

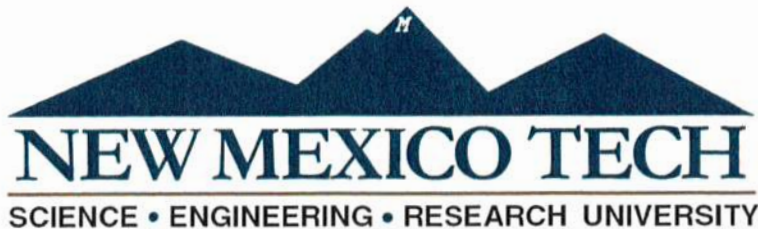
Board of Regents Regular Meeting
Friday, March 11, 2022
1:00 p.m.
NMT Main Campus, Macey Center, Galena Ballroom

MINUTES

The New Mexico Tech Board of Regents convened at 1:00 p.m., Friday, March 11, 2022, 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:

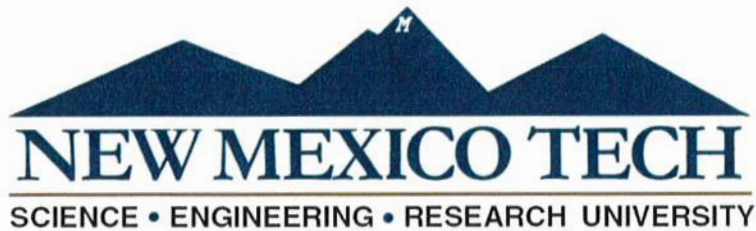
Stephen Wells	Cleve McDaniel	Nelia Dunbar
Vanessa Grain	Doug Wells	Colleen Foster
Katie Bauer	Van Romero	Mariana Huckabee
David Manzano	Carlos Romero	Robert Balch
J. Michael Timmons	Michael Hargather	Joann Salome
David Greene	Myrriah Tomar	Stephanie Rodriguez
Lisa Todd	Mark Adams	Stephanie Montoya
Mendi Marquez	Sanchari Chowdhury	
Aly El-Osery	Emma Aafloy	

- 1. Call to Order.** Regent Peacock called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.
 - a) Proof of Meeting Notice.** Vanessa Grain confirmed that legal notices were placed in the *Albuquerque Journal* and the *El Defensor Chieftain*.
- 2. Approval of Agenda.** Regent Peacock said that the meeting would not follow the published agenda due to guests in attendance at the meeting. Regent King moved to approve the agenda. Regent Armijo seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.
- 3. Public Comment.** President Wells introduced New Mexico Higher Education Cabinet Secretary Rodriguez and her Public Information Officer, Stephanie Montoya. Secretary Rodriguez addressed the Board, discussing the New Mexico Opportunity Scholarship and the Lottery Scholarship, both of which provide the opportunity for anyone in New Mexico who wants to attend college. She said that \$130 million in the recent legislative session will allow higher education to be tuition free for an additional four years. She stated that this scholarship is so critical to families in New Mexico and is open to both part-time and full-time students, as well as individuals going back to finish a degree. She explained the scholarship is the only college tuition program in the nation that offers



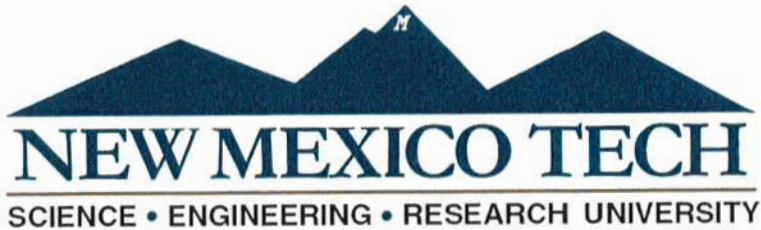
financial assistance for certificate, associate, and bachelor's degrees. Secretary Rodriguez thanked President Wells for his support and being present at the bill signing in Silver City. She also thanked New Mexico Tech students who made a difference in helping the legislation to pass. President Wells said that New Mexico Tech is pleased and proud to have such a passionate advocate for higher education. Regent Lepre noted that 10 years ago a study looked at actual job openings in New Mexico compared with graduates. The study found that we still need to import talent. Regent King and Chair Peacock thanked Secretary Rodriguez for attending the meeting.

