



**NORTHERN MARIANAS COLLEGE  
BOARD OF REGENTS  
Regular Meeting of May 31, 2023  
2:35p.m., BOR Conference Room, Saipan**

*Members: Regent Charles Cepeda (Chair); Regent Elaine Hocog-Orilla (Vice Chair); Regent Michelle Sablan (Member). Regent Irene Torres (member); Jeannie Mafnas (Member); Regent Dr. Jesse Tudela (Member); Regent William Cing.*

**Minutes of the Regular Meeting of May 31, 2023**

In compliance with the Commonwealth's Open Government Act, adequate notice of this regular meeting was provided as follows:

- (a) On May 29, 2023, advance written notice of this regular meeting was posted in the Marianas Variety News and Views.
- (b) On May 30, 2023, advance written notice of this meeting was emailed to the College campus.
- (c) On May 30, 2023, a copy of this advance notice of the meeting was uploaded on the college's website at [www.marianas.edu](http://www.marianas.edu).
- (e) Any individual who has requested notice of this meeting has been forwarded a copy of the notice of such meeting.

**I. Call to Order:**

Chair Cepeda called the Board of Regent's regular meeting to order on Wednesday, May 31, 2023, at 2:35 p.m. in the Board Conference Room of Northern Marianas College, Saipan. Chair Cepeda welcomed the Committee members and employees to the meeting.

a) Roll Call:

Members: Regent Charles Cepeda (Chair); Regent Elaine Hocog-Orilla (Vice Chair); Regent Irene Torres (Treasurer); Jeannie Mafnas (Member); Regent Dr. Jesse Tudela (Member); Regent Michelle Sablan (Member). *Excused Absent: Regent William (Bill) Cing (Member)*. Only six (6) members were present.

NMC attendees: Galvin Deleon Guerrero, EdD (President G); Frankie Eliptico (VP of Administration and Advancement); David J. Attao (Chief Financial Officer); Polly Masga (HRO Director); Jerome Ortiz (IT Director); Patty Coleman (Interim Dean of CREES); Pedro Deleon Guerrero (CREES); Michael Ogo (CREES); Lorraine Maui (Interim Dean of Academic Programs and Services; Dr. Sharker (CREES); Charlotte Cepeda (Dean of Student Services/ALO Liaison Officer); Rachel Fusco, CIP; Pedro Deleon Guerrero (CREES); and Helen Camacho (Exec. Assistant/Board Secretary /Recorder).

**Attending via Zoom:** Vilma Reyes (OIE Director); Calvo Dan; Clarisse Arriola (Counseling Services); Diana Hocog (Interim Rota Center Director); Karim Johnson (Social Sciences); Margaret Kintol (CREES); Neda Deleon Guerrero (Counseling Services);

Others: Jaime Pangelinan - Taniguchi, Ruth, Makio Architects

b) Review and Adoption of Agenda:

**BOARD ACTION:** Regent Michelle Sablan motioned to adopt the agenda for May 31, 2023 with changes to move item V(c)Evaluation of the President (March 2022 to June 2023) to VII. Miscellaneous Items, seconded by Regent Jeannie Mafnas. All members voted yes, the motion passed.

c) **Review and Adoption of Minutes:**

1) January 25, 2023 regular meeting

**BOARD ACTION:** Regent Elaine Orilla motioned to adopt the minutes for January 25, 2023, seconded by Regent Sablan. All members voted yes, the motion passed.

2) March 30, 2023 special meeting

**BOARD ACTION:** Regent Orilla motioned to adopt the minutes for March 30, 2023, seconded by Regent Sablan. All members voted yes, the motion passed.

**II. Public Comments:**

None.

**III. Reports from Standing Committees:**

a) Finance Committee – No report.

b) Audit Committee – No report.

c) Human Resources Committee: Regent Michelle Sablan, HR committee chair informed the board that the committee met to discuss the President’s evaluation. Overall, the evaluation was very positive and the committee voted to present, accept the eval of the president and recommend the renewal of Dr. Galvin Deleon Guerrero’s contract.

For the record, Chairman Cepeda informed the board that there is no motion until the board discusses this item under New Business.

d) Regent Nominating Committee: None.

e) Program Committee: None.

f) Facilities Committee: Regent Jesse Tudela, Committee Chair shared that the committee met to discuss the CRED A&E (30%) and will be making a recommendation to the full board.

