

New Chancellor Could Start a Year From Today

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The next chancellor at Appalachian State University could be named as early as February and on the job next July, according to Ann Lemmon, associate vice president for human resources at UNC General Administration. "This will be the most important work you do," Lemmon told members of Appalachian's Board of Trustees during a retreat session June 27th. She said, "This will be a very attractive job and the search won't be difficult to conduct. This campus is well known, and is not a campus in crisis." It's been 10 years since Appalachian conducted a search for its top administrator, and Chancellor Kenneth E. Peacock announced in April plans to step down as a successor is named. At the end of the 2013-14 academic year, he will have completed 10 years in the position. Lemmon said committee representation should reflect the campus and community, including the board of trustees, faculty, administrators, staff, students, alumni and community members. The search committee does not hire the chancellor, Lemmon said, but reports to the board of trustees who will recommend three candidates to UNC President Tom Ross. Lemmon noted that Appalachian's search 10 years ago was the last in the system to be an "open search" in which finalists for the position were made public. Such a practice, Lemmon said, can result in qualified candidates dropping out of the process. Search committee members will conduct their work in closed session and will be required to sign a letter of confidentiality. She also said its common practice to hire a search firm that will seek applicants for the position as such firms have a broader knowledge base of potential applicants. Lemmon said, "If you think about the world of higher education, we know a lot of folks, but we don't know everybody. There will be people interested in us who we don't know about." Lemmon said it's not unusual to have as many as 50 individuals interested in serving as a chancellor. Searches typically cost around \$120,000, Lemmon said, which includes the cost of hiring a search firm, travel expenses and other costs. Appalachian will use state and non-state funds to finance the search, according to Vice Chancellor for Business Affairs Greg Lovins. Lemmon said the search that would begin in August with the appointment of the search committee, with possible screening of applicants and nominees in October, selection of finalists in November, finalist interviews in December, and a recommendation of three finalists submitted to UNC President Tom Ross in December. Ross would then recommend a finalist for UNC Board of Governor approval in February 2014. "Typically, we move fast," Lemmon said of past UNC system chancellor searches. "There is nothing more important that a campus will do. This provides the opportunity to think about who you are and who you want to be in the next 10 years."