

# OPINIONS

## What COA needs in new president

**Dear College of the Albemarle Search Committee,**

As everyone knows, COA is looking for a new president because current president Robert Wynegar announced plans to resign on June 30. Head-hunter consultants are seeking input for the search committee as to what qualities the university's constituency — faculty, staff, students and the trustees — want when hiring a new president.



**MILES LAYTON**

COA has campuses in Pasquotank, Chowan, Currituck and Dare counties, so everyone should be engaged in this process as to who ascends the Iron Throne. The policies that this president pursues will directly impact northeastern North Carolina's future.

Jerry Climer, Edenton-Chowan Partnership chairman, said the region has a shortage of skilled workers that COA helps

address.

"The opportunity is to produce a different type of graduate — not necessarily the person who wants to be a rocket scientist or brain surgeon, but a person who understands that if they are going to work for Daedalus Yachts, they'd better have some capacity in that field and the skills," he said. "COA in the past has done a really nice job of working with some of our manufacturers to design programs specifically for their challenges."

During my long career as a reporter, I covered more than one presidential search, so I saw how the hiring process unfolds and afterward, what qualities are best suited for academic governance.

COA will pay consulting firm ACCT a flat fee of \$30,000 to assist the presidential search process.

For the bargain price of this newspaper, here are my thoughts about the best person to lead COA into the future.

The right candidate should have some academic management experience so as to know how to lead and improve the system. Decision makers also should give equal weight to a candidate with professional experience from outside the academy.

This is NOT to say that a scholar who possesses a terminal degree is unable lead the college.

Nor is it that a president with a law degree, political acumen or extensive business experience will be any more successful herding cats in a university setting.

Some of the best university presidents who I've met came from various backgrounds, but they all had people skills, were critical thinkers and able to attract outside investment while lobbying the legislature and alumni. David Hardesty Jr., who led West Virginia University for many years, had a Harvard law degree and held statewide office as Tax Commissioner.

Gordon Gee — Ed.D. and law degree from Columbia — is the gold standard of college presidents having led Ohio State, University of Colorado, Brown University and Vanderbilt. President of WVU, Gee is an amazing fundraiser, a great leader and an administrator who is very student centered.

Doreen Larson — formerly president at Pierpont Community and Technical College — holds a master's/doctorate in special education. She was an awesome administrator, student centered and an active lobbyist who transformed the community college in Fairmont, West Virginia.

When William E. Moran was chancellor at UNC-Greensboro, he transformed an institution that previously had been known to many as the state's Women's College into a highly respected top-tier school in the region. He held a master's degree and Ph.D. in business administration.

As a longtime administrator and later as provost, Gerald Lang transformed WVU into a top-tier institution. A keen mind and a straight shooter, Lang earned his master's degree and Ph.D. in biology.

Some of the worst administrators I worked with were blinded by a tunnel-vision approach that served the bureaucracy more than the students and stakeholders. Because of their academic credentials or professional experience, these folks naively thought they could lead the academy by virtue of personality, perhaps convinced of their own brilliance by sycophants, but they ended up getting dragged into the mind-numbing politics of faculty and institutional governance that has always been filled with competing petty fiefdoms.

Put simply, wars waged between the academic stakeholders have negative consequences. One only needs to study what happened to former ECU chancellor Cecil Station or UNC system President Margaret Spellings and even recent history at COA to conclude that leading a university is much harder than it looks.

Moreover, the COA doesn't need a smug leader who says that's how it is done at Berkeley, so it should work in Edenton or Elizabeth City. A condescending approach to university governance will not work in a place where people pride themselves on their independence, heritage and sense of community. One size does not fit all, and trust must be earned.

When the time comes, stakeholders need to ask each presidential candidate questions about strategies to increase enrollment and maintain retention that do not jeopardize prudent academic standards; how to grow endowments; what strategy will be employed when lobbying Raleigh lawmakers; how are you going to engage the local business community; how are you going to continue to retain and attract quality faculty and staff; are you willing to cut programs and shed staff as needed; and please provide an example as to your approach to communication.

No matter what a candidate's qualifications, we don't need someone who follows lockstep with the eye-rolling insanity that has turned top institutions into echo chambers of intellectual conformity that feast on catchphrases such as diversity and multi-culturalism, but ignore their core mission — providing a quality education.

And no one wants a president who is going to play it safe by seeking the same-old/same-old paper-pushing policies.

