

**Board of Regents Regular Meeting  
Friday, March 3, 2023 - 9:00 a.m.  
Drury Plaza Hotel – O’Keefe Ballroom  
828 Paseo De Peralta, Santa Fe NM 87501**

***MINUTES***

The New Mexico Tech Board of Regents convened at 9 a.m. Friday, March 3, 2023, with Regent Jerry Armijo presiding. Board members present were Dr. Dave Lepre Sr., Dr. Yolanda King, and Veronica Espinoza. Other university administrators, staff, and guests included:

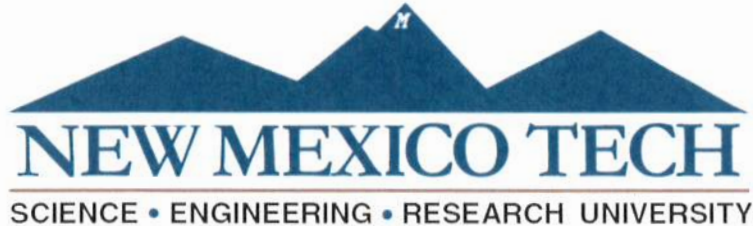
Stephen Wells	Myrriah Tomar	Mark Adams
Vanessa Grain	Mike Timmons	Emma Aafloy
Cleve McDaniel	Colleen Foster	Juliann Ulibarri
Michael Doyle	Nelia Dunbar	JoAnn Salome
Michael Jackson	Jenny Ma	Dan Blankenship
David Greene	Nowka Guitierrez	Shawn Nieman
Peter Phaiah	Bob Balch	Edwin Zuniga
Carlos Rey Romero	Gloria Guitierrez-	German
Jimmy Himes	Anaya	Bustillos Heras
Katie Bauer	Brian Borchers	Alex Garcia

1. **Call to Order.** Chair Pro Tem Armijo called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Chair Pro Tem Armijo said the meeting would wrap up by 11 a.m. He said that Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham announced the regent-designates, whom the Senate will confirm in the next week. One of the regent-designates is Dr. Srinivas Mukkamala, an NMT alum, and the student regent-designate is Mr. Adrian Salustri, a current electrical engineering major.
2. **Approval of Agenda.** Regent King moved to approve the agenda. Regent Espinoza seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.
3. **Public Comment.** No public comment.
  - a) **Proof of Meeting Notice.** Vanessa Grain confirmed that legal notices were placed in the *Albuquerque Journal* and the *El Defensor Chieftain*.

**4. Recurring Reports.**

- a) **President’s Report.** President Wells provided a legislative update on House Bill (HB) 2, which

NMT Board of Regents	Page 1	Minutes from March 3, 2023
----------------------	--------	----------------------------



is being considered by the Senate which included 1% in new funding for Instruction and General (I&G), a significant challenge for higher education institutions. The bill also includes funding for mental health and public safety resources, cybersecurity, dual credit, and recurring and nonrecurring funding for the Opportunity Scholarship. He noted other bills such as Senate Bill (SB) 8, which calls for geothermal research, and SB 202, which provides for a sustainable funding model and a study of Research and Public Service Projects (RPSPs). Another bill he highlighted was SB 494, for which Mark Adams did a written analysis about the legislation and its impact. Mark Adams said that the bill is carefully designed to avoid constitutional problems. President Wells explained he is optimistic about the Junior Bill, which includes \$300,000 for NMT. Regent Lepre discussed SB 494, its fiscal impact report, and the factors involved affecting NMT in funding at Higher Education Institutions Regent Lepre said research universities do not have the flexibility that other institutions have because of the percentage that tuition plays in the overall revenue stream – for research universities it is 39%. He also said that NMT has to be cautious regarding this legislation. President Wells said that NMT’s legislative team keeps articulating that argument with legislators.

**b) Govt. Affairs.** No report.

**c) SGA.** No report.

**d) GSA.** VP Genna Crom said more than \$35,000 in travel grants allowed 26 students to attend conferences this academic year. Graduate Student Appreciation Day is the end of April. The Student Research Symposium is coming up April 18-21, with awards for posters.

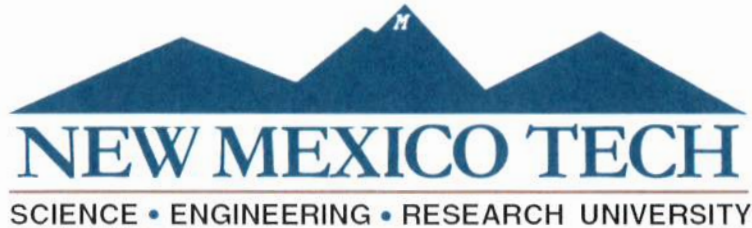
**e) Student Life.** No report.

