



**NORTHERN MARIANAS COLLEGE  
BOARD OF REGENTS  
Special Meeting of February 25, 2021**

**Minutes**

**I. Call Meeting to Order**

The special meeting of the Board of Regents (BOR) of the Northern Marianas College was held on Thursday, February 25, 2021 in the BOR Conference Room, Saipan Campus. Regent Charles V. Cepeda., BOR Chairman called the meeting to order at 3:01 pm and called for roll of the members. Seven members were present and a quorum was established. Chairman Cepeda welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**a. Roll Call**

Regents Present:

Regent Charles V. Cepeda., Chairman; Regent Elaine Hocog-Orilla, Vice-Chairperson; Regent Michaela U. Sanchez, Treasurer; Regent Irene T. Torres; Regent Zenie P. Mafnas; Regent Jesse Tudela and Regent Michelle Sablan.

NMC College Staff/Faculty

David J. Attao (Acting Interim President); Polly DLG. Masga (Human Resources Director); Renedel Buno (Information Technology) and Becky Sablan (President's Secretary as Recorder).

Via VTC:

Breanna Lee (Nursing Faculty); Charlotte Cepeda (Interim Vice President of Learning & Student Success ((LSS)); Christine Aldan (LSS PLA Program); Dennis Marcelo (Interim Director of Information Technology((IT)); Diana Benavente (NMC Rota Center); Dr. Laura M. Taylor (Faculty Senate President); Dr. Randy R. Yates (SOE Faculty); Jean Castro (LSS CJ Program); Kaelani Demapan (LSS Counseling); Lisa Hacskaylo (Institutional Effectiveness; Maria H. Aguon (Executive Director of Tinian Center); Neda Deleon Guerrero (LSS Career Manager); Patricia Coleman (Interim Dean of CREES); Polly DLG. Masga (Director of HR); Raymond

Muna (LSS PLA Program); Renedel Buno (Information Technology); and Sue Atalig (NMC Tinian Center).

Others Present

Steve Nutting (Legal Counsel to the BOR); Leo Pangelinan (guest from the public) and Mark Mendiola (guest from the public).

Chairman Cepeda continued with the review and adoption of the agenda for the February 25, 2021 special meeting as follows:

**b. Review and Adoption of Agenda**

The board reviewed and approved the agenda with the following change:

Under number IV. New Business, move item b. Presidential Search to item d.

**Action:** Regent Orilla moved to adopt the agenda with changes and it was seconded by Regent Torres. All members voted yes and the motion carried.

**II. Public Comment Period**

Individuals may orally testify on items on the agenda during the Public Comment Period. Written testimony is also accepted. Oral testimonies are limited to five (5) minutes.

Dr. Laura Taylor, Faculty Senate President

Public comment was given by the President of the Faculty Senate, Dr. Laura Taylor. Dr. Taylor communicated her desire to speak on behalf of the Faculty Senate and the Presidential Search Committee (in which she served as a faculty representative) in regard to the Presidential Search process. She expressed her deep concern for NMC and most especially for its students regarding how the outcome of the search would affect the overall institution. She and the members of the search committee spent twenty-six interpersonal hours assisting in the search in addition to countless hours spent reviewing protocols and materials for the search and asked that the Board also recognize the many stakeholders who also contributed to the development. She emphasized the importance of a fair and transparent process in selecting the new president for the assurance of our continued accreditation. It is her hope that the Board will recognize their efforts and solely consider the committee's top three recommendations.

Chairman Cepeda thanked Dr. Taylor for her comments.

### III. Old Business

None.

### IV. New Business

#### FY2022 Appropriations Budget Request

Regent Torres, Chair of the BOR Finance Committee, reported to the full Board that the committee had met in the afternoon to review the College's Fiscal Year 2022 Appropriations Budget request. Mr. David J. Attao, Acting Interim President (IP), presented the College's proposal to the committee which totaled 16.4 Million dollars. Details of the request were noted in the packet submission.

**Action: Regent Torres moved to approve the College's FY2022 Appropriations Budget Request and it was seconded by Regent Sablan. Discussion.**

Acting IP Attao guided the regents through the budget packet and PowerPoint presentation he prepared.

Acting IP Attao thanked Regent Torres and the committee members for their recommendation of approval. The College upon receiving the Budget Call for its FY2022 Appropriations Budget by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), reviewed our numbers to submit a viable and realistic budget.

