



**Board of Regents Regular Meeting
 Friday, May 12, 2023 -8:30 a.m.
 Macey Center - Galena Ballroom
 New Mexico Tech Main Campus, Socorro, NM**

MINUTES

The New Mexico Tech Board of Regents convened at 8:30 a.m., Friday, May 12, 2023, with Regent Chair Jerry Armijo presiding. Board members present were Dr. Dave Lepre Sr., Dr. Srinivas Mukkamala, Dr. Yolanda King, and Adrian Salustri. Other university administrators, staff, and guests included:

Daniel H. López
 Vanessa Grain
 Cleve McDaniel
 Jenny Ma
 Michael Doyle
 Carlos Romero
 Michael Jackson
 David Greene
 Peter Phaiah
 Robert Balch
 Brian Borchers
 German Bustillos

Myrriah Tomar
 David Manzano
 JoAnn Salome
 Nelia Dunbar
 Colleen Foster
 Jimmy Himes
 Katie Bauer
 Emma Aafloy
 Alex Garcia
 Tammy Roof
 Jenny Cyphers
 Juan Rueda
 Gloria Anaya

Mark Adams
 Lonnie Marquez
 Dylan Purcell
 Valentina Avramidi
 Tara Jaramillo
 Connor Jorgensen
 Joel Stanley
 Gregory Yandek
 Van Romero
 Lala Garcia
 Caitano da Silva
 Alex Gysi
 Ramyaa

1. **Call to Order.** Chair Armijo called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.
 - a) **Proof of Meeting Notice.** Vanessa Grain confirmed that legal notices were placed in the *Albuquerque Journal* and the *El Defensor Chieftain*.

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

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3. **Public comment.** Chair Armijo introduced NM State Rep. Tara Jaramillo, who will be attending Board of Regents meetings regularly in the future. Chair Armijo suspended the Board of Regents meeting at 8:35 a.m. to convene the Board of Trustees meeting.

4. Chair Armijo reconvened the Board of Regents meeting at 8:45 a.m. to continue its agenda. **Academic Tenure & Promotion Introductions.** IVP Jackson introduced three faculty members in attendance who are receiving tenure and promotions: Dr. Ramyaa, Associate Professor in the Department of Computer Science and Engineering; Dr. Alex Gysi, Associate Professor in the Department of Earth and Environmental Science; and Dr. Caitano da Silva, Associate Professor in the Department of Physics. Three other faculty members also will receive tenure and promotions but were not in attendance due to professional conferences: Dr. Kooktae Lee, Associate Professor in the Department of Mechanical Engineering; Dr. Anders Jorgensen, Professor in the Department of Electrical Engineering; and Dr. Michaelann Tartis, Professor in the Department of Chemical Engineering. IVP Jackson provided an overview of criteria for tenure and full professorship.

5. **Recurring Reports.**
 - a) **Student Life.** VP Greene provided a presentation on the Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) Committee, which is a new committee making changes and presenting a clear plan based on best practices and that supports NMT’s Strategic Plan and student success. A major focus will be on undergraduate admissions and recruitment – particularly out-of-state and international students – since NMT already does well with graduate admissions. He said the committee would incorporate parent engagement, supports for first-year and transfer students, and engagement with alumni for recruitment purposes. VP Greene detailed NMT’s student demographics, with 40% Hispanic, 3.4% Native American, 2.9% Asian, an overall minority population of 51.4%. He also said the state of New Mexico has seen growth in its African-American population, but that has not been seen at NMT. While NMT’s national rankings are high, the university remains the “hidden gem of New Mexico” and steps need to be taken to make it the “shining star.” He explained that more emphasis was needed on empowering student success and undergraduate research. The SEM Committee will work on developing pipeline-related initiatives as part of its Strategic Enrollment Plan, looking carefully at trends, projections, and planning. The SEM Committee will spend the summer determining how to tell NMT’s story and present a clear Strategic Enrollment Management Plan in spring 2024, operationalizing the information that is gathered. Chair Armijo shared his thoughts and concerns about the plan, stating that NMT has had declining enrollment for seven years and that four years ago strategic enrollment was taken

