

Board of Regents Regular Meeting
Thursday, June 26, 2025
1:00 pm
Macey Center Galena Ballroom

MINUTES

The regular meeting of the New Mexico Tech Board of Regents convened at 1:00 pm on Thursday June 26, 2025, with Regent Chair Dr. David Lepre Sr. presiding. Additional Board members in attendance were Dr. Yolanda Jones King, Jerry A. Armijo, Dr. Srinivas Mukkamala (virtually), and Cody Johnston.

University administration was represented by President Mahyar Amouzegar, Vice Presidents Delilah Walsh, Lique Coolen, Michael Jackson, and David Greene. Other attendees included Vanessa Grain, JoAnn Salome, and Bob Balch, Attorney Jenica Jacobi, and Melissa Kountz along with various guests in person and online as public attendees.

- 1) Call to Order, Chair Lepre.** Chair Lepre called the meeting to order at 1:01 pm.
 - a) Proof of Meeting Notice, Chair Lepre.** Ms. Grain confirmed that a legal notice was placed in the Albuquerque Journal and the Socorro El Defensor Chieftain.
- 2) Approval of Agenda, Chair Lepre.** Regent King moved and proposed a modification to the agenda. Move Brandon Boulter's Strategic Enrollment Management Committee presentation to follow federal updates. Pull Wellness Center Design from Consent Items for discussion in Action Items, 7e). Pull Southwest Innovation Alliance and Carbon Storage Project items from Consent Item 6a and reclassify them as Action items 7f and 7g. Amend Executive Session to strike item a) and include item c) as an information item. Regent Armijo seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- 3) Public Comment, Chair Lepre.** Vanessa Grain confirmed that no public comment requests were submitted, and no participants raised their hands in the Zoom webinar for comment.
- 4) Regent Committee Reports, Chair Lepre**
 - a) NMT Foundation Updates, Regent Armijo.** The NMT Foundation has an upcoming meeting. An update will be provided following that meeting. No further report was presented at this time.
 - b) NMT Univ. Research Park Corp. Updates, Regent King.** Regent King provided a

brief update on strategic planning for the URPC and noted that an action item would be presented later in the meeting regarding opening a new investment account.

- c) **NM HERC Updates, Regent King.** Regent King noted that NM HERC will finally convene for a meeting on July 10. Officers will be elected at that meeting, following delays due to multiple regent changes across state institutions.
- d) **Regent Finance Subcmte/Legislative Updates, Chair Lepre.** Chair Lepre discussed deferred maintenance and suggested the subcommittee explore current institutional needs. He also suggested the development of a dashboard to analyze institutional support and administrative spending for future presentations to legislators and stakeholders. He referenced historic data from the Council of University Presidents and emphasized the need for standardized data definitions. A broader institutional visioning discussion will occur in a future board meeting.
- e) **Regent Research Subcmte, Regent Mukkamala.** None.
- f) **Student Updates, Regent Johnston.** Regent Johnston raised concerns about the complexity of the dual credit enrollment process, citing feedback from students and Socorro High School leadership. He proposed the formation of a small working group to address inefficiencies and improve access. He also speculated that similar complexity might exist in the full admissions process.

5) Info Items, Chair Lepre.

