

**NORTHERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
Minutes of the Formal Session  
of  
Friday, May 3, 2024**

A formal session of the Board of Trustees of Northern Michigan University was held on Friday, May 3, 2024, in Peninsula II Conference Room, Northern Center, Northern Michigan University, Marquette, Michigan. The meeting was convened at 8:30 a.m. by Chair Stephen E. Young.

Trustees present included:

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

Trustee absent included:

Mr. Gregory J. Seppanen

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  
Dr. Shawnrece D. Campbell, Assistant Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion  
Mr. Brad Canale, Chief Executive Officer – NMU Foundation  
Dr. Anne Dahlman, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs  
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  
Mr. Jeff Korpi, Associate Vice President – Northern Student Experience  
Mr. R. Gavin Leach, Vice President for Finance and Administration and Treasurer of the Board of Trustees  
Ms. Cindy L. Paavola, Assistant to the President – Strategic Initiatives  
Dr. Jessica L. Thompson, Assistant Vice President for Sustainability  
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://www.youtube.com/@nmuavstreaming3304>*

**ROLL CALL**

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

**MOTION TO APPROVE AGENDA**

The following action was taken:

**It was moved by Trustee Hart, seconded by Trustee Toutant, and supported unanimously by a vote of 7 – 0, to approve the agenda as presented.**

### **MOMENTS OF SILENCE**

Provost and Vice President Anne Dahlman read a memorial for Mr. Alex Duquette, a sophomore in the Indoor Agricultural Program, from Negaunee, Michigan, who passed away on March 15, 2024. A moment of silence was held in his honor.

Vice President Gavin Leach read a memorial for Ms. Paula Supanich, a Buildings and Ground Attendant, who passed away on March 16, 2024. A moment of silence was held in her honor.

### **WORK SCHOLARS UPDATE**

Mr. Dave Nyberg, Executive Director – Business Engagement/Economic Development, and Dr. Cale Polkinghorne, Department of Engineering Technology, provided an update on Northern Michigan University's *Work Scholars Program*. The report included the vision and concept of the program, the program pilot: Medical Device Manufacturing in the Marquette area ↔ NMU Engineering Technology, a video showcasing a student's story in the program, future opportunities, and next steps. (Addendum #1)

*The meeting recessed at 9:04 a.m.*

*The meeting reconvened at 10:09 a.m.*

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

Mr. Tyler Thomson, President – TOP Union, addressed the Board regarding the successful negotiations with AAUP Union in the wage increase MOU and addressed the issue of also investing in the employee base.

Mr. Andrew Hill, President – AP Union, introduced Mr. David Weigand, AP Union President-elect, and Ms. Lindsay Haukkala, Vice President-elect. Mr. Hill addressed the Board regarding their collaboration with the AAUP Union during the wage increase MOU and the issue of continued investment in NMU staff employees.

Ms. Cheryl Jobin, community member and NMU alumna, addressed the Board regarding the need for additional commuter parking on campus.

Ms. Sabrina Mata, second-year Medicinal Plant Chemistry Program student and McNair Scholar, addressed the Board regarding the current state of the Medicinal Plant Chemistry Program, its future directions, and Dr. Fornwald's contract.

Mr. Michael Koogle, third-year Medicinal Plant Chemistry Program student and student Research Assistant, addressed the Board concerning the future prospects of the Medicinal Plant Chemistry Program and Dr. Fornwald's contract.

Chair Young thanked them for their comments.

### **INTRODUCTION OF GRADUATING SENIOR SPEAKING AT SPRING COMMENCEMENT**

Provost and Vice President Dahlman introduced [Ms. Grace Cook](#), Elementary Education major, from Memphis, Michigan, who will represent the graduating class of spring 2024 at the commencement ceremonies, Saturday, May 4, 2024. On behalf of the Board, Chair Young congratulated Ms. Cooke and presented her with a plaque. A photo was taken.

### **INTRODUCTION OF COMMENCEMENT SPEAKER**

President Tessman introduced [Dr. Milton Chen](#), innovative educator, author and senior fellow and executive director emeritus at the George Lucas Educational Foundation, who will be the Spring 2024 Commencement Speaker. Dr. Chen will also receive an honorary Doctorate of Education degree.