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out from under the VP of Student and University Relations and put under the VP of Academic Affairs. The plan presented to the Board then was a scattergun approach to move every lever. Now the strategic enrollment plan was moved back under the VP of Student Life, and the previous plan did not work. Chair Armijo asked how can NMT develop a new plan if it doesn't look at what didn't work. He further commented that he has seen an exodus of talent in staff from many of these departments represented on the SEM Committee. He asked if NMT has the infrastructure to carry this plan successfully or NMT could repeat the same mistake it made four years ago without buy-in. VP Greene said the plan presented previously did not come to fruition. He said he sees the need for full-time academic advisors and tutoring sessions and that some students struggling in math should not be at NMT. He said that despite these areas not reporting to him, he was asked to guide this plan. He praised committed faculty members dedicated to helping students succeed and said that NMT needs to treat community college transfers in the same way that it has championed transfers from international institutions. Chair Armijo said he looks forward to hearing from VP Greene with regular progress reports at future meetings, and especially about building strong relationships with feeder high schools. VP Greene said there are more than 200 STEM high schools across the country and they need to know about NMT. Regent Mukkamala asked why a representative from the Office of Research is not on the SEM Committee. VP Greene said that undergraduates do their research work with faculty, not with NMT's research areas. He did not include alumni or a representative from grad school admissions either on the SEM Committee. He added that if President López feels it was needed, additions could be made to the committee. Regent Mukkamala said that NMT needs a baseline to specify what worked and what did not. He said that many leads are coming in when students come to campus – robotics, summer programs. A look at seven years of data was needed. VP Greene said that tracking students who attended summer STEM programs is needed. He also said the committee needs \$1.2 million to do the simple things that it needs to do which are recurring dollars, not one-time funding. Regent Lepre added that NMT faces unique challenges, and explained that there has been an emphasis on access to higher education in New Mexico and on not raising tuition. A mix of in state and out-of-state students were needed. He said diversity is something that strengthens New Mexico and the revenue stream and the relevance of NMT's programs. Another concerning trend, Regent Lepre said, is the national trend of fewer people identifying as male attending college, which is another challenge to institutions. He encouraged greater engagement with high school counselors. High school students today want to be courted and NMT needs to follow up with students any way it can engage with them. NMT can obtain lists of students taking AP courses and follow up with the students.

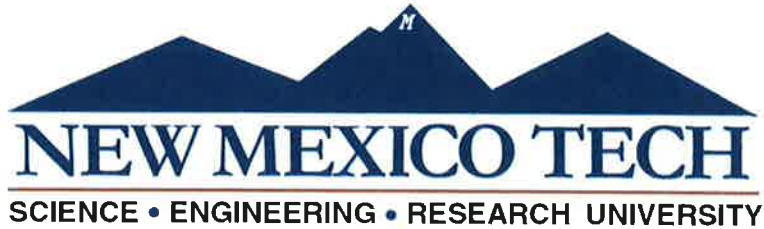
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It just does not suffice anymore, he said, to let them know NMT is here, NMT needs to let them know that it is a place they would be welcome. Regent Lepre suggested this be a topic for the Board’s retreat agenda. Regent King said she is surprised that NMT is not keeping track of students from the science fair as she has been judging it for 30 to 40 years. VP Greene said the information is not all in one place. Regent King cited the AAUW program and other programs that bring students on campus. VP Greene said Sharon Sessions, STEM outreach director, has brought up following up with students who attend the programs. Regent Mukkamala said NMT needs to come up with a plan and put it on paper and measure it. VP Greene announced that the Student Life fee changes were approved by President Wells and VP McDaniel in March 2023. Regent Salustri had asked for an explanation of the fee increases. The information provided includes meal plan changes as it costs more to do everything with higher inflation and increased utility costs. Auxiliary Services must be self-funded. He has spoken with Regents Lepre and Salustri and provided information about fees at four other institutions, showing that NMT is in line with its numbers and it is more affordable than others

