New Mexico Tech
Board of Regents
Minutes

Date: Friday, September 11, 2026
Time: 1:00 p.m. MDT
Location: New Mexico Tech Campus, Fidel Center Ballroom, 801 Leroy Place, Socorro, NM
Public Zoom Webinar: https://nmt-edu.zoom.us/j/97703739901

1) **Call to Order.** Regent Chairman Dr. David Lepre Sr. called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. Other Board members attending in person were Regents Jerry Armijo, Yolanda Jones King, and Cody Johnston. Regent Srinivas Mukkamala was absent from the meeting. In attendance: Michael Jackson, Vanessa Grain, Delilah Walsh, Lique Coolen, David Greene, Robert Balch, Mike Timmons, Brandon Boulter, Colleen Foster, Katie Ismael, Sandi Lucero, Darryl Ackley, and Daniel Gronow, and other members of the public who attended in the audience and virtually on Zoom.
   a) **Proof of Meeting Notice**. Ms. Vanessa Grain confirmed that legal notices were placed in the Albuquerque Journal and Socorro El Defensor Chieftain.

2) **Approval of Agenda**. Chairman Lepre presented the agenda for approval. Regent Armijo moved to approve the agenda as presented. Regent King seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

   Chairman Lepre recognized the 25th anniversary of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks and requested a moment of silence in remembrance of those who lost their lives and all who were affected. Regent Yolanda Jones King shared her personal experience near the Pentagon on that day.

3) **Public Comment**. Leigh Huntington, representing the New Mexico Tech Alumni Association, recognized the 25th anniversary of September 11, 2001, and paid tribute to Victor Saracini, a 1976 New Mexico Tech graduate and pilot of United Airlines Flight 175, who lost his life in the terrorist attacks. Huntington noted that the Alumni Association established an endowed scholarship in his memory. Mary Norman, a Socorro community member, addressed the Board regarding the use of the New Mexico Tech swimming pool during the winter months, including the availability of water aerobics. Vice President for Student Affairs David Greene responded that operating hours and heating considerations were still being evaluated. He also noted the County's contribution toward a pool cover and the University's goal of maximizing use of the facility during the winter.
4) **Socorro Stingray Swim Team.** Regent Cody Johnston provided an update on the Socorro Stingray Swim Team and expressed appreciation to New Mexico Tech for its continued support of the swimming pool and its collaboration with the City of Socorro and Socorro County. Regent Johnston introduced members of the swim team and highlighted their accomplishments, including swimmers who qualified for the New Mexico High School State Swimming Championships.
5) **Regent Committee Reports**.
   a) **NMT Foundation.** Regent Armijo provided an update on the NMT Foundation, highlighting its fundraising efforts, investment activities, and continued work to strengthen governance and support the University's priorities.

b) **Strategic Enrollment Management.** Regent Armijo reported on the Strategic Enrollment Management Committee's ongoing efforts to improve student recruitment, enrollment, and retention. He noted positive progress and continued collaboration across the University.

c) **NMT University Research Park Corporation.** Regent Yolanda Jones King reported that the NMT University Research Park Corporation Board met earlier that morning. She noted that the new Board members have been actively engaged and that the meeting was productive, with members participating both in person and virtually. Regent King deferred further discussion to Action Item 10(d), NMT University Research Park Corporation Updates.

d) **New Mexico Higher Education Regents Coalition**. Regent King reported that HERC was scheduled to meet on September 15, 2026, to discuss organizational business and potential legislative priorities. She also noted that HERC's annual meeting and training session would be held at Eastern New Mexico University in November, including a legislative update.

e) **Research.** No report was presented.

f) **Student Updates.** Regent Cody Johnston deferred his student updates to the informational reports scheduled later in the meeting.

g) **Finance and Legislative**. Chairman Lepre reported that the Regents Finance Subcommittee met on September 10, 2026, to review and discuss the University's legislative priorities and funding requests for the upcoming legislative session. He noted that the meeting included approximately three hours of presentations and discussions regarding the University's needs and priorities.

