

**New Mexico Highlands University Board of Regents**  
Virtual Special Meeting  
September 27, 2021

The New Mexico Highlands University Board of Regents held a virtual meeting on September 27, 2021. The meeting streamed via ZOOM from the New Mexico Highlands University main campus in Las Vegas, New Mexico. The University made every effort to accommodate members of the public as stated in the September 22, 2021 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/99373471046>

Meeting ID: 993 7347 1046

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**Call to Order** – Chairman Marchi called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m.

**Roll Call** - Board Members Present via ZOOM: Mr. William Garcia, Mr. Frank Marchi, Ms. Danelle Smith, Mr. Frank 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. Elisabeth Massaro, Faculty Senate Chair; Ms. Patricia Ives, 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 September 27, 2021 Agenda**

Regent Ulibarri moved to approve the Board's virtual meeting agenda for September 27, 2021. Regent Smith seconded. A roll call vote was taken, voting in favor: Regent Garcia, Regent Sanchez, Regent Smith, Regent Ulibarri, and Chairman Marchi. Motion carried.

### **Approval of the Minutes from July 23, 2021**

Regent Smith moved to approve the minutes from the July 23, 2021 meeting as presented. Regent Ulibarri seconded. A roll call vote was taken, voting in favor were: Regent Garcia, Regent Sanchez, Regent Smith, Regent Ulibarri, and Chairman Marchi. Motion carried.

### **Approval of the Minutes from August 12, 2021**

Regent Garcia moved to approve the minutes from the August 12, 2021 meeting as presented. Regent Ulibarri seconded. A roll call vote was taken, voting in favor were: Regent Garcia, Regent Smith, Regent Ulibarri, and Chairman Marchi. Abstain: Regent Sanchez. Motion carried.

## **President's Report**

### **Campus Update**

#### **HLC**

President Minner indicated that the HLC visit is scheduled for spring 2021. It is planned to be on site. He stated that the board will need to determine if all members will be meeting with the evaluators. Chairman Marchi indicated that the board will advise him on who will be attending. He also indicated that regular HLC Forums are being conducted to provide updates.

#### **Homecoming**

He informed the board that homecoming is this week. He stated that some of the faculty and staff are conducting HU Talks throughout the week. Some events were cancelled and others were moved to outdoor spaces. He stated the game is moving forward and he will be hosting a tailgate prior to the game.

#### **COVID Update**

He stated that an incentive program for student vaccination has been established. An email went out to students today. He indicated that larger events through Student Affairs were rescheduled. Athletics is competing with high standards in testing and weekly athletic meetings.

He indicated that his top concern is mental health. He has taken some steps on mental health by asking faculty, staff, and students to advise him on what else can be done.

#### **Community Connections**

He indicated that a community liaison was hired full time and is working on a few projects. The University will be hosting Ms. Taer Scott, a famous photographer. This event will be free to the campus and Las Vegas community. He stated that he will hold a social event at the University residence. This event will be a fundraiser for local animal shelter.

He stated that the University is also hosting Mr. David Sutherland on November 16th. Mr. Sutherland will be screening his newest film.

He indicated that the University continues the free Little Library around campus where campus members and the community can just grab a book for free.

He stated that he has discussed with the NMHU Foundation Board the possibility of a fundraising campaign. No final decision has been made. Some initiatives for this fundraising include one for Academic Affairs, one for Student Affairs, and one for Athletics. The Foundation is in good shape and is providing direct support to the University.

#### **Academic Affairs**

He stated that new initiatives out of that office is Wiley online, social work alternative teacher, and dual

credit. He indicated that he will be meeting teachers and dual credit students from West Las Vegas. Dr. Gonzales indicated that the National Applied Science degree has been submitted to the HLC for approval. The BA in Organizational Leadership in Public Safety is moving forward to both HED and HLC.

She provided some enrollment numbers from Wiley. She shared that fifty-nine students are enrolled for the fall in the alternative licensure program. Fifty-Three students have been new students as the result of Wiley.

She indicated that for the next board meeting the Doctorate in Nursing Practice will be on the agenda for approval.

Regent Garcia indicated that for the next meeting he would like information regarding demographics of the students enrolled through Wiley. Information to include, where are these students located, what are the disciplines, and what is the revenue impact to Highlands.

Dr. Minner stated that the Council for University Presidents (CUP) are ready for the upcoming legislative session. The CUP priorities are set. The number one priority is compensation. They will also be asking for additional monies for athletics. He stated that CUP supports the opportunity scholarship (free college).

### **Board of Regent's Report**

#### **Regents Comments-No action items**

Chairman Marchi asked the regents if they had any comments.

Regent Smith had no comments.

Regent Sanchez had no comments but did ask when the official enrollment numbers were going to be available. Dr. Minner indicated that enrollment numbers will be available for the next regular board meeting in October.

Regent Ulibarri had no comments

Regent Garcia had no comments

Chairman Marchi stated that he wanted to thank everyone at our University for continuing to try to give our students the most normal college experience while doing their best to keep everyone safe.

### **Approval of the Non-Exempt Union Article 30 Compensation and Memorandum of Understanding**

Dr. Minner indicated that one of his goals when arriving to Highlands was compensation for faculty, staff, and administrators. He thanked both member of the bargaining units for coming to terms with the compensation. He stated that that paying a fair wage will help the economic development and growth in the community.

Mr. Baca indicated that this has been his goal for seven years. With the completion of the Evergreen Study and solid business practices the University has been able to ensure the increase in compensation.

Dr. Montoya stated that the University partnered with Evergreen Solutions in 2020 to do a study on compensation. She indicated that it is good practice to do a study every five to seven years. She said the main goal of the study was to increase the minimum wage to a living wage of \$15.00 an hour. The study also increased the minimum wages of all pay ranges and pay structure. She also specified that of the job descriptions were reduced from 284 to 229.

She stated that approximately seventy-eight percent of non-exempt union employees will benefit if

approved.

Ms. Whalen stated that increase in compensation will benefit the lowest paid employees. She thanked the bargaining team for their creative measures and working in good faith. She indicated that these employees have worked through the peak of COVID.

Ms. Trujillo thanked both bargaining unit for coming together to negotiate and coming to an agreement.

Regent Smith stated that it is wonderful we can meet this milestone and to be part of the board that could make this happen. She asked for clarification of the compensation structure. Dr. Montoya provided an explanation on the pay chart which was determined by Evergreen Solutions.

Regent Smith moved to approve the Non-Exempt Union Article 30 Compensation and Memorandum of Understanding as presented. Regent Garcia seconded. A roll call vote was taken, voting in favor were: Regent Garcia, Regent Sanchez, Regent Smith, Regent Ulibarri, and Chairman Marchi. Motion carried.

### **Follow up Items**

1. Determine which members of the Board will participate in the HLC Visit.
2. Wiley update to include location of students, disciplines, and revenue impact to Highlands.
3. Official enrollment numbers to be provided at the next regular board meeting in October.

### **Adjournment**

Regent Garcia moved to adjourn. Regent Smith seconded. A roll call vote was taken, voting in favor: Regent Garcia, Regent Sanchez, Regent Smith, Regent Ulibarri, and Chairman Marchi. Motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 11:01 a.m.

  
Chairman  
NMHU Board of Regents

  
Secretary/Treasurer  
NMHU Board of Regents