**f) Title IX.** No report.

**g) Academic Affairs.** No report.

**h) Capital Projects.** VP McDaniel said Brown Hall is waiting for a final inspection, with the Office of Advancement moving on March 16-17, followed by a remodeling of offices in the Fidel Center for the Office of Student Life. He also shared that the university closed Feb. 22 for the first time in its history because of very high winds. A series of these winds completely removed a portion of the roof of the South Hall dormitory, downed a portion of the solar panels near Macey Center, damaged doors on multiple buildings, and completely uprooted several trees on campus. He said that it by far has been the most wind damage to campus since he has been at NMT – and all within three weeks. Regent Espinoza asked if students in South Hall had to be relocated. VP McDaniel said no, students were not affected as South Hall’s roof was patched, with the immediate repair costing \$34,000 and a permanent replacement to cost \$500,000 to \$600,000, which was covered by insurance. President Wells said that the decision was made to close the Socorro and branch campuses to keep students and staff from walking around.

NMT Board of Regents	Page 2	Minutes from March 3, 2023
----------------------	--------	----------------------------

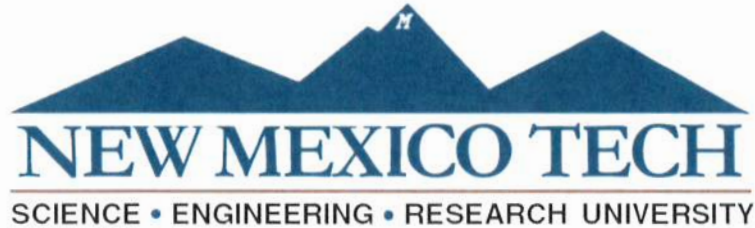


**i) Research.** VP Doyle said the high-performance computing MRI proposal he mentioned at the last Board meeting has been submitted. He explained that because the New Mexico Consortium is between directors, the computing facility will now be housed on the NMT campus, and NMT has a great team effort on that project. The Technology Enhancement Fund (TEF) met yesterday and made funding decisions on proposals. VP Doyle said the goal was to get up to \$16 million across all institutions. For new initiatives, VP Doyle also reported that he is working with Dr. Myrriah Tomar on the National Science Foundation (NSF) TIP (Technology Innovation Partnership) project, building technology translation capabilities out at universities including Advancing Research Translation (ART). He said they are pulling together ideas, including material science and electronic infrastructure resilience, and are looking at other technologies for proposals. He also reported on PFI – Partnerships for Innovation, which involves catching technologies early in the maturity scale so they can get to that first step in NSF-funded research. They are working on proposals to be submitted. In addition, VP Doyle said he has a verbal agreement for a new EMRTC director and is in the final negotiations to fill the position. VP Doyle said that for years research expenditures have been underrepresented and that this is the basis for rankings. He looked into where NMT is for research expenditures. Instead of \$24 million, the actual number is \$70 million. It is the consequence of NSF’s determination of what qualifies as a research expenditure. He had a call with NSF this week. VP Doyle says that it puts NMT in an interesting position, as the university needs a handful more Ph.D. students to jump into a significantly higher research classification. This also would allow NMT to move to a No. 2 position for research after the University of New Mexico (UNM). The original issue was that NSF changed its interpretation and did not inform NMT. President Wells commended VP Doyle for his efforts. Regent King said NMT needs to look for additional Ph.D. students. President Wells said it would be a profound shift to R1, a move that would attract students and faculty and bring NMT to a whole new level.

**j) OIC.** No report.

**k) Advancement.** Director Foster reported the best year ever for fundraising, with \$12.7 million, \$9.2 million over last year at this time. She stated that the Comprehensive Campaign has raised \$86.2 million. Director Foster had been in Denver for the recent Society of Mineral Engineers (SME) where almost 100 attended an alumni reception. Director Foster encouraged Board and Cabinet members to attend alumni receptions when they can. She explained that a committee of alumnae are promoting the Women’s Resource Center (WRC) and organized activities for International Women’s Day. The two days of events included speaker Dr. Jen Dawson, a panel discussion including Regent King, and the involvement of more than 20 volunteers, including faculty and emeritus faculty. She said it has been inspirational to work with these alumnae, who are working to raise \$1.2 million for the WRC. Ten people are being sought to commit to give

NMT Board of Regents	Page 3	Minutes from March 3, 2023
----------------------	--------	----------------------------



\$10,000 a year for the next 10 years. The Winter 2023 Gold Pan will be out in the next few weeks. The 49ers Celebration will include an eclipse event the last weekend of the Balloon Fiesta Oct. 14, 2023 sponsored by ExxonMobil. Dr. Van Romero is working with the Balloon Museum on a possible glow event at the height of the eclipse, which will garner a lot of national attention. Normally the 49ers parade is held during the day but this fall it will be held in the evening. Director Foster will be traveling to Houston, Texas, for an alumni reception. President Wells said that 27 students attended the SME conference – a great showing for NMT.

