



### **Board of Regents Regular Meeting**

***Monday, September 15, 2025  
9:00 am  
NMT Main Campus, Fidel Ballroom***

### **MINUTES**

1. **Call to Order.** Regent Chair Dr. David Lepre Sr. called the meeting to order at 9:00 am and recognized other Regents attending: Dr. Yolanda Jones King, Board Secretary/Treasurer; Regent Jerry Armijo, Dr. Srinivas Mukkamala, and Regent Cody Johnston.

University administration was represented by Acting President Michael Jackson, Vice Presidents Delilah Walsh, Lique Coolen, and David Greene. Other attendees included Mike Timmons, Robert Balch, Colleen Foster, JoAnn Salome, Sandi Lucero, Brandon Boulter, David Manzano, and Vanessa Grain, and Attorney Jenica Jacobi along with various guest attendees in person and on Zoom.

- a) **Proof of Meeting Notice.** Ms. Vanessa 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 with the following change: Under 7) **Action Items:** moving 7) e through 7) k to follow the Executive Session. Regent Cody Johnston seconded the motion, and the motion passed.
3. **Public Comment.** None.
4. **Regent Committee Reports.**
  - a) **NMT Foundation Updates.** Regent Jerry Armijo reported that no meeting was held and he didn't have anything to report at this time. The next Foundation meeting would be held in October.
  - b) **Regent Enrollment Subcommittee.** Regent Armijo reported that the subcommittee has met twice, adding that its membership is well represented among faculty, students and staff along with Regent Johnston and himself. The plan going forward is to meet monthly throughout the academic year. Enrollment is still down and until data indicate otherwise, the committee will keep working. The ability to hire and retain critical staff in key offices has been

an issue, noted Regent Armijo, adding that it will take staff across the board to turn enrollment around.

- c) **NMT Univ. Research Park Corp. Updates.** Regent King reported that the RPC has focused on strategic planning for the past year, with some changes on the board. Officers reviewed the patent investment portfolio to assess the board's future direction. Regent King announced that NMT's OIC Executive Director, Dr. Myrriah Tomar has resigned.
- d) **NM HERC Updates.** Regent King reported that HERC has meeting planned, and that Regent Chair Michael A. Martin of Northern NM Community College has been very active. Discussion with HED has focused on the mandated training; an upcoming meeting with CUP Director Marc Saavedra will consider Legislative priorities.
- e) **Regent Finance Subcmte/Legislative Updates.** Chair Lepre reported that thus far, the state has a projected General Fund revenue increase of \$480 million, balanced against backfilling for the anticipated loss of federal funding in key areas. The Legislature continues to be supportive, noting the importance of having NMT's Legislative team prepared for the 2026 session. The Chair reported a one-on-one meeting with VP Walsh in catching up on events since spring. The Subcommittee will meet again in October or November, and incorporate that discussion into the full Board meeting Nov. 21.
- f) **Regent Research Subcmte.** Regent Mukkamala met with VP Coolen to rank and compare RPSP's, taking a weighted approach. With guidance from President Jackson, they looked at project impact, activities and took a broader macro view regarding federal funding as well. Regent Mukkamala has asked VP Coolen to prepare a brief summary on the ranking methodology used. Chair Lepre noted that with additional one-time funds available, the Legislature has been more open to expanding current projects and supporting new initiatives.
- g) **Student Updates.** Regent Johnston reported attending a statewide leadership meeting in July and building relationships. He stated that the focus is at the SGA level. Johnston said he stepped in until SGA representation was onboard.

## 5. Info Items.

- a) **SGA Update.** President Ella Hooks reported filling all primary staff positions and implementing across-the-board training to ensure staff understand their responsibilities. Greater freshman participation is needed, such as at *Paydirt*; and fewer student clubs are projected, between 30 and 40, compared with 54 last year. SGA is planning another election for senators and representatives as well as more freshman-oriented events. It was noted that KTEC, a studio media group, will be offered as a paid position to continue its legacy – and an SGA open house is planned for Parents and Family Weekend. Ms. Hooks was recognized for her entertaining presentation. The Board affirmed its interest in all areas that affect students.
- b) **GSA Update.** President Imtiaz Ahmed. No report.

