

**NORTHERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Minutes of the Formal Session
of
Friday, May 5, 2023**

A formal session of the Board of Trustees of Northern Michigan University was held on Friday, May 5, 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:

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. Dale P. Kapla, Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
Ms. Cathy A. Andrew, Secretary of the Board of Trustees
Mr. Michael J. Bath, Chief of Police / Safety Director
Mr. Richard B. Comley, Athletic Director
Ms. Laura J. Glover, Executive Assistant to the President
Dr. Christine G. Greer, Assistant Vice President / Dean of Students
Mr. Derek J. Hall, Chief Marketing Officer
Ms. Deanna Hemmila, Executive Director – Board/Government Relations
Ms. Cindy L. Paavola, Assistant to the President – Strategic Initiatives
Mr. Carrick Craig, Legal Counsel
Ms. Ashley Higginson, Legal Counsel

The meeting was live-streamed on YouTube at <https://bit.ly/2UeD5Ex>.

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 Hart, seconded by Trustee Seppanen, 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. Carson Needham – a sophomore from Traverse City, MI, who died in a car accident on February 19, 2023. He was a Communication Studies major with minors in Music and Marketing. A moment of silence was held in his honor.

PRESENTATION OF POSTHUMOUS DEGREE

Interim Provost Kapla awarded Mr. Carson Needham’s parents with Carson’s posthumous Associates of Arts degree in General University Studies. A photo was taken with the Board of Trustees and Mr. Needham’s family.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY – STUDENT SUCCESS

President Tessman outlined the changes that are occurring with the format of the board meeting noting it will provide open space for discussions and presentations related to areas of particular strategic importance to the university. He noted that today’s topic will center around student success initiatives as this is at the center of the university’s mission. Presentations and discussions will be led by Dr. Chris Greer who will be joined by student success leaders on campus, to discuss student success through the embedded student success specialist program (noting that NMU’s efforts in this area also include advisors through the Academic and Career Advisement Center, Career Services, and faculty mentors across campus) and Dr. Abigail Wyche who will lead a discussion related to wellbeing on campus and how it drives student success (noting that a new lead Diversity Officer will be hired in the fall, which is also important in the wellbeing of our students, faculty, staff, and community).

Dr. Tessman said that student success initiatives are the right thing to do for NMU’s student body. NMU prides itself on being an open access university who reaches out to all parts of the State, particularly the UP, and invites students through its doors to receive an exemplary education. NMU needs to ensure it follows through on its invitation with a genuine equal opportunity for all students to earn success – to finish what they started. NMU’s student success efforts are all about getting every kind of student to the finish line as soon as possible, with the least amount of debt as possible, and with the best preparation personally and professionally.

Dr. Greer and Mr. Neil Baumgartner, Director of Student Success, led a discussion related to the student success initiatives. (Addendum #1)

Dr. Abigail Wyche led a discussion related to wellbeing as a center point of student success efforts on campus and how focusing on student wellbeing and investing in student mental health is an investment in student success and the sustainability of the institution.

Dr. Wyche announced that NMU is the 17th university in the country to sign the Okanagan Charter. (Addendum #2)

Dr. Wyche said NMU will be structuring the wellbeing plan with the four cornerstones of wellbeing – the 4 Cs – Case Management, Cultural Communications, Counseling Services, and Cocurricular Education (health/wellbeing promotions).

Counseling Services has been a cornerstone for NMU in terms of supporting student wellbeing on campus. The other three components are designed to wrap around Counseling Services and

capture those students who may not interact or may not meet the criteria/best practices model for the counseling center, but that NMU can still help these students, and an opportunity to do prevention work – to help them build skills and resiliency before they get to the place of needing mental health counseling.

Case Management Services – a director search is in process with the hope of having this position filled by the start of the fall semester. In the meantime, policies, procedures, and intra-university connections are being revisited. In the midst of reforming the Campus Assessment Team (CAT) – the name will change to the Care Team – which will be facilitated by the Case Management Services Director. Upgrades are being made to bring NMU operations in line with national standards for university behavioral intervention and threat assessment teams.

Culture and Communications – NMU just launched a strategic communication plan in conjunction with Siren Communications with the goals of raising awareness among students and key audiences for wellbeing resources already available, as well as to communicate additional enhanced resources when they become available, and to convey a positive message of NMU as a campus that cares about students mental health and wellbeing.

Dr. Wyche read a message that is a platform Siren Communications developed after surveying NMU students to create messages to build and strengthen NMU’s culture around wellbeing. (Addendum #3)

Cocurricular Education Cornerstone – the role of the director in this area will be responsible for educating the student body through cocurricular education and wellbeing promoting activities on topics (e.g., physical health and disease prevention, addiction prevention, healthy relationships, sexual health, mental health, mindfulness, etc.) that help students build resiliency. This office will continue to work with student success and student experience to ensure the programming continuously promotes wellbeing positive information and opportunities for students.