For the record, Chairman Cepeda informed the board that there is no motion until the board discusses this item under New Business.

g) Ad Hoc Committee:

Members: Regent Orilla, Chair Cepeda

NMC Staff: VP Frankie, Dean Charlotte Cepeda, Kevin Bautista

Representation from students, staff and faculty

**IV. Old Business:**

None.

## V. New Business

### a) Academic Calendar 2023-2027

President G shared with the board the proposed academic calendar and explained that the college in its goal for efficiency has adopted a four year calendar. President G asked Dean Charlotte Cepeda to give a summary of the changes that have been incorporated into the calendar. Dean Cepeda shared the proposed academic calendar for fall 2023 thru summer 2027. She highlighted the important dates such as the observed holidays, start dates for each of the semesters and final exams. The changes include: insertion of one week for fall, spring break which usually is aligned with the PSS calendar, however, the recommendation is to have spring fall right in the middle of spring break, due dates for anticipated graduates, graduation moved from Saturdays to Fridays and then there's the winter break. Dean Cepeda also noted that dates are subject to changes provided that we give constituents are given proper notice.

**BOARD ACTION:** Regent Orilla motioned to adopt the Academic Calendar 2023-2027, seconded by Regent Sablan. Chairman Cepeda called for discussion. Regent Tudela wanted to clarify that the college has not had graduations in the fall and Dean Cepeda responded that we have not had one in quite a while. However, she explained that at one point we did have fall graduations, it was due to financial reasons that it was taken off the calendar. After much discussion, Chairman Cepeda called for the vote. All members voted yes, the motion passed.

### b) CRED A&E (30%)

President G shared the CRED A&E (30%) request with the board. Rachel Fusco shared the overall site plan/design of the CRED Building. Rachel briefly went over the proposed design, layout and landscape.

Patty Coleman, Interim Dean of CREES outlined some of the key highlights of the building layout and floor plan. She shared some of the process that they used to determine how they went about designing of the building; input from our CREES personnel, CNMI State program leaders, Research personnel and staff; input from our stakeholders, reached out across the land grant university for technical and some international experts. Additionally, one of the most distinguished characteristics of the building is the laboratories that we have in this building (research or extension). We've also looked into accreditation for in particular the science laboratory was well. Overall, the college was very diligent with regards to the requirements.

VP Frankie thanked the team at CREES for engaging all of their stakeholders and incorporating the lessons from the conference they attended.

President G shared that he appreciates the work that the CREES programs (research, extension and education) does for the community. He mentioned how CREES and its employees has been published in multiples academic journals around the world. When it comes to extension, they've secured millions of dollars in grants to help buy the research to help our community and then when it comes to education, they do amazing things, such as helping families live healthy lives. We are very excited for CREES to have a more permanent home.

Regent Tudela shared with the board that there were some discussions made within the committee and worth noting that there is room for expansion, indigenous modern, ensure proper drainage, and leadership, energy and environmental design. The CRED structure will be a state-of-the-art building. Chairman

Cepeda inquired about how we would fit Sea Grant program when this building is completed. President G said that they can share the spaces because the work overlaps with the land grant programs.

**BOARD ACTION:** Regent Tudela motioned that based on the NMC staff and the committee's recommendation to approve the 30% A&E design for the CRED building (substantial and significant changes can be expensive) and to allow the staff to work with the A&E designer all the way to the 100 percent documents and to move the construction phase as soon as possible, seconded by Regent Sablan. Chairman Cepeda asked for more discussion. There was none and Chairman Cepeda called for the vote. All members voted yes, the motion passed. Congratulations NMC CREES!!!

## **VI. NMC Executive Reports:**

### a) President's Report

- 1) President G said that in lieu of the facilities update, he will share some ongoing work with FEMA. He went on to say that the team is working to secure the green light to break ground on the Student Center. We had hoped to have a final announcement today, however, we are being told that it's going to be ready for announcement on Monday. VP Frankie shared that there are a lot of eyes on this project and there are high level individuals following its movement. VP Frankie also thanked Congressman Sablan's office for having his staff participate in these meetings with FEMA. Chairman Cepeda inquired about the next steps. President G said that its schedule and mobilize the ground breaking for the student center.