- c) **Faculty Senate Update.** Chair Dr. Linda DeVeaux took the opportunity to thank Chair Lepre for addressing the Faculty Senate at their last meeting, saying it was much appreciated. Chair Lepre said he'd be happy to attend future meetings.
- d) **Enrollment Update.** AVP Brandon Boulter reported official enrollment numbers as of the Sept. 12 census as given to both state and federal agencies. Numbers are down for new, transfer, and returning students for a total loss of 79 undergrad degree-seeking students, or 8 percent. Graduate enrollment is up slightly. The retention rate for first-time, full-time students returning for the second semester is 84.9 percent, for both male and female students. One of the retention challenges is few students coming in Calculus I-ready, which he specifically called a state issue, because Algebra I is no longer a graduation requirement in New Mexico. Chair Lepre shared results of a study that showed college completion rates were not based on ethnicity, financial need, first generation or gender, but were tightly correlated on the rigor of the academic program in high school. Other factors raised during discussion were how best to reach students through social media, engaging high school counselors, eSports, Exploration Day, and overnight experiences.
- e) **Update on the State Investment Council Allocation.** VP Walsh explained that even with the volatility of the global and international markets, U.S. markets had strong index returns, so the university did have an overall portfolio net increase in its market value for June. Regent Armijo added that Tech's investment with SIC is incredible for a school of its size – and projections that New Mexico is to be independent of oil revenues by the year 2037. Among the endowments managed by the SIC, is a higher education fund intended to provide free or reduced tuition to New Mexico students in perpetuity. Regent Armijo noted that his vision is for NMT to reach an endowment value of \$1 billion, allowing the university to be financially independent in perpetuity, a goal VP Walsh agreed was possible as long as NMT is conservative, careful and responsible.
- f) **FY25 Qtr. Financial Report as of 06/30/25.** VP Walsh referred Regents to the complete report in their packets, noting that as a good financial indicator, the Institute's net position is up 30 percent, liabilities decreased by 3 percent and NMT has healthy reserves, capital and research balances. However, Tech has cost-sharing obligations with its federal grant funds, and liabilities, such as employee retirement benefits. VP Walsh and staff are devising a plan to move those reserves and show internal encumbrance. She advised to continue leveraging state relationships for continued funding, citing the need for additional support for Auxiliary Services to address deferred maintenance – an issue across the state, not just at NMT. VP Walsh noted that NMT simply does not have the economies of scale that UNM and NMSU have when it comes to auxiliary services. There followed a discussion on expenses related to academic support, such as professional journals, and the need to do what's best for researchers. VP Walsh in her report detailed revenues and expenditures, how I&G expenditures are allocated, and the need to find efficiencies.

**g) Special Appropriation Submissions.** VP Walsh explained the methodology in ranking the special appropriation requests as conducted by the President and Cabinet, and listed the top three: 1) \$3.6 million to continue the ERP upgrade with the Banner SAAS system to cover the final 18 months of implementation costs; 2) \$1.33 million for public safety equipment and technical upgrades to ensure campus safety corridors and to purchase more blue light boxes and cameras; 3) \$1.5 million to develop a master plan for all university-owned facilities, from housing and classroom needs to facility needs – even irrigation and landscaping plans. Chair Lepre commended the Cabinets for their work, adding that he would like to broaden the discussion through the subcommittee. VP Walsh suggested pre-planning with the Board in early July to be more strategic about tasks.

**h) President's Updates.** President Michael Jackson reported three updates on his activities: With assistance from David Manzano, meeting with six members of the LFC Committee and their analysts, as well as the HED secretary. Ms. Grain will prepare a summary of these interactions to share with the Board, and many are forthcoming. Regent Mukkamala has arranged meetings with key state and federal leaders and other New Mexico Legislative representatives, focusing on the varying needs of NMT. In alignment with the Strategic Enrollment Management Committee, President Jackson has asked the Office of Admission to develop a timetable showing their activities/events. His recent appearance at the NMT State Fair was less about recruitment than about making people aware that New Mexico Tech exists. In doing so the President encountered alumni, parents of alumni, and relatives of current students. Dr. Jackson also recognized the presence of Mechanical Engineering faculty and students, and Admission. He cited the need to identify short- and long-term areas of improvement and maintain critical staffing in Student Affairs offices such as Marketing & Communications, to do a better job of telling NMT's story. As such, President Jackson cited Myth Busters shooting a commercial at EMRTC, and the opportunity to film a clip with former host Kari Byron for use on social media. Finally, both the Extended Cabinet and Executive Cabinet are meeting monthly to keep up-to-date and maintain campus communications.

## **6. Consent Items.**

**a) Degree Conferrals.** President Jackson

**b) Resolutions for Property Disposition.** VP Walsh

**c) NMHED Endowment Report.** VP Walsh

**d) Unrestricted Fund Purchase >\$300k.** VP Walsh

NM Office of the State Engineer/Interstate Stream Commission

Regent King moved to approve Consent Items a) through d). Regent Johnston seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**7. Action Items.**

