

**NORTHWESTERN MICHIGAN COLLEGE**  
**BOARD OF TRUSTEES**  
**MINUTES**  
**Monday, March 20, 2023**  
**NMC Hagerty Center, Room C**

The Board hosted Student Government Association (SGA) representatives in room A of the Hagerty Center at 4:45 p.m. prior to the regular Board meeting.

**CALL TO ORDER**—Chair Laura J. Oblinger called the regular meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

**Trustees present:** Laura J. Oblinger, Chris M. Bott, Kenneth E. Warner, Andrew K. Robitshek

**Trustees absent:** Douglas S. Bishop, Rachel A. Johnson

**Trustees participating remotely:** Kennard R. Weaver (via Zoom from San Juan, Puerto Rico)

**Also present:** President Nick Nissley, Lynne Moritz, Diana Fairbanks, Troy Kierczynski, Todd Neibauer, Jennifer Hricik, Stephen Siciliano, Jason Slade, Marcus Bennett, Randy Melick, Glenn Wolff, Tony Jenkins, SGA Representatives, Dan Goodchild, Clifton Murie, Ali Thornton, Lisa Thomas

**REVIEW OF AGENDA**—The agenda was accepted as presented.

**STRATEGIC FOCUS**

**Mission & Values in Action: AudioTech Earth Day Concert**—Jeff Cobb, Director of Music Programs, and Brady Corcoran, Audio Tech Coordinator, introduced the Audio Tech Program and student Skye described the recording process. The Audio Tech Program focuses on live sound, studio recording and digital audio. Skye shared a song, “Sweeter Than Candy,” which was recorded in collaboration with another student.

**Strategic Initiatives Update: Future Focused Education**—Jason Slade, Vice President of Strategic Initiatives, and Stephen Siciliano, Vice President for Educational Services provided an update on the second strategy in the strategic plan. There was discussion regarding what is driving demand for online classes and success rates for various course formats.

**REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS**

**Program Focus: Student Government Association (SGA)**—Six students from the SGA presented on the activities for the academic year 2022-2023, including student group and start-up funding distributed by SGA. This year, SGA began giving funding allotments to start-up groups to encourage new groups to feel welcome. It was noted that four SGA members will be attending the ASGA Conference, and moving forward the group will focus on scholarship, recruitment, and fostering leadership

**Faculty Report: Object-Based Learning in Art Appreciation**—Randy Melick, Art Instructor, presented on the implementation of experiential learning in art appreciation courses. Melick emphasized the value of having the Dennis Museum Center as a resource, as well as the sculpture path around main campus. An assignment where students curate their own virtual exhibit was demonstrated.

**FY24 Budget Process**—Board Chair Laura Oblinger provided context regarding the budget process and noted the importance of gradual tuition increases. Vice President of Finance and Administration Troy Kierczynski provided a status update on the budget, set forth the assumptions going into the process, and outlined the next steps. Of note, labor is a large segment of budget expenses, non-labor is about 25%, and transfers are set to remain at FY23 levels. The initial FY24 deficit represents about 2% of the overall budget. Kierczynski reminded everyone of the college value of stewardship and intent to challenge these budget assumptions and analyze expenses to create a balanced budget. A secondary presentation will occur at the May 22 Board meeting, with adoption of a balanced budget occurring in June.

**PUBLIC INPUT**—There was public input offered by Clifton Murie.

## UPDATES

**President's Update**—President Nick Nissley elaborated on his mid-month written report, acknowledging the \$3.75 million included in the state's supplemental budget for the expansion of the Aviation Program hangar. Nissley thanked State Senator John Damoose, Wayne Schmidt, Aviation Director Alex Bloye and Trustee Rachel Johnson for their advocacy for the project. Nissley next highlighted partnerships: Extended Educational Services with 20Fathoms to develop a Business Essentials course; the Dental Assistant Program's articulation agreement with Bay Mills Community College; and collaboration to develop a Freshwater Research Innovation Center. Nissley highlighted recent individual and team awards for NMC's Phi Theta Kappa chapter and recognized Marine Tech student internship and job offers. On April 7, NMC will host State Budget Director Chris Harkins and Treasurer Rachel Eubanks.

**Board Chair Update**—Chair Laura Oblinger intends to include a written chair update included alongside the presidential mid-month update. Oblinger reminded trustees that a mid-year evaluation of President Nissley will occur at the June Board meeting, as discussed in the 2022 evaluation process. Oblinger offered kudos to Troy Kierczynski and Alex Bloye regarding Aviation hangar funding. Regarding NMC Foundation governance, Oblinger stressed that while Trustee Kennard Weaver represents the Board of Trustees on the Foundation's Board Development Committee, there will be numerous points along the process for trustee engagement. With the upcoming campus master plan, Oblinger apprised all that GTACS approached NMC regarding interest in the University Center; however, the master planning process will occur first before such interest will be considered. Lastly, Oblinger highlighted the college's participation in the Alliance for Innovation and Transformation (AFIT).

*All unanimous votes recorded below refer to those trustees physically present at the meeting. Trustee Kennard Weaver participated remotely for discussion purposes, but did not count toward a quorum or have authority to vote on consent or action items.*

**CONSENT ITEMS**—On a motion by Ken Warner, seconded by Andy Robitshek, the following items were approved by a unanimous vote as a group without discussion:

- Minutes of the February 27, 2023, regular meeting
- Enrollment Report—Todd Neibauer, Vice President for Student Services and Technologies

- Financial Report—Troy Kierczynski, Vice President of Finance and Administration
- PRMC—Diana Fairbanks, Associate Vice President of Public Relations, Marketing, and Communications
- Foundation Report—Jennifer Hricik, Interim Associate Vice President for Resource Development and Executive Director of Foundation
- Building & Site Committee Minutes—Ken Warner, Committee Chair

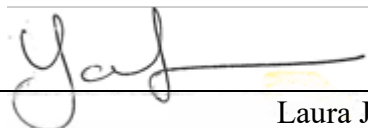
**ACTION ITEMS**

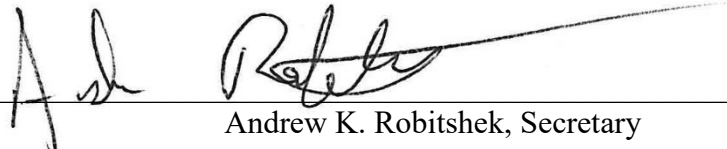
**Campus Master Plan Consulting Firm**—Ken Warner made a motion, seconded by Chris Bott, that the Board authorize administration to enter into a contract with Tower Pinkster Titus Associates in the amount of \$162,500 for campus master planning consulting services. The motion passed with a unanimous vote of those present. Trustee Kennard Weaver, who participated remotely, expressed his support for the motion.

**REVIEW OF FOLLOW-UP REQUESTS**—Confirmed requests made by the Board that require administrative follow-up for information to be provided to the Board at a later date.

**ADJOURNMENT**—The meeting adjourned at 6:53 p.m.

Recorded by Lynne Moritz, Executive Director of the President’s Office and Board Operations.

SIGNED  \_\_\_\_\_  
Laura J. Oblinger, Chair

ATTESTED  \_\_\_\_\_  
Andrew K. Robitshek, Secretary