

Board of Regents Regular Meeting
Friday, April 22, 2022
1:15 p.m.
NMT Main Campus, Fidel Center Ballroom

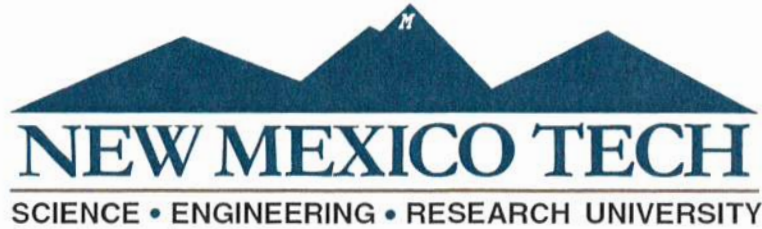
MINUTES

The New Mexico Tech Board of Regents convened at 1:15 p.m., Friday, April 22, 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	Peter Phaiah	Mariana Huckbee
David Manzano	Carlos Romero	Angie Gonzales
J. Michael Timmons	Michael Hargather	Scott Scarborough
David Greene	Myrriah Tomar	Alex Garcia
Dave Lepre Jr.	Mark Adams	Cathy Cook
Jenny Ma	Carrie M. (on Zoom)	Randy Seright
Michael Voegerl		

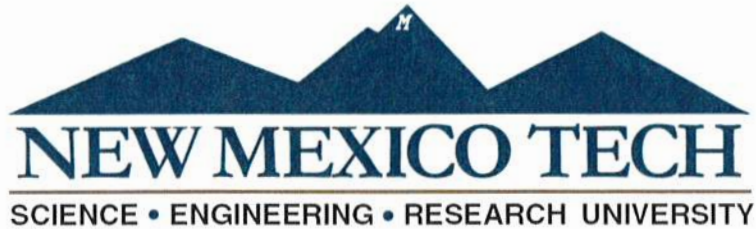
1. **Call to Order.** Chair Peacock called the meeting to order at 1:15 p.m.
 - a) **Proof of Meeting Notice.** Vanessa Grain confirmed that legal notices were placed in the *Albuquerque Journal* and the *El Defensor Chieftain*.
2. **Approval of Agenda.** Regent King moved to approve the agenda. Regent Armijo seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.
3. **Public Comment.** President Wells announced the departure of Marketing and Communications Director Dave Lepre Jr., who will become the Vice President for Marketing at Highlands University. President Wells thanked him for his service to NMT. Director Lepre thanked the Board and Administration for their support over the past five and half years.
4. **Recurring Reports.**
 - a) **SGA.** President Dallin Sobers had no report.

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- b) **GSA.** President Mariana Huckbee had no report.
- c) **Student Life.** VP Greene provided a presentation on the April 9 “Big Event” activity, with a news clip from KOAT-TV. He thanked Michael Voegerl, Director for the Center for Student Leadership and Engagement and International Programs Coordinator, for his leadership in following through on his request to implement the national service day at NMT. There were 16 community service projects that day with 98 students, staff, faculty, and family members involved.
- d) **Title IX, AVP Phaiiah.** No report.
- e) **Academic Affairs.** VP Wells reported on incoming student projections for the fall, with 383 new undergraduate students, a net gain of 41, and 831 students returning. For graduate students, Academic Affairs projects 100 new students with 340 returning. He explained that COVID-19 hurt the NMT community education enrollment. Regent Lepre asked if there was capacity to grow our graduate degree program. VP Wells said that it could probably grow by 200 students for professional programs, but NMT was close to capacity for research programs, due to funding.
- f) **Capital Projects.** VP McDaniel highlighted the Deju University House, which is now in the punch list phase, with signage forthcoming and by May, flowers and trellises will be installed. He explained that Brown Hall was ahead of schedule for its remodeling and six firms have responded to the request for proposals for the Kelly Hall project. A major upgrade of electronic locks is under consideration and HED already has approved this project but awaiting response from the Board of Finance. Chair Peacock inquired about Brown Hall stairways. Director Alex Garcia said stairways were destroyed so they can be rebuilt in a different configuration. President Wells said that Brown Hall will address students concerns that Brown Hall faced outward as the remodeling will result in in campus-facing doors and a patio facing the Quadrangle. VP McDaniel said it will be a spectacular building when finished.
- g) **Research.** Interim VP Dunbar highlighted proposals funded during 2022, including 29 proposals that have come in since January 1. She explained that many of the proposals relate to EMRTC and mechanical engineering, and there was a cyber security proposal. She updated the Board on the artificial intelligence (AI) research collaboration between NMT and Sandia Labs, which held a kickoff meeting April 8 with another meeting on campus planned for early May. New Mexico Tech scientists have been invited to participate in a workshop at Los Alamos National Lab, focusing on volcanic hazards in the Valles Caldera, which last erupted 50,000 years ago. Researchers will develop plans to monitor activity and look at data to predict future eruptions. Interim VP Dunbar also reported that the Legislature has developed a plan for a Technology Enhancement Fund (TEF), but it is not fully formed. IVP Dunbar will be meeting monthly with the VPs of Research (VPRs) from the other New Mexico research universities on TEF and other topics. She also congratulated the Student Research Symposium (SRS) organizers. Regent King commented that she also visited and engaged at the symposium. Interim