Highlights from the appropriations budget request were:

- Budget request commemorates our institution's 40<sup>th</sup> year anniversary this year.
- Cover letter from the Interim President and Board of Regents Chairperson. Letter identifies our needs and thanks the Governor for his continuous support of the College. Ensures we are using the funds prudently and shares the importance of NMC, showcasing our students and nurses at the front line responding to the COVID -19 pandemic.
- Funds for developing and offering critical workforce development programs.
- 114 current employees. 8 Partially funded by federal grants. 27 vacancies that need to be filled due to shortage of instructors (includes employee benefits). Total personnel cost at \$8.3 million.
- \$700K for utilities (power and water consumption for all three islands). Average use at the main campus at 300K but added 100K more for Tinian and Rota usage.
- Request includes funds of over 4 Million dollars for the initial startup of the College's new buildings/construction. Funding needed to get projects off the ground.

- Includes NMC CREES matching funds of \$1,670,000.00 (Half (50%) of the Hatch and Smith-Lever Act Grant, \$ 3.3 million). Acting IP Attao explained that in the past, the CREES program had been granted waivers to submit the matching funds due to economic hardship and natural disasters. The grantor agency recognized that the College has shown good faith and effort in trying to secure the matching funds and has required the CREES Program to show that good faith effort through our budget submissions for example.
- Includes our Mission Statement, Organizational Chart that was approved in 2018.
- Accomplishments reported in the Citizen Centric Report.
- Includes a request to fund Archives (Pacific Collection).
- **Total request: \$16,411,157.00**

**Action:** All members voted yes and the motion carried.

#### Digital Content Accessibility Policy (No. 8007)

The purpose of the policy is to establish all digital content created or obtained by Northern Marianas College such as documents, images and videos that are disseminated by electronic means (subject to the exceptions stated in this policy) to be made accessible.

Acting IP Attao explained that the policy would improve accessibility to most NMC content on its website to reduce basic barriers, provide alternative text and sound.

Chairman Cepeda asked if Legal Counsel had reviewed the proposed policy and if funding would be needed to support this requirement. Regent Orilla asked for its impact to the current budget request if any. Acting IP Attao said that the funding was already secured and available to procure the necessary software needed and that the policy conformed to sections 504 and 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (U.S. Federal law that protects qualified individuals from discrimination based on their disability). With the launching of our new NMC website planned for next month, the College looks forward to having the contents on our website available to all.

**Action:** Regent Orilla moved to adopt Policy No. 8007 –Digital Content Accessibility and it was seconded by Regent Sanchez. All members voted yes and the motion carried.

#### CEO Contract (WSCUC report)

Acting IP Attao informed the Regents that the item was on the agenda as a reminder to review the President's contract as it was one of the recommendations made from the Special Visit in 2014.

Chairman Cepeda informed the Regents that they have had these discussions with Legal Counsel and although the law states the initial contract term is two-years for all NMC employee contracts, after the initial term, it does not mean that they can't offer a further term for the President. The Chairman clarified that the item was on the agenda so that the Board understands its importance to accreditation standards. Regent Tudela emphasized that the Board was the forefront of the College and should ensure there is no ambiguity and Human Resources (HR) is to make certain that is stipulated.

The Chairman clarified that after the initial two-year term, or other terms reasonable to the Board of Regents as an option. Regent Orilla added that she had always questioned why we would offer two-years as this is not enticing at all. Now we know that we have options.

### Presidential Search Update

#### **V. Executive Session**

**Action:** Regent Orilla moved to enter into the executive session, seconded by Regent Torres. All members voted yes and the motion carried. Moved into executive session at 3:40 pm.

**Action:** Regent Torres moved to rise out of executive session at 4:11 pm, seconded by Regent Orilla. All members voted yes and the motion carries. Upon convening the meeting, the board did not take any action.

Discussion with Polly Masga, HR Director, on the upcoming working sessions relating to the Presidential Search process.

#### **Board Meeting Assessment**

Helen Camacho, Board Secretary emailed the electronic assessment form to the Regents to complete.

#### **VI. Adjournment**

**Action:** Regent Torres motioned to adjourn the meeting at 4:20 p.m., seconded by Regent Orilla. All members voted yes and the motion carried.

*Adopted April 28, 2021*