- b) Capital Projects.** VP McDaniel said that the final move to Brown Hall will take place the week after next (the week of May 22) as renovations to that building are complete. The electronic lock project will use external labor now that funding has been secured for the project so it can move forward and that roofing projects were going well..
- c) Research,** VP Doyle yielded to Dr. Van Romero, Physics Professor and Director of Tech’s Space Science Program, who introduced the new EMRTC Director, Gregory Yandek. Director Yandek has a Ph.D. from the University of Akron and comes to NMT from the Air Force Research Laboratory’s Rocket Propulsion Division at Edwards Air Force Base in California. Regent King asked Director Yandek if he was warned that she has a long history with the Air Force. Dr. Doyle announced the NSF Engines Proposals and the new Directorate for Technology, Innovation and Partnerships (TIP). The NSF Engines Type 1 planning grant puts NMT in shape to apply for Type 2 funding. Dr. Nelia Dunbar is the PI for the project. He also announced that NMT has two Type 2 proposals pending. These are great opportunities for trans-disciplinary work across campus. NMT is expected to hear more in a couple of weeks. NMT just filed for an NSF proposal for the MROI – a \$20 million proposal. A major focus for his office is the process of developing ART - Advancing Research Translation. Ninety percent of the research projects at NMT expand tech commercialization. A recent major breakthrough is in the technology for 3-D printing that can withstand 1,200 degrees centigrade. This will mean 3-D printing of parts can be used in turbine engines. The patent to be filed for this will have four students listed. VP Doyle recounted the Case Catcher technology

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developed by ICASA and announced at a news conference two weeks ago. The project involved a system for improving the abilities of law enforcement agencies for managing evidence and discovery sharing, which helps prevent criminal cases from being thrown out. The attorney general and law enforcement officials are very excited about this technology. This system could be sold to every county in the nation – a potentially huge impact. Regent King asked about the attorney general’s Crimes Against Children Task Force. VP Doyle said that his endorsement validated the technology and there was a need to build an economy around this project. He also said that he was inspired by Regent Lepre’s remark at a Board meeting earlier this year about NMT having a “big idea” to present for funding at the Legislature. VP Doyle said he has started working on establishing a National Center for Spatial Science at NMT, working on a paper. The project will need strong support and buy-in. He said that this was a big area of interest and that spatial science has roots in GIS and will bring new approaches to spatial statistics. He said he has been talking to other institutions and may get NMSU involved as well. Next steps include looking at sources of funding and sponsorships. Dr. Doyle said he was pulling together a working group and hopes to start pitching by the end of the summer. Regents Mukkamala and King had some recommended contacts. VP Doyle said he has more than 20 years of experience with the Visible Embryo Project and there is some interest in cross-connections. While it is at an informal level now, all of the research projects moving forward will have a large focus on student supports and new opportunities for undergraduate students and graduate students. More Ph.D. students are needed at NMT to move it to R1 status. He also wants to see Ph.D. students finish their degrees at NMT and stay to work as post-docs on commercializing technology. He also hopes to get more involved in community outreach, especially after judging the Science Fair this year. He noted that schools taking the top prizes came from the state’s military schools – he would like to see all those students come to NMT. He has been talking to Dr. Greene about student support for research initiatives as a way to grow enrollment. His goal for NMT to reach R1 status is by 2027, displacing Cal Tech. Regent Lepre said he had a lengthy conversation with the head of the LFC about why NMT is not bringing forward an aspirational goal. Dr. Doyle said he was all over this and he hopes to have further conversations about it and convey to others the value of our student engagement and convey to Santa Fe that NMT is unique and that makes NMT students very desirable when they graduate. He said that for the RPSP narratives – one-pagers were needed because when the projects are lumped together it does not do justice to them. NMT needs to show the value of the programs. AVP Romero said he would be working on that with Director Himes, making it a marketing piece as well. President López said that VP Doyle has been nominated for a Nobel Prize, a

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tremendous recognition of what he has done in the field of spatial genomics. VP Doyle said that his team may never receive the Nobel Prize but being nominated is incredibly humbling. His work is receiving new attention and it is a good time to push for the spatial science center.

- d) **Academic Affairs.** IVP Jackson reported that NMT’s students have many accomplishments. Alisha Roberts is NMT’s first Fulbright Scholar and will study neutrinos and black holes next year at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology. Cassandra Skaar was named a Goldwater Scholar and has a bright future in research. She has published one paper and has two more in preparation. Raymond Castillo is the recipient of an NSF Graduate Research Fellowship and will start working toward a Ph.D. at Washington University in St. Louis.
- e) **President’s Report.** Interim President López said that during his two weeks back at NMT he has greeted faculty, staff, and students, reintroducing himself. He said that it is inspiring to be among such talented people and he is excited to be here. While he believes the university is in good financial shape, he was worried about 2025 and the need to turn around the enrollment picture. He said he would be looking at recurring and nonrecurring revenues, expenditures, and contracts and the need to have a healthy cash balance. He said better financial controls were needed to bring decisions to a central point. He thanked VP Greene for his presentation but cautioned him not to try to do everything. He stated that there is a need to bring focus to these initiatives. At one point in 1988, NMT had fewer than 1,000 students. Efforts were put in place that brought NMT to 2,200 students at its peak. He said having a plan is great, but execution is what was needed. Dr. López said lower enrollment has created a \$4 million gap in the budget that is difficult to sustain. He said that the recent Faculty Senate meeting was a good meeting because the focus was on how faculty can help. President López said he hopes to reorganize the staff and make sure functions were properly aligned. He explained that he has 15 people reporting to him and vice presidents who do not have the authority to do their jobs. He recently attended a donor reception with more than 100 in attendance. He also talked to major donor Dr. Raul Deju to establish a good dialogue and about releasing some funds. The first check was expected next week to go toward scholarships and the national hydrology center. Other recent activities include preparing for Commencement and going over the security plan for the event. He commended NMT’s small police force for its active shooter plan. He also commended VP Doyle and said his recognition can put NMT on the map.

