

Houston Baptist University president to retire

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By Ken Camp

Managing Editor

HOUSTON-Houston Baptist University President Doug Hodo has announced plans to retire June 30 after 19 years at the school.

Hodo, 71, noted the end of his tenure at the university's helm roughly should coincide with the completion of a capital fund-raising campaign for a cultural arts center on the Houston campus, including a chapel and museum.

Doug Hodo

"My hope and expectation is that the entire building project will be under way by spring and that we will have funding for the completion of the project in the next few months," he said.

"With the success of this major project, it's the right time to go. The university is poised to take its next steps forward, and a new president will be integral in providing that leadership. I don't see myself retiring, but

instead, reassigning my activities to a different venue.”

HBU Trustee Chairman Ray Cox characterized Hodo as “without a doubt ... the right person to lead” the school for nearly two decades.

“Because of his leadership, this institution stands strong today,” Cox said.

Cox announced a search committee has been named to seek Hodo's successor. An advisory council comprised of faculty, staff and student representatives also will be named, he added.

Members of the search committee are Chairperson Diane Williams, Bruce Belin Jr. and Stewart Morris, all from Second Baptist Church in Houston; Karl Kennard of Spring Baptist Church in Spring; Jack Carlson of Tallowood Baptist Church in Houston; Mark Denison of First Baptist Church in Gainesville; and David Stutts of Willow Meadows Baptist Church in Houston. Cox, also a member of Second Baptist Church in Houston, will serve as an ex-officio member of the committee.

Second Baptist Church in Houston and Spring Baptist Church are uniquely aligned with the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention, a group that broke away from the Baptist General Convention of Texas in 1998. Tallowood and Willow Meadows Baptist churches of Houston and First Baptist Church in Gainesville are affiliated with the BGCT.

Hodo became HBU's second president June 1, 1987, succeeding William Hinton.

During Hodo's tenure, HBU's endowment grew from \$30 million to more than \$75 million, and the school's total unrestricted revenue increased from about \$13.3 million to \$33.3 million. Value of the total university plant grew from \$19.7 million to \$37.6 million.

Also during his time as HBU president, the university took steps to loosen

its ties to the BGCT. HBU trustees voted in May 2000 to create a self-perpetuating majority on their board, rather than continuing to allow the BGCT to elect all its trustees. And three years later, HBU entered into a fraternal relationship with the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention.

Hodo earned his bachelor's degree, two master's degrees and a doctorate all from the University of Mississippi. He served on the faculty at Nicholls State University and Middle Tennessee State University before he became dean of the College of Business at the University of Texas at San Antonio, the post he held until he became HBU president.

Hodo is a member of Second Baptist Church in Houston. He and his wife, Sadie, have three children and nine grandchildren.

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