4. **Approval of 2021 NMT Audit.** VP McDaniel announced that the Audit Report was approved and accepted by the State Auditor. He noted a one-page summary was in the materials. Lisa Todd of the Moss Adams accounting firm walked through the findings and discussed the auditor's role. Regent Armijo moved approval of the audit, Regent Lepre seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.
5. **Recurring Reports, President Wells.**
 - a) **SGA.** President Dallin Sobers was not in attendance but provided a written report.
 - b) **GSA.** President Mariana Huckabee reported that a Mental Health Committee held successful group sessions and more are planned. She stated that the Financial Aid and Scholarships Committee are doing a financial health survey to find out how students are faring financially. For the Student Research Symposium (SRS), this year the GSA will offer a prize for graduate students to draw more involvement and receive feedback on research presentations. The GSA is updating its constitution, working with VP Greene, and will present it at the next Board meeting and ask for approval. Regent King asked for the dates of the SRS and for a detailed agenda. President Huckabee said that it will be held April 20-22, 2022. Regent King said she would like to attend.
 - c) **Student Life, VP Greene.** No report.
 - d) **Title IX, AVP Phaiiah.** No report.
 - e) **Academic Affairs.** VP Wells reported that in the packet is a compendium of some student and faculty accomplishments. He yielded the floor to highlight two special guests: Mendi Marquez, a biotechnology graduate student, who is a third-year doctoral student in the Chemical Engineering Department. The focus of her research is on ultrasound-enhanced nanoparticle drug delivery systems, a multi-institution effort, along with Purdue University, the University of Chicago, and others. Chair Peacock asked what nanotheranostics means. Ms. Marquez said that it's a small technology in a nano application and the name of the journal that published her research.
VP Wells' second guest was Dr. Sanchari Chowdhury, associate professor of chemical engineering. Her current research is funded by the U.S. Department of Energy. Both graduate and undergraduates are working on the research, which looks at epoxy, a high-strength polymer. Regent King asked about the spectrum of sunlight used. Dr. Chowdhury said that they simulate sunlight in a concentrated manner. Chair Peacock asked if there is any industry

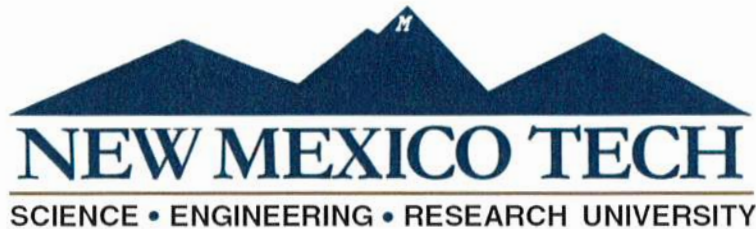


interest yet. Dr. Chowdhury said not yet but they are looking at what others are doing. Regent Espinoza said that she can attest that Dr. Chowdhury is an amazing professor who taught one of her favorite courses.

