PUBLIC SESSION

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

College Staff and Faculty
President Agnes McPhetres; Vice President Tee Abraham; Vice President Barbara Moir; School of Education Provost Roy Fua; Legal Counsel Jesse C. Borja, Esq.; Faculty Senate President Ed Zehr; Comptroller Harris Lawrence; Fe Y. Calixterio; Emie R. Tadeo. Allen Cameron was recorder.

Others
Students Lourdes S. Castro, Timothy Deleon Guerrero, Peggy Salas, Chung Bong and Helene Lizama.

I. Opening Procedures

A. Welcoming Remarks by Chair and Roll Call: 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. Chairman Santos expressed appreciation to the Board members for their regular attendance. He mentioned that five members of the Board of Regents he had met with Governor Pedro P. Tenorio yesterday morning and that the Program Committee had met yesterday in the afternoon.

B. Review/Approval of Agenda:
ACTION #1: It was moved, seconded and approved to accept the agenda presented with the addition at the request of President McPhetres of two topics under Miscellaneous, namely A. Auxiliary Services; and B. Business Development Center.

C. Review/Approval of Minutes: Regular Meeting: March 27, 1998 (Tab 1)
ACTION #2: The minutes of March 27, 1998 were approved as presented.

Chairman Santos asked Ms. Lourdes Santos to present her problem with the recent increase in Grade Point Average (GPA) requirements for Graduation honors, as
announced recently in *The Word*. President McPhetres said that the changes were to have been announced in the new College Catalogue, the publication of which unfortunately has been delayed. The President recommended that the Board take action to postpone the effective date of the change in GPA requirements for Graduation honors till next academic year.

**Action #3:** It was moved, seconded and unanimously approved to postpone implementation of the new GPA requirements for Graduation honors till the 1998-1999 academic year.

II. **Fiscal Committee's Report:** Regent Schwarz reported that the President and five members of the Board of Regents had met with the Governor yesterday morning, with particular attention given to the expected shortfalls by the end of May for one area, and sometime in August for the second. Governor Tenorio acknowledged that till now he has not been aware of the magnitude of the College's financial problems, especially with regard to the Vocational Education and the CNMI Student Financial Aid programs.

A. **Financial Statement (Tab 2):** Regent Schwarz asked Comptroller Lawrence to introduce the financial statement the Board had received under Tab 2. Mr. Lawrence reported that the audit will be completed within the next two weeks. He explained that the College had been counting on the $800,000 Financial Aid money receivable for the Fall and Spring semesters to pay current bills. He explained that this fiscal year the College is still within its operating budget. It allows only a strictly proportional share of budget to be expended each month.

Regent Sablan, in view of the present downturn in government revenues and the necessity of operating on a “continuing resolution,” commended the College for its fiscal restraint in the matter of purchasing new equipment, limiting travel, keeping on hold the recent Board-approved “Compensation and Classification” plan, and not going beyond the present payroll. Mr. Harris stated that in the formation of the FY 99 budget the College will conform to the directives of the CNMI government. Mr. Sablan suggested a cut-back of 5% or 10%.

President McPhetres asked that the Board take no resolution to cut-back at present, but allow her to negotiate and work out finances with the Governor and Legislature. She also expressed to the Governor the College’s interest in floating a bond issue, obtaining a Commonwealth Development Authority (CDA) loan, and reprogramming Capital Improvement (CIP) funds to finance the planned Business and Tourism Learning Center (BTLC). She said she appreciated being involved with the “702 Master Plan” Committee.

On the matter of Student Financial Aid from the CNMI Scholarship Office, President McPhetres stated that the NMC students seem to have suffered from a policy of preferential treatment accorded off-island college students. Regent Sablan voiced
his objection to the any discriminatory treatment of NMC students. He expressed the need for someone to do something about the situation.

Regent Manglona stated that students from Tinian and Rota who are attending classes on Saipan should really be considered “off-island students,” since they must bear the extra expense of apartment/room rental, sustenance and transportation costs, none of which are covered by Financial Aid. Rota and Tinian students are severely disadvantaged as a result.

**B. NMC Foundation Plan of Action (Information):** Regent Schwarz stated that the Foundation Board was still making plans to generate the funds needed for the Business and Tourism Learning Center (BTLC).

**III. President’s Report**

**A. Program Presentation: Adult School/ Adult Basic Education (Separate Folder):** President McPhetres introduced Ms. Fe Y. Calixterio, Director of Adult Basic Education, to speak of the program. The program, Ms. Calixterio said, targets mainly high school dropouts, and provides a triple program of (1) Adult Basic Education (ABE), (2) General Educational Development (GED), and (3) the Adult School in order to enable students to achieve a high school equivalency diploma. This program is now in its first year extension following the three past years of federal funding. Ms. Calixterio reported that the new ABE classes opened in the community over the last two years have been filled to overflowing. Her hope after the high school equivalency diploma is to prepare the students for admission to NMC. She expressed the hope that the literacy education program for adults would receive CNMI funding, as it deserves.

**B. FY 99 Budget (Tab 3):** On the matter of the preparation of next year’s budget, President McPhetres reported that the advice she received from Ms. Victoria C. Villagomez, Director of the Office of Planning and Budget, was to check with her office before the College passes its next budget. She reported that $7.9 million had been budgeted and capped for the College, that P.L.10-66 (formerly 5-32) had set aside $3.5 million for professional programs, of which $500,000 was for a work experience program for students. The Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, the Honorable Karl T., Reyes, was instrumental, she said, in ear-marking an additional $300,000 to fund the new College “Compensation and Classification” plan.

