

**NORTHERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
Minutes of the Formal Session  
of  
Friday, September 15, 2023**

A formal session of the Board of Trustees of Northern Michigan University was held on Friday, September 15, 2023, in the Scott L. Holman Executive Conference Room, Northern Michigan University, Marquette, Michigan. The meeting was convened at 8:00 a.m., by Chair Stephen E. Young.

Trustees present included:

Mr. Stephen E. Young, Chair	Mr. Steven W. Lindberg
Ms. Lisa I. Fittante	Mr. Gregory J. Seppanen
Ms. Alexis M. Hart, Vice Chair	Mr. Greg M. Toutant
Ms. Melissa A. Holmquist	Dr. Brock F. Tessman, ex officio
Ms. Brigitte R. LaPointe-Dunham	

Senior Staff and Counsel present included:

Ms. Cathy A. Andrew, Secretary of the Board of Trustees  
Mr. Michael J. Bath, Chief of Police / Safety Director  
Ms. Rhea E. Dever, Vice President – People, Culture, and Wellbeing  
Ms. Laura J. Glover, Sr. Executive Assistant to the President  
Dr. Christine G. Greer, Associate Vice President – Student Affairs and Student Success and Dean of Students  
Dr. Derek J. Hall, Chief Marketing Officer  
Ms. Deanna K. Hemmila, Executive Director – Board/Government Relations  
Dr. Dale P. Kapla, Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs  
Mr. Jeff Korpi, Associate Vice President – Northern Student Experience  
Ms. Cindy L. Paavola, Assistant to the President – Strategic Initiatives  
Dr. Abigail K. Wyche, Assistant Vice President – Wellbeing  
Mr. Carrick Craig, Legal Counsel  
Ms. Ashley Higginson, Legal Counsel

*The meeting was live-streamed on YouTube at <https://tinyurl.com/NMUAVStreaming>*

**ROLL CALL**

Secretary Andrew took roll call of the Trustees and noted that a quorum was met with all Trustees being present.

**MOTION TO APPROVE AGENDA**

The following action was taken:

**It was moved by Trustee Toutant, seconded by Trustee Holmquist, and approved by a vote of 8 – 0, to approve the agenda as presented.**

### **MOMENT OF SILENCE**

Interim Provost Kapla read a memorial for Mr. Peter Cabala, Jr. of Goodrich, Michigan – an undergraduate student Majoring in Biology with a concentration in Physiology, who died on April 30, 2023. A moment of silence was held in his honor.

### **PARTNER ENGAGEMENT**

- Business / Industry Strategic Partnerships – Mr. David M. Nyberg, Executive Director – Business Engagement/Economic Development, reported on NMU’s business and strategic partnerships. The report included background on the position, the primary focus of the position, how this position aligns with NMU’s value proposition, growing mutually beneficial partnerships and success stories, an update of how NMU is doing with the partnerships, a talent partnership pilot with three medical device manufacturers in the Marquette area, and plans going forward for 2023-24. (Addendum #1)
- Growing Michigan Together Council – Mr. Nyberg serves as a member of the Higher Education Workgroup on the Growing Michigan Together Council, which was established June 1, 2023, to grow Michigan’s population and recommend policy shifts in the State tied to funding to assist with this growth. The report included an overview of the council, its timeline, and the four workgroups – Jobs, Talent, and People; Infrastructure and Places; PreK-12 Education; Higher Education. (Addendum #2)
- Talent Together Network – Dr. Joe Lubig, Associate Dean / Director – School of Education, Leadership, and Public Service, reported on the [Talent Together Network](#) and the [Grow Your Own](#) programs as a means to partner with schools in Michigan to address the teacher shortage through NMU’s established education programs.
- Community Colleges / Transfer Partners – Dr. Dale Kapla, Mr. Jeff Korpi, and Ms. Gerri Daniels, Executive Director of Admissions, provided a report on transfer-friendly practices to assist transfer students and first-year/new freshmen with prior college credit through all processes related to transferring to NMU to further their college degrees/completion. (Addendum #3)

*The meeting recessed at 8:56 a.m.*

*The meeting reconvened at 9:51 a.m.*

### **SPECIAL RECOGNITION**

Chair Young recognized Mr. Rick Comley, Athletic Director, who was inducted into the Michigan Sports Hall of Fame on Thursday, September 14, 2023.

### **INDIVIDUAL REQUESTS TO ADDRESS THE BOARD**

There were none.

