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It's Mabry for Middlesex

By Grant Welker, gwelker@lowellsun.com

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BOSTON -- James Mabry was confirmed as the new Middlesex Community College president by the state Board of Higher Education Tuesday. The vote was unanimous.

Mabry, the vice president of academic affairs for Mesa Community College in Arizona, was chosen unanimously by the Middlesex board of trustees last week. The board had already been authorized to enter into contract negotiations with Mabry.

Trustees praised his credentials, experience and attitude, with several applauding how student-focused he sounded in interviews.

The Upstate New York native will replace Carole Cowan, the college's president since 1990. Cowan plans to remain with the school as a board member for the college foundation, for which she will also volunteer.

"I have big shoes to fill" replacing Cowan, Mabry said, adding that they've talked regularly and plan to continue doing so. "She'll be a huge asset."

Mabry's tentative start date is Feb. 16.

After having lived in New York, London and Tokyo, "its culturally more at home for me" being back in the Northeast, he said.

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James Mabry, third from left, was unanimously ratified as Middlesex Community College's new president Tuesday by the state Board of Higher Education. (Photo by Grant Welker).

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