

**NORTHWESTERN MICHIGAN COLLEGE**  
**BOARD OF TRUSTEES**  
**MINUTES**  
**Monday, April 26, 2021**  
**Virtual Zoom Webinar ID: 917 5245 2368**  
**Traverse City, MI**

**CALL TO ORDER**—Chair Chris M. Bott called the regular meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

**In compliance with PA 254 each trustee should publicly announce if they are attending remotely and provide their current physical location. The member's announcement must identify specifically the member's physical location by stating the county, city, township, or village and state from which he or she is attending the meeting remotely.**

Trustees present: **Douglas S. Bishop**, attending remotely from Bonita Springs, Lee County, Florida; **Chris M. Bott**, attending remotely from Traverse City, Grand Traverse County, Michigan; **Laura J. Oblinger**, attending remotely from Garfield Township, Grand Traverse County, Michigan; **Kenneth E. Warner**, attending remotely from East Bay Township, Grand Traverse County, Michigan; **Kennard R. Weaver**, attending remotely from Peninsula Township, Grand Traverse County, Michigan

Trustees absent: Michael Estes, Rachel A. Johnson

Also present: President Nick Nissley, Vicki Cook, Marguerite Cotto, Diana Fairbanks, Dan Goodchild, Joy Goodchild, Holly Gorton, Troy Kierczynski, Mark Liebling, Lindsey Lipke, Lynne Moritz, Kyle Morrison, Todd Neibauer, Denny Nguyen, Chris Ostrowski, Elizabeth Sonnabend, Rebecca Teahen, Stephen Siciliano, Jason Slade

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

**REPORTS**

**Program Focus—Construction Technology Program: Planning for the Future**—Presented by Dan Goodchild, Construction Technology Program Coordinator; Chris Ostrowski, Commercial Sales, Builders First Source, Advisory Board Member, and Build Your Life Initiative Founding Member; Jason Slade, Director of Technical Academic Area. Dan Goodchild provided an overview of the Construction Technology Program, comprised of areas including carpentry, construction management, electrical, and others. Goodchild also reviewed enrollment trends since 2018, indicating demand for trades has increased, including enrollment at area career tech centers. Chris Ostrowski discussed the development of Build Your Life (BYL), which serves to change the narrative of a life in the trades and provide educational opportunities to students. BYL has a goal of adding full-time instructors to each concentration area to teach academic courses and professional development training. The program is seeking partial external funding to support a full time instructor, which will then be fully funded by NMC after year four. The cycle would repeat through electrical, construction, and HVAC areas. The Board complimented the collaboration with an industry with high demand for workers and asked about training opportunities for current employees of our industry partners.

**Faculty Report—Building on Life Experiences**—Elizabeth Sonnabend, Adjunct Faculty-Business and Program Coordinator for EES, presented on bringing real world experiences into the business classroom to share the real-life working experiences of students. Sonnabend shared how she transformed her course from having students utilize case studies to bring their real-world experience into the classroom, allowing students to learn through practical exercises.

**Enrollment Report**—Todd Neibauer, Vice President for Student Services and Technology, provided the enrollment report. Neibauer noted it has been a strong registration season for summer and is early in the registration cycle for the fall semester.

**Financial Report**—Troy Kierczynski, Interim Vice President of Finance and Administration, reviewed the financial report for the period ending March 31, 2021. Kierczynski directed trustees to the Federal Relief Funding Update, noting funds were distributed quickly to students and institutional dollars are supporting areas of the college that lost revenue due to COVID-19 as well as long term investments such as wireless internet and firewall upgrades.

**Foundation Report**—Rebecca Teahen, Associate Vice President for Resource Development and Executive Director of Foundation, provided the Foundation Report. Teahen thanked Diana and Richard Milock for their recent \$3 million gift to support the college's Audio Technology program, Great Lakes Culinary Institute and Dennon Museum Center. The Be What's Possible campaign continues through the month of June. Teahen also thanked supporters of the recent Taste of Success and noted planning is underway for the Scholarship Open on August 5.

**PRMC Report**—Diana Fairbanks, Executive Director of Public Relations, Marketing, and Communications, provided her area report for the month of March 2021, noting year-over-year numbers are unusual, as they compare to the start of the pandemic in March 2020. Fairbanks also reported to the Board on the Phase I plan resulting from the PRMC redesign consultant work to date. An action item later in the agenda seeks approval from the Board to utilize the Fund for Transformation to invest in the restructuring and staffing of the PRMC area.

