PUBLIC SESSION

People Present
Board Members
Chairman Vicente N. Santos, Vice Chairman Justin S. Manglona, Regent Manuel A. Sablan, Regent Helen H. Abayare, Regent John I. Schwarz, and Regent Teresa I. Taitano.

College Staff and Faculty
President Agnes McPhetres, Vice President Tee Abraham, Vice President Jack Sablan, Vice President Barbara Moir, Acting Provost School of Education Roy Fua, Comptroller Harris Lawrence, Bob Scruggs, Debbie Raumakita, Abner Weed, Ed Zehr, and Allen Cameron as recorder.

Others
Bill Romanowski, representing Securewest and Frank Henshaw, representing Premier Security, Benhur Saladores, reporter, Saipan Tribune; and Laila Younis, reporter, Marianas Variety.

At 10:05 a.m. Chairman Santos called the meeting to order in the Board of Regents conference room on the As Terlaje campus, and asked the President to call the roll. As all six members of the Board answered “Present,” the President announced that a quorum was present for the conduct of business.

I. Opening Procedures

Chairman Santos welcomed Messrs. Romanowski and Henshaw of two security system firms with offices located on Guam. Mr. Santos thanked the Board for their vote of confidence in re-electing him Chairman of the Board. He said that he foresaw lean years ahead for the CNMI, and hence for the College, due to the downward swing of the local economy.

Mr. Santos mentioned that he was encouraged by the support promised the College by the new CNMI Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and Legislative leadership at their meeting the night of January 29th. He expressed his appreciation of the work accomplished by the President during the past year and of the steps taken toward the accreditation of the School of Education. Mr. Santos indicated that he and the
President had set up a schedule to meet every Friday morning. He also thanked the Board members for their fidelity in attending meetings saying that of all government agencies the Board of Regents had not once failed to achieve a quorum over the past four years.

A. Review/Approval of Agenda
ACTION #1. It was moved, seconded, and unanimously approved to accept the agenda as presented.

B. Review/Approval of Minutes
ACTION #2. It was moved, seconded, and unanimously approved to accept the minutes of the November 24, and December 29, 1997 sessions.

(The following item was advanced for early presentation at this meeting as a courtesy to the visitors from Guam whose time was limited on Saipan today.)

V. New Business

A. Proposal for Improving Security (Tab 11)
As a courtesy to the visitors from Guam, the proposal for a College security system was taken as the first item of business. Mr. Bob Scruggs indicated that installation of the proposed security system with videos, monitors and 24-hour tapes would result in reduction of security costs, 12% the first year, 17% the second and 34% the third. Nine video-cameras would be strategically located around the campus. Security personnel would be reduced to two guards, one to observe the monitor and one to make rounds of the campus in a golf cart. There would be walkie-talkie communication between the guards. The central monitor would be located at the telephone operator’s desk in the Operations Office during the day. During periods of extended power outage, an additional guard would be employed. Mr. Scruggs indicated that the contract with the present Security Service ends on September 30. Mr. Lawrence sees the proposal as staying well within the FY 98 budget.

ACTION #3. It was moved, seconded and unanimously voted to approve the proposed security system for the College as presented by Messrs. Bob Scruggs, Bill Romanowski and Frank Henshaw.

II. Fiscal Committee’s Report

A. Financial Statement (Tab 2)
Regent Schwarz, Chair of the Fiscal Committee, introduced Comptroller Harris Lawrence to present the financial report. Mr. Lawrence reported that the endowment fund had earned $97,000 during the past year. He indicated that under the present “continuing resolution” funding the College would be $1 million short in Operations payroll and $500,000 short in Vocational Education payroll by the end of the year. He said that “continuing resolution” was based on actual funding received, not appropriations.
Regent Sablan suggested entering into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the new administration. Mr. Lawrence agreed that this would be helpful once the new administration had reviewed its financial position. He said they have always paid NMC’s utility bills, but that there is no such provision under “continuing resolution.”

Regent Sablan would like the College to be treated like any other Commonwealth agency in the matter of utility bills and the employer’s share of retirement premiums. Mr. Lawrence promised a draft of the final audit figures at the next meeting.

President McPhetres indicated that the College is still hoping to receive $233,000 from the Marianas Visitors’ Bureau and $47,000 in typhoon relief. She said the expense had to be incurred since there could be no delay in re-roofing typhoon-damaged buildings.

Mr. Lawrence reported that the Finance Office has been accepting 50% or more in pre-payment of tuition and fees from foreign students, and the remaining 50% within the month. President McPhetres indicated that the budget for the School of Education was prepared with a view to its accreditation by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges.