- f) **Capital Projects.** VP McDaniel highlighted the progress on the Deju University House, stating that the retaining wall was three-quarters finished and the landscaping has started. He stated that Brown Hall was undergoing demolition/remodeling and the project was ahead of schedule. For Kelly Hall, the RFP is completed and will be sent out soon. He stated that \$3.3 million for Kelly Hall and \$5 million for Playas Research Training Center upgrades were included in the General Obligation bond request to the State are subject to legislative approval. For West Hall parking, administration acknowledged the comments received from members of the campus community and the VPAF Office presented what is believed to be a reasonable solution that will not require parking permits. Regent Espinoza expressed gratitude for addressing the parking issue. President Wells said that there is a naming opportunity for the Kelly Hall Annex. VP McDaniel said NMT will keep using the current structure as the new one is built.
- g) **Research.** President Wells introduced Dr. Nelia Dunbar as the new Interim Vice President for Research and said he is pleased she stepped up and into this position. Interim VP Dunbar discussed the Permian Energy Development Laboratory (PEDL), a user research facility located in the Permian Basin of Texas on University of Texas lands. She also reported that Sandia Laboratory is supporting NMT through the Sandia Campus Executive Program, developed to foster relationships with selected universities to engage and collaborate. Ron Baker, a NMT alum, is involved in the university liaison for Sandia. Artificial intelligence is a focus area for the collaboration, and an on-campus visit is planned for April by Sandia Labs staff. She also said that the call has gone out for this year's Distinguished Research Award, and Dr. Ivan Avramidi will chair the committee. Regent Lepre thanked Dr. Dunbar for the example she is setting. Interim VP Dunbar said she appreciates the support and will do her best.
- h) **OIC.** Director Tomar reported that she has hired Ms. Dorothy Duran, who will be the new Business Manager for the OIC and NMT University Research Park Corp.
- i) **Advancement.** Director Foster said that fundraising numbers are up \$1.2 million and they are hoping to surpass the \$4 million mark. She explained a few personnel changes in the office. She reported a wonderful trip to Yellowstone with 30 alums, President Wells and his wife, Beth Wells, and Interim VP Dunbar and her husband, Dr. Bill McIntosh, attending. The Advancement Office will look at a trip to the "Volcanoes of Hawaii" in 2023 and future trip to Iceland. On April 9th, there will be a President's Club Reception at the President's House, which will mark the first big event to be held there. Director Foster gave an update on the capital campaign with \$68 million as the goal, and \$40 million left to be raised.
- j) **Bureau of Geology.** Interim Director Timmons introduced himself and gave a brief background of his career. He stated the Bureau is partnering with the Arizona Geological Survey on an Earth MRI grant, looking at critical and strategic minerals, which is a three-year project worth \$300,000.



- k) PRRC.** Director Balch gave an update on commercialization for a water filtration project and carbon storage. He stated he participated on the Governors Energy Roundtable with President Wells.
- l) HR.** Director Salome. No report.
- m) Faculty Senate.** Chair Hargather submitted a written report to the Board that highlighted a SWOT analysis of NMT and approval of an honorary degree.
- n) Marketing & Comm.** In Director Lepre's absence, President Wells introduced the new Communication Specialist in the Office of Marketing and Communication, Ms. Katie Bauer.
- o) Govt. Affairs.** Director Manzano reported that Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham signed the budget on Wednesday, March 9, with several bills very important to New Mexico Tech, including a 3.8% increase in Instruction and General (I&G) funding. Higher education overall did well as compensation issues were viewed as very important. Legislation known as the Junior Bill that had research and public service proposals was vetoed, however. Legislation regarding the General Obligation Bond appropriating \$3.3 million for the Kelly Building and \$5 million for Playas did pass. Another bill that passed will provide funding for roof repair across campus. A compensation increase for staff will be 3% April 1 and an average compensation increase 4% on July 1. Although the \$15 per hour minimum wage for higher education staff didn't pass, money and language was provided in House Bill 2 to move forward with staff raises. Director Manzano echoed Secretary Rodriguez's remarks that the improvements to the Opportunity and Lottery scholarships are a big deal and they are fully funded for four years. VP McDaniel commented on the Junior Bill and the funding that NMT lost when it was not enacted. Director Manzano said hopefully the bill will be reconsidered as there is \$600,000 in funding in there for New Mexico Tech. Regent Lepre also gave a report. He said that the Opportunity Scholarship is significant for nontraditional students to return to campus and fulfill their dreams. He also commented on the Junior Bill, which he said tends to be more vulnerable, and said NMT would keep fighting the good fight. VP McDaniel said that New Mexico Tech will have to spend more than \$18 million from reserves in matching funds for projects. Regent King asked about how much of the endowed faculty funding of \$137 million NMT would likely see. Director Manzano said that funding is aimed at social workers, nurses, and educators. President Wells said that New Mexico Tech should be able to tap into that funding with the master's in science teaching degree.
- p) President's Report.** President Wells recognized that NMT has incredible faculty members and stated that Dr. Joel Sharbrough was recently awarded a National Science Foundation CAREER Award, which means NMT now has four NSF awards—a tribute to our faculty. Dr. Myrriah Tomar will be recognized April 21 as an Outstanding Woman in Technology, the third in a row for New Mexico Tech. He also recognized two students on the No. 2 ranked Miners Rugby Team – Elijah Naranjo and Milaan Van Wyk – who have been recognized as All-Americans by National Collegiate Rugby. He also announced that VP McDaniel has been named to the New Mexico Finance Authority. AVP Carlos Romero commented on the hydrogen roundtable and the need as a state to transition to renewable energy. President Wells updated the Regents that