**Strategic Planning Report**—Vicki Cook, Special Assistant to the President, provided an update on the strategic planning process. Cook highlighted over 50 students participated in the Student Experience Workshop, 356 SWOT surveys were completed, and over 18 focus groups have been scheduled to take place over the next month.

**Executive Committee Report**—Committee Chair Chris Bott provided a report on the work of the Board Executive Committee, including a brief update on anticipated formats for future Board meetings. Bott does not expect the state legislature to allow remote attendance to public meetings on a permanent basis.

**Legislative Issues Report**—President Nick Nissley discussed the three proposed state budgets, from the Michigan House, Senate, and Governor, respectively. The significant difference between the community college appropriations budget proposal from the Governor/Senate and the House Subcommittee is that the House Subcommittee is proposing to replace the performance funding formula with one based on Full Year Equivalent Students (FYES). Under the FYES formula, NMC would see an alarming \$3 million annual decrease in operations funding by FY24. Nissley also reviewed current advocacy efforts, including communications and meetings with legislators.

**PUBLIC INPUT**—There was no public input offered.

## UPDATES

**President's Update**—President Nick Nissley reported COVID-19 cases have increased in the region; cases with campus exposure at NMC to date are 35 students and 5 employees. A vaccination clinic will occur on April 28 and 29 at the Hagerty Center for NMC employees and students. Nissley stressed the fastest way to return to fewer restrictions is through vaccination. Planning efforts are underway for summer and fall, including moving to Stage 3 of the Re-opening Plan.

Nissley recognized recent achievements of the Phi Theta Kappa Alpha, The White Pine Press, and Extended Education Services. Nissley recognized faculty member Steve Drake for his 50 years of service at NMC, which was included in the recognitions at the recent employee recognition event on April 14. Lastly, Nissley promoted the upcoming walk-through commencement event planned for Saturday, May 1.

**Board Chair Update**—Chair Chris Bott provided a brief update emphasizing upcoming Board events pertaining to the strategic planning process.

## DISCUSSION ITEMS

**Board Meeting Format**—Chair Chris Bott reviewed the plan developed by staff for future meeting formats. In the event that in-person meetings need to be resumed before local conditions improve and individuals have had the opportunity to get vaccinated, staff has developed a plan for a hybrid meeting format, which was provided to the Board.

**HLC Open-pathway Review**—Joy Goodchild, Executive Director, Office of Research, Planning, and Effectiveness, provided a brief review of the Higher Learning Commission accreditation process. NMC's most recent accreditation affirmation occurred in 2019; therefore, the next reaffirmation of accreditation will occur in 2028-29, with interim monitoring reviews at various intervals of the 10-year cycle. Goodchild also reviewed the role of the Board as it relates to accreditation.

**CONSENT ITEMS**—On a motion by Kennard Weaver, seconded by Laura Oblinger, the following items were approved by a unanimous vote as a group without discussion:

- Minutes of the March 22, 2021, regular meeting
- Minutes of the April 6, 2021, special meeting

## ACTION ITEMS

**Fund for Transformation Investment**—On a motion by Laura Oblinger, seconded by Kennard Weaver, the Board authorized administration to utilize the Board designated Fund for Transformation for investment of up to \$320,000 in the restructuring and staffing of the Public Relations, Marketing and Communications area to support the strategic enrollment management plan and other college initiatives. The motion passed with a unanimous vote.

**MCACA Grant Application**—On a motion by Kennard Weaver, seconded by Ken Warner, the Board authorized the Dennon Museum Center at Northwestern Michigan College to submit an

application for grant funding in the amount of \$30,000 for program support from the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs in the current round of grant applications due June 1, 2021. The motion passed with a unanimous vote.

**Housing and Board Rates for FY2022**—On a motion by Laura Oblinger, seconded by Ken Warner, the Board approved the Housing and Board Rates for the 2021-2022 fiscal year as presented. The motion passed with a unanimous vote.

**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 7:58 p.m.

Recorded by Holly Gorton, Chief of Staff to the President and Board of Trustees.

SIGNED \_\_\_\_\_



Chris M. Bott, Chair

ATTESTED \_\_\_\_\_



Kenneth E. Warner, Secretary