
The vacancies were created after Collins’ request on Friday that the board’s eight appointed members resign. By yesterday, six of the eight had said they would step down.

The governor also asked Morehead President Herb F. Reinhard to go on sabbatical until his contract expires June 30.

Collins, in a prepared statement about her appointments, said, “It is gratifying that these two men of stature who command respect across the state are willing to contribute their talents to put Morehead State University on a firm foundation.”

Breathitt, 61, a Hopkinsville native and a Democrat, served as governor from 1963 to 1967. He is now a vice president of Norfolk Southern Railway in Washington, D.C., but also maintains homes in Kentucky. He is a member of the state Council on Higher Education but will have to relinquish that post to accept the Morehead assignment.

Nunn, 61, a Republican who lost to Breathitt in 1963 but was elected governor in 1967, is a Lexington lawyer and a Barren County native.

Meanwhile, three more regents - vice chairman James Richardson of Owingsville, Forrest Skaggs of Lynch and Patricia Burchett of Paintsville - confirmed yesterday that they had resigned from the board.

Earlier, board chairman Robert "Mike" Duncan of Inez, Harry LaViers Jr. of Irvine and Eunice Caston of Winchester had announced their resignations.

The board's senior member and former chairman, Lloyd Cassity of Ashland, said he was still not sure whether he would resign.

Cassity, a board member since 1963, said that "it would be helpful" to know whether Reinhard also would
agree to Collins’ request.

But Cassity said Reinhard's decision would "in no way be a determining factor in my decision."

(Reinhard is in New Orleans for the annual convention of the National Collegiate Athletic Association and could not be reached for comment. His lawyer, John Pinney of Cincinnati, said there had been no resumption of negotiations over the president's contract.)

Cassity praised the appointment of Breathitt and Nunn as "very welcome news" that "only goes to prove that the governor was trying to be helpful."

The other holdout, regent Walter Carr of Morehead, said, "I'm not going to resign."

Carr said that Collins' call for the regents’ resignations "disturbs me greatly."

He said that he thought the board "just about had this thing licked" in its dispute with Reinhard when the governor intervened. Carr said he had received "at least 50 calls asking me not to resign."

The others on the 10-member board - faculty regent John Duncan and student regent Margaret Holt - were not affected by Collins' request because they were elected by their respective groups.

In the midst of yesterday’s events, Collins appeared to be gaining support for her action.

State Rep. Walter Blevins, D-Morehead, said he had overcome his initial opposition to Collins’ request for the board members to step down.

"If she would have asked me before, I probably would have said it wasn't a good idea," he said. "Many of the board members were my friends and they cared about the university.

"But with the governor trying to push a higher education package . . . and clouds on the horizon hanging over Morehead, a bold act was needed, and I support the governor."

Blevins called Breathitt and Nunn "two exceptional appointments."

State Rep. Roger Noe, D-Harlan, chairman of the House Education Committee, called the appointees "good management types (who) would provide some leadership wherever they go."

David Bolt of Morehead, president of the Morehead State University Alumni Association, called the two former governors "two fine, honorable men (who can) definitely provide distinctive leadership."

Dan Lacy, an Ashland Oil executive and president of the Morehead State University Foundation, the university’s fund-raising arm, said the new
appointees were "very high-level gentlemen" who were demonstrating their commitment to resolving Morehead's problems by agreeing to serve on the board.

Asked about the governor's decision to seek an entirely new board, Lacy said, "Just to start with a clean sweep, from purely a fund-raising point of view, might be positive."

David Brumagen, the president of Morehead's faculty senate, said the governor's new appointments "seem quite reassuring."

He said he had hoped that the governor would "delimit the political aspect of the board" but added that with Breathitt and Nunn, the governor had chosen men who "politically have nothing to gain or to lose."

But Brumagen said the Morehead faculty remained "extremely uncertain" about the university’s direction. He said he thought most professors supported the governor's approach in asking for the immediate departure of the appointed regents and Reinhard.

"They think a clean sweep would be a good idea," he said.

Harry M. Snyder, the executive director of the Council on Higher Education, said, "The fact that both of these former governors agreed to serve . . . and Governor Collins asked them to serve is a good indication of a brighter future at Morehead."

Both Nunn and Breathitt said yesterday that they had no preconceived notions about their approaches to Morehead's problems. Both said Collins had told them they could help the university by agreeing to serve on the board.

"It appears to me that Morehead has serious problems," Nunn said. "I think it needs the attention of individuals who have no bias or predetermined ideas about the problems or how they should be solved."

Breathitt said he wanted "to help where I can be of most help" but added that it would be "premature" to discuss any specifics about the Morehead situation.

Regents Richardson and Skaggs said they complied with Collins' request because she was the state's chief executive.

Richardson noted that "time is of the essence" and said, "If she wants to get a new board, maybe we should let her get started now."

Mrs. Burchett said she had resigned with "deepest regret." She said a new board "will have to solve the same problem we were facing," which she said was "first and foremost" service to its immediate area.
Mrs. Burchett said that "Morehead State needs new blood but not at the expense of old friends."

She also said that she resented the implication of a Lexington Herald-Leader editorial that "I was a weak member. Politics and the good old boy system never once entered into any decision I made."

Collins Cabinet Secretary Larry Hayes said the governor would continue to fill the other vacancies in the next few days. He also called on Reinhard to agree to take a sabbatical to "let new leadership chart the course" for Morehead.

The Morehead board has refused to renew Reinhard's contract. The board has offered to pay Reinhard $60,000 for the remainder of his contract and benefits if he will go on leave until his pact expires.

A source told the Herald-Leader last week that Reinhard had demanded a $100,000 settlement, though other sources said the president dropped his asking price to $90,000. But negotiations have remained stalled, and Collins took her action last week in the face of projections that Morehead could face a potential $1.7 million deficit in its 1986-87 fiscal year unless administrative action is taken to cut the budget.