APPROVED MINUTES
for
the Special Meeting
of the
BOARD OF REGENTS
on
MARCH 22, 1999

PEOPLE PRESENT:

Board Members:
Chairman Manuel A. Sablan, Vice Chairman Justice Ramon G. Villagomez, Regent Teresa I. Taitano, Regent Abelina Cing Cabrera, Regent Helen Abayare, Regent Vincent J. Seman, and Regent Fermin M. Atalig were present.

NMC Faculty and Staff:
President Agnes M. McPhetres; Legal Counsel Jesse C. Borja, Esq.; Vice President Jack Sablan; Vice President Tee Abraham; Vice President Dr. Barbara Moir; Provost Roy Fua, School of Education; Comptroller Harris Lawrence; Malinda Matson; Mike Jenck; Jeannette Villagomez; Janice Tenorio; Eric Plinske; Kohne Ramon; Rosamond Rice; Dr. Diana Greenough; Tony DL Guerrero; Rik Villegas; Danny Wyatt; Dr. Nancy Flood; Ray Mafnas; David Atalig; Jim Ellis; Al Johnson; Ed Camacho; George Pangelinan, and Ed Zehr. Julie Ulloa-Heath and Allen Cameron were present as recorders.

Others:
Student Council Officers Shirley Santos; Hazel Tudela; Zerlyn Alcazar; students Hilbert H. SanNicolas, Domie Govendo; Catherine Anderson; Airika Actouka; and Visitor Ron Barrineau. Reporters Sheila Amor, Saipan Tribune; René P. Acosta, Marianas Variety; TV Cameraman Tony Cobb, Marianas Cable Vision.

Roll Call: President McPhetres called the roll at 10:15 a.m. All seven members of the Board of Regents answered “present,” thus constituting a quorum for the transaction of business.

Agenda:
I. Opening Procedures: Welcoming Remarks by Chair
II. Reorganization
III. Presidential Issue
IV. Adjournment

I. Opening Procedures: Welcoming Remarks by Chair: Student Hilbert H. SanNicolas asked for permission to present a written petition signed by students asking that the President not be allowed to resign at this time. Student Council President Shirley Santos presented her comments, stressing that the petition was biased and that the
Student Council had nothing to do with it... Student Domie Govendo presented her appreciation of the sacrifices President McPhetres had made for the College over the years, adding that the President should be allowed to retire with dignity as she wished and when she wished.

Vice Chairman Justice Villagomez clarified that the President’s letter to the Board of Regents was a letter of intent to retire at the end of the year, and not a letter of resignation.

President of the Faculty Senate, Rik Villegas, requested to be allowed to read a copy and present a stack of 93 petitions signed by faculty members, requesting that the Board not accept the President’s offer to resign, but that, if it was her desire to retire, the Board allow her to do so with dignity.

Chairman Sablan clarified that the March 16 letter of the President to the Board was a letter of intent that she planned to retire in December after taking three months of accumulated annual leave. In the letter the President also stated that she was prepared to submit her resignation, if so required by the Board. Chairman Sablan said that the Board would dispose of this issue today.

Vice Chairman Villagomez stated that two Fridays ago at the HEW oversight hearing the allegation was made that there existed a conflict of interest for Comptroller Harris Lawrence and David J. Burger, CPA. auditor of NMC finances, Justice Villagomez wished publicly at this time to set the record straight. Mr. Lawrence had terminated his business relationship with Mr. Burger’s firm before accepting employment at the College.

II. Reorganization. Chairman Sablan introduced the second item on the agenda, and asked for the President’s report on the Reorganization Plan for the remainder of FY 1999 and for FY 2000. President McPhetres explained that this second reorganization was occasioned by the continued downturn in government funding, about 2.8% less than the previous estimate. She said she had invited all faculty and staff via e-mail to offer their opinions, and she had held two meetings, one for faculty and one for staff regarding reorganization. She said that Julie Ulloa, Stanley Mar and Ed Camacho, who had worked on the previous reorganization plan in December, worked closely with her on the present proposal. For FY 1999 the plan proposed a reduction of personnel expenditures in amount $166,859.52, and an additional reduction of $141,053.18 in FY 2000.