Counseling and Consultation Cornerstone – a department head has been hired and will begin on June 1, 2023. Dr. Wyche thanked Dr. Greer for her leadership during the past four years heading this area.

The meeting recessed at 9:25 a.m.

The meeting reconvened at 11:14 a.m.

INDIVIDUAL REQUESTS TO ADDRESS THE BOARD

Ms. Molly Miller addressed the Board on fossil fuel divestment at NMU.

Ms. Kolibri Drobish addressed the Board on fossil fuel divestment, reinvestment into sustainable and ethical funds that will benefit future generations, and other university’s policies.

Ms. Laura Whipple addressed the Board on fossil fuel divestment at NMU and reinvesting in environmentally responsible companies, and NMU’s rating in the current Sustainability Tracking Assessment and Rating Systems (STARS) Report.

Dr. Rick Mengyan, President of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), addressed the Board regarding a brief introduction and welcome to the new Trustees, background on the AAUP union at NMU, and a positive update on faculty, administration, and Board relations.

OKANAGAN CHARTER – BOARD RESOLUTION

Chair Young said President Tessman signed the Okanagan Charter on Wednesday, April 26, 2023, pledging Northern Michigan University’s commitment to promote health and wellbeing on campus and in the community. He noted the Charter is very worthwhile and is used to guide universities as they work to improve health and wellbeing. Chair Young said on behalf of the Trustees, the Board is committed to promoting the health and wellbeing of all students, faculty, staff, and the community in general.

Trustee Holmquist read the NMU Board of Trustees Resolution related to the Okanagan Charter. (Addendum #4)

The following action was taken:

It was moved by Trustee Toutant, seconded by Trustee LaPointe-Dunham, to adopt the Board of Trustees Resolution related to the Okanagan Charter as read.

Being no discussion, Chair Young called the question.

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

Aye

Nay

- Lisa I. Fittante
- Alexis M. Hart
- Melissa A. Holmquist
- Brigitte R. LaPointe-Dunham
- Steven W. Lindberg
- Gregory J. Seppanen
- Greg M. Toutant
- Stephen E. Young

Trustee Holmquist presented Dr. Abigail Wyche a framed copy of the approved resolution on behalf of the NMU Board of Trustees. She thanked Dr. Wyche for her commitment and leadership to this initiative. A photo was taken.

INTRODUCTION OF GRADUATING SENIOR SPEAKING AT SPRING COMMENCEMENT

Interim Provost and Vice President Kapla introduced [Ms. Alexandra Johnson](#), a Computer Science major, from Antioch, Illinois, who will represent the graduating class of spring 2023 at the commencement ceremonies tomorrow, Saturday, May 6, 2023. On behalf of the Board, Chair Young congratulated Alexandra and presented her with a plaque. A photo was taken.

INTRODUCTION OF COMMENCEMENT SPEAKER

President Tessman introduced [Mr. James Haveman](#), president of the Haveman Group consulting firm and NMU Trustee Emeritus, who will be the Spring 2023 Commencement Speaker. Mr. Haveman will also receive an honorary Doctor of Public Health degree.

MOMENT IN NMU HISTORY

Dr. Russell Magnaghi, NMU historian, provided a report on “*NMU Presidents Over the Years.*” (Addendum #5)

Chair Young thanked Dr. Magnaghi for his many reports to the Board of Trustees, noting he has been providing these reports at most meetings since July 2011. He said Dr. Magnaghi’s knowledge and commitment to NMU is a perfect example of the exceptionalism of the faculty, staff, and students. Chair Young presented Dr. Magnaghi with a framed, signed photo of the NMU Wildcat Statue as a token of the Board’s appreciation. A photo was taken.

ASNMU UPDATE

Ms. Zora Binert, President – ASNMU, and Ms. Gwen Feamster, President-Elect, provided an end-of-year report on academic year accomplishments and plans for fall 2023. (Addendum #6)

Vice Chair Hart thanked Zora for her work and presented her with a gift on behalf of the Board of Trustees. A photo was taken.