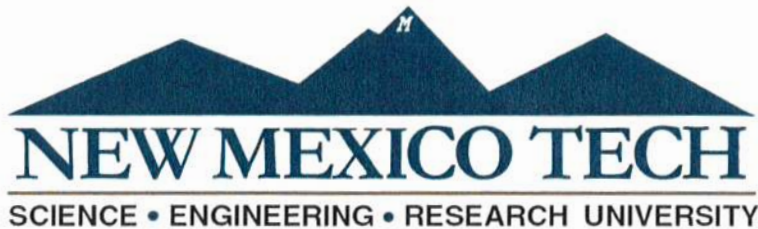


current COVID-19 active cases on campus have steadily declined since the beginning of the semester.

6. Information Items.

- a) NMT Foundation Updates,** Regent Armijo reported that the next meeting is Friday, April 1, 2022.
- b) NMT Univ. Research Park Corp. Updates.** Regent King reported that Interim VP Dunbar had been inducted onto the board.
- c) NM HERC Updates.** Regent King met with NMHED Secretary, Stephanie Rodriguez. HERC and CUP will assist HED in their late summer or fall Summit which will include discussion of legislative priorities. HERC is sponsoring the annual educational symposium as well as a separate strategic thought and planning session at UNM on April 25-26, 2022.
- d) NMT Legislative Updates.** Regent Lepre said he had nothing else to add to his earlier comments about the legislative session.
- e) NMT Student Updates.** Regent Espinoza said that students are concerned about the tuition increase. She also stated concerns from students about their limited choices on where they can live and that some older students want to live in dorms and some freshmen want to live in apartments. VP Greene said the issue was discussed in a town hall meeting.
- f) Sabbaticals Notifications,** VP Wells noted the upcoming sabbaticals of Dr. Benjamin Duvall, Dr. Chelsey Hargather, Dr. Michael Hargather, Dr. Bhasker Majumdar, and Dr. Lisa Young. Regent Armijo asked if they have all been approved. VP Wells said they have been approved. Regent Espinoza said she was glad the Hargather's are able to get the sabbatical time to do research and that they are both amazing professors and mentors. She also noted a recent Paydirt article on the research on gas production of microbes in the desert done by one of Dr. Duvall's master's students, Cassia Esparza.
- g) Degree Conferrals for January 2022.** The Board acknowledged the January 2022 degree conferrals with no discussion.
- h) Financial Analysis ending 1/31/22.** VP McDaniel referred the Board to his written report. He explained that state appropriations call for base and salary increases, which, compared to last year, was a 7.7% increase. Chair Peacock inquired about energy costs and inflation. VP McDaniel said that costs are going up and he doesn't see that changing any time soon. He said supply chain issues are a concern and the effect of the war in Ukraine on energy costs is unknown at this point. He said NMT was projecting a significant increase in revenues but forecasting equivalent increases in expenses. VP McDaniel shared some good news that the Playas Training and Research Center debt was reduced and that other areas—such as auxiliaries—are seeing improvement in fund balances.
- i) Restricted Fund Purchase Notification of Awards.** The Board acknowledged the report with no discussion.