Chair Armijo thanked President López for being willing to return to NMT and told him that he brings stability, calm, and transparency. The feedback that Chair Armijo has received from stakeholders was that President López was who was needed and

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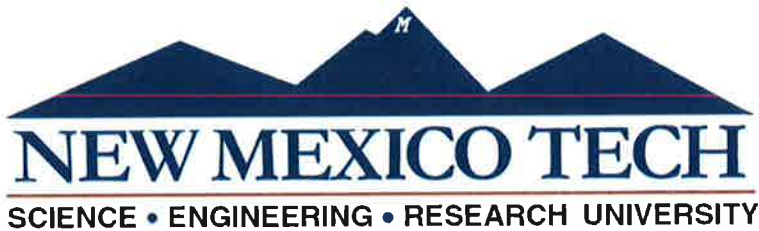


his management style fits in with the requirements of the university. Chair Armijo told President López that his advice was valuable and that he knows that he was not going to fix every issue but would provide a start in the right direction and he was looking forward to working with him. Chair Armijo also said the transition has gone relatively smooth. Regent Lepre said that President López has brought experience back to NMT. The newly instituted Finance Subcommittee has a list of topics that he and Regent Salustri will go over with him and get his ideas and recommendations. He will bring the list to the Board’s summer retreat July 17. Regent Mukkamala said thank you to President López for coming back and that students, faculty, and researchers at NMT deserve a better path forward. He said the Research Subcommittee was formed now and the group will come back with a plan, working closely with Dr. Doyle and the research areas and to focus on commercialization. He said the subcommittee would provide focused updates at every Board meeting. Regent King said that stability is important, with minimal changes for a calm environment.

6. Information Items.

- a) **NMT Foundation Updates.** No update.
- b) **NMT Univ. Research Park Corp. Updates.** Regent King reported that the group is trying to schedule a face-to-face meeting.
- c) **NM HERC,** Regent King reported that HERC has a new set of officers and it was good to have new blood.
- d) **NMT Budget Subcmte/Legislative Updates.** Regent Lepre said that the HED would study its mechanism for funding higher education institutions. It was important for NMT to be engaged in that process, he said. Regent Lepre said he was hoping NMT would hear soon the intention of how HED wants to proceed with the study. He and Dr. López engaged in that topic in the past. It might be an enrollment-driven approach, he said. He said NMT is unique and doesn’t fit neatly into a plan for all HE institutions. He explained that NMT delivers expensive programs – something people do not understand, and that cost modeling has been forgotten. He explained that it makes a huge difference and there was a need to ensure that people understand it. Regent King said that at the recent HERC meeting the group had a discussion on that topic and will have active participation in the future. Regent Lepre said the Budget Subcommittee would deal with more than just the budget.
- e) **NMT Research Subcmte.** Regent Mukkamala said the subcommittee has not yet started its work, but has a list of names of possible members to go over.
- f) **NMT Student Updates,** Regent Salustri thanked the Board for welcoming him and getting him involved. He will be on campus all summer. Regent Salustri reported that at a recent student social gathering all students in attendance said they had jobs

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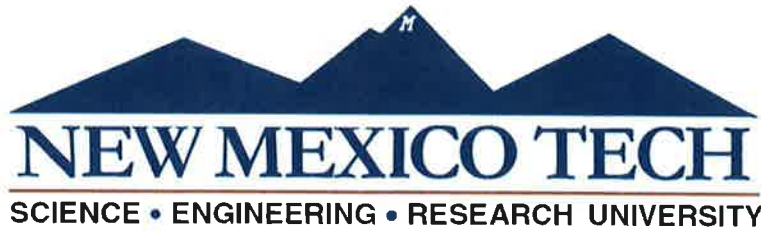
lined up after graduation. He said he was impressed with the amount of persistence among students and said he would provide a deeper report at a future Board meeting.