Regent Sablan remarked that the need to prioritize and cut costs was obvious to him in the present state of the CNMI economy. Mr. Lawrence reported that the Finance Office is presently coding fee revenues so that they can be allocated to specific departments. He said there is a need for a new software system, since integration is not possible between the two systems NMC presently has. The cost of a new system would be in the area of $500,000.

It occurred to Regent Sablan that those in the A.A. program aiming at eventual transfer to the School of Education should really be considered part of the B.A. in Education degree program, and under its supervision.

III. President’s Report:

A. Program Presentations:

1. Nursing Program: The Vice President for Instruction, Dr. Moir, introduced Ms. Debbie Raumakita, Chair of the Nursing Department. Ms. Raumakita reported that the department had dropped a “career ladder” program two years ago in favor of requiring prior completion of developmental English and math courses before entering the nursing program proper. The Nursing program demands 1237.5 hours in clinical work and 367.5 hours in lecture courses for a total of 1605 total contact hours over the areas of medical, surgical, obstetrics, pediatrics and mental health.

Ms. Raumakita indicated that enrollment is always low because of poor pay in this very demanding and essential profession. The Nursing program has the reputation of being a difficult one. She thought that perhaps a nursing program over its distance education network might be developed here for students in Micronesia. Currently
nursing students would normally be expected to be able to extract information from the Internet, needed in their courses. However, computers in the nursing department do not have enough memory for this purpose. Additional classroom space is also needed now for traditional class work.

Ms. Raumakita reported that nursing students are required to pass the National Nursing Board Examinations to practice as R.N.s. To date, most of the nursing students from Saipan or abroad who have taken the College’s NCLEX-RN review classes have achieved their RN degrees.

When questioned by Regent Sablan regarding current enrollment in the program, Ms. Raumakita responded that there were six students presently, with 13 expected to graduate in 1999 with the degree of Associate of Science in Nursing. There are an additional 34 students, who have declared Nursing their major, but are still working their way through developmental English and math courses. Ms. Raumakita reported that she is working with Mr. Patrick Tellei of PSS to establish a health occupations program on the high school level to encourage interest in a nursing career.

Regent Sablan said that there were some good-paying medical and para-medical career opportunities in the private sector on Saipan for computer-literate students. People who understand diagnosis codes can facilitate insurance reimbursement. Other wide-open fields are medical records technicians and pharmacists and their assistants. He said that the number one priority should be to correct the low salary problem. Ms. Raumakita pointed out that these positions require a 4-year degree in Medical Records or a 5-year degree in pharmacology which at this time we are not prepared to offer.

2. Marine Technology Program: Vice President Moir introduced Mr. Abner Weed who provided a thorough review of the program to date. He outlined the accomplishments during past school year as follows: 1. Inaugurating certificate programs in seamanship and scientific diving; 2. Developing an A.A.S. degree in Recreational Diving matching the curriculum of Santa Barbara City College; 3. Achieving the first graduates in the Scientific Diver program; 4. Providing eleven new SCUBA specialty courses; 5. Obtaining Academic Council approval of five degree and certificate programs in Recreational Diving, Scientific Diving, Public Safety Diving, and Seamanship and Small Boat Operation.

Mr. Weed reported that only two dive shops serve the local community, whereas 41 others serve tourist clientele and instruct in the several East Asian vernacular languages. In response to a question on certification, Mr. Weed said that dive shop certification is achieved mainly through association with one or more international diving organizations. At this point, the group recessed for lunch.

B. Student Enrollment (Tab 3): Vice President Moir presented statistics gathered by the Admissions and Records Office after Spring 1998 registration. They showed
a total enrollment of 1,078 with 914 on Saipan, 74 on Tinian and 88 on Rota (with 9 students on hold).

C. Accident Report (Tab 4): An accident report was provided by Jack Peters, Director, Business Development Center. The case is still pending. Regent Sablan remarked that when an employee is responsible for an accident, he/she is personally liable for the costs.

D. Trip Report (Tab 5): President McPhetres submitted a report on her participation on Kauai, Hawaii, in (1) the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) Accrediting Commission Meeting, January 7-8, 1998; (2) the Pacific Postsecondary Education Council meeting, January 9-10; and (3) a meeting of the Operation Maintenance Improvement Program (OMIP) of the U.S. Department of Interior.

E. Monthly Reports (Tab 6): These reports covered the months of November and December, 1997.

F. Travel Reports (Tab 7): This report covered the entire month of December, 1997.

IV. Old Business
A. Board Policy - Safety & Health (Tab 8): Regent Manglona, Chair of the Program Committee, presented a draft of Board Policy, Operational Services, #6004, and of Administrative Procedure, Operational Services, #6004. The Program Committee had met on January 29 to consider the proposed policy.