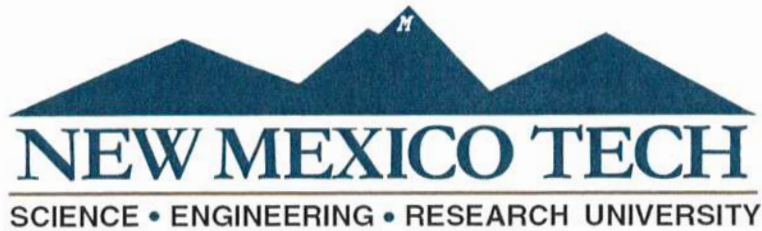
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VP Dunbar also said that the alumni trip in March 2023 will focus on the volcanoes of Hawaii.

- h) **OIC.** Director Tomar reported that the Inventors & Entrepreneurs Workshop is being moved from fall to spring to capture more student engagement. She also requested input on the Intellectual Property Policy draft. Dr. Tomar will post it and she has sent it to legal counsel for review. President Wells said that the policy is clearer and much improved. Regent King requested a digital copy of the policy draft.
- i) **Advancement.** Director Foster said that fundraising numbers are up \$1.2 million from last year, now at \$3.6 million. She is expecting a planned gift of \$1 million and is now hoping to surpass the \$5 million mark. She explained that a night at the Isotopes and a behind-the-scenes tour of Spaceport are planned. She said NMT will host the NMT Rugby Team in the National Rugby Championships in New Orleans over Memorial Day weekend. Also, the Comprehensive Campaign has brought in \$68 million in cash gifts and planned giving with more pledges coming in.
- j) **Bureau of Geology.** Interim Director Timmons announced a new permanent art display in the atrium of the Bureau building and urged Board members to stop by to see it. He also provided information on three recent awards from the U.S. Geological Survey.
- k) **PRRC.** Professor Randy Seright, filling in for Director Balch, had no report.
- l) **HR.** Assistant Director Angie Gonzales, filling in for Director Salome, had no report.
- m) **Faculty Senate.** Chair Hargather said that a new survey gathered information from students evaluating their faculty advisors. He urged the Board to attend the final session of the SRS featuring graduate students. Regent Lepre asked if NMT does surveys of student satisfaction. VP Greene responded that one was completed recently on satisfaction with services across campus. President Wells said that the results should be shared with the Board. VP Greene said that the information is being shared with the areas and then will be shared with the Board. Regent Lepre said the information will be useful when NMT representatives have conversations in Santa Fe.
- n) **Marketing & Comm.** No report.
- o) **Govt. Affairs.** Director Manzano detailed the two items passed by the Legislature in the April 5 special session: 1) Removing the personal income tax from Social Security income; and 2) SB1, the Junior Bill, which the Governor previously vetoed. Previously, the bill had \$670,000 in recurring funds and \$50,000 in non-recurring funds for NMT. Now the legislation has \$570,000 and \$150,000, with the change due to Playas. Director Manzano said he hopes NMT can get money back in the recurring fund for Playas. President Wells said that NMT had a lot riding on the Junior Bill and had a very successful result. Director Manzano also said he recently traveled to Washington, D.C., with AVP Carlos Romero.
- p) **President's Report.** President Wells reported that his office submitted a congressionally directed spending request (CDSR) of \$4 million for the NMT Mind and Body Center to Senator Heinrich and Senator Lujan's Offices. President Wells updated the Regents that

