



**New Mexico Tech Board of Regents Emergency Meeting
Wednesday, December 20, 2023
3:30 pm
Virtual Public Zoom Webinar**

MINUTES

The New Mexico Tech Board of Regents Emergency Meeting convened at 3:30 pm on Wednesday, December 20, 2023, with Chair Jerry Armijo presiding, as a Virtual Public Zoom Webinar. Other Regents present were Dr. David Lepre, Dr. Yolanda King, Dr. Srinivas Mukkamala and Adrian Salustri. Among others present were Interim President Dr. Daniel López and Ms. Vanessa Grain, Chief Executive Assistant to the President and other NMT Staff and members of the public on Zoom.

1. Call to Order. Chair Armijo called the meeting to order at 3:35 pm. He announced that the meeting was being broadcast live as an emergency meeting pursuant to Section 10-15-1 (F) to protect the University from substantial financial loss in adhering to a 30-day period from the date the five candidates for President were formally announced, to a finalist being chosen by the Board.

a) Proof of Meeting Notice. Ms. Grain reported that proper legal notice was given per NM OMA requirements to the media and news outlets via email and by phone call.

2. Approval of Agenda. Regent King moved to approve the agenda. Regent Salustri seconded the motion, which passed unanimously, followed by a roll-call vote conducted by Ms. Grain.

3. Public Comment. Chair Armijo asked for public comment, with the caveat that comments for the emergency meeting be limited to one minute. Ms. Grain reported that no requests for public comment were made via Zoom online or in advance.

4. Executive Session. NMSA 1978, Sec 10-15-1(H)(2), (If required to Consider Legal and/or Personnel Matters). Regent King moved to adjourn the emergency meeting and meet in Executive Session. Regent Mukkamala seconded the motion, which passed unanimously, followed by a roll call vote conducted by Ms. Grain. Ms. Grain announced that the Board would meet in a closed Zoom executive session, before resuming the public webinar. The emergency meeting was adjourned at 3:41 pm.

5. 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. Chair Armijo reconvened the emergency meeting at 4:18 pm, and announced that



only items listed under NMSA 1978, Sec 10-15-1(H)(2) were discussed, and no action was taken. He then explained the process, and the needs of the University, in arriving at a decision. He explained that choosing the right person to lead the University is one of the most difficult and challenging jobs imaginable. The process began by selecting Korn Ferry Consultants, an experienced search firm with specialization in higher education, which provided an excellent slate of candidates; and assembling an exemplary search committee based on members' selective roles at the University and their passion for the Institute. Regent Armijo served as committee chair; Regent Lepre, as Co-Chair. The Chair publicly recognized and noted his deep respect for the members: Ms. Colleen Foster, Dr. Lorie Liebrock, Dr. Aly El-Osery, Ms. Emma Aafloy, Dr. Myrriah Tomar, Dr. Michael Timmons, Mr. Dylan Purcell, Mr. Dylan Schroeder, Mr. Holm (Cuatro) Bursum IV, and Mr. Jeff Corey.

The search firm and committee considered the results of the survey, discussions with shareholders, and how best to meet the needs of the teaching and research University in determining two areas of necessary improvement: Increased enrollment and providing a better student experience. Of the three finalists, one excelled on the academic side, one in research; the third offered a balance between both. On the research side, all five candidates were amazed at the levels and quality of research for a university the size of New Mexico Tech. It is in the university's DNA to dream big, and Tech has a long history attesting to such, said Chair Armijo, "but we're not doing as well as we could." It was determined that, considering the qualities unique to Tech, what worked in the past, and its financial situation, a balanced approach would be best.

6. New President. Chair Armijo then announced Dr. Mahyar Amouzegar as the 18th president of New Mexico Tech, under a five-year contract effective April 15, 2024. Dr. Amouzegar and his wife, Maria Montero, will live in the presidential home in Socorro. In the meantime, Dr. Daniel López will continue as Interim President, and will represent Tech at the 2024 Legislature, a critical session for higher education, and at the request of the incoming President. Regent Lepre, search committee co-chair, spoke about the selection process and the confidentiality agreement that limited what information could be released. He explained that the process was exciting and a lot of work, and was conducted as honestly and openly as possible, and thanked the Tech and Socorro communities for their participation. Regent Lepre said that the transition will continue, and Dr. Amouzegar will be invited to visit as often as possible, to include a trip to the Legislature in Santa Fe. Regent Lepre also said he was extremely optimistic about the future of New Mexico Tech.

Chair Armijo then entertained a motion to approve the contract for Dr. Amouzegar. Regent King so moved, followed by a second from Regent Lepre. The motion was approved unanimously, followed by a roll-call vote conducted by Ms. Grain. Dr. Amouzegar, introduced via Zoom, said he was excited and ready to go, and would start tomorrow if he could. He will collect feedback from University constituents in developing a plan to move forward, and will deal with issues as they arise. Dr. Amouzegar added that he was amazed at the caliber of questions asked by students during his candidate visit earlier in December.



7. Individual Board Member Comments. Chair Armijo offered congratulations to Dr. Michael Jackson as the new Vice President of Academic Affairs; and to Mr. Daryl Ackley, new Director of EMRTC.

8. New Business. None.

9. Adjournment. Regent King moved to adjourn the meeting, followed by a second from Regent Lepre. The motion passed unanimously, by a roll call vote conducted by Ms. Grain. The meeting was adjourned at 4:38 pm.



President

Attest:



Secretary- Treasurer