

LTCC president calling it quits

By Kathryn Reed

Unable to hold back the tears, Kindred Murillo has mixed emotions about having tendered her resignation as president of Lake Tahoe Community College.

While she will be leaving behind an extensive list of accomplishments, it is the people she will miss the most. She only had good things to say about the boards she has worked for since taking the helm in July 2011, the faculty and classified staff.

What comes next for the 61-year-old remains to be seen. Whatever it is, it will have to be in a region without pine trees or at least with more humidity. Murillo is allergic to pine trees, which leads to colds and respiratory issues. Throughout the meeting Tuesday night she was dabbing at her eyes and blowing her nose – which at that time wasn't about the sadness of her impending departure.

"I can retire, but I really like what I do," Murillo told *Lake Tahoe News* after the special closed session. "I may look at select opportunities. I had a great experience here."



Kindred Murillo is Lake Tahoe Community College's fourth president, having been hired in 2011.

Jim Duke served from 1974-90; Guy lease 1990-2007, and Paul Killpatrick 2008-10.

She doesn't have a solid end date, which gives the board flexibility and the potential for the college to transition from one president to the next with some overlap. At the earliest she will leave June 30, the latest is Feb. 1, 2017.

If the board doesn't have someone on board by then, an interim president will be hired from outside the college, board President Fritz Wenck said.

The college board spent 90 minutes Jan. 19 discussing what happens next in finding the 42-year-old institution's fifth president. A search firm will be hired and from there a nationwide search will begin.

What exactly the board wants in the next leader will be discussed in greater detail in closed session at the Jan. 26 meeting. The next president will oversee the spending of the bulk of the bond money that voters approved in 2014 as well as the upcoming accreditation process.

"We are buckling up to try to do the best we can with a situation that is very unhappy for us," Wenck told *Lake Tahoe News*. "She is an outstanding president and none of us wants to see her go." But he recognizes that her health must come first.

For Murillo, she is most proud of having brought the college to a point of fiscal solvency, with a plan for the college's future. This includes having identified issues with the

facilities, as well as technological shortfalls.

“My hallmark is the fiscal plan so the college is here for the community and the future,” Murillo said.

She spearheaded the \$55 million facilities bond. Wenck gave her a ton of credit for that, admitting it’s something he didn’t think would come to fruition.

Murillo does have one major goal left – the one set for herself and the college at the onset of her tenure here – to have LTCC be a four-year college.

With local resident Lisa Maloff donating more than \$5 million for a university center, Murillo’s goal is on the path to completion.

“To make sure there is four-year education in South Lake Tahoe is the last thing to complete,” Murillo said. She is working hard to have one or two universities lined up by the end of this fiscal year.