The President reported that at the meeting of April 23 with the Governor, she had in response to his question indicated the costs of the architectural and engineering (A & E) plans for the Business and Tourism Learning Center (BTLC) have been met.. The President also indicated that the College is obliged to reimburse the Foundation for some $200,000 in early donations received before the establishment of the Foundation.
C. NMC/Rota High School (Information): President McPhetres and Chairman Santos reported that they had met with the new Mayor of Rota, His Honor Benjamin T. Manglona, who proposed a joint use of classrooms and computer labs by NMC and Rota High School. The new high school and NMC would share a common campus, consisting of part private and part public land. Chairman Santos spoke of the difficulties involved if “land exchanges” are involved. He also reported that a new College building on Rota is badly needed to replace the present structure. He added that Rota has $9 million in CIP funds as yet unexpended. The President said that a master plan is needed first.

D. Monthly Reports (Tab 4) & E. Travel Reports (March, 1998) (Tab 5): President McPhetres presented these two sets of reports for the members’ reading.

IV. Old Business: Program Committee Chairman Manglona reported that the Program Committee at its meeting yesterday had taken action and recommended approval by the whole Board today of the following items A, B, C (as amended), D, and F.

A. Budget Authorization, Policy # 2550 (Tab 6): Regent Sablan questioned the necessity of both the Finance and the Budget Offices being involved in establishing account numbers. Vice President Tee Abraham said the reason was so that the chart of accounts would agree with the object codes on the budget worksheets. Regent Sablan said that he thought the Comptroller to take the lead without need to consult and in so acting would conform to the normal procedures of the government.

Regent Sablan said to his way of thinking some salary assignments made by the College were too subjective. He questioned salaries which are based on longevity of service. He said that salaries should be based rather on what the College considers important namely, educational service in the Pacific area, academic degree, experience, etc.. President McPhetres said that we also have to consider the College’s Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action policy. She said that perhaps legal counsel should review our practices so that we can avoid favoritism.

Regent Sablan inquired why was it that some employees start at step 6, and not at step 1. When making application for employment, prospective employees are asked to set down the minimum salary they will accept, and that should be step 1 for that individual. Regent Manglona and President McPhetres expressed the thought that perhaps we should revisit the process and review again the College’s “Compensation and Classification” plan.

B. Recruitment and Hiring Practices, Adm. Proc. # 4008, p. 4 (Tab 7):

C. Vacation Leave, Adm. Proc. # 4301 (Tab 8): (deleting “416,” page 1, lines 7 & 8, and inserting “360,” as the maximum of vacation leave hours that may be accumulated. - as recommended by the Program Committee 04/23/98)
D. Suspension and Termination, Adm. Proc. #4352 (Tab 9)

**ACTION POSTPONED:** A motion to vote approval of all four of the above items, A through D, was later withdrawn, and consequently, Board action on items A - D was postponed.

E. Trimester Sessions (Tab 10): President McPhetres reported that this policy has been proposed to the faculty and student body, who are to be most affected. The students have given Administration a mandate to consider the trimester system further and explore all of its ramifications.

F. *Man’amko* Tuition Waiver (Tab 11): The adoption of 55 was recommended as the qualifying age for a senior citizen, since such is the practice of the CNMI Office of Aging.

**ACTION #4:** It was moved, seconded and unanimously approved to adopt the recommended tuition waiver using the age of 55 as the criterion of a senior citizen.

G. College Seal (Tab 11): (Suggestions of various artists have been sought.)

H. Support Services & Division of Instruction Re-organization (Tab 12): (President McPhetres stated that she is not yet ready to propose a re-organization plan for Board action. It may have to wait until next month’s meeting.)

V. New Business

A. Academic Council Policy: President McPhetres indicated this is a first time presentation to the Board. Board action may be taken at the next meeting.

B. Request for Sabbatical Leave: For John R. McCollom, Instructor, Business Management.

**ACTION #5:** It was moved, seconded and unanimously voted to approve the sabbatical leave for John R. McCollom for one year.

VI. Miscellaneous: Considered here are topics added to the agenda by President McPhetres:

A. Auxiliary Services: President McPhetres reported that the Auxiliary Services Advisory Board had asked the President to make an appointment to contact the owner of Saipan Catering Services (SCS) regarding the overdue renewal of SCS’s business license. This has been done, but as yet there has been no response from the owner.
B. Business Development Center (BDC): The Business Development Center is considering a plan next year to coordinate a Conference on Economic Development in the CNMI. BDC would invite participants from the Pacific and East Asia.

C. Student Center: President McPhetres reported that everyone is delighted with the transformation of the old PSS kitchen in Building M into an attractive Student Center and a Tutorial Center. A faculty member has recently remarked that the Student Center is one of the finest accomplishments of the Board of Regents. He reports improved attendance at afternoon classes as a result. Apparently, many students now no longer leave campus at the noon break but after study and prepare for class in the comfort and relative quiet of the renovated Student Center.

VII. Executive Session

A. Legal Counsel

VIII. Adjournment: 12:40 p.m.