**l) Bureau of Geology.** Director Dunbar said she had just returned from four days of visits to federal agencies in Washington, D.C., as well as a number of visits on Capitol Hill. She participated in meetings with the Association of American State Geologists. Three themes rose to the top: 1. critical minerals; 2. climate change and water; and 3. workforce development. The Bureau is well positioned to speak to these three concerns. An NSF-funded consortium is looking to NMT to support a summer internship program. The Bureau was asked to host eight students from New Mexico for internships this summer, who will stay on campus. Regent King asked about the selection process in place. Director Dunbar said that it is a challenge to find mentors for the student interns.

**m) PRRC.** Director Balch reported on outreach efforts, including PRRC-sponsored international students from Vietnam, South Korea, and Ghana. He said that he would travel to Ghana next week to recruit 30 students to attend NMT next fall. At a future meeting, he will discuss outreach efforts further.

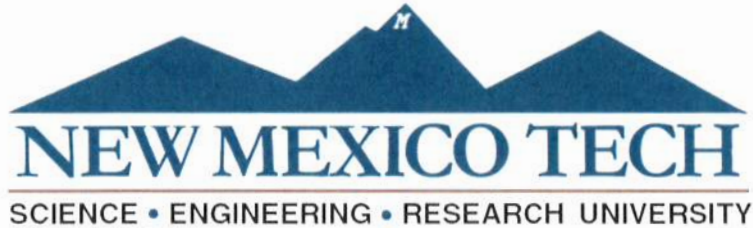
**n) HR.** No report.

**o) Faculty Senate.** No report.

**p) Marketing & Comm.** No report.

**q) PRTC.** AVP Romero distributed a memo on the Playas Research and Training Center's financial health. He explained that there has been a dramatic financial improvement with an increase in contract activity. He stated that management is having trouble filling staff positions at Playas. He optimistically plans to complete the debt repayment to NMT by January 2024. He also detailed the water and wastewater management projects and other enhancements, such as work on drainage, roads, and the airstrip. He explained that other infrastructure enhancements were funded by the GO Bond; PRTC will apply for federal matching funds; and that a fiber optic upgrade was approved last month. Chair Pro Tem Armijo said that the PRTC memorandum is phenomenal and gave kudos to AVP Romero and his team for their work and for the economic impact PRTC is having in the county. Regent King asked if there are other colleges PRTC can leverage for recruiting. AVP Romero said that PRTC is recruiting at job fairs and approaching people who are retiring from

NMT Board of Regents	Page 4	Minutes from March 3, 2023
----------------------	--------	----------------------------



Phelps Dodge. President Wells thanked AVP Romero for getting PRTC on a positive path.

r) **Other.** None.

## 5. Information Items

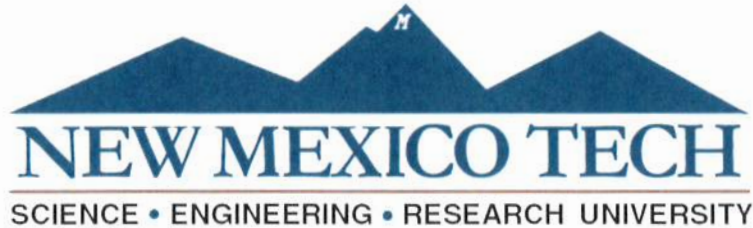
**a) NMT Foundation Updates.** Chair Pro Tem Armijo reported that there would be a quarterly meeting next week. He explained that the foundation board president had a major health event recently, and asked all present to keep him and his family in thought and prayer. Chair Pro Tem Armijo said all of the money the Advancement Office is raising is a good problem to have and the very engaged board members are working to build a model for the income stream and will bring in a consultant to help make the Foundation sustainable.

**b) NMT Univ. Research Park Corp. Updates.** Regent King reported that the bylaws are almost completed and there will be a board meeting on April 12, 2023 via Zoom.

