Ex-bank CFO to lead Children's Museum

Hummers to serve as interim president

By Amy Clarke
Staff Writer
aclarke@greenvilleonline.com

Longtime South Financial Group Chief Financial Officer Bill Hummers has been tapped to lead the Children's Museum of the Upstate as the interim president and chief executive officer.


Hummers

Hummers will take the place of Mary Sellers, who this week stepped down from the post she has held since July 2010.

Hummers has lived in Greenville for most of the last 40 years, working in banking for Southern Bank, First Union and Carolina First. He retired in 2006 and got interested in the Children's Museum near the time of its July 2009 opening.

"Grandchildren make you do things," Hummer said of his early interest in the museum, the board of which he has served on for more than two years.

Michelle Seaver, chairman of the museum's board, said the board sought specific characteristics for an interim leader, including a strong financial background, ties to the community and familiarity with the museum.

"He's the perfect person to bridge the gap in time for us. He gives us instant credibility in the community because he is so well respected already and has already proven himself," she said.

Though the museum's attendance has stayed strong since its opening, welcoming more than 150,000 visitors last year, Seaver said corporate giving has fallen off in the last year.

Seaver and Hummers both believe he can play a vital role in securing funding to maintain the more than $2 million annual budget and keep the museum's balance sheet strong.

The Children's Museum receives very little public funding and relies almost entirely on admission fees and other revenue and contributions to keep its doors open.

"Part of where I can help the most is open doors in order to get in and talk to different corporations," Hummers said.

The museum board is currently forming a search committee to find a permanent replacement.