- g) Sabbatical Notifications.** IVP Jackson said the sabbatical notification list includes five faculty members requesting one-semester sabbaticals during the 2023-2024 academic year.
- h) Restricted Fund Purchase Notification of Awards > \$100k.** VP McDaniel presented information on eight requests for restricted fund purchases. The requests ranged from computer consulting services to heavy equipment rentals to well drilling for research purposes.

7. Action Items.

- a) Approval of April 28, 2023, Minutes.** Regent Lepre moved approval and Regent Salustri seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.
- b) Approval of April & May 2023 Graduates.** IVP Jackson said that a list of graduates walking at the May 13, 2023, Commencement was included in the Board’s packet. The list was approved May 11, 2023, at the Faculty Senate meeting. Regent Mukkamala moved approval and Regent Salustri seconded the motion, which Regent King amended to include the signature date of May 12, 2023. The motion passed unanimously.
- c) Approval of Degree Conferral Policy.** IVP Jackson said that the revised policy calls for a change from approvals on a monthly basis to three times a year. The Registrar’s Office, he said, can provide a letter to students if needed by prospective employers stating that the student met the degree requirements. The revised policy was posted on the NMT website March 29, 2023, and garnered three comments, two of which involved wordsmithing and one that opposed it. IVP Jackson said the policy has gone through a legal review, which suggested a change in the second bullet point – concerning times of the year that the registrar will present the list. Regent King moved approval and Regent Mukkamala seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.
- d) Approval of Honorary Degrees.** IVP Jackson said that a committee earlier this year approved posthumous degrees for Jeffrey Begaye and Laura Leyba Newton, who were both close to graduation when they died. Regent King moved approval and Regent Salustri seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.
- e) Approval of NMT & PRTC KMP Resolutions.** AVP Romero said that the Board is required to approve key management personnel, which will enable NMT to obtain and maintain security clearance. This was done at most universities by their boards of regents. This request has two separate parts, including the main campus, where the president of the university is the senior compliance official. Since President

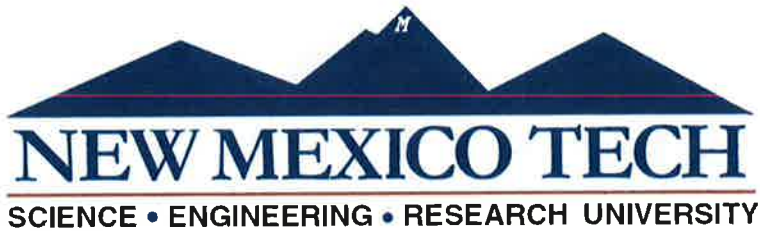
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López is serving on an interim basis, AVP Romero said he could be designated for that position rather than the interim president. Regent Mukkamala said that the Board needs to have a briefing on this to truly understand it. He has asked for a briefing and it has not happened. He does not want to approve this change and then change it again. He wants to be assured that being out of compliance does not get NMT in trouble. Regent King said for compliance reasons the Board should approve the resolutions. Regent Mukkamala said he wants to go on record that he does not know what he was approving and takes his fiduciary duty seriously. AVP Romero said that for 17 classified contracts, it affects the amount that NMT discloses to the public. These resolutions affect the classified scopes of work. Key management personnel are entrusted to ensure research is done according to the contracts. AVP Romero said that the financials are not classified; only the work being done was classified. Regent Mukkamala said he was requesting that 30 minutes be taken to brief him. He wants to understand the resolutions. AVP Romero said that NMT is currently out of compliance, with two new regents and a change in the institution's management and he recommended to pass these resolutions. Chair Armijo said that the resolutions needed to be passed at the current meeting and added that Regent Mukkamala has asked twice for briefings. He encouraged Board members to approve the resolutions as presented but then have the discussion. Regent King moved approval and Regent Salustri seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

