



**Board of Regents Regular Meeting
Monday, April 26, 2021
Online via Zoom
New Mexico Tech, Socorro, N.M.**

Zoom Webinar

MINUTES

The New Mexico Tech Board of Regents convened at 1:15 p.m. Monday, April 26, 2021, with Regent Chair Deborah Peacock presiding. Board members present were: Jerry Armijo, Dr. Dave Lepre Sr., Dr. Yolanda King, and Veronica Espinoza. Other university administrators, staff, and guests included:

Stephen Wells
Vanessa Grain
Juliann Ulibarri
Cleve McDaniel
Peter Phaiah
Doug Wells
Van Romero

Michael Hargather
Colleen Foster
Nelia Dunbar
Mark Adams
Robert Balch
Dave Lepre
David Manzano

Thom Guengerich
Henry Prager
Quincy Bradfield

1. **Call to Order.** Regent Peacock called the meeting to order at 1:15 p.m. She announced that the meeting was a regular meeting and would also be streamed via Zoom webinar. She explained all votes would be roll-call votes since the Board was convening remotely.
 - a) **Proof of Meeting Notice.** Ms. Grain confirmed that legal notices were placed in the *Albuquerque Journal* and *El Defensor Chieftain*.
2. **Approval of Agenda.** Regent King moved to approve the agenda. Regent Lepre Sr. seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by roll call vote.
3. **Public Comment.**
 - a) None
4. **Welcome Reappointed and New Regents.** Regent Peacock officially welcomed reappointed Regents Jerry Armijo and Veronica Espinoza as well as newly appointed Regent Dr. David Lepre, Sr.

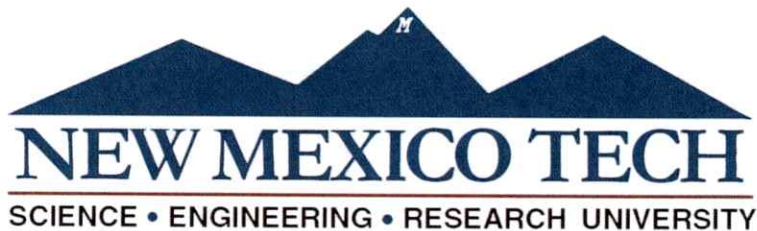
5. Recurring Reports.

Prior to the recurring reports, President Wells updated the Board about a car accident that resulted in injuries to four NMT students.

- a) **SGA President, Mr. Quincy Bradfield.** Mr. Bradfield said many activities at Spring Fling were truncated due to reverting to Yellow CV19 status, but it was a success.
- b) **GSA President, Mr. Henry Prager.** Mr. Prager said the GSA Interdisciplinary Symposium was a success and is available to watch online. He said the GSA is selecting a new slate of officers, and he expects to introduce his successor at the May 2021 meeting.
- c) **Office of Student Life, AVP Dr. Peter Phaiah.** AVP Phaiah offered a showcase of the Office of Disability Services. He presented a new brochure and gave a detailed explanation of the services available.
- d) **Office of Academic Affairs, VP Dr. Doug Wells.** VP Wells presented the monthly Admission Office report. He said NMT is on track to have 330 new students in the fall. He has set a goal of 350. VP Wells expects to see 113 new graduate students in the fall.
- e) **Office of Administration and Finance, VP Dr. Cleve McDaniel.** VP McDaniel provided a report of Capital Projects and summarized the report. He said the Jones Hall renovation is nearing completion with minor punch-list items being resolved. His team is working on a move-in plan for the summer. The Deju house will have the foundation poured the following week. The construction plan now includes upgraded infrastructure for electronics to accommodate future capability. He said there were no substantive updates on the following projects: Brown Hall, Energy Audit, PRRC Renovation, and Bursum House.
- f) **Office of Research, VP Dr. Van Romero.** VP Romero first offered a correction, saying that the Department of Homeland Security is offering \$37 million to create a new Center of Excellence (not \$70 million). He said Los Alamos National Labs is bringing a new facility to the NMT campus, and it will occupy the former Aerojet building. LANL will pay for any modifications, upgrades, and recertification that might be necessary. VP Romero reported that the State of New Mexico has asked NMT to conduct an “after-action” report on COVID-19. NMT’s bid was over the budgeted amount, but the State still wants NMT to complete the study. He also said the First Responder program, which had restarted classes in Playas, is now also back up and running in Socorro after a yearlong hiatus.
- g) **Office of Advancement, Director Colleen Foster.** Director Foster presented a monthly report on giving, which showed a YTD figure of \$2.2 million, up from \$1.8 million in 2020. She announced that NMT has a new pledge for a \$5 million donation, which will be delivered in \$1 million increments over five years. She said the donor is creating an endowed chair in the Computer Science and Engineering Department, offering stipends for Masters of Science for Teachers students, and, in general, supporting programs that

