

**Board of Regents Regular Meeting
Monday, April 29, 2024
1:00 pm
Macey Center Galena Ballroom
NMT Main Campus**

MINUTES

The New Mexico Tech Board of Regents convened at 1:00 pm on Monday, April 29, 2024, with Regent Chair Jerry Armijo presiding. Board members present were Dr. David Lepre, Dr. Yolanda Jones King, Dr. Srinivas Mukkamala (via Zoom) and Adrian Salustri. Other University administrators, staff and guests included President Mahyar Amouzegar, Dr. Michael Jackson, Dr. Michael Doyle, Dr. Van Romero, Richard Cervantes, Dr. David Greene, Dr. Rick Thompson, Vanessa Grain, Juliann Ulibarri, Dr. Robert Balch, Dr. Michael Timmons, Dr. Brian Borchers, JoAnn Salome, Alex Garcia, Jenny Ma, Emma Aafloy, Valentina Avramidi, Dylan Purcell, Donna Essel, Tammy Roof, Laura Lee Hunt, John Ryan, Anne Green Romig, Jay Cox; and Mark Adams, Dr. Myrriah Tomar and Dr. Callum Bell (via Zoom).

1. Call to Order. Regent Chair Armijo called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm.

a) Proof of Meeting Notice. Ms. Grain confirmed that legal notices were placed in the *Albuquerque Journal* and *El Defensor Chieftain*.

2. Approval of Agenda. Regent Lepre moved to approve the agenda. Regent King seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

3. Public Comment. None.

4. Recurring Reports.

a) SGA Updates. None.

b) GSA Updates. The GSA is closing out the semester, reported GSA President Purcell. He introduced his successor, Donna Essel, who ran unopposed for the position. Ms. Essel is a Master's Degree student in Petroleum Engineering.

c) Student Life. Fall 24 semester applications started with 1290, reported VP Greene. New applications number 221, down 13 compared with last year. Dr. Greene expects an increase once the FAFSA forms start coming in. While not required for the Opportunity and Lottery scholarships, the FAFSA makes students eligible for additional scholarships and federal Pell grants. In reply to questions from Regent King regarding student food assistance, VP Greene noted that NMT has a complete food pantry and a community garden, adding that the pantry was moved to the third floor in Fidel for greater privacy. Some students may qualify for SNAP benefits, but the program would require a full-time employee to process applications.

d) Academic Affairs. VP Jackson reported that several hundred New Mexico mid- and high-school students across 99 teams competed in last weekend's Miner Mayhem robotics competition on campus. Regent King attended the event and recognized Dr. Curtis O'Malley of the Mechanical

- Engineering Dept. for doing a great job. The competition also drew a number of state legislators.
- e) **Admin. & Finance.** VP Cervantes reported that the University is negotiating an amended lease with NRAO regarding their headquarters leased from NMT. Regent Armijo noted that he, and then-interim President Dr. Dan López, VP Romero and Mayor Bhasker met with NRAO staff on how to better the NMT-NRAO partnership, and what services the University can provide. Regent Armijo emphasized the need for further engagement with NRAO. In the past nine months, VP Cervantes has met with NRAO staff five times, generating much dialogue, including addressing unmet infrastructure needs.
 - f) **Research.** VP Doyle reported pulling together a working group with faculty, research staff, ICASA and representatives from Electrical Engineering, Math, Computer Science and Physics to brainstorm ideas on how to respond to an NSF solicitation regarding its new interest in spectrum science, relevant to the next generation of the VLA. At a recent event at LANL, Dr. Doyle visited with Dr. Patricia Henning of NRAO on additional NMT-NRAO research collaborations to make the University more relevant to them. Dr. Doyle noted that discussions are under way with the City of Albuquerque to develop a software factory as a pipeline for high-paying and high-demand jobs for NMT students. In very early discussions is to create a consortium with NMSU and UTEP to develop a semiconductor manufacturing plant through the CHIPS Act.
 - g) **Special Research.** VP Romero reported a March 27 accident on a U.S. Forest Service road leading to the MRO involving a crane supplied by Crane Services. He noted the need to work with the Forest Service and NMT engineers on how to improve the road.
 - h) **Bureau of Geology.** Director Timmons reported that 70 individuals attended a Bureau workshop headed by Dr. Shari Kelley on April 18 at the Fidel Center, “Advancing Geothermal Development in New Mexico,” and another 30 participated in Zoom. The event was kicked off by state Senator Gerald Ortiz y Pino, who facilitated funding from the state. Among attendees were representatives from federal and state agencies, research universities, industry, LANL and Sandia labs and tribal leaders. To date, 180 people have registered for a Water Data Initiative workshop on May 10 in Albuquerque; and 98 have signed on for a Water Leaders workshop on May 22 at Ghost Ranch focused on decision-makers to include 21 legislators, five tribal representatives, 33 state agencies and seven federal agencies. The Bureau received \$600k from the USGS to support state-wide mapping program activities and another \$91k to improve data preservation/modernization. In addition, Dr. Raul Deju has increased his pledge to the Bright Star Scholar Program from \$30k to 50k; the Bureau is seeking matching funds.
 - i) **PRRC.** Director Balch reported that FY24 was a really good year for PRRC, including a \$5 million grant to clean up produced water and for lithium mining. Grant funds total \$67 million, with 33 proposals still out for review. Regent King noted that she went to high school with the new Secretary of Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Melanie Kenderdine, and suggested she be invited to campus.
 - j) **President’s Report.** The sign of a good leader is to have an amazing leadership team, said President Amouzegar, adding that he is looking forward to meeting and collaborating with faculty and staff. Regent Armijo thanked Dr. Amouzegar and former Interim President López and their spouses for graciously hosting the President’s Club Dinner on April 27, which he described as very elegant. Regent Armijo wanted to recognize the following offices and individuals for organizing the gala event: **Advancement** – Director Colleen Foster, Megan Van Winkle, Sandi Lucero, Rhiannon