- a) **Marketing and Comms. Cmte Update, Haley Hanson.** Ms. Vanessa Grain announced that she will be assisting as Interim Marketing and Communication Director during Director Szatmary's medical leave. Ms. Grain introduced all of the Marketing and Communications Staff members to the Regents. She introduced Ms. Haley Hanson, Assistant Director of Graphic Design and Brand Management. Ms. Hanson presented a comprehensive update on efforts to enhance NMT's brand visibility and enrollment marketing. The committee proposed several university motto and tagline options in English and Latin, recommended a standard color scheme (navy blue and silver), and shared mock-ups for departmental one-pagers. Emphasis was placed on consistency and engagement, with a plan to gather feedback from campus stakeholders in the fall.
- b) **Strategic Enrollment Mgmt. Cmte. Update, Brandon Boulter.** Brandon Boulter presented updates from the SEM Committee, highlighting three core pillars: outreach, recruitment, and retention. Efforts included hiring social media ambassadors, adding admissions counselors, and planning the launch of professional retention counselors in spring. Boulter praised faculty collaboration and emphasized a data-driven, student-centered approach. He also proposed future subcommittees and a public-facing enrollment dashboard.
- c) **NMT Finance Update, VP Walsh.** Vice President Walsh reported a smooth fiscal year-end closeout with no anomalies. She detailed a pending investment reallocation within the State Investment Council's new index pool structure, with transfers scheduled for July. Walsh noted a draft investment policy has been submitted to the President and anticipated for board review by late summer.
- d) **Federal Updates, VP Coolen.** Vice President Lique Coolen and Director David Manzano outlined the impacts of shifting federal policies. To date, five awards had been canceled and 13 placed under stop-work orders, totaling \$1.3 million in losses.

Potential caps on indirect cost recovery (F&A rates) were also discussed. NMT is proactively rewriting proposals, diversifying funding strategies, and preparing for potential bridge funding. Additionally, four congressional earmark requests totaling over \$5 million were submitted. Coolen emphasized the importance of continued advocacy.

e) Presidents Updates, Dr. Amouzegar.

President Amouzegar provided a broad institutional update, highlighting recent developments and partnerships:

Staff Council Formation

NMT has officially formed its first Staff Council. President Amouzegar congratulated Ms. Val Thomas for her leadership, noting that the council will be co-chaired by Ms. Thomas and Ms. Haley Hanson. The council will serve as a formal mechanism for staff engagement and collaboration with university leadership.

Wellness Center Project

The university continues planning a \$45 million Wellness Center project intended to serve both the campus and the Socorro community. The project is supported by the City of Socorro and Socorro County, and a general obligation bond may be pursued to fund construction. Architectural planning has begun, and the project will include wellness, recreation, and eSports components.

Marketing and ERP Modernization

Dr. Amouzegar noted that \$3.5 million has been allocated for a comprehensive update to the university's website and the transition to a SaaS-based Ellucian Banner ERP system. This modernization will support more efficient operations and improved transparency through real-time dash-boarding capabilities.

Socorro Electric Cooperative Collaboration

Amouzegar shared that NMT is rebuilding its relationship with the Socorro Electric Cooperative under the leadership of Manager Manny Gonzalez. Previous tensions have given way to collaboration in areas like workforce development, technical training, and shared infrastructure planning.

Fourth of July Fireworks and City Partnership

In response to a question from Regent Armijo about the fireworks event, President Amouzegar and Regent Armijo discussed the history of NMT's involvement in the annual Fourth of July celebration. Regent Armijo explained that the event had grown beyond NMT's logistical capacity, prompting a shift to city-led coordination. President Amouzegar stated that while NMT still funds the fireworks, costs have escalated to approximately \$60,000 due to tariffs and labor expenses. He shared that he requested cost-sharing from the City of Socorro—25% for 2025 and 50% for 2026. The mayor agreed to contribute \$15,000 this year. Dr. Amouzegar described this as a productive and positive collaboration between the university and city,

reinforcing community engagement.

f) Process/Procedure for Board Approval of Personnel Actions, Chair Lepre.

Human Resource Director Salome presented the newly implemented process for routing personnel actions to the Board of Regents for review and approval in accordance with the recent resolution passed by the Board on June 19, 2025. She distributed the HR Position Justification Form, which now includes: Position type (new, replacement, temporary, etc.), employment status (regular, temporary, emergency), work site, FTE, funding source, and pay range. A narrative section for justification of the position, signature and routing blocks for supervisor, division head, budget office. Director Salome explained that the final approved form, complete with budget and HR review, will be submitted to the Board of Regents for their review. Once the Board provides approval, the hiring unit will proceed with the personnel requisition and announcement. Several Regents weighed in: Regent Mukkamala and Regent Johnston emphasized the importance of balancing thorough oversight with a streamlined process that does not slow down hiring or budget operations. Chair Lepre noted that the most significant attention from the Board should be focused on new positions or major changes, while routine actions could proceed more efficiently. The Board affirmed the need for transparency and agreed to continue refining the process based on feedback and turnaround timelines for approvals. No formal vote was taken, as this was an informational discussion.

