In a week’s time, Jim Huckestein will spend his last day on the job at Linn-Benton Community College. As he travels up the road to Clackamas Community College to assume duties there as the vice president for college services, he says he’ll take with him the friendships and memories of 22 years of service to LBCC.

“I’ve been at one place for a very long time, and it seemed like the time to do something different before I retire,” Huckestein said this week in an interview from his LBCC office. Next Friday, Jan. 31, will be his last day in that office.

On the next Monday, Feb. 3, he’ll start his work at Clackamas, where some of his duties will be similar to those he performed as LBCC’s vice president for finance and operations.

Huckestein, 56, came to LBCC from the Oregon Department of Forestry, where he had been a general accountant. Initially, he was hired at LBCC in 1992 to help install new software.

“It was a job grant that was only supposed to be for six months,” Huckestein said.

He stayed much longer. In 2008, he joined the administrative staff, replacing Mike Holland.

From those first days in 2008, change has been constant.

“Things were a lot more stable with funding before I got the job. Resources were steadier,” Huckestein said. “In the last few years, there has been a lot of volatility.”

Huckestein has been a main force in creating LBCC’s annual budget.

“As the state began to disinvest in the community colleges, we had to make decisions to retain programs,” Huckestein said.

Those decisions included cutting other programs and raising tuition, two steps Huckestein said the college would have liked to have avoided. He said the important thing became looking to the future and building up reserves.

And taking the long view is essential, he said: “You have to look at it knowing that good times and bad times are only temporary.”

Despite the budget struggles, Huckestein said he will remember LBCC’s accomplishments
during his tenure. He pointed to the new science building in Albany and the Advanced Transportation Technology Center in Lebanon.

LBCC President Greg Hamann said Huckestein always has had a keen sense of commitment to the purposes served by the college’s fiscal resources.

“He’s never been one to simply keep track of revenues and expenses. He’s been a leader in making conscious, effective and ethical connections between the resources we are given and the benefits we provide,” Hamann said.

“It would be impossible to overemphasize the importance of Jim’s leadership,” Hamann said. “He made it possible for us to dream, plan and change without the fear of going over some sort of ‘fiscal cliff.’”

LBCC is searching for a replacement.

The toughest part about leaving for Huckestein will be saying goodbye to the many friends he has made.

“This is a people place,” he said of LBCC. “It’s all about the people: ... students, staff, everyone. I’ll miss that.”

Huckestein will find a place in the Portland area but plans to retain his home in Albany to be able to stay close to his grandchildren.

Huckestein, who grew up in Astoria and graduated from Oregon State University, said he plans to stay in touch.

“Community colleges are a tight-knit group,” he said. “I expect to still see the many friends I have here.”

**Jim Huckestein**

**Age:** 56

**Current job:** Linn-Benton Community College vice president for finance and operations.

**New job:** Clackamas Community College vice president for college services.

**No rest:** Huckestein’s last day at LBCC is Friday, Jan. 31. His first day of work at Clackamas is Monday, Feb. 3.

**On the resume:** Huckestein previously worked as a general accountant for the Oregon Department of Forestry. He was first hired at LBCC in 1992 to help install new software; the job was expected to last only six months.