



For Immediate Release

Thursday, April 12, 2012

Media Contact

Lillian Leopold, Chief Public Information and Government Relations Officer
Office (619) 482-6564, Cell (619) 279-1627

Southwestern College Governing Board Seeks Litigation Legal Action Would Be Against Three Firms

CHULA VISTA – Last night the Southwestern College Governing Board voted unanimously to direct legal counsel to initiate litigation against BCA Architects, Inc., Seville Construction Services and Echo Pacific Construction to challenge the procurement of their contracts on the corner lot project for Proposition R.

In seeking this action, Southwestern College plans to seek recovery of payments on contracts entered into without compliance with public contracting laws.

“We recognize the public interest surrounding this project,” said Board President Norma Hernandez. “We also want to ensure we are fulfilling our duty to properly safeguard public funds in this project.”

The contracts, and those involved in procuring them, have been the subject of a San Diego County District Attorney’s investigation, as well as a Special Focused Review conducted by Seo Consulting for Southwestern’s general counsel. To date, the actions taken by former College employees and contractors associated with Proposition R have resulted in indictments and a guilty plea by the corner lot architect.

Proposition R consultants have resulted in indictments and a guilty plea by the corner lot architect.

Southwestern College continues to cooperate with the District Attorney’s investigation, and has implemented the recommendations of the Special Focused Review to ensure transparency and legal compliance in the procurement process.

Southwestern is suspending work on the corner lot for a year to update the College’s educational master plan and create a long-range facilities master plan that is in alignment with the College’s educational master plan. When the College recommences bidding for additional Proposition R projects—beginning in April 2013—Southwestern will accelerate the construction schedule to complete projects 10 years earlier than originally projected. This will allow students to use the facilities earlier and offer long-term cost savings for the college.

“We are elected by the community to protect the interests of students and taxpayers, and our actions reflect our commitment to these interests,” Hernandez said. “We will continue to operate in an open, forthright and transparent manner in all educational and fiscal issues at Southwestern College.”

About Southwestern College

Established in 1961, Southwestern College is the only public institution of higher education in southern San Diego County, serving approximately 400,000 residents of communities including Bonita, Chula Vista, Imperial Beach, National City, Nestor, Otay Mesa, Palm City, San Ysidro, Sunnyside and Coronado. The College District offers more than 300 associate degree and certificate options. More information at swccd.edu.

Southwestern College Office of Communications, Community and Government Relations (619) 482-6304

###