- a) **Approval of Minutes for July 21, August 6 and August 25, 2025.** Regent King moved to approve the three sets of Minutes, with minor changes. Regent Johnston seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- b) **NMHED FY27 Research and Public Service Projects (RPSP's) Ranking and Funding Requests.** VP Walsh noted that RPSP requests are due today (Sept. 15, 2025) for 13 existing programs and one new program. Total funding request for FY27 is \$19 million, an increase from the \$16 million approved for FY26. Many of the programs are housed at NMT, but serve the entire state. Rankings reflect state priorities focused on economic development, national defense and the growth of STEM education: 1) N.M. Homeland and National Security Center; 2) N.M. Cybersecurity Center of Excellence; 3) N.M. Bureau of Geology and Mineral Resources; 4) STEM Outreach Program; 5) PRRC; 6) EMRTC; 7) ICASA; 8) Geophysical Research Center; 9) NCKRI, a cave and karst program; 10) Continued Research Assistants in Chemical Engineering; 11) Bureau of State Mine Safety; 12) N.M. MESA; 13) STEM Center Pathways for Success – new; 14) Rural Economic Development Program. Regent King moved for approval as presented. Regent Armijo seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- c) **NMHED Capital Project Transmittal Summary Sheets for the Bureau of Geology Seismic Station Installation Project.** VP Walsh requested that the Board authorize administration to submit the Capital Project Transmittal Summary Sheets for \$950k to establish a permanent seismic network. Regent Armijo moved for approval. Regent King seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- d) **Approval of AF-04 NMT Investment Policy.** VP Walsh requested Board approval for a new policy that sets comprehensive guidelines for the investment of university, endowment, operational funds, and some bond proceeds. The proposed policy followed procedures for NMT's "Policy on Policies" including campus review. The policy framework reflects clear investment objectives, such as to preserve capital, preserve corpus and adjust for inflation. Changes from the previous policy include stating guidelines with risk and diversification. Following a brief discussion, Regent Armijo moved for approval. Regent Johnston seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**8. Individual Board Member Comments.** None.

**9. Announcements & New Business.** None.

**10. Executive Session.** NMSA 1978 Sec. 10-15-1 (H) (2), (If required to Consider Legal and/or Personnel Matters). Regent King moved to go into Executive Session. Regent Armijo seconded the motion. Following a roll call vote conducted by Ms. Grain, the regular session was adjourned at 10:42 am.

**11. Reconvene in open session and take final action, if any, on such limited legal and personnel matters which shall be acted upon in open session following conclusion of the closed session.** Chair Lepre reconvened the regular meeting at 12:52 pm and announced that no votes or official action was taken in the closed session.

## **7. Action Items**

- e) Approval of SA-03 Student Code of Conduct Policy.** VP Greene was tasked with developing a new Student Code of Conduct Policy which was reviewed by legal counsel. Regent King moved for approval. Regent Johnston seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- f) Approval of SA-06 Hazing Discipline and Prevention Policy.** VP Greene noted that the hazing policy was mandated by a previous federal administration. Regent King moved for approval. Regent Johnston seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- g) Approval of OR-02 Research Integrity Policy.** VP Coolen explained that the policy addresses every stage of the research process, and includes updated procedures, a major change from 11 years ago. Regent King moved for approval. Regent Johnston seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- h) Approval of OR-03 Export Control Policy.** As noted by VP Coolen, NMT research staff are in full compliance with current export laws, and the policy provides protection. It has been reviewed by legal counsel, and is similar to that of other universities in accordance with law. Mikell Coleman, Director of Research Compliance, and her team put much effort into its development. The policy is posted on NMT's website along with a procedural manual that includes, for example, official NMT international travel procedures. Regent King moved for approval. Regent Johnston seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- i) Approval of Personnel Action Items.** HR Director JoAnn Salome requested approval to post two positions currently vacant with salaries greater than \$100k: 1) Director of Cybersecurity and 2) Senior Program Manager to work with ICASA. Regent King moved for approval. Regent Mukkamala seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

President Jackson announced that the search committee for a Director of Marketing and Communication selected a candidate, and he requested authority to make an offer to the candidate, which exceeds \$100k. Regent Johnston moved for approval. Regent Mukkamala seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Chair Lepre noted that NMT has an Acting President, and needs an Interim President. The Board unanimously moved to appoint Dr. Michael Jackson for the Interim President position. The Board's also authorized Chair Lepre to move



forward with an employment agreement offer to Dr. Jackson. Chair Lepre said that Dr. Jackson instills confidence with the people he works with at every turn. Dr. Jackson said he was happy to step forward and cited the focus of faculty and staff in how best to advance the Institute and its impact on Tech students.

- j) **Approval of Regents Conflict of Interest Policy.** Chair Lepre noted that a new policy is critical and needs to be drafted for the Board to be in compliance. Regent Armijo moved to appoint Chair Lepre to procure the services of an outside consultant to assist with developing a comprehensive conflict of interest and code of conduct policy to bring back for consideration by the Regents. Regent Mukkamala seconded the motion. The motion passed on a 4-1 vote by Regents Lepre, Armijo, Mukkamala and Johnston. Regent King voted against the motion.
- k) **Approval of Amendment to Regent Bylaws.** Chair Lepre announced a proposed amendment to Regent Bylaws to add the position of Vice Chair to the Board as drafted by NMT's legal counsel. Regent Armijo moved for approval. Regent Mukkamala seconded the motion. The motion passed on a 4-1 vote by Regents Lepre, Armijo, Mukkamala and Johnston. Regent King voted against the motion.

**12.Adjournment.** Chair Lepre adjourned the meeting at 1:22 pm.



**Chair, David Lepre Sr.**

**Attest:**



**Secretary-Treasurer, Yolanda Jones King**

