



Board of Regents Minutes

Date: Friday, March 06, 2026

Time: 1:00 p.m. MST

Location: Fidel Center Ballroom B, 801 Leroy Place, Socorro, NM 87801

Public Zoom Webinar: <https://nmt-edu.zoom.us/j/97703739901>

- 1) **Call to Order.** Regent Chair Dr. David Lepre Sr. called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm. Other Board members attending were Regent Jerry Armijo, and Regent Cody Johnston. Regent Dr. Yolanda Jones King and Regent Dr. Srinivas Mukkamala attended virtually via 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 Armijo moved to approve the agenda, followed by a second from Regent Johnston. The motion passed unanimously.
- 3) **Public Comment.** Chair Lepre opened the public comment portion of the meeting and noted that there were individuals signed up to speak. He provided guidance to speakers and requested that remarks be limited to approximately three minutes. Ms. Lee Huntzinger, a New Mexico Tech alumnus (Class of 1981) and representative of the New Mexico Tech Alumni Association, addressed the Board. He shared that the Alumni Association, including an active online community of over 1,500 members, is recommending that the University pursue construction of a new on-campus pool. Ms. Huntzinger emphasized the importance of creating a facility that serves students, faculty, and staff, and suggested a design that could be open-air during warmer months and enclosed during colder seasons. He noted that such a facility could serve as a central gathering space for campus life and expressed that alumni would be supportive of fundraising efforts to help finance the project. Dr. Jennifer Siegel also addressed the Board regarding the value of the campus pool. Speaking from her perspective as a physician, she emphasized the importance of preventative health and physical activity, noting that access to facilities such as the pool supports improved health outcomes. Dr. Siegel shared observations of individuals benefiting from regular use of the pool, including increased physical activity and improved overall health. She provided an example of a community member whose health significantly improved through participation in water aerobics and emphasized the broader health and wellness benefits associated with maintaining such a facility. Chair Lepre thanked both speakers for their comments and closed the public comment period.
- 4) **Regent Committee Reports.**
 - a) **NMT Foundation Updates.** Regent Armijo reported that the New Mexico Tech Foundation will hold its next regular board meeting the following week. He noted that several new board members are currently being on boarded, along with the appointment of a new Board Chair, Dr. Nelia Dunbar.
 - b) **Regent Enrollment Subcommittee.** Regent Armijo reported enrollment indicators are trending positively but noted long-term challenges related to declining high school graduates and the need for strategic planning to sustain enrollment growth.



- c) **NMT Univ. Research Park Corp. Updates.** Regent King reported continued progress in refining operations and advancing commercialization efforts, including support for faculty and staff engagement.
- d) **NM HERC Updates.** Regent King reported a new director has been hired and is advancing planning efforts, including a legislative update and future training initiatives.
- e) **Regent Research Subcmte.** No report.
- f) **Student Updates.** Regent Johnston reported ongoing collaboration with student leadership, exploration of a campus polling location, and efforts to support student voter registration
- g) **Regent Finance Subcmte/Legislative Updates.** Chair Lepre reported the April 2 Budget Forum will include a legislative update and campus input. Questions from faculty, staff, and students are being collected and will be shared with administration in advance.