Ross, Ashlie Gonzales, Stephanie Chavez, Rebecca Clemens and Samantha Barnash. **Marketing** – Director Peter Szatmary, Jay Ann Cox, Lydia Gonzales, Haley Hanson and Sindy Haley. Regent Armijo and Regent King both commented that Chartwell’s also did an excellent job.

5. Information Items

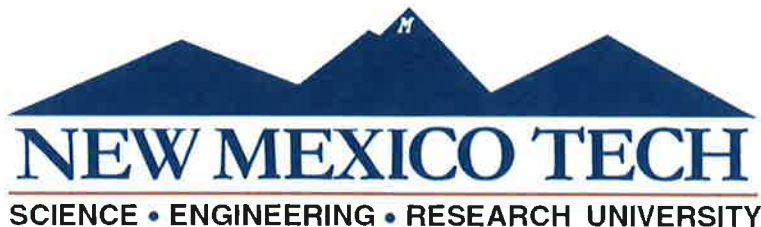
- a) **NMT Foundation Updates.** None.
- b) **NMT Univ. Research Park Corp. Updates.** In her report, Regent King said the next scheduled meeting will be in Albuquerque to discuss the Strategic Plan. Dr. Bell has been interviewing attorneys following retirement of the Research Park’s former counsel.
- c) **NM HERC Updates.** Regent King noted that Student Regent Randy Ko is no longer with HERC, and that the new Student Regent at NMSU will do a good job as President. Dr. King reported that she linked in with the advisory board for broadband, and that the broadband for the statewide educational network will launch on June 3.
- d) **NMT Finance Subcmte/Legislative Updates.** Subcommittee Chair Lepre reported a good turnout for the inaugural Spring Budget Forum on April 3, noting online audio issues and a three-hour agenda that left little time for public comment, and appreciated the feedback from staff and faculty. Co-chair Salustri called the forum a good step in the right direction and a learning experience on how to improve the process for future meetings which will focus on NMT’s priorities for the 2025 Legislative Session. Regent Lepre noted that the LFC will meet on campus on July 15, giving the University an opportunity to tell its story, which doesn’t happen at LFC hearings in Santa Fe. NMT would like to eliminate the requirement for capital project matching funds, as previously done under HED Secretary Rodriguez. Another LFC focus is a university’s return on investment (ROI), Lepre said, adding that the NY Times named New Mexico Tech as having the best ROI value in the state. The Governor would like to invite the Board and others to visit with her in Santa Fe this summer, with the prospect of a gubernatorial visit to campus as well.
- e) **NMT Research Subcmte.** None
- f) **NMT Student Updates.** Regent Salustri recognized the outgoing and incoming GSA Presidents.
- g) **Restricted Fund Purchase Notification >\$100k.** VP Cervantes informed Regents of an equipment purchase for \$730k to EMRTC for a Homeland Security training program through the National Domestic Preparedness Consortium.
- h) **Quarterly Financial Report as of 03/31/24.** VP Cervantes explained the report to Regents and President Amouzegar.

6. Action Items

- a) **Approval of March 06, 2024 Minutes.** Regent King moved to approve the Minutes as presented. Regent Salustri seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.
- b) **Approval of Rio Sol Option Agreement.** Chair Armijo explained that a previous Board and administration entered into negotiations for a transmission line to provide clean energy for communities in New Mexico and Arizona. He introduced Ms. Lorelee Hunt from Rio Sol, who explained that the project time line, deliverables and agreements. NMT attorney Adams reviewed the documents saying the proposal is sound and good for NMT. Regent King moved to approve the agreement with Rio Sol as contained in Regents’ packets. Regent Salustri seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.
- c) **Approval of Emeritus Status for Dr. Snezna Rogelj.** At the request of the Department of Biology

and based upon over 25 highly productive years with NMT, VP Jackson recommended Board approval granting Emeritus Status for Professor Rogelj. Regent King so moved, followed by a second from Regent Salustri. The motion passed unanimously.

