

**NORTHWESTERN MICHIGAN COLLEGE  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
MINUTES  
Monday, December 15, 2025  
Timothy J. Nelson Innovation Center  
Room 106/107**

**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, Kennard R. Weaver, Kenneth E. Warner, Andrew K. Robitshek, Mark B. Keely, Jody N. Lundquist, Pamela T. Horne

**Trustees absent:** None

**Also present:** President Nick Nissley, Lynne Moritz, Troy Kierczynski, Todd Neibauer, Stephen Siciliano, Jason Slade, Lindsey Lipke, Kyle Morrison, Laura Stevens, Becca Richardson, Caroline Schaefer-Hills, Tricia Lincoln, Janet Lively, Scott Eldridge, Cari Noga, Hollie DeWalt, Molly Norville, Lindsey Dickinson, Lori Hodek, Seth Johnson, Bobby Peplinski, Michael Anderson

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

**STRATEGIC FOCUS**

**Mission & Values in Action**—Jaron Larson shared his NMC story: through dual enrollment and Michigan Reconnect he will earn his second associate degree this spring and is pursuing a degree in Engineering at the University of Michigan in fall 2026.

**Strategic Plan 2026-2029**—Jason Slade, Vice President of Strategic Initiatives, reviewed the process over the past several months as the 2026-2029 strategic plan has been developed. Slade also noted the planned framework for continued updates to the Board. Trustee Keely noted the impressive work that has been done that he witnessed as part of the Strategic Planning Steering Committee. Trustee Oblinger recognized that the plan also includes agility and opportunity to grow throughout the next three years, and commended leadership and collaboration of Vice President Slade and Associate Vice President Fairbanks. The Board also celebrated intentional alignment with the NMC Foundation.

**REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS**

**October Conference**—Lori Hodek, Talent Development Coordinator and Director of the Professional Development Institute, and Janet Lively, Communications Instructor and Director of the Center for Instructional Excellence, shared the 10th professional development conference for NMC employees. Partnering with various organizations, including 20 Fathoms, the conference focused on the transformative impact of AI. Hodek and Lively also shared that there are continuous learning opportunities for employees through department specific training, work aligned with the strategic plan, and there is an AI community of practice at NMC. Trustee Warner commended Hodek and Lively on planning the conference day, noting the importance of how AI will transform, including

higher education. Chair Oblinger recommended the work be proposed as a conference session for either the Michigan Community College Association or Association of Community College Trustees.

**Faculty Report**—Tricia Lincoln and Caroline Schaefer-Hills presented on the NMC Magazine, which has been published in the fall and spring for 48 years. The magazine blends genres and collaborates across disciplines. National conference attendance and award recognition are highlights for the students and advisors. Students shared the teamwork and project management have been significant experiential learning for them.

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

## UPDATES

**President's Update**—A student managed investment fund has been created under the leadership of Foundation Finance and Audit Committee Chair Chris Lamb. An eighth consecutive semester of enrollment growth is anticipated for Spring 2026. President Nissley shared kudos from a community member for the NMC nursing students that he encountered at Munson Medical Center. Nissley congratulated the thirty-plus nursing students who participated in the pinning ceremony this past weekend and Police Academy graduates who achieved 100% pass rates on licensing exams. Trustee Horne highlighted the data shared recently regarding NMC transfers to Ferris State University; President Nissley confirmed staff is gathering similar data from other university partners.

**Board Chair Update**—As Trustee Oblinger plans to conclude her term as chair in 2026, she shared appreciation for each fellow trustee, college staff, and President Nissley.

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

- Minutes of the November 24, 2025, regular meeting and closed sessions
- Enrollment Report—*Todd Neibauer, Vice President for Student Services and Technologies*
- PRMC Report—*Diana Fairbanks, Associate Vice President of Public Relations, Marketing, and Communications*
- Advancement Report—*Katharine Marvin, Vice President for Advancement*
- Executive Committee—*Laura Oblinger, Committee Chair*
- Minutes of the Building & Site Committee, regular and closed sessions—*Kennard Weaver, Committee Chair*

## ACTION ITEMS

**Strategic Plan**—Ken Warner made a motion, seconded by Pam Horne, recommending approval of the 2026-2029 strategies as presented. The motion passed unanimously.



**Board Policy**—On a motion by Jody Lundquist, seconded by Mark Keely, it was recommended to adopt the following Board policies on a second-reading basis:

- Policy A-106.03 Policy Amendment and Additions (minor revisions)
- Policy A-001.00 College Policy Organization (revised)
- Policy A-101.00 Board of Trustees Responsibilities (minor revisions)

Trustee Weaver confirmed the revisions made to Policy A-001.00 and the motion passed unanimously.

**Closed Session**—Mark Keely made a motion, seconded by Kennard Weaver, to adjourn the open session and consider in closed session (pursuant to Section 8(h) of the Open Meetings Act, MCL 15.268) one privileged legal memo prepared by the college's outside counsel, Miller Canfield, PLC, which is material exempt from discussion or disclosure under state or federal statute as written attorney-client communications in connection with Section 13(1)(g) of Michigan's Freedom of Information Act 15.243. The motion passed with the following roll-call vote: Yes—Jody Lundquist, Mark Keely, Ken Warner, Pam Horne, Andy Robitshek, Kennard Weaver, Laura Oblinger; No—none. The closed session began at 6:26 p.m.

**Reconvene Regular Session**—Kennard Weaver made a motion, seconded by Mark Keely, to adjourn the closed session and reconvene the open session. The motion passed with the following roll-call vote: Yes—Pam Horne, Kennard Weaver, Ken Warner, Andy Robitshek, Jody Lundquist, Mark Keely, Laura Oblinger; No—none. The regular session convened at 7:52 p.m.

**Letter of Intent**—Chair Oblinger sought a motion and second for the following action:

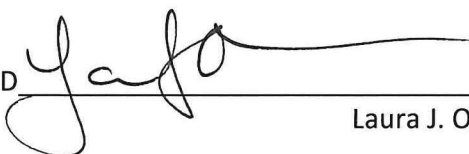
- (a) authorize NMC President Nick Nissley to work with Cunningham-Limp and Miller Canfield to present a letter of intent to the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Tribe detailing the College's opening response to the Tribe's recent proposal to purchase the Boardman Lake Campus property;
- (b) if the Tribe signs the letter of intent on or before December 30, 2025, further authorize President Nissley to exercise his discretion whether to suspend the October 20, 2025 RFP entitled "Master Lease of the Northwestern Michigan College Boardman Lake Campus," pending negotiations with the Tribe; and
- (c) further authorize President Nissley to work with Cunningham-Limp and Miller Canfield to negotiate the terms of a final purchase and sale agreement to sell the Boardman Lake Campus to the Tribe, subject to final approval by the Board of Trustees.

Trustee Keely made the motion, seconded by Trustee Lundquist. The motion passed with a majority vote, with Trustee Robitshek opposing.

**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 7:54 p.m.

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

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

ATTESTED  \_\_\_\_\_  
Pamela T. Horne Secretary