

**New Mexico Highlands University  
Board of Regents Virtual Special Meeting  
December 18, 2020**

The New Mexico Highlands University Board of Regents held a virtual special meeting on December 18, 2020. The meeting streamed via ZOOM from the New Mexico Highlands University main campus in Las Vegas, New Mexico. The university complied with the Governor's Office and the New Mexico Department of Health's social distancing mandate which limits mass gatherings to five (5) individuals therefore, the Board of Regents meeting was held as a virtual meeting only. The university made every effort to accommodate members of the public as stated in the December 15, 2020 meeting announcement. The items addressed during the meeting were time sensitive and could not wait. Thus, in accordance with the NM Attorney General's Open Government Division Advisory, the meeting was held as a virtual meeting only. Members of the public were able to access the meeting via zoom and/or via phone call:

<https://nmhu.zoom.us/j/122824474>

Or iPhone one-tap: US: +13462487799,122824474# or +16699006833,122824474#

Or Telephone: Dial (for higher quality, dial a number based on your current location):

US: +1 346 248 7799 or +1 669 900 6833 or +1 312 626 6799 or +1 646 558 8656 or +1 253 215 8782 or +1 301 715 8592

Webinar ID: 122 824 474

International numbers available: <https://nmhu.zoom.us/u/ac1IDo7Azz>

Or an H.323/SIP room system: H.323: 162.255.37.11 (US West), 162.255.36.11 (US East)

Chairman Sanchez called upon Dr. Kimberly Blea, Dean of Students to read an opening statement: *"Thank you for joining the NMHU Board of Regents today, December 18, 2020 for our virtual Special Board meeting. The university is complying with the Governor's Office and the New Mexico Department of Health's social distancing mandate limiting mass gatherings to five (5) individuals. The university has made every effort to accommodate members of the public. The items to be addressed at this meeting are time sensitive and cannot wait, thus in accordance with the NM Attorney General's Open Government Division Advisory, the meeting is being held as a virtual meeting only. Board members participating in the meeting remotely are: Mr. William Garcia, Mr. Frank Marchi, Ms. Danelle Smith, Mr. Christopher Ulibarri, and Board Chairman/Mr. Leveo Sanchez."*

*"Also participating in the meeting remotely are Dr. Sam Minner, Dr. Roxanne Gonzales, Mr. Max Baca, Dr. Terri Law, Dr. Kimberly Blea, Dr. Orit Tamir, Ms. Veronica Black, and Ms. Linda Palos."*

*"Should Board members or the university lose connectivity and there is no longer have a quorum, the Board meeting will be suspended and no action will be taken until a quorum is reconvened."*

**Call to Order** – Chairman Sanchez called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m.

**Roll Call** - Board Members Present via ZOOM: Mr. William Garcia, Mr. Frank Marchi, Ms. Danelle Smith, Mr. Leveo V. Sanchez, and Mr. Christopher Ulibarri.

Administrative Personnel Present via ZOOM: Dr. Sam Minner, President; Dr. Roxanne Gonzales, Provost/Vice President of Academic Affairs; Mr. Max Baca, Vice President for Finance & Administration; and Dr. Kimberly Blea, Dean of Students.

Others Present via ZOOM: Dr. Orit Tamir, Faculty Senate Chair; Mr. Luke Salganek, University Legal Counsel, and Ms. Maria Sena, Senior Executive Administrative Assistant. Numerous faculty, staff, students, community members, and the general public participated in the meeting as it was streamed via ZOOM.

#### **Approval of the December 18, 2020 Virtual Special Meeting Agenda**

Regent Garcia moved to approve the Board's virtual special meeting agenda for December 18, 2020 with the request made by President Minner. Regent Ulibarri seconded. A roll call vote was taken, voting in favor: Regent Garcia, Regent Marchi, Regent Smith, Regent Ulibarri, and Chairman Sanchez. Motion carried.