PRESIDENT’S REPORT

President Tessman reported on the following:

- Northern Today is a great place for the Trustees to get information on campus happenings. He thanked Ms. Kristi Evans, News Director, for her work in this area.
- Administrative Alignment Plan – the plan came about after the last 100 days of listening and learning driven by meetings with academic departments and Interim Provost Kapla, Executive Council, informed by the strategic plan and core values that guide NMU, and a presidential learning network built from students, staff, faculty, and community members. The plan is simply an administrative plan that clears the way for action. It does not supplant existing efforts (e.g., interim strategic plan).
 - ✓ Rationale: Northern’s distinction today and in the future comes from students and employees who define NMU. The five pillars outlined in the plan reflect an increased focus on the people of NMU. Two of those pillars are more specifically focused on students.
 - Dr. Chris Greer will be the Associate Vice President for the new Student Affairs and Success Division – this pillar will be laser focused on how NMU can support its students through the Dean of Students Office and academic advising resources. What NMU can do to ensure it invites students with open arms and then deliver its promises – getting students to the finish line academically and preparing them for personal and professional success.
 - Mr. Jeff Korpi will be the Associate Vice President of the new Northern Student Experience Division – this pillar will be dedicated to the Northern Student Experience. Creating an environment from the first hello from an admissions counselor, through orientation, housing and residence life, opportunities through the Center for Student

- Enrichment, to graduation. The experience on campus is one of the standout elements NMU provides its students.
- Ms. Rhea Dever will be the Vice President of the new People, Culture, and WellBeing Division – Overall, this pillar is about creating an extraordinary learning and work experience, for both students, faculty and staff. Ms. Dever will coordinate all efforts in this pillar. Within her core area of expertise, human resources, she will continue to do good work on hiring and some of the policy-based work of HR, but also paying additional attention to career laddering, professional development, the sense of wellbeing NMU employees have. NMU cannot achieve student success and student experience objectives, unless it pays equal attention to the quality of work life on campus.
 - In addition, this pillar addresses our students – the wellbeing, Okanagan Charter, health promotions, etc. being led by Dr. Abigail Wyche, Assistant Vice President of WellBeing. Students will benefit from a more diversified, inclusive, and equitable campus – this effort will be led by NMU’s new Diversity Officer. One of NMU’s first steps around diversity should be around faculty and staff – looking at what can be done to attract and retain more diverse professors, student services personnel, and administrators.
 - Two core pillars have been in place and will continue to be leading pillars – 1) Finance and Administration Division – led by Vice President Mr. Gavin Leach. President Tessman noted NMU is in the position to make these investments in new pillars because of Vice President Leach’s capable leadership; 2) Academic Affairs Division – led by Interim Provost and Vice President, Dr. Dale Kapla, noting he is a tremendous resource for the university. President Tessman thanked both for their leadership and commitment to the university.
- Finlandia Outreach – NMU has joined seven other universities in signing teach-out agreements to ensure Finlandia’s students have opportunities for degree completion. NMU is being aggressive in letting those students know they have a home and financial support.
 - Athletics – Wildcat athletes have had a very successful year and some sports continue into the spring. The Lacrosse team wrapped up it’s season one goal short of a GLIAC championship. The golf teams had a terrific end to their season with the women’s team being invited to the NCAA Division II championships. The women’s track team wrapped up the championships today with strong accomplishments across the board, notably Crystal Walker who continues with school record performances.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Academic Affairs

Trustee Fittante, Chair of the Academic Affairs Committee, reported on a meeting held, Friday, May 5, 2023. A copy of the report is appended to these minutes. (Addendum #7)

Finance Committee

Trustee Hart, Chair of the Finance Committee, reported on a meeting held Friday, May 5, 2023. A copy of the report is appended to these minutes. (Addendum #8)

ACTION ON FORMAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The following action was taken:

It was moved by Trustee Seppanen, seconded by Trustee Holmquist, and supported by a vote of 8 – 0, to approve the Formal Recommendations.
(Addendum #9)

STANDING COMMITTEES – RESTRUCTURE AND APPOINTMENTS

Chair Young reported the Extended Learning and Community Engagement Committee has been folded into the Academic Affairs Committee and the number of Trustees on each standing committee has been increased from three Trustees to four. He noted that when this occurred, Trustees LaPointe-Dunham, Lindberg, and Toutant had not yet been appointed to the Board. Chair Young recommended the following additional committee appointments:

- Academic Affairs Committee – Trustees Steve Lindberg and Greg Toutant
- Finance Committee – Trustee Brigitte LaPointe-Dunham
- Ad Hoc Policy Review Committee – Trustees Steve Lindberg and Greg Toutant

The following action was taken:

It was moved by Trustee Hart, seconded by Trustee Toutant, and supported by a vote of 8 – 0, that the Board of Trustees accept the Committee appointments as presented.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF INFORMAL CLOSED SESSIONS TO BE HELD IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE THURSDAY – FRIDAY, JULY 27 – 28, 2023 AND THURSDAY – FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 14 – 15, 2023 SESSIONS OF THE BOARD

President Tessman made this announcement for the public record.

