

**NORTHWESTERN MICHIGAN COLLEGE  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
MINUTES  
Monday, March 21, 2022  
NMC Hagerty Center, Room C**

**CALL TO ORDER**—Chair Rachel A. Johnson called the regular meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

**Trustees present:** Andrew K. Robitshek, Chris M. Bott, Laura J. Oblinger, Kennard R. Weaver, Rachel A. Johnson

**Trustees absent:** None

**Trustees remote:** Douglas S. Bishop—participating remotely from Bonita Springs, Lee County, FL; Kenneth E. Warner—(at 5:44pm) from SeaTac, King County, WA

**Also present:** President Nick Nissley, Lynne Moritz, Jerry Achenbach, Diana Fairbanks, Troy Kierczynski (via Zoom), Mark Liebling, Kyle Morrison, Todd Neibauer, Rebecca Teahen, Becca Richardson, Brie Mills

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

**STRATEGIC FOCUS: Future Focused Education**—Jason Slade, Vice President of Strategic Initiatives, and Stephen Siciliano, Vice President of Educational Services, provided an update on the first strategy of Future-Focused Education. Upon completion of this strategy, NMC will be able to provide expedited academic pathways for our learners through the acknowledgement of credit for prior learning and shortened (accelerated) course sequencing. Course options will include face-to-face, hybrid, and online learning which allow the student to customize a schedule that meets their learning style as well as their availability. Each student’s education will be enhanced through meaningful experiential learning opportunities, adding value and unique student experiences.

**REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS**

**Great Lakes Maritime Academy**—Jerry Achenbach, GLMA Superintendent, noted his presentation is brief on the very important topic of Every Mariner Builds a Respectful Climate (EMBARC) and he is available to speak with any trustees who have further questions not addressed today. In 2021, several cadets brought to our attention that they believed cadets were experiencing harassment while on board a commercial vessel, but were reluctant to report it. In response to this concern as well as reports of harassment in the broader maritime industry, the maritime academies The goal of EMBARC is to provide cadets the equivalent level of safety as the MARAD plan while also maintaining their ability to sail onboard commercial vessels.

**Faculty Report**—Quantitative Literacy (MTH 100)—Becca Richardson and Brie Mills, Math Instructors, presented on the development of course MTH 100, which consists of four units—geometry and numeracy; rates, proportions, and numeracy; linear modeling & statistics; and non-linear models & dimensional analysis. The course utilizes toolkit and mindset activities to expand on students’ prior knowledge and promote a growth mindset. The course also utilizes experiential learning opportunities and the EL learning cycle.

**Audit Committee Report**—Committee Chair Kennard Weaver directed fellow trustees to the minutes of the Audit Committee meeting from March 16, 2022. It was clarified that there will be a new partner in charge assigned to NMC from Plante Moran, while the manager will be the same as in 2021.

**Building and Site Committee Report**—Committee Laura Oblinger noted significant projects are underway and that all can be connected to the strategic plan. Oblinger applauded the work of Troy Kierczynski and his team for seeking state and federal funding opportunities.

**EXECUTIVE REPORTS**—The following written reports were provided in the packet of materials: Enrollment, Financial, Foundation Report, and PRMC.

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

## UPDATES

**President's Update**—President Nick Nissley began his update by sharing that staff, faculty and students are successfully transitioning with the removal of the mask requirement on February 28, 2022. Regarding the legislative report, Nissley noted updates on community college BSN legislation, state budget developments, and college budget development. Vice President of Strategic Initiatives Jason Slade and President Nissley continue to meet with area organizations to discuss the NMC Next Strategic Plan. Traverse Connect's Scale Up North Awards include two finalists having connections with NMC alumni. Lastly, Nissley thanked Board Chair Rachel Johnson for participating in a recent meeting with legislators focused on the NMC aviation program.