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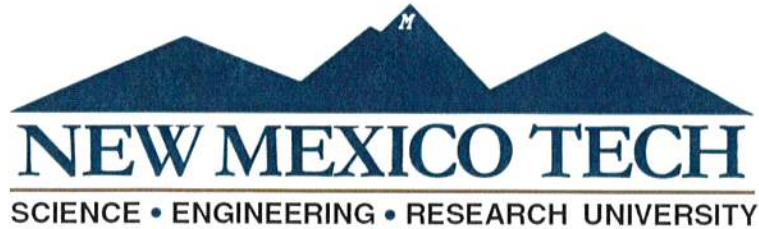


there have not been any COVID-19 cases on campus since March 22, 2022. NMT is still offering testing two days a week and continues to encourage vaccination and testing, but the requirement for vaccination and testing has been suspended. He also reported that the COVID-19 Task Force is continuing to meet at least monthly. President Wells presented a slide featuring four faculty members who are National Science Foundation (NSF) grant winners and three faculty members named Outstanding Women in Technology. He also presented a slide with updated national rankings, listing NMT as No. 18 for students who pursue a doctorate degree and one of the top 50 universities ranked by NSF. President Wells said that NMHED Cabinet Secretary, Stephanie Rodriguez is planning a joint announcement on the rankings. He explained that On March 31, 2022, Forbes announced it is using a new measurement for ranking institutions, Academic Stewardship. Regent Lepre asked about rankings for the Colorado School of Mines. President Wells responded that it is a healthy competitor. Regent Peacock said NMT should get the word out about the rankings in every way possible. President Wells said the upcoming media event may include New Mexico's U.S. Senators. President Wells also announced a new prospectus sheet being used in the national searches for the Vice President for Research position. A similar process is being used for the EMRTC Director position. AVP Carlos Romero said the search process for that position begins next week and should wrap up by the fall. Regent Lepre commented that the VPR position is a critical position for NMT. President Wells said NMT is conducting national searches for both positions. He also said that there is a transition process underway for the Director of Marketing and Communications position and that the position will be posted shortly. President Wells also announced the Communications and Outreach Plan he used to communicate about the recent tuition increase, which included the all-campus email and student forum held April 12, 2022. He reported that the forum featured a robust discussion of student finances and said Director of Graduate Students Aly El-Osery handled the forum questions well. President Wells also said NMT has not received questions or comments from HED on the tuition increase. He also referred Board members to the annual report for the past two years. He said he is planning to move the report to the fiscal/academic year rather than the calendar year. He would like to see it streamlined and completed in time to distribute it to legislators at the beginning of the legislative session next year.

5. Information Items.

a) NMT Foundation Updates. Regent Armijo reported that a Foundation Board meeting was held a few weeks ago, using Deju House as a venue, even though it's not quite finished. He remarked that it's a fabulous meeting space and most of the Foundation Board attended in person, and Dr. Raul Deju was in attendance. Regent Armijo also said the Mountain Spring Apartments off the NMT campus are in need of significant upgrades to the roof. The Foundation will work with the NMT Administration collaboratively on a renovation plan. NMT will purchase the apartments from the Foundation and a budget will be developed to

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renovate the apartments so they are usable. He explained that the same architects who worked on the Brown Hall renovation will work on the apartment project. Regent King asked Regent Armijo if NMT had looked into a third party to manage the apartments. VP McDaniel said that NMT had looked at that option, but not for this project as public-private partnerships work better in larger cities, but not in a small town like Socorro.

b) NMT Univ. Research Park Corp. Updates. No report.

c) NM HERC Updates. Regent King said that the NM HERC will host a strategic thought session at UNM on April 25. NM four-year university representatives participate in the first day, and the second day, April 26, will be the annual symposium of the continuing education which also includes two-year institutions. She also reported that HERC and CUP were trying to do their legislative priority planning earlier. She said that there will be an election to replace her as president.

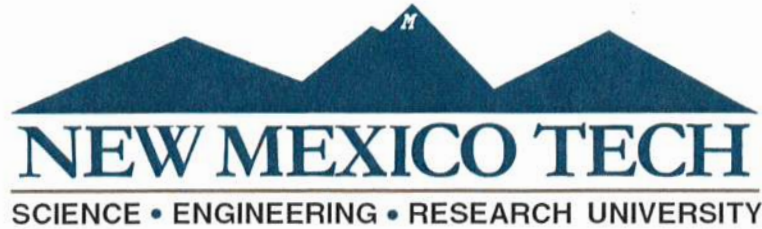
d) NMT Legislative Updates. Regent Lepre reported he had a two-hour meeting with HED Secretary Rodriguez on funding issues and he impressed upon her the unique nature of NMT with its critically important research component and that STEM education and graduate studies are more expensive to provide. The Secretary is interested in his experience on the funding formula and wants it to be collaborative, not divisive. He also spoke to her about the G.O. Bond and that NMT does not have taxing authority as community colleges do. President Wells said that he appreciates Regent Lepre's efforts.

