

Board of Regents Regular Meeting

Friday, June 7, 2024

1:00 pm

Macey Center Galena Ballroom

NMT Main Campus

MINUTES

The New Mexico Tech Board of Regents convened at 1:00 pm on Friday, June 7, 2024, with Chair Regent Jerry Armijo presiding. Board members present were Dr. David Lepre, Dr. Yolanda Jones King, Dr. Srinivas Mukkamala (via Zoom) and Adrian Salustri. Other University administrators, staff and guests included President Mahyar Amouzegar, Vanessa Grain, Patricia Landavazo, Dr. Michael Jackson, Dr. Michael Doyle, Dr. Van Romero, Dr. David Greene, Richard Cervantes, Dr. Rick Thompson, Dr. Michael Timmons, Dr. Jennifer Raney, Dr. Brian Borchers, Alex Garcia, Jenny Ma, Emma Aafloy, Valentina Avramidi, Donna Essel, Zohreh Motlagh, Mercy Ajigah, Rashedul Chowdury, Tammy Roof, Jay Cox, Gloria Gutierrez-Anaya; and Mark Adams (via Zoom).

1. Call to Order. Regent Chair Armijo called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm.

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 Lepre moved to approve the agenda. Regent King seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

3. Public Comment. In lieu of public comment and on behalf of PRRC Director Dr. Robert Balch, Associate PRRC Director Dr. Jennifer Raney delivered a memorial tribute to Leonard Garcia, a highly respected PRRC staff member who passed away on May 15, 2024 in Albuquerque. Even after he officially retired, Mr. Garcia remained with the research division on quarter-time for many years. While at PRRC, he contributed valuable intellectual property; and, as part of this work, headed senior design groups. He was a tinkerer and innovator who tackled issues head-on. Mr. Garcia was recognized as a mentor who enjoyed working with students, a natural-born teacher and organizer. On the personal side, he never passed up an opportunity to enjoy chicken wings; and, above all, he treasured his family, community and his career.

4. Information Items.

a) GSA Updates. GSA President Donna Essel presented her executive team as committed to advancing the interests and welfare of NMT's graduate community; They introduced themselves, gave their home countries and degree goals: Vice President Zohreh Kazemi Motlagh, Iran, Mineral Engineering Ph.D.; Events Officer Mercy Ike Ajigah, Nigeria, Environmental Engineering MS; and Grants Officer Rashedul Chowdury, Bangladesh, Materials Engineering MS. Chair Armijo thanked the team for attending the meeting, adding that the Board is looking forward to working with them.

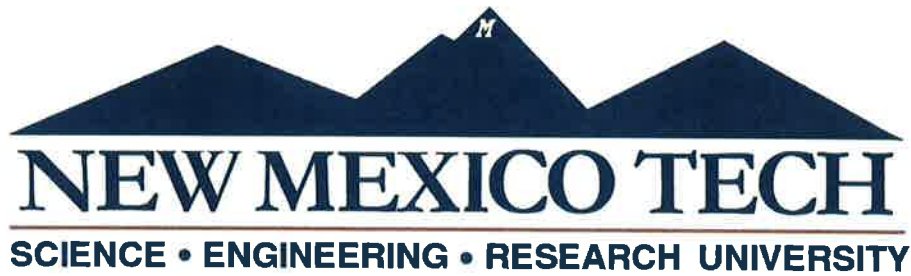
- b) **Regents Faculty Conference Report.** On behalf of the Faculty Senate, Dr. Borchers presented results of the 2024 Faculty Survey which asked faculty to prioritize a list of six topics from most to least important: Faculty Issues, University Governance, Graduate Student Issues, Undergraduate Student Issues, Undergraduate Recruitment and Retention, and Quality of Life in Socorro. Of the 60 survey respondents, 29 cited Faculty Issues as most important, with salaries ranked first by 43 respondents. Second most important was Undergraduate Recruitment and Retention; third, University Governance. Quality of Life in Socorro was last. Dr. Borchers reported that a lot of faculty searches fail because of salary issues. Among other concerns are admission standards, insufficient efforts in recruiting out-of-state students and the effects of a decade of declining enrollment which could affect the long-term stability of the Institute. Under the topic of University Governance, top faculty concerns were administrative division so long that there is budget transparency. Regents have the full report in their meeting packets.

A lengthy discussion followed, touching on issues of student services; a need for additional counselors/advisors; lack of student health insurance, especially challenging to international grad students; affordable housing; food insecurity; issues related to faculty retention; the current 80/20 split among in-state and out-of-state students, and others. Many of the issues are driven by declining enrollment, and the past three years have been more challenging and complex than anticipated, noted Chair Armijo. He thanked everyone for their suggestions, offering assurance that the Board will address them. The Chair also expressed confidence that the enrollment issue will turn around. Dr. King asked Dr. Borchers to thank his committee for their hard work.