6) Consent Items, Chair Lepre.

- a) Unrestricted Fund Purchase >\$300k, VP Walsh.
 - Franken Construction –Data Center Infrastructure
 - Lynn Landscaping – Playas Fence Project

Regent Johnston moved to approve Consent Items 6a) followed by a second from Regent Mukkamala. The motion passed unanimously.

7) Action Items, Chair Lepre.

- a) **Approval of May 16, 2025 Minutes. Chair Lepre.** Regent Johnston moved approval, with a second from Regent Armijo. The motion passed unanimously.
- b) **Approval of NMHED Capital Project Transmittal Sheet, VP Walsh.** Regent King moved approval, with a second from Regent Mukkamala. The motion passed unanimously.
- c) **Approval of Resolution and Request from NMTURPC to Open Investment Account, VP Walsh.** Presented by VP Walsh. The Research Park Corporation requested authorization to open an investment account with the Local Government Investment Pool via NMT, as they are not eligible to open one independently. Regent Armijo moved approval, with a second from Regent Johnston. The motion passed unanimously.
- d) **Approval of Unrestricted Fund Purchase >\$300k, VP Walsh.**
 - Ellucian Banner Saas.** Presented by VP Walsh, this contract awards Ellucian for a seven-year SaaS-based ERP modernization initiative. The system will replace NMT's

legacy 20-year-old on-premises Banner system. The move includes cloud hosting, enhanced cybersecurity via AWS, and a robust training and implementation plan over 18–24 months. Regent Mukkamala moved approval, with a second from Regent King. The motion passed unanimously.

e) Unrestricted Fund Purchase >\$300k, VP Walsh

-McClain and Yu – Wellness Center Design. Presented by VP Walsh, the contract awards McClain & Yu Architecture & Design for the architectural planning and design of the new Wellness Center. The firm was selected under a state contract and has previously worked with NMT. The project includes stakeholder engagement, community charrettes, and infrastructure planning, funded through \$1M in special state appropriations to be spent or encumbered in FY26. Regent Johnston moved approval, with a second from Regent Armijo. The motion passed unanimously.

f) Restricted Fund Purchase Notification of Award>\$300k, VP Walsh. Southwest

Innovation Alliance. Presented by VP Walsh and AVPR Carlos Romero. The award of \$500,000 to the University of Texas at San Antonio supports space and collaboration under the Southwest Innovation Alliance funded by the Air Force Research Lab. The partnership allows NMT to establish presence in San Antonio's National Security Collaboration Center. Regent Armijo moved approval, with a second from Regent Mukkamala. The motion passed unanimously.

g) Restricted Fund Purchase Notification of Award>\$300k, VP Walsh. Carbon

Storage Project. Presented by VP Walsh. The funding supports continued research and development under NMT's carbon storage initiatives. Regent King approval, with a second from Regent Johnston. The motion passed unanimously.

8) Individual Board Member Comments, Chair Lepre. None.

9) New Business, Chair Lepre. None.

10) Executive Session, Chair Lepre. NMSA 1978, Sec 10-15-1 (H) (2), (If Required to Consider Legal and/or Personnel Matters)

Chair Lepre entertained a motion to meet in Executive Session. Regent Mukkamala so moved. Regent Armijo seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by roll call vote by Chair Lepre, Regents King, Armijo, Mukkamala and Johnston. The regular meeting adjourned at 1:52 p.m.


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, Chair Lepre.

Chair Lepre reconvened the regular meeting at 2:55 pm. He announced that only those items listed in the agenda were discussed and no action was taken in the closed meeting.

- 12) **Adjournment, Chair Lepre.** The meeting was unanimously adjourned at 2:57 pm on a motion by Regent Armijo and a second from Regent King.


Chair, David Lepre Sr.

Attest:


Secretary-Treasurer, Yolanda Jones King