make STEM education available to all learners. She said the donation will also fund a weeklong summer program for middle school students, high school students, and MST students, all with the goal increasing accessibility of computer science education and programs. Dr. Lorie Liebrock, Dr. Sharon Sessions, and Dr. Megha Khandewal will spearhead the summer program. Director Foster said the Advancement team will resume travel in May. They are also planning in-person events, including the President's Golf Tournament, the President's Dinner, and other events in addition to virtual events.

- h) **NM Bureau of Geology, Director Dr. Nelia Dunbar.** Director Dunbar said the federally-funded STATE MAP program was funded at \$600,000 for the next fiscal year, an increase from the typical \$150,000 per year. She said the new "Postcards from the Field" is a new online feature that highlights images from field research sites around New Mexico. The new project has reached more than 40,000 views and 6,000 engagements. Director Dunbar reported that the Bright Star scholarship program raised \$20,000 from 26 donors, doubling the goal of \$10,000.
- i) **PRRC, Director Dr. Bob Balch.** Director Balch reported that NMT has submitted a proposal to the Department of Energy to study rare earth elements in coal beds in the San Juan Basin. He said Dr. Navid Mojtabai of the Mineral Engineering Department is the P.I.; co-P.I.'s are Dr. William Anmopah (PRRC) and Dr. Virginia McLemore (Bureau). Chair Peacock asked Director Balch about negative carbon funding being offered by XPrize. Director Balch said much of the PRRC's work involves carbon storage, which is an integral part of the carbon-negative strategy.
- j) **Human Resources, Director JoAnn Salome.** Director Salome reported that the campus is transitioning from remote-work plans to hybrid work plans as it moves back to on-campus work plans. She said NMT is aiming to have the workforce operating fully on-campus by July 1.
- k) **Faculty Senate, President Dr. Michael Hargather.** Dr. Hargather reported that the Faculty Senate has approved NMT's first-ever Bachelors of Arts offering in the Psychology Department. He said the Faculty Senate will meet on May 4 and consider new bachelors of arts degrees in management and in geology.
- l) **Office of Marketing & Communication, Director Dave Lepre Jr.** Director Lepre said Albuquerque media outlets have aired reports on an NMT student rocket launch, the NMT rugby team, and a NASA intern from NMT. He said the iHeart media ad campaign was such a success that iHeart media has asked to use the NMT campaign as an example of effective advertising. The campaign is nearing its goal of 750,000 impressions, with 16,000 prospective students and/or parents visiting the NMT website.
- m) **Office of Government Affairs, Director Dave Manzano.** Director Manzano offered highlights of the state budget that relate to higher education. He said the State is bolstering the Lottery Scholarship fund with a non-recurring funding of \$15.5 million, which will fund 90 percent of tuition. He said the state has provided \$1 million to HED for mental health and suicide prevention, \$5 million for endowments, and 1.5 percent



for compensation increases. For NMT, the budget includes a 4.2 percent budget increase for a total for \$39.5 million. The MESA program might move back to NMT.

The capital outlay for a severance tax bond will provide \$2.52 million for infrastructure improvements. NMT's request for funding of a new fiber optics loop was part of the Governor's \$133 million initiative for broadband improvements across the state.

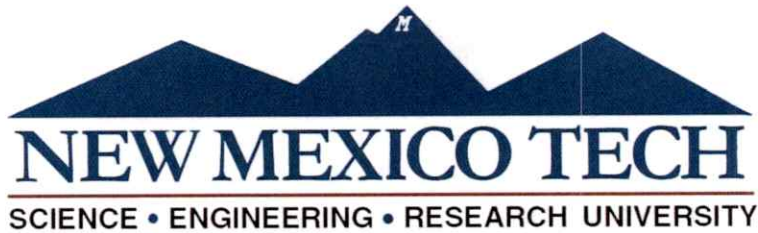
- n) **Office of the President, Dr. Stephen Wells.** President Wells offered updates on new cases of COVID-19 and an update on 2021 commencement planning.

6. Information Items

- a) **NMT Foundation Update.** Regent Armijo provided an update on the Foundation's investment structure.
- b) **NMT University Research Park Corp Updates.** Regent King said there would be no report.
- c) **Degree Conferrals for February 2021.** The Board acknowledged the February 2021 graduation list.