Personally, I'm hoping for a dynamic leader, perhaps a leading politico or military type, maybe even the right type of academic, and certainly someone who is comfortable in their own skin — not someone who will burn King's Landing after enduring a contentious four-hour faculty senate debate over the price of tea in China.

It might be nice to see a president with direct ties to agriculture as that has a huge economic footprint in northeastern NC.

Most importantly, the next president should possess vision and an ability to work with others to transform our region in terms of training skilled labor, spurring economic development and revolutionizing education.

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## Opinions on wind energy shared

When NC Sen. Bob Steinburg, R-Chowan, said he had grave concerns about the constitutionality of a recent proposal to ban wind energy, we asked our readers what they think.

Steinburg takes aim at Sen. Harry Brown's bill, SB 377, which, if passed, would ban wind energy development in over 40 counties in eastern North Carolina, many of which are Tier 1 counties in desperate need of economic development and revenue.

"This is a clear violation of the personal property rights we have provided to us in the U.S. Constitution. In addition, the passage of this bill would be in direct violation of our nation's Supremacy Clause which invalidates a state law that conflicts with a federal law. Federal law is that the FAA and USDOT regulates airspace, not states," Steinburg said.

Here's how our readers responded on Facebook:

**Chris Reichle:** At some point this technology has to be developed. Its just common sense. Records use to be the method used to store information and sound now look where we are with data storage. It may be expensive right now but eventually it will develop into a way of life that will save other natural resources. Just look at what happens when we deplete oil reservoirs for example.-( <http://adventuresportsjournal.com/does-oil-drilling.../>). Keep up the hard work Bob Steinburg, and thank you for considering future generations.

**Diane Hahne Swanner:** Why? Netherlands has used them for centuries. They are not a new idea!!!

**Dana Nicholas:** He must be getting a kickback from an energy company. But legislative support is a step in the right direction.

**Barbara Epps Tuttle:** I see him



### OTHER VIEWS

as someone in NC government I can be proud of. He can see past today far into tomorrow. He cares about his children's children's children.

**Charles Wallen:** Regardless of whether or not you believe in climate change, coal and petroleum are finite resources, they WILL eventually deplete. We can either plan for that now, and in the process reduce our dependence on foreign sources without having to use fracking (which is far more harmful than wind energy), or we can keep our heads in the sand and watch the entire country go into the crapper when there's no more oil or coal to depend on. Solar alone can't replace oil/coal. Wind blows day and night, and solar storage is incredibly inefficient. So the old folks can sit down and get out of the way of progress, or you can just die off, and we'll do it after you're dead anyways.

**Teddy Chappell:** Politicians are trying to make this country go in the crapper.

**Pete Lacy:** I think he is making a bad choice supporting wind and solar. He needs to be supporting coal, gas and nuclear. Wind and solar are to high cost more per KW and we are putting tax dollars in a soon to be a dead industry.

**Steve Heller:** Wind energy is not cost efficient....ruins the appearance of the landscape.....kills birds.....no, no, no!

**Mark Byrum:** Listened to Tom and Sadie discuss this issue yesterday. They spoke about how noisy they are.

**Buck Winslow:** Yeah, that noise is awful! I much prefer being not able to breath from pollutants in the air emitted from coal plants and having Duke Energy dump their coal ash in our rivers. I also prefer dying of radiation poisoning by nuclear reactors gone bad. Just ask the folks at Chernobyl how much they like nuclear energy. Oh yeah, you can't. They all evacuated rather than die of radiation poisoning. If you don't want noise from a wind turbine, DON'T LET SOMEONE BUILD ONE ON YOUR PROPERTY!

### Advice: Town must tread lightly on STR rules

**Dear Editor,**

I have been following the correspondence between the various parties that seem to have an opinion on the Short Term Rental (STR) phenomena. Speaking as one who has embraced the concept and has found it to be nothing but delightful, I regret that it has become something to be attacked, controlled or otherwise interfered with.

However, we do live in an age when the long arm of government seems to intrude in all sorts of areas that seem to me to be very personal and nothing to do with them, or anyone else. The initial concept for Airbnb, which seems to be the best known platform, though not the only one or even the first, was to invite strangers to use a spare bedroom or guest cottage for a nominal sum.

Thus the guest was able to visit places that might not otherwise have been on their list and the owner was able to offset the cost of ownership and get the opportunity to meet some very personable and interesting people.