### **MOMENT IN NMU HISTORY**

Dr. Russell Magnaghi, NMU historian, provided a report on “*Bringing the World to Northern.*” (Addendum #4)

**ASNMU UPDATE**

Ms. Gwen Feamster, President – ASNMU, provided an update on ASNMU accomplishments during the summer months and plans for the academic year. (Addendum #5)

**STAFF REPORT**

Mr. Andrew G. Hill, Director of Annual Giving – NMU Foundation, and President of UAW Local 178, and a steward for UAW Local 1950, and the AFSCME Group. Mr. Hill provided an update on university staff. (Addendum #6)

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

President Tessman thanked the presenters for the informative updates that were provided. He provided a report on university accomplishments since the last meeting. A full copy of his report is appended to these minutes. (Addendum #7)

**COMMITTEE REPORT**

**Academic Affairs Committee**

Trustee Fittante, Chair of the Academic Affairs Committee, reported on a meeting held this morning, Friday, September 15, 2023. A copy of the report is appended to these minutes. (Addendum #8)

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES PROPOSED 2024 MEETING SCHEDULE**

The following action was taken:

**It was moved by Trustee Heart, seconded by Trustee Seppanen, and supported by a vote of 8 – 0, to approve the following proposed 2024 Meeting Schedule of the NMU Board of Trustees:**

**Thursday – Friday, February 15 – 16, 2023 (Retreat or Meeting)**

**Thursday – Friday, May 2 – 3, 2023**

**Thursday – Friday, July 18 – 19, 2023 (Retreat)**

**Thursday – Friday, September 19 – 20, 2023**

**Thursday – Friday, December 12 – 13, 2023**

**ACTION ON FORMAL RECOMMENDATIONS**

The following action was taken:

**It was moved by Trustee Toutant, seconded by Trustee LaPointe-Dunham, and supported by a vote of 8 – 0, to approve the Formal Recommendations.**  
(Addendum #9)

**ANNOUNCEMENT OF INFORMAL CLOSED SESSIONS TO BE HELD IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE THURSDAY – FRIDAY, DECEMBER 14 – 15, 2023 SESSIONS OF THE BOARD**

President Tessman made this announcement for the public record.

**GOOD OF THE ORDER**

Chair Young opened the floor to the Trustees for Good of the Order.

Trustee Hart made the following comments:

- She noted a theme in every presentation and activity over the past two days is “collaboration and innovation” – the strategic partnerships, the research NMU is doing, outreach and connections made throughout the campus, the tuition advantage program, among others.
- She touched on the increased enrollment of approximately 3.5%, which is shocking in a wonderful way.
- She is pleased with the holistic and human-centric approach to NMU students that is moving the needle forward.
- She is excited and feels the culture shift happening across campus.

Trustee Fittante touched on the following:

- She is happy to see and feel the positive energy and excitement on campus.
- She enjoyed hearing from the EcoReps and the good work they are doing on campus and in the community.
- She enjoyed the lunch at The Lights and the interaction with the students who were present.
- She is looking forward to the new Jacobetti Complex Rededication

Trustee Seppanen commented on the following:

- He said he agrees with the previous comments and is overwhelmed with all the good news that is occurring with enrollment, the School of Education, etc.
- He noted everything occurring across campus is providing an upbeat start to the academic year.

Trustee Holmquist made the following comments:

- She said she loves hearing directly from the students regarding what’s going on across campus.
- She noted that you can feel the excitement across campus with all the clubs, activities, etc. happening and how passionate and committed the students are to their different interest areas.
- She noted she stopped by fall fest during the first week and was pleased to see so many student organizations and engaged students – she is excited to see and hear what is happening now and going into the future.
- She said hearing about all the programs NMU has to support the students is exciting (the support the pillars provide, engaging the commuter students, etc.)
- She noted that there is a lot of opportunity with the community engagement pieces for the students which gives them real world experiences.

Trustee LaPointe-Dunham made the following comments:

- She said she is impressed with the participation on the Growing Michigan Council and with the Talent Together Network.
- She agrees that the theme of “collaboration and innovation” that has resonated throughout is providing opportunities to help the students get to know the community.

Trustee Lindberg touched on the following:

- He said agrees with everything that has been said so far.
- He noted the best experiences he has when he is on campus is with the students.
- He noted that NMU is continuing the tradition of giving every student a chance.
- He touched on NMU is ensuring everyone has the opportunity to be here and hopefully leave without a large debt upon graduation.

Trustee Toutant made the following comments:

- He said that despite the amazing amount of strategic planning, financial stewardship, and projects, NMU is still keeping the student experience at the heart of what is guiding the university.
- He said the one theme he has felt throughout the presentations is “partnership” at every level; the focus of which is on partnering with one another and the community. Partnerships strengthens everything that is done on campus.

Trustee Young made the following comments:

- He introduced his wife, Tricia Kinley, and his father-in-law, Bill Kinley, who were present at the meeting.
- He thanked Secretary Andrew for the attention to detail that is needed for the meetings and wished her well at her son’s wedding on Saturday.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Young adjourned the meeting at 10:44 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Cathy A. Andrew  
Secretary of the Board of Trustees