Other updates included the status of the Workforce Development Building. President G said that we are currently working with the A&E design firm who is also working with our stakeholders. It was shared that the 30 percent for the Workforce Development building should be ready in August. Chairman Cepeda asked about the NMHC project for the classrooms. VP Frankie said that the final negotiations with NMHC and the contractor is ongoing in the next few days. To respond to Chairman Cepeda's inquiry about other facilities updates, VP Frankie shared that for the Fina Sisu Lane project, DPW has moved forward and are now waiting for the CUC portion. The next project is the healthcare training center where we received \$1million for the A&E and still need help to get funds for construction. We want to make sure that this is regional training facility. There were other discussions and small successes that include the construction project manager, RFP for a project inspector, consultant, and cost savings, etc. Chairman Cepeda closed with the expectation that a ground breaking and the construction phase is in the near future.

### 2) Accreditation Update

Dean Charlotte Cepeda, Dean of Student Services/Accreditation Liaison Officer shared that the president established the accreditation team (A-Team) back in February. The team has met a lot recently and thanked Director Vilma, Office of Institutional Effectiveness for the planning and implementation of the plans in fulfilling the recommendations.

Dean Cepeda shared with the board the six (6) recommendations:

- a) Conclude and implement a new strategic plan in a timely fashion to guide the college over the next three to seven years, as well as implement the recently adopted facilities master plan

- b) Conclude the work of the governance review task force in a timely fashion to ensure consolidation and clarity of NMC governance structures, insist on streamlined efficiency, affirm effective academic leadership by faculty, and focus on institutional excellence
- c) Develop approaches to implement the draft strategic goal, ensuring the recruitment, retention and ongoing professional development of sufficient, qualified, and diverse faculty and staff
- d) Provide substantial and continuing support for the president, leveraging best practices in onboarding and development, to help the president achieve a focused set of initiatives early in the president's tenure
- e) Empower and resource information technology (IT) to reorganize and refocus the department in ways that establish clear responsibilities and business processes, provide support for academic programs, and improve the college's operational efficiencies
- f) Establish a standardized and centralized data reporting infrastructure with a sense of urgency to efficiently produce mandatory reports, provide consistent and reliable data that are widely accessible and that inform decisions at all levels of the college.

Dean Cepeda shared the status for each of the recommendations and the steps that are being taken to meet these recommendations. She shared that we also have a group called the Data Governance Planning group (DGPG) that was established in April 13, 2023. This group is assigned to assess the NMC's data governance and develop a data roadmap. Dean Cepeda also shared a timeline of the ongoing accreditation efforts for the interim report that is due in 2025.

### 3) CFO Report

President G shared with the board that there is a budget hearing with the Ways and Means scheduled for Monday and we are preparing for our presentation to the legislature. CFO Dave provided the financial highlights and shared that we are still in a financial situation and the college is still fronting a lot of the expenses, the government has not made the regular deposits to the college. To date, we have enough to pay our bills and operate the semester. Our collections are slow because the transfer for scholarships is not going through and the community is suffering as a whole. VP Frankie asked for the board's advocacy and support because we still need all the help that we can get especially as we face the legislature next week.

### 4) Legislative Updates

Kevin Bautista, Executive Director for the President's Office talked about legislative relations that we have with the government by creating a thematic approach by leveraging the strategic master plan.

## **VII.Miscellaneous Items**

Chairman Cepeda shared with the board that he and the president have been working on forming a Pacific Post-Secondary Council. The proposed meeting date is either August or September. President G said that PPEC is very supportive and as soon as some dates are identified we can provide the administrative support.

## **VIII.Executive Session**

President's Evaluation (March 2022-June 2023)

**BOARD ACTION:** Regent Orilla motioned to move into executive session at 4:44pm, seconded by Regent Sablan. All members voted yes, the motion passed. Executive Session ended at 5:09pm. Regent Sablan motioned to formally accept the president's evaluation, seconded by Regent Orilla. Chairman Cepeda called for discussion, there was none. All members voted yes, the motion passed.

Regent Sablan motioned to renew the president's contract for four years, and establish a retreat with the board within six months period, seconded by Regent Orilla.

Regent Orilla recommended to assign someone to work on the details of the president's contract, and recommend assigning Regent Sablan to work out the details, seconded by Regent Sablan. All members voted yes, the motion passed.

### **IX. Adjournment**

**BOARD ACTION:** Regent Torres motioned to adjourn the meeting at 5:17pm, seconded by Regent Sablan. All members voted yes, the motion passed.