7. Action Items, Chair Peacock



- a) Approval of February 11, 2022, Minutes.** Regent Lepre moved and Regent King seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.
- b) Approval of Resolution Appointing Director of NMC, Inc.** President Wells said the resolution calls for Interim VP Dunbar to be appointed as the new Director. Regent King moved and Regent Espinoza seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.
- c) Approval of FY23 NMT Tuition.** VP McDaniel presented the proposal calling for tuition for the 2022-2023 academic year to be increased by nine percent (9%). He explained that during the COVID-19 pandemic, NMT did not increase tuition, while many other universities made increases each year. VP McDaniel explained that NMT made the right decision not to increase tuition last year, FY22, in the middle of a pandemic when the university, students and their families were facing so many challenges. He continued that tuition wasn't raised even though costs for the university continued to increase, which, in part, had led to the need for the increase for the 2022-2023 academic year. He further explained that tuition needed to increase in order to continue providing high quality instruction at NMT and make key investments in support services that enable students to flourish at NMT and in their future careers. VP McDaniel explained that the tuition increase will also fund the creation of two new student support positions which will, again, support student success. President Wells added that NMT was committed to doing everything possible to improve student life, especially for students facing financial hardships and mental health challenges. President Wells went on to say that much of the increase will go toward faculty and staff retention efforts and continued improvement for equity in salaries and wages, explaining that it was difficult to retain outstanding professors with salaries below the national average. He explained that NMT wants to continue to retain its talented faculty and dedicated staff so NMT can continue to provide academic excellence to students. Several members of the President's Cabinet stated that even with the proposed tuition increase, tuition at NMT would still be very affordable, especially compared to tuition at other science and engineering schools. Also mentioned was that NMT is committed to small class sizes, hands-on research and lab opportunities, exposure to top-notch faculty addressing real-world issues, which are all factors that help NMT offer unique educational experiences that enable students to achieve academic and career success. Regent Armijo submitted opposition to the 9% (nine percent) tuition increase on the grounds that the increase would be significantly higher than all other New Mexico universities and will result in NMT having the highest tuition rates in the state, which can have a chilling effect on student accessibility. Regent Armijo also questioned the need for a significant tuition increase in light of recently passed legislation increasing both university salaries and I&G funding. Regent King moved to approve, and Regent Espinoza seconded. Chair Peacock called for a roll call vote. Regents King, Espinoza, Peacock and Lepre voted yes. Regent Armijo voted against the motion and said he will advocate for the university and that it will take everyone working together for the same goal. Regent Armijo called for a communications plan to explain the increase to the student body. Chair Peacock thanked the Board for the good discussion.

d) Approval of NMT Property Resolutions. The motion to approve the resolutions was moved by Regent King and seconded by Regent Lepre, and it passed unanimously.

e) Approval of Honorary Degree for John Shipman. VP Wells said that former NMT staff member John Shipman's spectrum of accomplishments was wide ranging and referred to a list of his accomplishments. President Wells said the honorary degree was well deserved. Regent Armijo moved to approve the honorary degree and Regent King seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved. Chair Peacock said that Mr. Shipman's sister would receive the honor at the spring commencement ceremony. Interim VP Dunbar said that Shipman was much loved in the NM Tech community. Director Foster suggested a news release be sent about the degree to El Defensor Chieftain.


8. Individual Board Member Comments. None.

9. New Business. The Board will meet next on April 22, 2022.

10. Executive Session. NMSA 1978, Sec 10-15-1 (H)(2), (If Required to Consider Legal and/or Personnel Matters) On a motion by Regent King and a second from Regent Espinoza, the Board unanimously adjourned its regular session at 3:47 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 legal and/or personnel matters which shall be acted upon in open session following conclusion of the closed session. The meeting reconvened at 4:31 p.m. with the Chair announcing that no action had been taken and only legal and personnel items were discussed.

12. Adjournment, Chair Peacock. Regent King moved and Regent Espinoza seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.



President

Attest:



Secretary-Treasurer