6) **Informational Items.**

a) **Student Government Association.** Student Government Association (SGA) President Lilah Villarreal introduced herself to the Board and provided an update on student government activities. She highlighted increased participation and engagement among incoming freshmen and discussed ongoing efforts to encourage student involvement in campus activities and student government.

b) **Graduate Student Association.** Graduate Student Association (GSA) President Juan Altamirano-Gonzalez provided an update on graduate student activities and concerns. He discussed graduate student health insurance, access to campus health services, and the challenges international graduate students face due to changing immigration regulations. He also highlighted efforts to increase graduate student participation and engagement within the University community.

c) **Faculty Senate.** Faculty Senate Chair Linda DeVeaux provided an update on Faculty Senate activities and discussed the importance of faculty participation in university governance. She recommended that the Faculty Senate and Staff Council chairs be provided seats at the Board table during Regent's meetings to facilitate communication and engagement. Chair DeVeaux also announced that she would be stepping down as Faculty Senate Chair and Faculty Senate elections would be in October.

d) **Staff Council.** Staff Council Co-Chair Val Thomas presented an update on Staff Council activities, including the results of the staff climate survey. She highlighted concerns regarding employee compensation, retention, workplace climate, and communication between staff and University administration. Thomas emphasized the importance of addressing staff concerns and improving employee engagement. She also acknowledged Co-Chair Heidi Love's departure.

e) **Student Affairs**. Vice President for Student Affairs David Greene provided an enrollment update, reporting 253 new undergraduate students, representing a 36.8 percent increase, and 213 first-time degree-seeking students, representing a 42 percent increase. He noted that although incoming student numbers showed improvement, overall undergraduate enrollment continued to decline. Vice President Greene discussed ongoing recruitment and student support efforts.

f) **Administration and Finance.** Vice President for Administration and Finance Delilah Walsh presented the University's fourth-quarter financial report for fiscal year 2026, ending June 30, 2026. She reported a 27.8 percent increase in total revenue, primarily attributable to increased state appropriations, one-time funding, and strong investment performance. The University's net position increased by 26 percent, reflecting continued financial stability and healthy reserves. Vice President Walsh discussed the importance of maintaining adequate reserves to meet future financial obligations, including state matching requirements for capital projects and potential federal research funding uncertainties. She noted that the University would need to provide a 20 percent match for certain capital projects, including approximately $8 million for Phase I of the proposed Wellness Center. She also discussed the University's investment and endowment funds, explaining that much of the endowment is restricted and cannot be used for general operating expenses. Vice President Walsh reported that the University was exploring the potential use of its Benefit Administration Fund to help offset upcoming employee health insurance cost increases. In response to questions from Regent Armijo, Vice President Walsh clarified that University investments are managed in accordance with its investment policy and that any expenditure of plant funds for capital projects would require Board approval.

g) **Academic Affairs.** No report was presented.

h) **Research.** Vice President Coolen presented an update on research activity, reporting 365 research proposals submitted, representing a 13 percent increase. The proposals totaled more than $260 million in requested funding. She also reported 137 new awards totaling more than $59 million, highlighting the University's continued research activity and external funding efforts.

i) **President's Updates.** President Jackson provided an update on university initiatives and activities. He discussed a recent call to action from the U.S. Department of Education and indicated that he would seek feedback from the campus community regarding the University's response.

7) **Consent Items.**

a) **Degree Conferrals**

b) **NMHED 2026 HB 8 Major Projects Capital Project Funding Plan**

c) **Unrestricted Fund Purchases over $300,000**

- **Franken Construction**
- **Intraworks**
- **Miller Bonded**
- **Presbyterian Healthcare Services for NMT Student Healthcare**

d) **NMHED Endowment Report**

e) **KMP Resolution for Playas Research and Testing Center**

Regent King moved to approve Consent Items 7(a) through 7(e) as presented. The motion was seconded by Regent Armijo. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

8) **Executive Session**, Chairman Lepre
Pursuant to NMSA 1978, Section 10-15-1 H(7) of the New Mexico Open Meetings Act, if required, to consider pending litigation involving the Board of Regents, specifically, 1) Doug Wells v. Board of Regents of New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology, and 2) Tammy Roof v. Board of Regents of New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology and NMSA 1978, Section 10-15-1 H(2) of the New Mexico Open Meetings Act, if required, to consider limited personnel matters specifically, 1) President's Evaluation Criteria.

Chairman Lepre called for a motion to enter into executive session. Regent King moved to enter executive session pursuant to the purposes stated above. Regent Armijo seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by roll-call vote conducted by Ms. Grain, with Chairman Lepre and Regents Armijo, King, and Johnston voting in favor. Regent Mukkamala was absent. The Board entered executive session at approximately 2:20 p.m.

9) **Vote to 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.** Chairman Lepre called for a motion to reconvene in open session at 3:02 p.m. Regent Armijo moved to reconvene in open session. Regent King seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by roll-call vote conducted by Ms. Grain of all Regents present, with Chairman Lepre and Regents Armijo, King, and Johnston voting in favor. Regent Mukkamala was absent. Chair Lepre stated the matters discussed in the closed session were limited only to those specified in the motion for closure.

