

NORTHWESTERN MICHIGAN COLLEGE
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MINUTES
Monday, May 18, 2026
Timothy J. Nelson Innovation Center
Room 106/107

CALL TO ORDER—Chair Mark B. Keely called the regular meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL

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

Trustees absent: Laura J. Oblinger

Also present: President Nick Nissley, Lynne Moritz, Diana Fairbanks, Troy Kierczynski, Todd Neibauer, Stephen Siciliano, Jason Slade, Lindsey Lipke, Kyle Morrison, Hollie DeWalt, Chris Hackbarth, Nate Krommendyk, Becca Richardson, Katharine Marvin, Chelsie Niemi, Craig Hadley, Lindsey Dickinson

REVIEW OF AGENDA—The agenda was accepted as presented.

REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS

Faculty Report: “Voices Project”—Shilo Smith, Psychology Instructor, summarized the “Voices” project that began from Professional Development Day in 2022, which seeks to bring awareness of lesser-known but major contributors to the arts, sciences, and professions. The semester-long project requires students to select two voices from marginalized groups. In returning the Introduction to Social Psychology to an in-person format, projects have now resulted in various installations around campuses. One student collaborated with the NMC Library to collect and display literature from Indigenous authors. As provided by a student testimonial, takeaways from the project included recognizing cultural influences from marginalized populations in the United States. Smith shared that student reflections demonstrate deep understanding and impacts from the project.

Advancement & Community Engagement—Katharine Marvin, Vice President of College Advancement, provided an overview of the Advancement and Community Engagement (ACE) division and how they support campus and community vibrancy. International Affairs Forum, Dennon Museum Center, WNMC Radio, and the NMC Foundation comprise the ACE division. Dennon Museum Audience Engagement and Communication Manager Chelsie Niemi presented the rationale and timing behind the Dennon brand refresh. Following the college’s brand refresh, in addition to alignment with an upcoming comprehensive fundraising campaign and applying for American Alliance of Museums (AAM) accreditation, the timing also coincides with the Dennon’s 35th anniversary. A steering committee chose the Phire Group to conduct the discovery work of surveys, stakeholder interviews, and competitive analysis. The goal of the brand refresh was to intentionally set the vision for the museum. Dr. Craig Hadley, Executive Director & Chief Curator, shared an update on the pursuit of accreditation through the AAM. While fewer than 5% of museums achieve AAM accreditation, Hadley shared the benefits of accreditation, including in receiving grants.

Anchor and Edge Strategic Plan—Strategy 3: Vibrant College Community

Vice President of Strategic Initiatives Jason Slade applauded the collaboration across the college and recognized the broad reach of the third strategy. Slade commended the champion team of Troy Kierczynski (VP Finance and Administration), Hollie DeWalt (AVP, Human Resources), Katharine Marvin (VP Advancement), and Todd Neibauer (VP Student Services and Technologies). Joan

Sodini, Creative Director, is also the brand lead for all three strategies. College vibrancy spans facilities, people, efficiencies, and employer of choice throughout its five objectives. Trustees encouraged bold goal setting and engaging employees throughout the college.

FY27 Budget Update—Troy Kierczynski, Vice President, Finance and Administration, provided an update on the FY27 budget since it was first presented in March, including key developments in Grand Traverse County property tax data and the state budget. The Composite Financial Index (CFI) is a data point reported to the college's accrediting body (Higher Learning Commission) and has been identified as an important KPI in the developing organizational health metrics. With future tuition restraint levels and state funding for students, the Board is asked to consider at 4% increase in tuition, which would result in a FY27 budget impact of \$184,176. For students, this would be an increase from the current \$131 per contact hour to \$136 per contact hour. The FY27 budget and tuition rates will be recommended for Board approval on the June 22 agenda.

PUBLIC INPUT—There was no public input offered.

UPDATES

President's Update—President Nick Nissley commended Vice President Kierczynski for his leadership of a balanced budget aligned with strategic priorities, and without utilizing reserves or one-time funding sources despite significant uncertainty in economic and enrollment forecasts. Nissley highlighted college events that demonstrate a vibrant college community: Commencement, Extended Education Campus Day, Employee Recognition, Freshwater Research & Innovation Center "Topping Off" ceremony, and hosting legislators for a tour of student services. Lastly, Nissley also recognized that the Traverse City Human Rights Commission Humanitarian Awards included NMC alumni and the Neurodiversity Support Center. The NMC Foundation recently received a \$2 million anonymous gift to endow the Dennon Museum Center's operating fund. Additionally, the Foundation has achieved its FY26 fundraising goal and hosted a successful Taste of Success event raising for \$200,000 for the Great Lakes Culinary Institute.

Board Chair Update—Chair Mark Keely noted with appreciation the time and energy that trustees dedicate to their role.

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

- Minutes of the April 27, 2026, regular meeting
- Enrollment Report—*Todd Neibauer, Vice President for Student Services and Technologies*
- Financial Report—*Troy Kierczynski, Vice President of Finance and Administration*
- Public Relations, Marketing, & Communications Report—*Diana Fairbanks, Associate Vice President, Strategic Communications and Change Initiatives*
- Advancement Report—*Katharine Marvin, Vice President of Advancement*
- Building and Site Committee—*Kennard Weaver, Committee Chair*
- Executive Committee—*Mark Keely, Committee Chair*

ACTION ITEMS

Notice of Truth-in-Taxation Hearing -- Ken Warner recommended that the Truth-in-Taxation Resolution be adopted as presented. Pam Horne seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

DTE Easements -- Kennard Weaver made a motion to recommend authorization for administration to sign and grant two easement requests from DTE Energy. The motion was seconded by Ken Warner and it passed unanimously.

Cell Tower Lease – On a motion by Pam Horne, it was recommended to authorize administration to enter into a lease extension contract with American Tower Corporation. Ken Warner seconded the motion and it passed with unanimous support from the present trustees.

Strategic Fund Investment – Kennard Weaver made a motion to recommend approval of a five-year aggregate investment of \$500,000 from FY27 through FY31 to support operational expenses for a comprehensive fundraising campaign. After being seconded by Ken Warner the motion passed with unanimous support.

MACC Grant Application – Kennard Weaver made a motion to recommend authorization for the Dennis Museum Center at Northwestern Michigan College to submit an application for grant funding in the amount of \$45,000 for the MACC Project Experience Grant for FY27. Trustee Pam Horne seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.


Tribal Council 2% Funds Application – Jody Lundquist made a motion, seconded by Pam Horne, to recommend authorization for administration to submit application for the 2% grant from the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians video gaming revenue as presented. The motion passed unanimously.


Sentinel One Renewal – On a motion by Kennard Weaver, seconded by Jody Lundquist, and with unanimous approval, the Board authorized for administration to enter into a contract with People Driven Technologies for the renewal of the Sentinel One software at a cost of \$56,008.22 to be funded from the SLM E&G budget.

REVIEW OF FOLLOW-UP REQUESTS—While trustee input and feedback were noted, particularly regarding the strategic plan and budget, no specific requests were made by the Board that require administrative follow-up to be completed at a later date.

ADJOURNMENT—The meeting adjourned at 7:21 p.m.

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

SIGNED  _____
Mark B. Keely, Chair

ATTESTED  _____
Pamela T. Horne, Secretary