

**NORTHERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Minutes of the Special Formal Session
of
Thursday, September 17, 2020**

A special formal session of the Board of Trustees of Northern Michigan University was held on Thursday, September 17, 2020, in Marquette, Michigan. The meeting was convened at 5:03 p.m. via Zoom Video Conference by Chair Steven M. Mitchell.

Trustees present included:

Mr. Steven M. Mitchell, Chair	Ms. Donna L. Murray-Brown
Ms. Lisa I. Fittante	Ms. Tami M. Seavoy, Vice Chair
Mr. James K. Haveman	Mr. Stephen E. Young
Mr. Robert E. Mahaney	Dr. Fritz J Erickson, ex officio

Trustees absent included:

Ms. Alexis M. Hart

Senior Staff and Counsel present included:

Mr. Brad Canale, Chief Executive Officer – NMU Foundation
Mr. R. Gavin Leach, Vice President for Finance and Administration and Treasurer of the Board of Trustees
Dr. Kerri Schuiling, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
Dr. Steven VandenAvond, Vice President for Extended Learning and Community Engagement
Ms. Deanna Hemmila, Executive Director – Board/Government Relations
Ms. Cathy A. Andrew, Secretary of the Board of Trustees
Mr. Kurt McCamman, Legal Counsel

ROLL CALL

Secretary Andrew took roll call of the Trustees and noted that a quorum was met with seven Trustees being present. Chair Mitchell noted that Trustee Hart was excused from this special meeting as she had a previously scheduled conflict.

MOTION TO APPROVE AGENDA

The following action was taken:

It was moved by Trustee Seavoy, seconded by Trustee Murray-Brown, and supported by a vote of 7 – 0, to approve the agenda as written.

VIRTUAL 2020 GRADUATION RECOGNITION/CEREMONY RECOMMENDATION

President Erickson outlined the recommendation that was brought forward by the Commencement Committee:

- NMU hold a virtual commencement for anyone eligible to graduate this semester, as well as those from the summer semester and winter 2020 semester.
- Possible date would be November 28.

- Graduates who want to wait for a face-to-face commencement when the University is able to hold one will have the option to come back and participate.
- Hope is to have a face-to-face ceremony May 2021, but with what is known about COVID at this point a virtual commencement is the most appropriate option.

The following action was taken:

It was moved by Trustee Seavoy and seconded by Trustee Fittante that the Board of Trustees approve the recommendation from the Commencement Committee to hold a virtual celebration honoring all 2020 graduates, which includes May, August, and November/December 2020 graduates.

Discussion followed:

Chair Mitchell stated the following:

- NMU was hoping to have a face-to-face commencement ceremony for the May 2020 graduates but COVID has not allowed that to occur; he is happy that the May 2020 graduates can be honored as well.
- NMU will do as good a job as possible under these circumstances to make this a meaningful experience for all of the graduates.

Being no further discussion, Chair Mitchell called the vote.

On a roll-call vote, the Board voted as follows:

Aye

Nay

Lisa I. Fittante
James K. Haveman
Robert E. Mahaney
Steven M. Mitchell
Donna Murray-Brown
Tami M. Seavoy
Stephen E. Young

WINTER 2021 ACADEMIC CALENDAR RECOMMENDATION

President Erickson outlined the process taken and the recommendation from the Executive Committee regarding the winter 20201 academic calendar:

- The Committee looked very carefully at the winter semester calendar options and discussed it with the leadership of the Academic Senate.
- Recommendation is to change the calendar for the winter 2021 as follows:
 - Semester would start one week later than was previously identified – start Tuesday after Martin Luther King day – and still complete on time as previously identified.
 - No spring break.
 - Other opportunities during the semester to support the students when they need a break – whether they be snow days or other opportunities – will continue to be explored.

The following action was taken:

It was moved by Trustee Fittante and seconded by Trustee Seavoy that the Board of Trustees approve the recommendation from the Ad Hoc Calendar Committee that NMU start the Winter 2021 semester in-person, delay the previously scheduled start date by one week, cancel spring break, and end as originally scheduled. The winter 2021 academic calendar will be as follows:

Orientation for new students
Martin Luther King Day – no classes
First official day of classes
Last day of classes
Examination Period
Commencement
Final grades due from faculty

Wednesday – Friday, January 13 – 15
Monday, January 18
Tuesday, January 19
Saturday, April 24
Monday – Saturday, April 26 – May 1
Saturday, May 1
Tuesday, May 4

Discussion followed:

Trustee Seavoy made the following comments:

- It would be helpful to make this change and not having spring break will eliminate the opportunity for students to leave town and come back.
- During this period of COVID, she believes this is what we have to do.

Trustee Young asked the following questions:

- Will the university be doing the same testing for everyone that was done at the beginning of the current semester; and
- Given the situation with getting results back at a slower rate than expected and having to start on line for the first week, is that an option for the winter semester as well.

President Erickson provided the following information:

- The administration is working closely with Dr. Kirkpatrick and Dr. Mann in terms of what, if any, testing and testing types would be available.
- NMU is running into increased difficulties getting the materials needed to do the tests as there is a run on the commercial testing labs.
- Given the delays encountered last time, a determination has to be made regarding the value of tests.
- It is unknown at this time if any of the testing protocols from the CDC will change in the next few months.
- The administration is monitoring this very closely but have not yet been able to make the decision on testing everyone when they return from the winter semester break.

Chair Mitchell made the following comments:

- Hopeful that testing is something NMU can do but there are many factors that are outside of our control.
- NMU will have to seriously look at how this can be accomplished once more information is available.

Chair Mitchell thanked Dr. Norma Froelich, Chair of the Academic Senate, on the work they did on this topic. This is a way to keep as safe as possible during the winter semester.

Being no further discussion, Chair Mitchell called the vote.

On a roll-call vote, the Board voted as follows:

Aye

Nay

Lisa I. Fittante
James K. Haveman
Robert E. Mahaney
Steven M. Mitchell
Donna Murray-Brown
Tami M. Seavoy
Stephen E. Young

SEPTEMBER 24 – 25, 2020 MEETING CHANGEADJOURNMENT

President Erickson reported that given some of the changes the university has had and the times the Board has met, October 15 – 16 would be a better time for the next formal meeting of the Board.

The following action was taken:

It was moved by Trustee Seavoy and seconded by Trustee Murray-Brown that the Board of Trustees move the originally scheduled September 24 – 25, 2020 meeting to be held on October 15 – 16, 2020.

Being no discussion, Chair Mitchell called the vote.

On a roll-call vote, the Board voted as follows:

Aye

Nay

Lisa I. Fittante
James K. Haveman
Robert E. Mahaney
Steven M. Mitchell
Donna Murray-Brown
Tami M. Seavoy
Stephen E. Young

ANNOUNCEMENT OF INFORMAL CLOSED SESSIONS TO BE HELD IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE THURSDAY – FRIDAY, October 15 – 16, 2020 SESSIONS OF THE BOARD

President Erickson made this announcement for the public record.

Chair Mitchell adjourned the meeting at 5:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

/signed/ Cathy A. Andrew
Secretary of the Board of Trustees