

Texas WMU committee terminates interim executive director

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By Ken Camp

Managing Editor

The executive committee of the Woman's Missionary Union of Texas board dismissed Nina Pinkston of Fort Worth as interim executive director May 8 and named newly elected President Paula Jeser of El Paso to fill the interim post on a volunteer basis.

"It was not an easy decision. It was not a decision made in a matter of minutes," Jeser said. "There was lengthy discussion. The executive committee recognized the repercussions."

Pinkston was named interim executive after Carolyn Porterfield resigned as Texas WMU executive director-treasurer in October.

Pinkston's contract was scheduled to expire July 2, but the committee decided to take immediate action, Jeser added.

"Texas WMU needs to move forward," she said.

Jeser declined any further comment, citing a need for confidentiality and nondisclosure.

Regarding a candidate to fill the executive director-treasurer's post permanently, Jeser said: "We may be closer than we think. I hope we may have someone by mid-June."

The termination came without warning, according to Pinkston. She had been scheduled to attend a retreat with the consultant-level staff May 8. When she arrived at the retreat site near Kaufman, she said, she learned the retreat had been cancelled, and she was told to call the WMU office.

When Pinkston called, she was directed to Jeser, who read to her a statement regarding the termination of her contract, she recalled.

"I'm still puzzled," she said. "All I was told was that the staff didn't want to go on the retreat, and morale was not good in the office. I was told not to come to the office, and my things would be boxed up and sent to me."

Pinkston acknowledged division among the Texas WMU staff. She also noted a perception held by some Baptist Building staff that Texas WMU was distancing itself from the BGCT and its Executive Board staff.

She particularly cited concerns by some that the BGCT Executive Board staff had been "shut out of the process this year" in determining Mary Hill Davis Offering allocations, as well as a persistent rumor that Texas WMU planned to move its offices away from the Baptist Building.

Pinkston said she met with BGCT Executive Director Randel Everett recently to offer assurances that Texas WMU wanted to continue its partnership with the BGCT.

"I had so much wanted to build bridges," she said. "WMU would cut its own throat if it separated from the BGCT."

This story will be updated as new information becomes available.

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