5) **Info Items.**

- a) **NMT Aquatic Center Discussion.** Ms. Judy Richardson opened the discussion by speaking to the longstanding value and broad community use of the New Mexico Tech aquatic facility. She emphasized that the pool serves not only students, but also faculty, staff, retirees, and residents from Socorro and surrounding communities who rely on it as one of the few available year-round aquatic resources in the region. Ms. Richardson highlighted the health and wellness benefits of the facility, noting its importance for individuals who depend on aquatic exercise for mobility, rehabilitation, and overall well-being. She described the pool as a space that supports both physical and mental health, as well as community connection. She also referenced the strong support from alumni and community members, including interest in potential fundraising efforts to support the facility. Ms. Akram Mostafanejad then addressed the Board on behalf of faculty, staff, students, alumni, and community members who use the facility regularly. She emphasized the importance of maintaining safe, sustainable, and continuous access to aquatic services and encouraged the Board to ensure transparency and thoughtful planning as decisions are considered. Ms. Mostafanejad described the aquatic center as critical infrastructure, noting its role in serving a wide population, including students without transportation, employees, seniors participating in therapeutic programs, and youth programs such as swim teams. She acknowledged the age and condition of the facility and the need to evaluate cost, safety, and long-term solutions, including the possibility of partnerships or future replacement options. Referring to the February 26, 2026 NMT Town hall, Ms. Mostafanejad stated that while general information had been shared regarding facility conditions, costs, and potential partnerships, there remained a need for greater clarity. She requested additional documentation and transparency, including engineering assessments and cost assumptions, as well as a clearer understanding of timelines and sequencing of decisions. She further emphasized the importance of continuity of access, noting that any transition plan should ensure that year-round aquatic services are not interrupted before a viable alternative is in place. Following the discussion, Chair Lepre referenced the materials provided from the town hall and noted that a frequently asked questions document had been developed in response to community input. No formal action was taken.
- b) **Student Government Association.** SGA reported a projected budget of approximately \$187,000 due to declining enrollment and outlined ongoing programming, student surveys, and conference participation.
- c) **Graduate Student Association.** GSA reported continued support for graduate student travel and noted concerns regarding international student services and limited resources.
- d) **Faculty Senate.** Chair Dr. Linda DeVeaux reported that faculty are actively participating in survey efforts related to the upcoming budget forum, along with staff and students. She also noted that a



separate Faculty Senate survey is currently underway, with results to be shared at a later date. Chair Lepre emphasized the importance of reviewing both current and historical survey feedback to better understand recurring faculty concerns and inform future planning.

- e) **Staff Council.** Co-Chair Ms. Val Thomas reported distribution of the campus budget survey and noted staffing considerations related to the International Student Office.
 - f) **Student Affairs.** Mr. Brandon Boulter, AVP for Strategic Enrollment Management, reported projected fall 2026 enrollment of approximately 225 new students. Applications, admissions, and confirmations are trending upward, with continued concerns regarding student melt and financial barriers. Expanded recruitment efforts include out-of-state markets and targeted outreach across New Mexico.
 - g) **Administration and Finance.** Vice President Delilah Walsh introduced the new Chief of Police and Public Safety and provided updates on capital projects, including the Kelly Building (approximately 76% complete), electronic lock upgrades, and infrastructure improvements at Playas. Tuition and fee options are under review for future Board consideration.
 - h) **Research.** Vice President Lique Coolen reported ongoing federal funding efforts, including NDAA and CDS appropriations requests, and introduced updates from the National Cave and Karst Research Institute.
 - i) **President's Updates.** Interim President Michael Jackson reported progress on synthesizing Staff Council survey feedback for presentation at the April board meeting. David Manzano, Director of Government Affairs, provided a 2026 NMT State legislative session update, including increases in recurring and non-recurring funding and capital investments. Updates were also provided on the Presidential Ambassador Program and a potential Green Data Center opportunity. Regents discussed the importance of due diligence, including infrastructure and water use considerations.
- 6) **Consent Items.**
- a) **KMP Resolutions for PRTC and NMT.**
 - b) **Restricted Fund Purchase over \$300,000.** Rio Grande Travel for EMRTC.
 - c) **Unrestricted Fund Purchase over \$300, 00.00.** Virga Labs and Power Ford.
Regent Armijo moved to approve the Consent Items 6a) through c) as listed, followed by a second from Regent Johnston. The motion passed unanimously.
- 7) **Executive Session.** NMSA Section 10-15-1 H (7) of the New Mexico Open Meetings Act, if required to consider limited legal matters. NMSA 1978, Sec 10-15-1 (H) (2), of the New Mexico Open Meetings Act, if required to consider limited personnel matters. Regent Johnston moved to adjourn the regular meeting and meet in Executive Session as stated on the agenda and also discuss negotiations regarding the purchase, acquisition, or disposal of real property or water rights. Regent Armijo seconded the motion which passed on a roll call vote conducted by Ms. Grain. The meeting was adjourned at 3:28 p.m.
- 8) **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 called for a motion to reconvene in open session at 4:27 p.m. Regent Johnston moved to reconvene in open session. Regent Armijo seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. Chair Lepre stated that the Board certified that the matters discussed in executive session were limited to legal matters and/or personnel matters as authorized under the Open Meetings Act, and that no final action was taken.



9) Action Items.