TRUSTEE EMERITUS RECOGNITION

Chair Young called former Trustee Jim Haveman forward to be honored as Trustee Emeritus. He noted that he was awarded with this honor on November 3, 2022, however, this was Trustee Emeritus Haveman's first opportunity to come back to campus to receive his award. Chair Young presented him with a plaque in honor of his distinguished service to NMU. A photo was taken.

Chair Young revealed the new Trustee Emeritus plaque that will be hung and displayed in the Scott L. Holman Executive Conference Room. Trustee Emeritus Jim Haveman added the tile with his name to the plaque.

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 the many activities happening on campus this week.
- She recognized Trustee Emeritus Haveman and thanked him for his mentorship during his time on the Board.

- She thanked Molly Miller and her fellow students for their comments noting that Ms. Miller is not trivial (which Ms. Miller referenced in her comments to the Board) and that she is powerful.
- She thanked Ms. Zora Binert for her time served as the ASNMU President and welcomed incoming President, Ms. Gwen Feamster.
- She commented on President Tessman's realignment strategy and is thrilled with the human-centric approach believing it helps create the infrastructure needed to ensure student success going forward.
- She noted that there are 883 graduates walking at Commencement on Saturday and congratulated all the graduates.

Trustee Fittante touched on the following:

- She was moved by the presentation of the posthumous degree to Mr. Carson Needham's family, noting it was emotional and touched her heart and hopes it brought them small sense of peace or comfort.
- She enjoyed the tour of the new WellBeing Center noting how impressive the facility is and pleased with the integration of mental and physical health being located in one facility.
- She was encouraged by the presentation by Dr. Wyche on the WellBeing initiatives and the signing of the Okanagan Charter.
- She noted the Board toured the NMU Food Bank and what a wonderful resource it is for students. She said the students who work at the food bank are doing an outstanding job noting they could use additional support.
- She was happy to see Trustee Emeritus Haveman at the meeting and enjoyed her time with him on the Board.
- She said she is hopeful for the future of NMU under President Tessman's leadership.

Trustee Seppanen commented on the following:

- He congratulated the students graduating on Saturday.
- He said this board meeting has been the most exciting one he has been at since his time on the Board noting everything coming together making NMU more holistic and a better place:
 - ✓ the Okanagan Charter – what it is going to do and what it is already doing for the University
 - ✓ Trustees Emeritus Haveman being here who was a major part of the wellbeing initiative
 - ✓ President Tessman who is implementing this initiative
 - ✓ The tour of the new WellBeing Center
 - ✓ The realignment bringing NMU to be more student-focused
 - ✓ The comments from the students on divestment of fossil fuels

Trustee Holmquist made the following comments:

- She welcomed the new Trustees to the Board.
- She is energized by President Tessman's alignment and the five pillars.
- She was honored to read the Board's resolution supporting the signing of the Okanagan Charter which solidifies the Board's and NMU's commitment to students' wellbeing.
- She enjoyed the engagement on campus with the tours of the Food Pantry and the new WellBeing Center.
- She looks forward to more student engagement opportunities.

- She's looking forward to Commencement and celebrating all the graduates.
- She thanked Trustee Emeritus Haveman for his support and mentorship.

Trustee LaPointe-Dunham made the following comments:

- She thanked everyone for their support during her first Board meeting.
- She is excited about the student-experience focus ensuring NMU students have the best experience possible and adding value to their lives.
- She said the Chief Diversity Officer hire is important which will ensure everyone has the same opportunities available to them.
- She is excited to see the new WellBeing Center and believes NMU is a step ahead of other universities in this aspect.
- She is excited to see the enhanced and new options in the Exercise Science program.
- She is also an alum of Finlandia and is proud of the support NMU is offering to those students.

Trustee Lindberg touched on the following:

- He said the campus experience since he was appointed to the Board has been terrific; he is impressed with the energy he is seeing at NMU.
- He said NMU has far-exceeded his expectations of what the university is attempting to do for the students and commended President Tessman for what he has seen so far.
- He said he expects to see a different campus when he leaves the Board in five years and is excited for the future of NMU.

Trustee Toutant made the following comments:

- He said the shared experience of the tours at the Food Pantry and the WellBeing Center this week, hearing from faculty, students, and staff have been remarkable.
- He said part of the inclusion, thoughtfulness, and kindness from everyone he has come in contact with shows how everyone wants to do well and wants to help people – this is a wonderful experience.
- He is looking forward to the next few years and feels a lot of pride seeing the direction the University is going in.

Trustee Young made the following comments:

- He said he feels invigorated after this meeting with the enthusiasm of President Tessman and his team.
- He introduced his mom, Dot Young, and his brother, Marc Young, who were present at the meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Young adjourned the meeting at 12:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cathy A. Andrew
Secretary of the Board of Trustees