**c) NM HERC Updates.** Regent King said that the HERC symposium will be at NMT's Deju House April 27-28, 2023 including a strategic planning session on how to support students better and is looking forward to meeting and educating new regents. Chair Pro Tem Armijo said Regent King has done a good job as a HERC officer and appreciates her efforts. Regent King said she still serves on the board as a past president.

**d) NMT Legislative/Budget Cmte. Updates.** Regent Lepre explained that the legislative session had been a rollercoaster ride with mixed messages. He said that NMT's tuition is too low, and expressed concerns if NMT will be able to raise tuition. He said that this coming year is an important year for the university such that NMT needs to make sure it has representation and a voice in the process. He went on to explain that research is not the priority in higher education, expressing that NMT needs to make the argument for research. Regent Lepre went on to say that, regents are ultimately responsible for the fiduciary health of the institution and have an important information and compiling function. Regent Lepre put together a list of topics for the next year for the Board to explore and is requesting a one-page synopsis from each area from VPs explaining their budgets. He also wants to hear from Admissions Director Greg Stringer and HR Director JoAnn Salome. He will work with Vanessa Grain on putting together a meeting to go over the summaries. He also would like to see summary presentations on RPSPs. Regent Lepre said he wants to hear from all campus constituencies. In addition, he said, he would like a discussion on declining enrollment as part of NMT's structural problem and budgetary implications. These discussions and snapshots will help the Board as it builds next year's budget. Regent King asked who is on the Budget Subcommittee. Regent Lepre said once NMT has the new Board in place, which will be determined. President Wells asked Regent Lepre if he is seeking all six of his topic areas to be addressed in April. Regent Lepre said that is his request at this point. President Wells

NMT Board of Regents	Page 5	Minutes from March 3, 2023
----------------------	--------	----------------------------



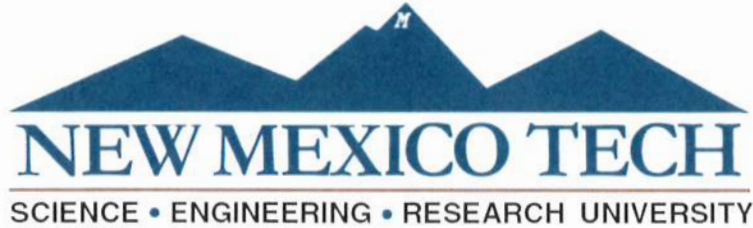
asked for the summary sheet template. Regent Lepre said he would send it to him electronically. Chair Pro Tem Armijo said that it is a tremendous fiduciary responsibility to serve as a regent and commended Regent Lepre for taking this project on and sharing his expertise with the Board. Financial transparency, he said, is crucial within an organization as it builds trust and contributes to better communications and decision-making.

**e) NMT Student Updates.** No report.

**f) Sabbatical Notifications.** IVP Jackson said he has submitted a list of eight sabbatical requests from six departments to President Wells. Chair Pro Tem Armijo asked if historically NMT has had so many requests at one time and about its effect on delivering instruction. IVP Jackson said some of the faculty members would receive only a portion of their salary, allowing for the hire of temporary faculty if needed. As part of every proposal is the identification of how to cover when the faculty member takes a sabbatical. Chair Pro Tem Armijo asked how NMT is faring with faculty vacancies. IVP Jackson said that hiring processes are going on currently, with offer letters going out to candidates.

**g) Degree Conferrals for Feb 2023.** IVP Jackson said the list of degree conferrals for February 2023 was passed along to President Wells.

**h) Financial Analysis ending January 31, 2023.** VP McDaniel said reported on I&G activity for the current year ending Jan. 31, 2023, and the prior year and a memo are in the Board members' binders. He highlighted key points, including that seven months into the fiscal year, the year-to-date balance is \$733,000 lower than the prior year, even with increased utility costs – oil and natural gas price increases. With increased usage of buildings with the full return to normal activities post-COVID-19, NMT is seeing incredible utility increases. Revenue is up 17.6% with the 9% increase in tuition, despite the head count decline of 44 students. Across-the-board wage and salary increases for faculty and staff are behind instructional support costs. VP McDaniel pointed out the bar chart in his report, which compares I&G revenues and expenses. Increases in research and public service, including increases at PRRC and the dramatic decrease in Playas debt, have helped. He said EMRTC's fund balance is of some concern and will continue to need monitoring. Regent Lepre said he did some work on reports of actuals going back to 2014 for his own information, looking at the Land Grant Permanent Fund for examples. He reported that he was surprised to see how much finances bounce around and that the pandemic has had a big effect. The situation of each institution constantly changes, he said. VP McDaniel said that the Land Grant Permanent Fund is funded by natural gas and oil and can't be used for permanent funding because it does vary so much. He said that he feels there is a minimum level NMT can budget for recurring funding. When the funding level drops, however, there is an even bigger deficit. It is not just research, he said, other sponsored activity is bringing in revenue but that cannot be built into the