7. Action Items.

- a) **Approval of March 5, 2021, Minutes.** Regent King moved approval. Regent Armijo seconded. The motion was approved unanimously by roll call vote.
- b) **Approval of the NMT Resilient Plan 6.0.** President Wells and Vanessa Grain reviewed the key changes made to the plan, which details university operations under the COVID-19 pandemic. Regent King moved approval. Regent Espinoza seconded. The motion was approved unanimously by roll call vote.
- c) **Approval of Resolution on Security Managerial Group Resolution.** Regent Armijo moved approval. Regent King seconded. The motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.
- d) **Approval of Tenure and Promotion Recommendations.** This agenda item was moved to executive session for personnel discussion only.
- e) **Approval of Unrestricted BAR #2.** VP McDaniel presented the documentation and offered a summary of the memo. Regent Armijo moved approval. Regent King seconded. The motion was approved unanimously by roll call vote.
- f) **Approval of Restricted BAR #1.** VP McDaniel presented documentation and summarized the memo. Regent King moved approval. Regent Espinoza seconded. The motion was approved unanimously by roll call vote.
- g) **Approval of FY22 Operating Budget.** VP McDaniel mentioned highlights of the budget documents presented to the Board of Regents. Chair Peacock noted that NMT budget does not include any increases in tuition next year, and VP McDaniel said that we made the decision in recognition of the financial impacts of the pandemic to our students and their families. Regent Armijo moved approval. Regent King seconded. The motion was approved unanimously by roll call vote.



- h) **Approval of NMHED Qtr. Certification as of 3/31/21.** Regent King moved approval. Regent Armijo seconded. The motion was approved unanimously by roll call vote.

8. Individual Board Member Comments.

- a) None

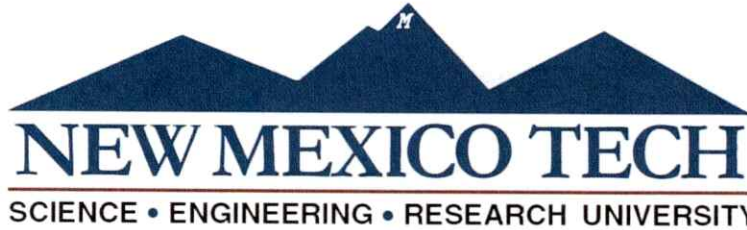
9. New Business.

- a) The next meeting will be at 1 p.m. Friday, May 7, with an abbreviated agenda. Regents Retreat will be a one-day retreat in August in northern New Mexico – either August 13, 20, or 27. Chair Peacock asked board members to recommend discussion topics for the retreat.

- 10. Executive Session.** NMSA 1978, Sec.10-15-1 (H)(2), (If required to Consider Legal or Personnel Matters). On a motion by Regent King and a second from Regent Lepre Sr., the Board unanimously adjourned its regular session at 3:16 p.m. to meet in executive session under a roll-call vote of the Regents.

- 11. Reconvene in open session and take final action, if any, on such limited personnel matters which shall be acted upon in open session following conclusion of the closed session.** The meeting reconvened at 5:25 p.m. with the Chair announcing that no action had been taken and only legal and personnel items were discussed. Regent Armijo moved and Regent King seconded to reconvene. Approval was unanimous by roll-call vote.

- a) Regent Espinoza moved to approve the list of five faculty for tenure and promotion for Dr. Ben Duval, Dept. of Biology; Dr. Sanchari Chowdury, Dept. of Chemical Engineering; Dr. Yulia Mikhailova, Dept. of CLASS; Dr. Praveen Patidar, Dept. of Chemistry; Dr. Stewart Thompson, Dept. of CLASS; Regent Espinoza also moved to approve the list of 5 faculty for promotion for Dr. Corey LeClerc, Dept. of Chemical Engineering; Dr. Tan Nguyen, Dept. of Petroleum Engineering; Dr. Dongwan Shin, Dept. of Computer Science & Engineering; Dr. Steve Simpson, Dept. of CLASS; and Dr. Jun Zheng, Dept. of Computer Science & Engineering. In her motion, Regent Epinoza listed one new hire as Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dr. Michael Jackson, Dept. of Physics, who also was approved for tenure. Regent Armijo seconded the motion. Approval was unanimous by roll-call vote.



12. Adjournment. Regent Armijo moved to adjourn at 5:25 p.m. Regent King seconded the motion. The board unanimously approved the motion by roll-call vote.

President

Attest:

Secretary- Treasurer