10) **Action Items for Board Consideration.**
   a) **President's Evaluation Criteria.** A motion was made by Regent Armijo and seconded by Regent King to approve the President's Evaluation Criteria as presented. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.
   b) **Public Comment Directive.** Chairman Lepre presented the proposed Public Comment Directive, explaining that the Board had received increased public comment during the year and that a formal procedure was needed. He noted that the directive was developed using the University of New Mexico's model, with minor modifications, to establish a consistent process for public comment at future Board meetings. A motion was made by Regent King and seconded by Regent Armijo to approve the Public Comment Directive as presented. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.
   c) **Regents Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Policy.** The Board reviewed the proposed Regents Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Policy. Regent Johnston raised questions regarding the policy's application to student Regents who may also be employed by the University. Legal counsel explained that potential conflicts would require individual review and appropriate disclosure or recusal. The Board also discussed Section 9(A), concerning filing the policy with the State Ethics Commission. Following discussion, Regent King moved to approve the Regents Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Policy as amended to remove Section 9(A) and renumber the remaining subsections. The motion was seconded by Regent Armijo and passed unanimously by voice vote.
   d) **NMT University Research Park Corp. Updates.** Regent King and Vice President Coolen provided an update on efforts to improve the operations and governance of the NMT University Research Park Corporation (RPC). They reported that an RPC subcommittee had

developed five proposed recommendations, including revisions to the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), changes to the corporation's bylaws, and a model for allocating royalty and commercialization revenue. Vice President Coolen discussed plans to strengthen inventor support, mentoring, and technology commercialization through the Office of Innovation and Commercialization. She also reported that the director position for that office had been posted. The recommendations were presented as a working draft, with further revisions and legal review anticipated before returning to the Board for approval. No formal action was taken.

e) **Minutes for Regular Mtg. on July 24, 2026.** Regent King moved to approve the minutes of the July 24, 2026; regular meeting as presented. The motion was seconded by Regent Armijo. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

f) **2028 NMT Legislative Priorities.** NMHED FY28 Research and Public Service Projects (RPSPs) Ranking and Funding Requests. The Board reviewed the proposed FY2028 New Mexico Higher Education Department (NMHED) Research and Public Service Projects (RPSP) rankings and funding requests. The presentation outlined the University's funding priorities for submission to NMHED and consideration during the upcoming legislative session. Regent Armijo moved to approve as presented. The motion was seconded by Regent Johnston. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

g) **Agreement for Loan of University Property to Maine Mineral & Gem Museum for Cameca SX100 Electron Microprobe and All Accessories.** Regent Armijo moved to approve the agreement as presented. The motion was seconded by Regent King. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

h) **Space Resource Management Certificate.** Vice President Coolen presented the proposed 12-credit-hour graduate certificate in Space Resource Management, designed to support workforce development needs in the growing commercial space industry. She noted that the program would utilize existing resources and courses that had previously demonstrated strong enrollment. During discussion, the Board considered whether future certificate programs should require Regent's approval. Chairman Lepre expressed support for allowing the administration to approve certificate programs following the appropriate faculty and administrative reviews, without requiring individual Board approval. He requested that the Board continue to receive informational updates on new certificate programs, potentially through an annual report. The Regents expressed agreement with this approach. Regent King moved to approve the Space Resource Management Certificate as presented. The motion was seconded by Regent Johnston. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

11) **Individual Board Member Comments. C**hairman Lepre expressed appreciation to the University staff for their efforts in preparing and supporting three consecutive meetings over the previous two days. He thanked everyone for their hard work and assistance.

12) **Announcements and New Business.** Chairman Lepre announced that the Association of Governing Boards (AGB) would hold its national conference in March 2027. He noted that Regent King had expressed interest in attending and encouraged other Regents to consider participating. Regent King emphasized the value of connecting with Regents from other institutions to exchange ideas and discuss common challenges. The possibility of group registration rates was also discussed. The Board then viewed a New Mexico Tech fundraising video highlighting the student experience and encouraging support for student programs, activities, research opportunities, and other initiatives.

13) Adjournment. Regent King moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Regent Armijo. The meeting adjourned at 3:33 p.m.

Approved by the Board of Regents on November 16, 2026.

David A. Lepre

Approved by David Lepre Sr., Chairman

Yolanda Jones King

Attested by Dr. Yolanda Jones King, Secretary-Treasurer