administrator who will encourage and support excellence and innovation in teaching, research, and public service, as well as in the roles the University and campuses play in support of statewide economic development.

"Leveraging the existing strengths of the University, she or he will drive the institution to produce graduates demonstrating the best in critical and creative thinking skills; new knowledge in the arts, engineering, humanities, health, the sciences, and the professional schools; and new technologies and innovations."