#### **Approval of the Minutes from November 20, 2020**

Regent Garcia stated that he would like to add additional wording to the minutes indicating that the board members agreed to use the strategic plan for the second part of the board training and that President Minner would review the strategic plan to determine if it could be used as part of the performance evaluation of the university president. Regent Garcia motioned to approve minutes with these changes. Regent Marchi seconded. A roll call vote was taken, voting in favor were: Regent Garcia, Regent Marchi, Regent Smith, Regent Ulibarri, and Chairman Sanchez. Motion carried.

#### **Board of Regents Report**

Regent Marchi indicated that he had participated in meeting with CUP/HERCS. Dr. Shepard, CUP President provided a presentation of the 2021 priorities. Priorities included fully restoring the federal fund swap to the I & G Base, maintaining current higher education funding levels, and funding for student financial aid. He indicated that the Higher Education Work Plan will work on increasing enrollment, decreasing costs, and enhancing other revenue sources.

Regent Garcia stated that he also attended this meeting. HERCS primary initiative is broadband and the need for quality access to all areas of the state. Regent Garcia asked if broadband is a big issue in our area. Dr. Minner stated that currently broadband is not good in our area and our students are driving to coffee shops to take their courses. Broadband is a problem throughout our state. Mr. Baca indicated that Highlands bandwidth has been sufficient for our services. However, the current networks are not able to handle the load. Mr. Baca stated that companies cannot keep up with the demand that has increased from the stay at home order. Regent Garcia indicated that the initiative will address a strategic plan that provides funding for statewide broadband and ensures that funding is not taken from the universities. Regent Garcia would like a review of our broadband and identify what is lacking to make sure we are delivering higher education.

#### **President's Report-Dr. Sam Minner**

##### **Board of Regents Meeting Dates**

President Minner indicated that his office has reviewed prior dates for the Board of Regents

regular meetings and proposed the following meeting dates:

- January 29, 2021
- April 23, 2021
- July 23, 2021
- October 22, 2021
- December 17, 2021

He stated that no action is needed for these meeting dates. These dates will be the regular board meeting. Special board meetings can be called as needed.

### **Legislative Session**

He stated the university is spending time getting ready for the legislative session. Mr. Baca shared a power point. He stated that higher education might receive a two percent reduction. For Highlands it will be about half million dollars.

### **Survey**

He indicated that a survey response from student regarding COVID was completed. He has charged the emergency operation group to examine and make recommendations to improve performance.

### **Enrollment**

He indicated that enrollment is currently down one percent. The university is participating in television ads and providing free one-hour courses for the spring semester.

### **Grants**

He stated that during COVID faculty has obtain about 1 million dollars in grants for student support.

### **Transit Program**

He informed the board that a partnership was created with the community for a transit program. It is a one-year experiment for bus transportation. The bus starts in Cleveland and Mora and makes stops throughout Las Vegas twice a day.

### **National and University Avenues Project**

He stated that he is in discussion with the City of Las Vegas for the renovations of National and University Avenues. He indicated that the university was in full support of the top recommendation in a study that was conducted by the city.

### **Provost/Vice President of Academic Affairs-Dr. Roxanne Gonzales**

#### **BS in Wildlife Biology and Conservation-Action Item**

Dr. Gonzales presented a new degree proposal. It is an opportunity for students to go on a professional track in the field of Biology. Dr. Kempner stated this program allows students to become more specialized in certain fields. This new degree would provide options to students.

Regent Smith moved to approve the new BS in Wildlife Biology and Conservation as presented. Regent Ulibarri seconded. A roll call vote was taken, voting in favor were: Regent Garcia, Regent Marchi, Regent Smith, Regent Ulibarri, and Chairman Sanchez. Motion carried.