- d) Approval of Honorary Degree for Joe Zinecker.** VP Jackson requested that Regents approve a posthumous honorary doctoral for Joe Zinecker, who, following retirement, came to NMT in 2021 as a Ph.D. student in Geophysics. Regent King moved for approval. Regent Salustri seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.
- e) Approval of FY25 Operating Budget.** VP Cervantes presented the Budget to the Board. Following discussion, Regent Lepre moved to approve the Operating Budget as presented. Regent Salustri seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. Mr. Cervantes thanked his staff for their tireless efforts, the Board for their patience, noting a number of moving targets and moving parts. It's a slow process, but not for lack of effort.
- f) Approval of Unrestricted Fund Purchase >\$250k.**
- J3 for South Hall Roof Repairs
 - TLC for the Water/Sewer Replacement for Campus Drive.
- Regent King moved to approve both purchases, followed by a second from Regent Salustri. The motion passed unanimously.
- g) Approval of Restricted Budget Adjustment Request (BAR#1).** VP Cervantes requested Board approval for Restricted BAR #1. Regent King moved for approval. Regent Salustri seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.
- h) Approval of Unrestricted Budget Adjustment Request (BAR#2).** VP Cervantes requested Board approval for Unrestricted BAR#2. Regent King moved for approval. Regent Salustri seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. Following the vote, Regent Lepre suggested a modified format that would be easier to follow, which VP Cervantes said can be done.
- i) Approval of NMHED 5-Year Capital Project Funding Plan.** Chair Armijo asked that the report speak to the process as well. VP Cervantes said the 5-year plan was in place before his arrival, and that President Amouzegar would like to change the process in establishing priorities. The top three projects are 1) \$6 million to replace the Fidel sewer line, 2) \$7 million to replace the campus-wide irrigation system, and 3) \$8.164 million for a core storage facility for the Bureau. Weight must be given to health and safety issues and infrastructure needs. The VP and Mr. Garcia agreed that the threshold of severance tax projects getting approval is ~ \$8 million. GO Bond projects are on statewide ballots for this year; 2025 capital projects will be funded through severance tax monies. The Wellness Center was discussed, with Regent Lepre noting its health and instruction components and the need for a place where students can get together amid the stress and isolation many young people face. Other Regents agreed the Center needs to remain a high priority. Regent Salustri questioned, and VP Cervantes responded to, justification for top priorities. Moving forward, he said, a more detailed report will show how listed items are selected. Regent Lepre moved to approve the capital project funding plan. Regent Salustri seconded the motion to allow for a vote. The motion passed 4-1, with the student Regent casting the nay vote.
- j) Approval of NMHED Capital Project Transmittal Summary Sheets for Torres Hall Flooring Repair.** VP Cervantes requested Board approval for the request as stated. Regent King moved for approval. Regent Salustri seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.



- k) **Approval of Property Resolutions.** VP Cervantes requested Board approval for the property resolutions as presented to Regents. Regent King moved for approval. Regent Salustri seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.
- l) **Approval of Regent Meeting Dates (Summer/Fall).** Working with Ms. Grain, Regents agreed to the following meeting dates and times: 1 pm on **June 7**; no meeting in July; Board Retreat, all day on **August 3**; 1 pm on **Sept. 20**; 1 pm on **Oct. 11**; and **Nov. 15**. Primary discussion issue was when to meet to establish priorities for the 60-day Legislative Session in 2025. President Amouzegar wants to get as many people involved as possible, noting his need to meet with NMT's legislative team and other shareholders. Regent King moved to approve the meeting schedule. Regent Salustri seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

7. **Individual Board Member Comments.** Regent King thanked the Chemistry Department for American Chemical Society grants for senior members, noting the presence of the Kids' Science Café in Magdalena.

8. **New Business.** None

9. **Executive Session. NMSA 1978, Sec. 10-15-1 (H) (2), (If Required to Consider Legal and/or Personnel Matters).** Regent Salustri moved to meet in Executive Session. Regent Lepre seconded the motion and Ms. Grain conducted a roll call vote, which was unanimous. The meeting adjourned at 3:19 pm.


10. **Reconvene in open session and take final action, if any, on such limited legal and/or personnel matters which shall be acted upon in open session following conclusion of the closed session.** At 4:31 pm, Regent King moved to reconvene in open session. Regent Salustri seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. Chair Armijo affirmed that the only items discussed were those reflected in the Agenda. Regent King then moved to approve the following faculty for tenure and promotion as listed. Regent Salustri seconded the motion, which passed unanimously: **Tenure and Promotion to Associate Professor:** Dr. Christopher ChoGlueck, CLASS Dept., Dr. Deep Choudhuri, Mat. & Met. Engr. Dept.; Dr. Dan Jones, E&ES Dept.; Dr. Ryan Leary, E&ES Dept.; Dr. Youngmin Lee, Chem. Engr. Dept.; Dr. Alex Rinehart, E&ES Dept. **Promotion to Professor:** Dr. Subhasish Mazumdar, C.S. Dept., and Dr. Raúl Morales-Juberías, Physics Dept.

11. **Adjournment.** Regent King moved to adjourn the meeting at 4:33 pm. Regent Salustri seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.



President

Attest:



Secretary- Treasurer