The pleasure in meeting these interesting people far outweighs any financial gain, and without that part of it, the Short Term Rental business would never have got off the ground. The financial gain will offset some of the ownership costs, but it will never make you rich or give you a decent income.

That said, I am talking about homeowners who rent out one property on a short-term basis. If, as is happening, people buy several properties to rent out on a short-term basis, then in my opinion, they have crossed the line from friendly homeowners to hard-nosed business people. And for that reason I am not against the town's effort to regulate and control short term rentals.

The original proposed ordinance was a bit draconian but it has been softened considerably and now, again in my opinion, is fairly reasonable. Most of the requirements are common sense safety items that any responsible owner would have provided in any case. Things like smoke detectors, fire extinguishers, liability insurance etc, are things that most landlords would have in place. So in that regard the regulations seem to me to be common sense.

One item that has not been specified is the cost of a license to operate as a STR. Provided the town/county does not make that

### READERS WRITE

anything other than a nominal sum, then I would have no difficulty in supporting their efforts.

I don't want my guests to disrupt the neighborhood, annoy my neighbors or do anything to draw attention to themselves. So far, I have succeeded in achieving this happy state. There is nothing in the proposed legislation that will assist me to do a better job, but I understand that I may not be a typical owner and that some controls need to be in place so that the odd problem can be addressed.

The STR customer is not someone who would otherwise stay at a hotel or a bed and breakfast inn, as they don't like the social aspect of sharing a dining room with strangers in the morning, not that there is anything wrong with that, but not all people are friendly first thing in the morning. So they appreciate the privacy, comfort and space that is part of the STR situation.

I am quite sure that the clients of the STRs in town add significantly to the revenue on Broad Street. Usually their first question is about our restaurants and which is best. Also having access to the local knowledge of the host occasionally leads to a purchase of a house and a new town resident.

So, I would suggest that the town treads lightly with their regulations so that they do not discourage STR owners, a shortage of which would drive away a segment of the tourists and visitors that we desperately need.

**BRIAN FITZSIMONS**  
Edenton

### Senator Steinburg tilts at windmills with analysis

**Dear Editor,**

It's clear Big Wind throws money at Tier 1 governments, which is a smokescreen to sell large-scale industrial wind energy development to struggling rural communities. It worked in Chowan County, and Bob Steinburg is still hoodwinked because all of Chowan County will be affected by the 14KM infrasound transmission range, including all downtown residences.

By knowing this I hear alarm bells listening to Bob analyze NC Bill 377, which protects military flights up to 100 miles inland from wind turbine interference. Votesmart.com reported Bob received \$1000 from Apex Clean Energy, LLC during the 2018 election cycle. The bells are ringing loudly here

because there's a 30-40% cost increase for turbine-developed energy wherever it plays out.

With a pro-wind site estimating a 300 MW wind power plant will cost \$1.3 million to \$2.2 million per MW, averaged to \$350 million, a power company or a wind developer won't enter the free market without assurances. Their costs and profits will have to be offset over the life of the Timbermill project.

Bob got \$1,000 and Chowan citizens will get a bill for \$350 million should Timbermill be developed, which is Apex/Timbermill's challenge. They're good at misdirection and ignored construction costs throughout the approval process.

With only one developer/energy company a free market doesn't really exist, even if problems exist with leases, which they do. Leaseholder's rights are suppressed because they are denied a legal voice once they sign their property over to turbine developers. State and Federal turbine energy mandates create other rights issues and diversions from more important discussions.

A far more disconcerting rights area was allowing the expansion of the original Timbermill permit. Commissioners allowed Apex to amend its initial approval rather than order a new application hearing. The amended application added transmission lines and infrastructure that only existed in the Perquimans' CUP application, not Chowan's.

Another editorial from July 25, 2018, "Windmills may affect radar transmission," suggests that we don't know squat about turbine low frequency (LF) emission, radar signal corruption or other science the military or private industry use operationally. (To test turbine problems the Federal government quickly approved the Amazon project.) USDOT and FAA permit jurisdiction are only procedural check offs, which affect flight lights and roads. They have nothing to do with the state's economic or political prosperity/fallouts that may be at play in a turbine future.

I personally don't want the federal government violating NC's authority to determine its future destiny and define anything that may affect us, given the military is the state's second largest revenue stream. I hope NC Bill 377 is designed to keep an eye turned toward the future, not some vague conspiracy. With an ounce of prevention worth a pound of cure I trust the authors of NC 377 rather than a leader bought and paid for.

**PATRICK FLYNN**  
Edenton