- f) **Approval of 5-Year Capital Project Funding Plan.** VP McDaniel presented the annual plan that was brought first to the Board of Regents and then to HED for its summer hearings. This year the focus will be on the G.O. Bonds – five projects: PRRC (Kelly Hall) Replacement - Phase 2 (first priority), Mineral Science and Engineering (MSEC) Complex Mechanical Upgrade (second priority), Campus wide Storm Water Infrastructure Upgrade, Campus wide Facility Condition Index Survey, and the Mind and Body Center. The MSEC is the largest building on campus and planners looked into the cost of replacing the building as well as the cost of replacing all the mechanical systems and controls. There is no place on campus that can handle that size of a building so it was determined that renovation is the way to go. Chair Armijo asked if the project could be done in phases. VP McDaniel said that there are ways to minimize the impact on those using the building. The facility index survey was not funded last year so NMT is using internal funds to complete it. For the mind and body center, the plan includes changes in the numbers. Fundraising has been the primary mode of funding for the gym renovations. Regent Lepre asked for an explanation of the process to prioritize the projects. VP McDaniel said that the Kelly project is the completion of a project. For the MSEC, the infrastructure there is getting old and funding is available now to do the project. For the storm water

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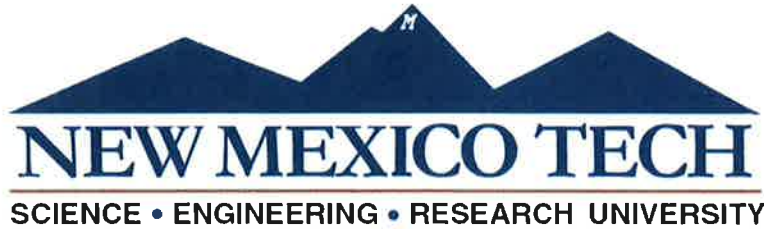
project, NMT just completed the engineering study, which revealed that the pipes are old. For the mind and body center, NMT is seeking donations. Regent Lepre said the center is timely with the emphasis on student health and mental health and the need to attract students to NMT. He commented that he would like to see that project move up in priority. Regent Mukkamala moved approval and Regent King seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

- g) Approval of Resolution for the NMDOT.** VP McDaniel said the resolution concerned \$180,765 in funding that NMT can receive for repaving Canyon Drive and the Jones Hall parking lot, which requires a match of \$45,191. This resolution will go to the Transportation Department at the end of May and it requires a signature. Regent King moved approval and Regent Mukkamala seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.
- h) Approval of NMHED Capital Project Phase I.** VP McDaniel presented the Capital Project Phase 1 – the PRRC Building. This project for the two-story Kelly Hall building that would be discussed at the HED summer hearings. This project is getting a lot of state funding. Construction costs are increasing and the PRRC staff size is growing, requiring more square feet. Chair Armijo said he received a briefing on the building from VP McDaniel last week. Regent King moved approval and Regent Salustri seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.
- i) Approval of NMT Property Resolutions.** VP McDaniel said the resolutions concern the removal of property. Regent King moved approval and Regent Salustri seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.
- j) Approval of Unrestricted Fund Purchase > \$250K.** VP McDaniel said this resolution concerns a chiller replacement. Regent King moved approval and Regent Salustri seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

8. Individual Board Member Comments. Regents King, Lepre, Mukkamala, and Salustri had no comments. Chair Armijo announced that the search committee for the new president is underway and he is co-chairing it with Regent Lepre. The committee will include students, faculty, staff, research areas, alumni, and community members. A national search firm, the same one overseeing the Hantush-Deju National Center for Hydrologic Innovation director, is already on contract so it can start the search immediately. Chair Armijo said he thought it would be a five- to eight-month process to come to fruition. He had talked to leaders at NMSU, which were using a different search firm for its president search. That institution has 10 different search firms on contract. Regent Armijo said he was not comfortable with using the same search firm as NMSU or ENMU. The search firm NMT has on contract has been on our campus and is familiar with NMT.

9. New Business. None.

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10. Executive Session. NMSA 1978, Sec 10-15-1 (H)(2), (If Required to Consider Legal and/or Personnel Matters) On a motion by Regent Lepre and a second from Regent Salustri, the Board unanimously adjourned its regular session at 11:30 a.m., Friday, May 12,, 2023, to meet in executive session under a roll-call vote of the Regents.

11. 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. The meeting reconvened at 11:32 a.m. with the Chair Armijo announcing that no action had been taken and only legal and personnel items were discussed.

12. Adjournment. Regent King moved and Regent Salustri seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by voice vote.



President

Attest:
 Secretary- Treasurer

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