ACTION #4. It was moved, seconded, and unanimously voted upon to adopt the proposed Board of Regents Policy, Operational Services, #6004 on “Safety and Health” and the accompanying Administrative Procedure, Operational Services, #6004.

B. Accreditation of School of Education (Tab 9): President McPhetres reported that representatives of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) Accrediting Commission would be coming to Saipan in the spring 1998 as a step toward eventual accreditation of the School of Education. The President also announced that she was working with the CNMI House of Representatives for the passage of the Postsecondary Education Act of 1998, required by the Accrediting Commission.

C. Rota Vehicles (Tab 10): President McPhetres’ memorandum to the Board of Regents under date of January 27, 1998 regarded the request of Rota campus for a vehicle for use by administration and visiting faculty.

ACTION #5. It was moved, seconded, and unanimously voted upon to authorize the President to do whatever she could on this matter in the light of the Governor’s present cap of $5,000 for all but essential purchases.
V. New Business

A. Proposal for Improving Security (Tab 11): (Refer to page 2 above for the presentation of this proposal)

B. Goals for 1998 (Tab 12): President McPhetres stated that she was herein presenting a list of NMC’s Priority Initiatives for 1998. All eight items, she said, were within the compass of the NMC Strategic Plan. Regent Sablan stated that he wanted the Board of Regents to give the President maximum latitude in her administration of the College and its finances. He mentioned several percentages in the area of 90% or 95%, reserving the remainder for emergencies, as possible ceilings beyond which the President should consult the Board. He said that this matter could be discussed between the President and the Chairman of the Board of Regents at their next scheduled Friday meeting.

Regent Sablan also suggested that the President set up a meeting with a bank to look into the possibilities of an overdraft facility. President McPhetres said that the funds released by the Commonwealth government to NMC have varied under recent governors from quarterly to bi-weekly amounts. Regent Sablan wished the President to assure funding in three areas: the School of Education, retirement, and utilities.

C. FY 99 Budget (Separate Folder): Regent Sablan expressed his appreciation to the Office of Planning, Budget, and CIP, and Director Roger Madriaga for the work on the FY 99 Budget presented to the Board today. President McPhetres said that the Budget includes the first phase of the Tourism Training Center, if the Legislature agrees to it. Chairman Santos reminded the group that the Land Trust has owed the College in the area of $500,000/year for the past 10 years, and that finally the College should receive these funds.

ACTION #6 It was moved, seconded and unanimously approved to approve the FY 99 Budget and to authorize the President to submit it to the new Administration and follow up on it with the Commonwealth government accordingly.

VI. Executive Session

VII. Miscellaneous

A. Board of Regents: After the Executive Session President McPhetres introduced the issue of courtesy resignations brought up by Regent Sablan in the Board meeting of December 29, 1997. Regent Sablan stated at the meeting with the new leadership last evening, January 29, 1998, it was clear to him that the officials were satisfied with the Board as it stood and wanted them to remain as is.

President McPhetres spoke of the standard of the WASC Accrediting Commission that integrity of Board policy be maintained by the institutions it accredits. This continuity could not be preserved if the institution were subject to changes in Board of Regents membership every four years. She cited instances of postsecondary
institutions in the Pacific area whose accreditation was endangered and even lost for a time because of political interference.

Speaking further of the WASC Accrediting Commission policies, she expressed her gratification that the Commission is responding favorably to NMC’s providing 300-level courses in the School of Education.

Regent Sablan presented the following points in summation: (1) that the Scholarship Fund should be administered on the merit system; (2) that NMC continue to work with PSS to upgrade the high school English and math programs; (3) that NMC prioritize its choice of programs; (4) that he personally was proud of being a member of the Board; and (5) that the Board is in complete support of the President.

**B. Board of Regents Computer:** President McPhetres presented to the Board the computer located in the Board of Regents Conference Room. Vice President Abraham had earlier distributed keys to the room so that Board members could use the computer at their convenience. The President introduced Mr. Adrian Atalig of NMC’s Computer Services Department who provided a brief introduction to the use of this particular computer. All the Regents are listed on the Microsoft Exchange of the College.

**C. Miscellaneous:** Ms. Malinda Matson, Director of Information and Technology Services, announced that Radio Station KRNM would be a beneficiary of proceeds from a March combination Dinner and Operatic Music program to be presented on Saipan by the San Francisco Opera company.

Finally, the following action was also taken by the Board of Regents at this meeting: **ACTION #7.** It was moved, seconded and unanimously approved to authorize the President to make a payment of $12,000 to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) under audit of FY 93-94.

**Adjournment:** 3:15 p.m.