In response to a question of Chairman Sablan, Mr. Lawrence indicated that we would be back on even keel for the next quarter for payroll, and that no revenues are anticipated to be received from the Educational Assistance Program (EAP).

Referring to the current reorganization plan, President McPhetres said that vice presidents/provosts had been reduced from four to one, the number of deans from seven to four, and ungraded positions from 18 to 10.
Regent Seman asked if personnel had been eliminated or moved to other positions. President McPhetres answered that there is a need to give a 90-day notice to those personnel eliminated. Among positions eliminated were 2 Vice Presidents, a Provost and some Deans’ positions had been changed to Directors.

In answer to a question of Vice Chairman Villagomez, the President responded that the College would function well in the tightened circumstances, and the programs in nursing, accounting and computer education would be strengthened. She added that in cases of Reduction in Force (RIF), Board policies and procedures, as found in the black folder distributed to Board members today, would be followed strictly.

**ACTION #1 (not voted on):** It was moved and seconded to adopt the reorganization plan to downsize for purposes of discussion, but not voted on.

Tony DL Guerrero stated that he was not able to give input into the reorganization plan on the in-depth effects of the plan. He said he believed the plan might adversely affect the quality of service. President McPhetres responded that the new reorganization would not affect the quality of existing programs, because the Department Chair’s responsibility is to insure the program’s quality. To judge from her two open meetings with faculty and staff, she said the major difference would be reporting to a different dean. The changes would not affect the quality of instruction. Mr. Ray Mafnas suggested that the salary be commensurate with responsibilities.

Regent Atalig expressed concern over who would report to the President for the Financial and Administrative Services division. David Atalig remarked that there should be checks and balances between the two sections, Accounting and Budget sections, under the Financial and Administrative Services. Rik Villegas recalled that there was much input into the reorganization plan in December, 1998. Justice Villagomez thought that a couple of weeks of input would be fine.

As a result of the above interventions, ACTION #1 was withdrawn by proposer, Vice Chairman Villagomez, who expressed the idea that there was need to talk to more people.

**ACTION #2:** It was then moved by Regent Atalig, seconded and approved unanimously to refer the reorganization plan to the Board of Regents Personnel and Fiscal Committees who would work with the President and administration for the purpose of allowing more input within the College community and to report back to the Board of Regents within two weeks.

Regent Seman expressed the desire to meet with the BOR Personnel Committee so as to be able to answer questions of the House HEW Committee in the future.

Chairman Sablan announced that the Board’s decision on the reorganization plan would be postponed for two weeks, though he expressed a preference for a one
week’s wait. He also suggested that the College revisit the reorganization plan and conduct in-house hearings.

Regent Abayare suggested that both the Fiscal Committee and the Personnel Committee could work together.

Student Shirley Santos was recognized and she brought up the problems the Student Council officers have had in managing the Student Center following the reassignment of Daisy Villagomez, former Associate Director of Student Activities. President McPhetres asked that the officers see her regarding their responsibilities, which may be more burdensome than the stipend justifies. Ed Camacho concurred that the Student Center plus normal classes may make the job a bigger burden than was intended. Vice Chairman Villagomez suggested to the students that if they have a problem they should seek a solution through proper channels. Chairman Sablan made the suggestion to the students that if the Board of Regents meetings are scheduled at a time not convenient for them, they should let the President know.

There was a break and the Board then went into an executive session. Upon reconvening the special meeting, the Board addressed item III on the agenda.

III. Presidential Issue:

**ACTION #3:** It was moved, seconded and unanimously approved that the Board members accept the President’s letter of intent to retire in December, 1999, and that she take her accumulated annual leave; that the Board accepts the President’s recommendation that there be an acting President while she is on leave; that the Board begin the search for a new President; that the day-to-day management be delegated to the Acting President; and that the President concentrate her time working on the Master Plan, the implementation of assessment and evaluation activities, the annual report, the new College Catalogue, and the self study required for accreditation purposes.

IV. Adjournment: 12:10 p.m.