- a) Approval of Personnel Action Items.** Regent Lepre asked for a motion to approve personnel action memos for the following positions: EMRTC Deputy Director, Cyber Security Director, Director of PRTC, Bursar, and Director of Campus Planning. Regent Armijo moved to approve the memos as presented by HR Director Salome. Regent Johnston seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
- b) Approval of Minutes for Regular Mtg. on January 28, 2026.** Regent Johnston moved to approve the minutes. Regent Armijo seconded with the approved correction where he abstained from voting as given to Ms. Vanessa Grain and included in the Regents box drive. The motion passed unanimously.
- c) Approval of Resolution of NMC Director.** President Jackson thanked Carlos Romero for serving in this capacity for over a decade and requested the board appoint Dr. Aly El-Osery to serve as NMC Director. Regent Armijo moved to approve the resolution as presented. Regent Johnston seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
- d) Approval of Proposal for Master of Science in Geobiology.** Provost Coolen presented the new Master's program. Regent Armijo moved approval. Regent Armijo seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
- e) Authorize Strategic Options for NMT Aquatic Center.** Vice President Delilah Walsh presented a request for authorization for administration to enter into negotiations and develop a memorandum of agreement (MOA) with the City of Socorro related to aquatic services. Ms. Walsh explained that the New Mexico Tech Swim Center is facing imminent closure, noting that the University will be unable to install the seasonal bubble due to compromised soil conditions and contractor refusal to proceed. As a result, the facility will not be operational for winter use, regardless of funding availability. She stated that, even under ideal circumstances, construction of a new facility would take approximately 15 to 24 months, requiring closure during that period. Given these constraints, administration has been working to identify a strategic, interim solution to maintain aquatic services for the campus and broader community. Ms. Walsh reported that the University has engaged in extensive outreach, including stakeholder meetings, a public town hall, and coordination with the City of Socorro, local schools, and county representatives. She noted that the administration will continue discussions with the City Council regarding a potential partnership. She outlined a proposed framework in which the City of Socorro would retain ownership of the pool facility, while New Mexico Tech would provide operational and maintenance support. The arrangement would preserve key community services, including youth swim programming and use by the Stingray swim team. Ms. Walsh also noted that the University has identified approximately \$800,000 in previously allocated funds for bubble replacement, which could be redirected to support enclosure and operational needs at the city facility. Additional funding opportunities are being pursued through state and federal sources. She emphasized that the request before the Board was authorization to proceed with negotiations and develop formal agreements, subject to legal review, in order to move forward with a timely solution. Regent Johnston moved approval. Regent Armijo seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
- f) Approval of NMHED Capital Projects Transmittal Sheet for Mountain Springs Apartment Lease Purchase.** Regent Armijo moved to approve. Regent Johnston seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

10) Individual Board Member Comments. None.

11) Announcements and New Business. Chair Lepre presented a request to amend the previously scheduled April 17, 2026 Board of Regents meeting, proposing that the meeting be moved back to the New Mexico



Tech campus and begin at 9:00 a.m. The change was discussed in consideration of scheduling and logistical needs. Regent Johnston moved to approve the change. Regent Armijo seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Chair Lepre provided an update on the presidential search process, noting that the search is progressing as planned. He stated that the Board is moving into the next phase of the process and emphasized the importance of continued engagement from the campus community. Chair Lepre highlighted that upcoming steps will include on-campus visits and opportunities for stakeholder input, and encouraged participation from faculty, staff, and students. He expressed appreciation for the work of the search committee and Chair Dr. Steve Simpson and all those involved in supporting the process, noting the significance of the search for the future of New Mexico Tech. Chair Lepre also provided direction to New Mexico Tech administration regarding the proposed Green Data Center opportunity, requesting that administration continue to evaluate the proposal and gather additional information. He emphasized the importance of conducting appropriate due diligence, including understanding impacts, feasibility, and alignment with institutional priorities, and asked that updates be brought back to the Board as discussions progress. Regent Armijo moved to approve giving authority to NMT administration regarding the Green Data Center. Regent Johnston seconded. The motion passed unanimously

12)Adjournment. Regent Armijo moved to adjourn the meeting. Regent Johnston seconded the motion, and the meeting was adjourned at 4:55 p.m.

Approved by the Board of Regents on April 17, 2026.

Approved by Dr. David Lepre Sr., Chairman.

Attested by Dr. Yolanda Jones King, Secretary-Treasurer, Yolanda Jones King