e) NMT Student Updates. Regent Espinoza said that Narcan training was recently offered on campus. She also said that a freshman student is asking for peer support workers, which are used in other states to provide additional student counseling support. She's researching how to make this work and funding opportunities. She wanted to bring this issue to the Board's attention. Regent Espinoza also directed the Board to a recent Paydirt article on the NMT e-Sports Team. She would like to have a NMT e-Sports presentation at a future Board meeting. Regent Peacock said that an e-sports activity could be scheduled before a future Board meeting. President Wells said that he looks forward to the presentation, as well as the rocket club and rugby team visits. She also said that it was very exciting to attend the SRS Chemical Engineering Showcase as it featured future engineers preparing to go out into the world. Regent Armijo asked Regent Espinoza what her suggestion is on peer support. Regent Espinoza said that she had a meeting yesterday on the topic and is doing research to see how we can implement it effectively. She said that NMT does not have enough staff in the Counseling Center and students have to wait up to two weeks to be seen. VP Greene said that this type of training – mental health first aid – is included in the new position he has posted. AVP Phaiah said that he has heard from HED about \$50,000 in state funds for peer training.

f) Degree Conferrals for February 2022. The Board acknowledged the February 2022 degree conferrals with no discussion.

g) Draft NMHED Five Year Capital Project Funding Plan. VP McDaniel said the draft plan was provided and approval will be sought at the next Board meeting in May. The focus was

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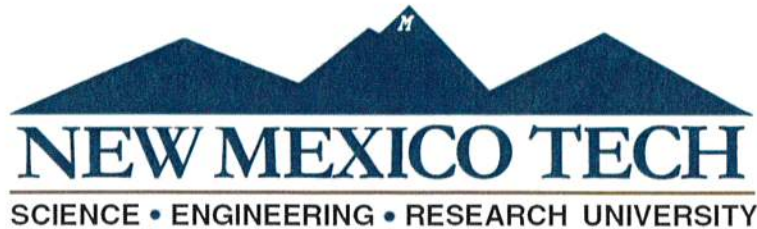
on infrastructure upgrades, such as the additional cost of the lock system upgrades if we are required to hire an outside contract. The campus wide facility condition survey will include a visual survey of buildings and mechanical systems, along with an inventory of every space on campus. He explained that there is a need for this independent assessment with an external perspective every five years. He explained that a data center upgrade was also needed. NMT has half of the data center project completed with the other half – an expansion – still needed. The fourth project was a water and gas line replacement on Campus Drive, a \$700,000 project. Regent Armijo said the selection of these four projects shows that NMT is a good steward of the campus.

h) Restricted Fund Purchase Notification of Awards. Regents acknowledged the information provided in the binders.

i) Division of Student Life Strategic Plan/DEI Town Hall. VP Greene provided an overview of the Student Life Strategic Plan – a Five-Year Plan for Success. The plan calls for division realignment; new positions, including a Dean of Student Life and a Director of Student Health Services; and three new clusters: Health and Wellness Cluster, led by Dr. Peter Phaiah; Dean of Students Cluster; and an Auxiliary Services Cluster, led by Nowka Gutierrez. The six values emphasized in the plan were: accountability, respect, community, leadership, success, and innovation. A major goal was to develop a robust first-year experience to try to improve second-year retention. A working group will develop an action plan over the summer. For his second report, as the Chief Diversity Officer, VP Greene reported that he conducted some diversity town halls to listen to students, faculty, and staff. He looked for overarching themes from the feedback he received and sorted them into positives, challenges, and asked the group what they wanted to see in the next nine months. He will present his findings to the NMT community April 25, 2022, create a Celebrating Affinity Committee, and develop a DEI survey. VP Greene’s next report to the Board will be in January 2023 and he expects that an action plan for DEI will be in place in spring 2023. Regent Peacock commented on the amount of work VP Greene has done in the short time he has been at NMT. Regent Lepre said that NMT has gone several years without merit-based scholarships and he discussed this with Secretary Rodriguez. President Wells said that this was the first report from VP Greene as Chief Diversity Officer. AVP Phaiah said he will talk about the strategic planning efforts in an upcoming meeting or at the retreat.

j) Updated Academic Catalog Policy Change-Commencement. VP Wells said the issue of graduate students who have successfully defended their thesis but are still working on changes and still being able to walk at commencement needs to be addressed. He explained that students get shortchanged when they have to wait a year. Regent Lepre said NMT needs to address extensions but has a problem with the proposed wording. He said he would prefer language like, “not an official confirmation of graduation status.” VP Wells said they are still working on the language.