**Vice President of Finance & Administration and Government Relations-Mr. Max Baca**

**Revocation Action on NMHU Resolution on Collective Bargaining-Elimination of the Local Labor Management Board-Action Item**

Mr. Baca stated that a new law went into effect on July 1, 2020. The university had two choices. Disband the local labor board and in January 2021 adhere to the new law or modify our current policies and procedures indicating that the local labor board would take all labor actions to the state board. After careful consideration, the recommendation was to disband our local labor management board.

Dr. Jenkins stated that the bargaining union is in full support of disbanding the local labor management board.

Regent Smith moved to approve the revocation action on NMHU Resolution on Collective Bargaining, Elimination of the Local Labor Management Board as presented. Regent Marchi seconded. A roll call vote was taken, voting in favor were: Regent Garcia, Regent Marchi, Regent Smith, Regent Ulibarri, and Chairman Sanchez. Motion carried.

**Acceptance of Non-Except Union Collective Bargaining Agreement Article 14 “Leaves” (i.e. Annual, Sick and Bereavement Leave)-Action Item**

Mr. Baca indicated that for the last few years there has been a difference between union and non-union groups with understanding of leave. Article 14 would bring them up-to-date with the current policy.

Dr. Jenkins stated that the bargaining union ratified and is in full support of this article.

Regent Garcia moved to approve the acceptance of Non-Exempt Union Collective Bargaining Agreement Article 14 “Leaves” as presented. Regent Ulibarri seconded. A roll call vote was taken, voting in favor were: Regent Garcia, Regent Marchi, Regent Smith, Regent Ulibarri, and Chairman Sanchez. Motion carried.

**Acceptance of Non-Exempt Union Collective Bargaining Agreement Article 28 “Benefits”-Action Item**

Mr. Baca indicated that this agreement would bring the non-exempt group up-to-date with current policy.

Dr. Jenkins stated that bargaining union ratified and is in full support of this article.

Regent Ulibarri moved to approve the acceptance of Non-Exempt Union Collective Bargaining Agreement Article 28 “Benefits” as presented. Regent Marchi seconded. A roll call vote was taken, voting in favor were: Regent Garcia, Regent Marchi, Regent Smith, Regent Ulibarri, and Chairman Sanchez. Motion carried.

**Quarterly Reports & Certification (FY21/Q1)-Action Item**

Mr. Baca indicated that certification has to be submit to HED ensuring that the university is in a solid financial position.

Regent Marchi moved to approve the Quarterly Reports & Certification (FY21/Q1) as presented. Regent Ulibarri seconded. A roll call vote was taken, voting in favor were: Regent Garcia, Regent Marchi, Regent Smith, Regent Ulibarri, and Chairman Sanchez. Motion carried.

**Executive Session – (a) limited personnel matters related to Sam Minner pursuant to NMSA 1978, § 10-15- 1(H)(2)**

Regent Marchi moved to enter into executive session for the sole purpose of discussing the items listed. Regent Smith seconded. A roll call vote was taken, voting in favor: Regent Garcia, Regent Marchi, Regent Smith, Regent Ulibarri, and Chairman Sanchez. Motion carried. The Board entered into executive session at 1:20 p.m.

Regent Marchi moved to return to open session. Regent Garcia seconded. Regent Marchi stated for the record that only those items specified under the executive session were discussed and the Board took no action. Regents present confirmed. A roll call was taken, voting in favor of returning to open session were: Regent Garcia, Regent Marchi, Regent Smith, Regent Ulibarri, and Chairman Sanchez. Motion carried and the Board returned to open session at 2:37 p.m.

**Public Action as Necessary on Closed Session – Action Item**

No action was taken

**Public Comment**

No one came forward.

**Adjournment**

Regent Ulibarri moved to adjourn. Regent Smith seconded. A roll call vote was taken, voting in favor: Regent Garcia, Regent Marchi, Regent Smith, Regent Ulibarri, and Chairman Sanchez. Motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 2:38 p.m.



Chairman  
NMHU Board of Regents



Secretary/Treasurer  
NMHU Board of Regents