5. Regent Committee Reports.

- a) **NMT Foundation Updates.** Regent Armijo. The next Foundation meeting is on Friday, June 14.
- b) **NMT Univ. Research Park Corp. Updates.** Regent King reported that the Research Park Board will meet on June 28 for a strategic planning session plus a regular Board Meeting.
- c) **NM HERC Updates.** No report.
- d) **NMT Finance Subcmte/Legislative Updates.** Regent Lepre reported on plans to bring to campus the HED's funding formula consultant to speak on several topics for a better understanding of how State Instruction and General dollars flow relative to shifting enrollments and degree production.
- e) **NMT Research Subcmte,** Regent Mukkamala. Dr. Mukkamala reported taking advantage of several opportunities to promote NMT to high-level government officials in Washington, D.C., to make them aware of the University's unique research profile, including a planned visit to campus.
- f) **NMT Student Updates.** No report.

6. **Consent Items,** Chair Armijo. The Chair explained that items 6 a-f) are typically addressed at meetings, but rather than go through them individually, he noted that Regents already have read the




information in their packets. Dr. Jackson and Mr. Cervantes declined an opportunity to expand on them. Regent King moved for approval of the consent agenda as presented. Regent Salustri seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

- a) **Sabbatical Notifications.** VP Jackson
- b) **Information Security Update.** VP Cervantes
- c) **Restricted Fund Purchase Notifications >\$100k.** VP Cervantes
- d) **Approval of Resolution to Update NMT Bank Investment Accounts.** VP Cervantes
- e) **Approval of Resolution for NMDOT.** VP Cervantes
- f) **Approval of NMHED Quarterly Certification for 03/31/24.** VP Cervantes

7. Action Items.

- a) **Approval of April 29, 2024 Minutes.** Regent King moved for approval. Regent Mukkamala seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.
- b) **Approval of Emeritus Status for Dr. Matthew Heizler.** In requesting that Regents approve Emeritus Status for Dr. Heizler, Bureau Director Timmons highlighted Dr. Heizler's 30-year career as an argon geochronologist researcher, including establishing with a Bureau colleague the esteemed New Mexico Geochronology Research Laboratory. Noted for his research, mentorship and leadership, Dr. Heizler was honored with New Mexico Tech's 2022 Outstanding Researcher Award. He will retire from the Bureau at the end of June. Regent King moved for approval. Regent Salustri seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.
- c) **Approval of Unrestricted Fund Purchase >\$250k for Franken Construction and EBSCO.** VP Cervantes requested that Regents authorize a \$797k award to Franken Construction to replace faulty flooring on the second and third floors of Torres Hall. He noted that NMT did receive some insurance money to augment replacement costs, 60 percent from Auxiliaries and 40 percent in unrestricted funds from administration. Regent Salustri moved for approval. Regent King seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. Regents also authorized a \$288k award to EBSCO for the Skeen Library on a motion by Regent King and a second by Regent Salustri. The motion passed unanimously.
- d) **Approval of NMHED Capital Project Transmittal Sheets for PRTC Comm. Tower and Shelter.** VP Cervantes explained that even though the PRTC project will be federally funded, it requires HED approval. He asked the Board to authorize the administration to submit the transmittal sheets to HED. Regent King so moved, followed by a second from Regent Salustri. The motion passed unanimously.
- e) **Approval of Amended NMTURPC MOU.** Chair Armijo, said President Amouzegar agreed to his suggestion to present to the Research Park a draft MOU. The Research Park Board will have come back with suggestions or revisions. Regent King said the issue will be addressed at the June 28 meeting, and moved to transmit the draft MOU to the appropriate parties. Regent Salustri seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

8. Individual Board Member Comments. Regent Lepre expressed his appreciation to the New



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Mexico Tech community for reaching out with their condolences following his recent loss. In response to her query, Regent King was told that the Statewide Educational Network or SEN now has broadband high-speed Internet access. NMT has been a critical part of that progress. She will also contact the Governor's office to schedule a visit to campus, along with Melanie Kenderdine, newly appointed NM Secretary for Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources.

9. **New Business.** Chair Armijo announced that the Regents' Retreat is tentatively scheduled for the second week of August.
10. **Executive Session.** NMSA 1978, Sec. 10-15-1 (H) (2), (If Required to Consider Legal and/or Personnel Matters). None.
11. **Reconvene in open session and take final action, if any, on such limited legal and/or personnel matters which shall be acted upon in open session following conclusion of the closed session.** N/A.
12. **Adjournment.** Regent King moved to adjourn the meeting at 1:43 pm. Regent Mukkamala seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.



President

Attest:



Secretary- Treasurer