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6. Action Items.

a) Approval of March 11, 2022, Minutes. Regent Armijo moved and Regent Espinoza seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

b) Approval of FY23 Operating Budget. VP McDaniel said the Fiscal Year 2022-2023 Operating Budget is due by May 1 to HED. It's been a challenging year to prepare a budget, he said, and there is a need for a discussion at this summer's retreat about a revenue infusion. He explained to accomplish the things NMT wants to accomplish; a look at the structural deficit is needed. NMT is looking to the Legislature for full funding of higher education salaries. He explained that the NMT budget has three strategic initiatives: two new positions in Student Life; \$200,000 for faculty equity; and \$100,000 for staff compression. Also, a key expense is an initial \$1+million deficit balance in utility debt. Regent Lepre said that a large amount of money -- \$4.46 million -- was from salaries and fixed costs. Regent Lepre emphasized that a 3% ending balance is too low, and creates a risk for the campus, and that over time; NMT should grow the ending balance. Regent Lepre recommended that NMT should step up a half-percent a year to get up to 5%. VP McDaniel said that this kind of strategy to increase the ending balance should be a part of the strategic financial planning discussion to address this and other financial issues, possibly at the summer Board retreat. Regent King moved approval of the budget and Regent Armijo seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

c) Approval of Restricted Budget Adjustment #1. Regent Armijo moved approval as presented and Regent King seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

d) Approval of Unrestricted Budget Adjustment #2. Regent Armijo moved approval as presented and Regent King seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

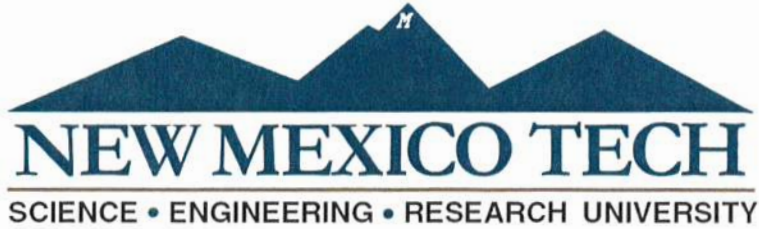
e) Approval of NMHED Quarterly Certification for 3/31/22. Regent King moved approval and Regent Espinoza seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

f) Approval of fall 2022 Regent Meeting Dates. The Board will meet in Chama August 28-31, 2022 for an annual retreat. President Wells said that the Bureau will provide information on the history and geology of the area and that a major focus of the retreat will be regarding NMT funding. The next Board meeting after the retreat will be October 24-25, 2022 at PTRC. The November 18, 2022 meeting will be held in Socorro, with an NMT e-Sports demonstration. Regent King moved approval of the fall meeting dates and Regent Espinoza seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

7. Individual Board Member Comments. None.

8. New Business. The Board will meet next on May 13, 2022, on the NMT campus. President Wells announced that the Interim Director of Marketing and Communications was Ms. Katie Bauer.

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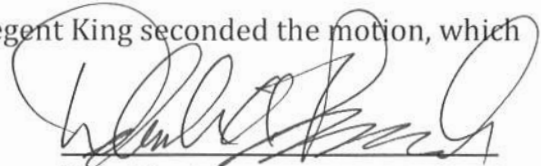


9. Executive Session. NMSA 1978, Sec 10-15-1 (H)(2), (If Required to Consider Legal and/or Personnel Matters) On a motion by Regent King and a second from Regent Espinoza, the Board unanimously adjourned its regular session at 4:09 p.m. to meet in executive session under a roll-call vote of the Regents.

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 5:22 p.m. with the Chair announcing that no action had been taken and only legal and personnel items were discussed. Regent Armijo moved and Regent King seconded to reconvene. Approval was unanimous by roll-call vote.

Regent Espinoza moved to approve the list of five (5) faculty for tenure and promotion to Associate Professor for Dr. Tafetta Elliott, Dept. of Class; Dr. Gilberto Gonzalez-Parra, Dept. of Mathematics; Dr. Chelsey Hargather, Dept. of Materials Engineering; Dr. Mostafa Hassanalian, Dept. of Mechanical Engineering; and Dr. Haoying Wang, Dept. of Computer Science & Engineering. Regent Espinoza also moved to approve Dr. Michael Hargather, Dept. of Mechanical Engineering, for promotion to Full Professor. Regent King seconded the motion. Approval was unanimous by roll-call vote.

12. Adjournment. Regent Armijo moved and Regent King seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.



President

Attest:

DocuSigned by:

Jerry Armijo

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Secretary- Treasurer