recurring base. The biggest challenge, VP McDaniel said, is that NMT is \$4.2 million behind the starting line each year due to the structural deficit. Regent Lepre asked that the numbers that he pulled from reports be given to VP McDaniel's staff to review. VP McDaniel agreed to follow up.

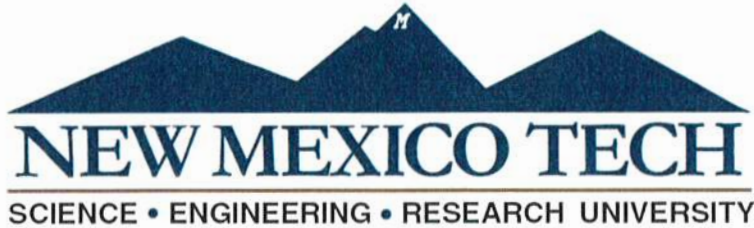
**i) Earned Media Coverage Case Study.** Director Himes will present at a future meeting.

## 6. Action Items

- a) Approval of February 10, 2023 Minutes.** Regent Espinoza moved approval of the minutes. Regent Lepre seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.
- b) Approval of NMT KMP (Key Management Personnel) Resolution for PRTC.** AVP Romero presented a resolution regarding updates to key management personnel positions at NMT. Regent King moved to approve the resolution. Regent Espinoza seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.
- c) Approval of NMT FY24 Tuition.** No action was taken; the item was tabled until the April regent meeting.
- d) Approval of Property Resolution.** VP McDaniel presented the resolution to remove property from inventory that is obsolete, worn out, or no longer economical for continued use. Regent King moved to approve the resolution. Regent Espinoza seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.
- e) Approval of Hidalgo County Commission Designation of Playas as a Colonia.** VP McDaniel presented the resolution to designate Playas as a Colonia to request state funding for \$330,000 in wastewater system improvements and \$230,000 in water system improvements. The request also has been made of the IRS to expedite its designation of Playas as a political subdivision. Regent King moved to approve the resolution. Regent Espinoza seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.
- f) Approval of Emeritus Faculty Dr. Huang and McCoy.** IVP Jackson presented two requests to designate Dr. Frank Huang from the Civil and Environmental Engineering Department and Dr. John McCoy from the Materials and Metallurgical Engineering Department emeritus faculty. Dr. Huang is already retired and Dr. McCoy is retiring in August 2023. Regent King asked if emeritus status means they will retain access to resources. IVP Jackson confirmed that and said that they are still mentoring students. Regent King moved to approve the resolution. Regent Espinoza seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

## 7. Individual Board Member Comments. None

NMT Board of Regents	Page 7	Minutes from March 3, 2023
----------------------	--------	----------------------------



**8. New Business.** The next meeting of the Board of Regents will be April 28, 2023, in the afternoon via Zoom, with a short agenda with no other business planned other than the budget. The meeting just prior to Commencement will be held on Friday, May 12, 2023, at Macey Center. Regent Lepre said that the Budget Subcommittee meeting could be moved to May. President Wells said the subcommittee’s half-day meeting would be better in May. Regent Lepre said the subcommittee would not impact the budget. President Wells recommended moving the subcommittee reports to May and holding the meeting in person. Director Dunbar asked when the new regents were official. Chair Pro Tem Armijo said when the New Mexico Senate confirms them next week.

**9. Executive Session, NMSA 1978, Sec 10-15-1 (H) (2), (If Required to Consider Legal and/or Personnel Matters)** On a motion by Regent King and a second from Regent Espinoza, the Board adjourned its regular meeting at 11 a.m. to meet in Executive Session under a roll-call vote of the Regents.

**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.** The meeting reconvened at 11:45 a.m. with Chair Pro Tem Armijo announcing that no action had been taken and only legal and personnel items were discussed.

**11. Adjournment.** Regent King moved and Regent Espinoza seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by voice vote.

  
\_\_\_\_\_

President

Attest:

DocuSigned by:

*Dr. David Lepre Sr.*

9FADBB724DD54F8...

Secretary/Treasurer