Call to Order:

I. Preliminary Matters

A. Present

1. Members: Fermin Atalig, Kimberlyn King, Eloise Furey, Galvin Dl Guerrero

2. Staff & Faculty: President Joaquin Sablan, Jesse Blorja, Esq., Vince Merfalen, Vince Riley, Chas Algaier, David Dlg Atalig, Burce Johnson, and Dr. Barbara Moir.

3. Other guests of the college: Congressman William Torres

B. Agenda was reviewed and approved with addition of “Vacancies of the BOR” under the Miscellaneous Section

C. Minutes of June 20, 2001 was reviewed and unanimously adopted

II. EUCON – Application for Licensure as a Postsecondary Education Institution.

A. The BOR Program Committee has been meeting regularly on this matter as well as on the BOR Policy on licensure. The last meeting was yesterday with Dr. Wei, President of EUCON International College.

B. We sent to EUCON, about a week and a half ago, a copy of the BOR Policy on Licensure of Postsecondary Educational Institutions. The members of the Committee agree that in fairness to EUCON, they will need more time to fill in the gaps in their application. A reasonable compromise is to grant a 9-month provisional license. The provisional period will be used by EUCON to update their application.

C. Motion: to grant a 9-month provisional license to EUCON International College. That the first three months of the provisional period will for EUCON and the BOR to communicate on the requirements of the policy and for EUCON to gather data and prepare an update to their application. That the second 3 months will be start providing the BOR with the updates. The final 3 months of the provisional period will be for the BOR to review the updates and make a decision on the license.
D. Discussion:

1. The provisional period will allow EUCON to begin immediately to function as a school.
2. 9 months will be sufficient to complete a school year.
3. Since this is a first for the BOR, it will also allow the BOR to evaluate the new policy and any possible improvements.
4. Regent Guerrero emphasized the policy clearly indicates that a provisional license is used in this situation when there is missing material.
5. Regent Furey points out that although the BOR was given documents describing the EUCON International College, there was never a formal / written request for the BOR to grant them a license.
6. Dr. Wei thanked the Board for all their efforts and time spent on EUCON’s quest for licensure. For the record, Dr. Wei gave a verbal confirmation that the documents in front of the BOR at this time was intended to be the EUCON application for license.
7. Chairman: “I would like to make one thing clear… that the media has portrayed the Board of Regents as not supporting. I’d like to make it clear that there is no intention to withhold, to stop, or to stall the application of EUCON or anybody else. We welcome competition. If Northern Marianas College is not doing its job we want to recognize that and we will correct that. And it is not to block anybody from coming in as what is portrayed in the media. I’m sorry, that this has come to this but we are supporting you Dr. Wei.
8. Regent Guerrero: “We met with Dr. Wei yesterday to really clarify some or what’s been said in the media and some communications. And it came to, our understanding, that there are just a lot of miscommunications or a lack there of, lack of communication period. So I would like to make a friendly amendment to my motion to really add emphasis to our obligation to the next three months to thoroughly review their submission and thoroughly communicate to them what we expect more of them, from what more expect. Because from what I understand Eucon, Dr. Wei misunderstood the proper process and I’m not sure exactly why, but I just wanted to make sure that there is no room for understanding.”

E. Motion carried unanimously

III. Congressman William Torres
A. Chairman and members of the Board, I have developed a keen interest in seeing to it that other privately operated institutions of higher learning have ample opportunities to flourish here in the CNMI.

B. I’m happy to see that the college [NMC] has expanded so much. And that clearly shows how healthy the environment here in the commonwealth.

C. I think that there’s also room for concern. I would like the record to reflect that this provision [to license postsecondary educational institutions] mandates, not on the college [NMC], but on the Board of Regents, to provide policy and procedures. If I remembered correctly, this provision has been in the book since 1985. It just amazes me that an important fundamental such as this has escaped the eyes of our leaders. And this is not to place any finger on anybody, but it is just an observation.

D. I think you all are correct in saying that we need to make sure that there is adequate and continuous communication. That is extremely important.

E. Second, you know there is a lot of interest in other institutions coming in for whatever reasons and I hope it is the right reason and not for any other reason, other than to educate, to provide educational facilities for the local people and non-local, alike. There are people waiting, to come in that has, approach the legislature and I hope that they approach you, because the Legislature is not the forum for these people to go to. They should go to the Board of Regents. So, I would like to stress that point, that the Legislature is not a licensing body. It is there to help in whatever way possible to develop these kinds of institutions who offer these kinds of services to the people.

F. Finally, I would like to bring to attention of the Board, the issue of a licensing authority to license privately operated institutions, but publicly operated institutions as well. Now, that may be an over sight, I don’t know. We do not want any institution circumventing the intent of the law by not being sanction directly by the Board of Regents to operate and offer services here in the CNMI. There are also online universities, floating universities, how are we going to regulate this? We need to figure this out because I believe it is a way of circumventing the intent of the law.