**Board Chair Update**—Chair Rachel Johnson thanked Sen. Schmidt, Sen. VanderWall, Rep. O'Malley, Rep. Roth, Rep. Borton, Rep. Van Singel, and former Rep. Triston Cole for visiting the NMC Aviation Program on March 18. Johnson also highlighted key statistics regarding NMC aviation, including: the program currently has capacity for 125 students and a waitlist of 200 students who will wait 1-2 years for entry. The current hangar was built in 1978 and has had minimal improvements since. Graduates experience nearly 100% job placement, with starting salaries around \$75,000 and a median annual salary of \$248,000. NMC graduates often choose to stay in the region, continuing to support the regional economy. Johnson encouraged fellow trustees to educate themselves on this request and to tour the program if they have not already.

## DISCUSSION ITEMS

**FY23 Budget Process**—Vice President of Finance and Administration Troy Kierczynski began by noting the tremendous challenges the college has overcome over the past two years due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As the pandemic crisis recedes, Kierczynski noted investments in growth opportunities are needed to support the strategic plan. Kierczynski recommends considering a tuition rate increase to accommodate these investments. Each percentage of tuition increase results in approximately \$135,000 in revenue. Kierczynski reviewed comparisons amongst other Michigan community colleges and it was noted that rather than freezing tuition year-over-year and then needing to increase it significantly all at once, it is helpful to make incremental increases. It was requested to provide clarification on the investments that would occur in FY23 Budget Scenarios 2

and 3 and analysis of how the increases impact the average student. Budget discussions will continue in the months leading up to the June Board meeting, at which time the FY23 budget will be presented to the Board for their consideration and approval.

All unanimous votes recorded below refer to those trustees physically present at the meeting. Trustees Doug Bishop and Ken Warner participated remotely for discussion purposes, but did not count toward a quorum, and they did not have the authority to vote on consent or action items.

**CONSENT ITEMS**—On a motion by Kennard Weaver, seconded by Laura Oblinger, minutes of the February 28, 2022, regular and closed meetings were approved unanimously without discussion.

### **ACTION ITEMS**

**Financial Audit Services**—On a motion by Kennard Weaver, seconded by Chris Bott, the Board authorized administration to enter into a contract with Plante Moran as Northwestern Michigan College's auditing firm for the upcoming three-year period, for a three-year total amount of \$240,450, based on satisfactory completion of each fiscal year audit. The motion passed unanimously.

**Human Resource Talent Management Software**—Laura Oblinger made a motion, seconded by Chris Bott, to authorize administration to enter into a contract with NeoEd for HR Talent Management software for a three-year total amount of \$143,000. The motion passed with unanimous support.

**Replacement Visual Communications Computers**—On a motion by Laura Oblinger, seconded by Kennard Weaver, the Board authorized for administration to purchase replacement computers for the Visual Communications (VCA) computer lab and faculty at a cost of \$53,200 from CDW. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

**Information Technology Audit**—Kennard Weaver made a motion, seconded by Laura Oblinger, for administration to enter into a contract with CBI Secure for an Information Technology Audit of NMC's systems at a cost of \$39,600. Vice President for Student Services and Technologies Todd Neibauer described the comprehensive testing. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

**Sabbatical Requests**—On a motion by Laura Oblinger, seconded by Chris Bott, the Board approved the sabbatical applications for Jerry Dobek, Nancy Gray, and Mark Liebling. Chair Rachel Johnson explained that sabbatical requests have historically come to the Board of Trustees due to a MPSERS requirement that has changed, the Board Policy Committee will review Policy A-105.00 Consent Agenda Items to match. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

**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 7:13 p.m.

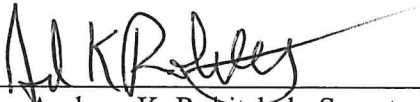
Recorded by Lynne Moritz, Executive Director of the President's Office and Board Operations.

SIGNED \_\_\_\_\_



Rachel A. Johnson, Chair

ATTESTED \_\_\_\_\_



Andrew K. Robitshek, Secretary