G. Your power is very broad and you not only regulate private institutions but public as well. Any government entity who desires to establish an institution of higher learning other than the Northern Marianas College, will have to apply for licensing. That is the law and we will be more than happy to receive your comments and your views as to how you would like to see that interpreted or improved. But until that is done, I think there is going to be continuing confusion on this issue and we are ready to act on that, with your guidance.

H. Congressman Torres: “I would like to thank the committee for it’s hard work. I know there has been a lot of public statements made about EUCON and their
attempt to get a license. I am sometimes baffled over the process... but then again everything is new, it’s a new policy, it’s a new procedure. So that’s, sort of my limited observation at this time. Thank you!”

IV. Reports

A. Program Committee report by Regent Guerrero

1. the policy as we approved it lacks any kind of guiding or substantial criteria, it’s very vague. The only evaluated phrases here is “within the public interest of the CNMI”, and I think that’s too vague.

2. I think we need to, other the Program Committee or the Board, revisit the policy

3. Some kind of a tool? or maybe even something written into the policy.

4. Chairman: Okay, so that’s what we have to do in the next three months, come up with an evaluation tool. Guerrero: Yes, Exactly!

5. Furey: Go back to our Program Committee and discuss how to get new tool

6. rero: Maybe, we can come up with the tool without having to change the policy.

7. Chairman: I’m sure that we have expertise in the college that can help us/advise us. I would like to ask the president to make this … available.

8. Hinds: Can you do that though, being that what we’re doing is not NMC

9. Legal Council: The Board can make use of any extra assistance that deems appropriate, now your fear is that there may be a conflict with the situation coming up. In this situation, if there are other experts, of course, on the island that you can make use of, then, perhaps you can look at that first, but if there are none, as long as we disclose the possible conflict, then you guys make the final decision. You know, you’re just listening to the NMC staff in terms of what their opinion is then I think you are protected.

B. Personnel Committee: Regent Hinds

1. Regent Hinds introduced the new procedures for the drug-free policy.

2. President Sablan presented
   a. The procedures before the BOR outlines how we will carry out the requirements of BOR Policy.
b. Background information: The Administration assigned a committee of faculty and staff to develop the drug-free procedures and make a recommendation to the Management Council.

c. The Management Council approved the recommendations and got the BOR Personnel Committee endorsement at their last meeting.

d. We ask the BOR not only to support our efforts but also to be mindful of the impact of implementation. Our plan is to implement the procedures next Spring Semester. In the mean time we will be training our staff and supervisors on the policy and the procedures.

C. Fiscal and Legislative Committee: Regent Furey

1. Chairman acknowledges the fact that Regent Furey was appointed as Chair of the Fiscal and Legislative Committee just a few days prior.

2. Regent Furey: “Proceeding with my responsibilities as the new Chair of the Fiscal and Legislative Committee, I would like to meet with the President on the current financial situation and status of the college.” The Chair would like to start by reviewing the 2002 priorities.

3. Regent Guerrero, member of the F/L Committee, reported on the tax rebates of students owing monies to NMC.

   a. Met with Ms. Lucy Nielson to discuss the possibility of withholding student tax rebates.

   b. Ms. Nielson said that it is an administrative matter and not a BOR matter. The process would be initiated by a letter from the NMC President to Ms. Nielson.

   c. Chairman Atalig asked the President to expedite this matter.

D. Associated Students of NMC: Patricia Borja, ASNMC Vice resident and Student Representative to the BOR.

1. ASNMC is currently conducting orientation of its new officers.

2. ASNMC submitted yesterday their budget proposal (tuition and fees).

3. Ms. Borja asked for an update on the issue of establishing an honorary student position on the BOR. This was referred to Legal Counsel for review and opinion. A copy of the Legal Counsel’s response will be sent to ASNMC soon as it is received.

4. Regent King stated that the students on Tinian would like to establish a student association of their own.
a. They were advised that only one ASNMC is chartered.

b. President Sablan explained that there is only one NMC and one student association. Students can form student groups and have representatives on ASNMC.

c. Regent Hinds expressed that Tinian students are concerned that they do not get the same benefits as those on Saipan. The only benefits that students would get is the stipend that is paid to the ASNMC Officers. All qualified students, from all campuses may run for an ASNMC position.

E. President

1. President Sablan introduces a proposal for a Business Development Center. Congressman William Torres explains the proposal.

a. The idea originated on or about 1988 but could not overcome funding obstacles.

b. The federal Economic Development Authority (EDA) is offering $1 million to establish a Hospitality and Business Center. We are in competition with Guam and other institutions in the Pacific. The offer requires a $1 million matching contribution.

2. A one page letter of intent from the BOR is necessary. Chairman Atalig asked the President to draft the letter and the Program Committee to review it. Final draft due next Tuesday.

F. Faculty Senate: Vince Riley

1. The Faculty Senate is currently working on their budget proposal

2. Mr. Riley announced that the next meeting of the Faculty Senate will be on September 21, 2001. Regents are invited to attend.

Adjourn: 12:05 p.m.