### **SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS**

Chair Young noted that NMU has had a successful year in athletics, with fourteen of twenty-one teams advancing to regional and/or national championship competition. The number may increase to sixteen as women's lacrosse and track and field are competing in their respective GLIAC championships this weekend. Women's soccer and the cross-country teams were recognized this past fall; the following are being recognized at today's meeting:

- Trustee Toutant recognized the men's basketball team who won the GLIAC regular season title for the first time since 1992-93 and advanced to the NCAA Regional Tournament for a second consecutive year. Of note for the team: Coach Majkrzak was named the GLIAC Coach of the Year; Mr. Max Weisbrod was selected to the All-District First Team; Mr. Dylan Kuehl was selected to the All-District Second-Team. Representing the team at the meeting are Mr. Dylan Kuehl and Coach Matt Majkrzak. A photo was taken.
- Trustee LaPointe-Dunham recognized the women's basketball team who earned a berth to the NCAA Regional Tournament for the first time since 2019 and advanced to the round of thirty-two. Representing the team was Ms. Jacy Weisbrod, who tied NMU's single game record with nine triples in the first round NCAA victory over Kentucky Wesleyan; Ms. Makaylee Kuhn, who became NMU's all-time leading scorer with 2,005 career points, was selected All-Region, and was a recipient of the prestigious GLIAC Commissioners Award; and Coach Casey Thousand. A photo was taken.
- Trustee Lindberg recognized the 20 members of the men's and women's swimming and diving teams who qualified to compete at the NCAA Championships, fourteen members of whom received the title All-American. The men's team finished 15<sup>th</sup> and the women's team 19<sup>th</sup> out of 59 teams. Representing the team at the meeting are All-Americans Mr. Will LaCount and Ms. Zoe DeKievit, Coach Heidi Voigt, and Assistant Coach Matt Williams. A photo was taken.
- Trustee Fittante recognized the Nordic men's and women's ski teams who won the Central Collegiate Ski Association conference titles. The men grabbed the crown and the women placed second at the NCAA regionals and earned bids to compete at the NCAA Championships where they combined for an 18<sup>th</sup> place finish. Representing the teams at the meeting are NCAA Championship competitors Mr. Kristoffer Karsrud and Ms. Henriette Nilssen, along with Coach Andy Keller. The men's and women's Alpine teams both won their respective regional titles and finished 4<sup>th</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>, respectively at the national championships where six Wildcats finished

as All-Americans. Representing the teams at the meeting were All Americans Mr. Aaron Grzelak and Ms. Regan Olli, along with Coach Erik Lundeigen. A photo was taken.

- Trustee Holmquist recognized the track and field team and the women's golf team. Track and Field – Ms. Ellyse Wolfrath earned All-America status in the 60-meter hurdles at the NCAA indoor championships. She is unable to attend today as she is on the road with the team. Golf Team – Ms. Maya Hunter earned one of the three individual spots for the NCAA Division II East Regional Gold Competition that will start in a few days. Representing the women's golf team at the meeting are Ms. Maya Hunter, along with Coach Erick Johnson and Assistant Coach Ben Johnson. A photo was taken.
- Trustee Toutant recognized the Greco Roman wrestling team and the women's wrestling team. Greco Roman Wrestling – Trustee Toutant noted that five of NMU's National Training Site Greco Roman wrestlers competed at the U.S. Olympic Trials Qualifier where Mr. Payton Jacobson captured a Team USA roster spot and will compete at the Paris Summer Olympic Games. He also noted Mr. Max Black advanced to the U.S. National Team and on Team USA for the Under-23 World Championships. Women's Wrestling Team – Three women wrestlers qualified for the National Collegiate Women's Wrestling Championship where they finished 28<sup>th</sup> out of 49 teams. Representing the teams at the meeting were: Greco Roman Wrestling – Mr. Payton Jacobson, Mr. Max Black, and Coach Andy Bisek; Women's Wrestling – Ms. Marisa Angelos and Coach Diana Dzasezeva. A photo was taken.

Chair Young congratulated all of the athletes and coaches and thanked them for attending the meeting.

- Vice Chair Hart recognized Ms. Rose Schopfer, a recipient of the Leadership Scholarship Award, from Mikado, Michigan, who will be graduating in December after adding a second major in Math to her Computer Science major. The program is administered by the Center for Student Enrichment and seeks to identify students who have significant leadership experience, academic achievement, and have demonstrated outstanding leadership potential. These students need to have a high level of leadership involvement, responsibility, and an attitude toward leadership. Applicants compete in the Presidential Scholars Competition at NMU in the fall. The winners are selected based on their participation in small group exercise, their resume, an essay, and their GPA (they must maintain a 3.0 throughout their four years), have active participation in a student organization leading to a leadership position, among many others. Ms. Shopfer shared her favorite leadership memory – working with other computer science enthusiasts and club advisor, Dr. Andy Poe, to resurrect the Association of Computing Machinery (ACM) chapter at NMU, which enables NMU to bring students to compete at a globally recognized event – The ACM Coding Competition – which creates an environment for students to practice coding. With the assistance of Dr. Poe, and the club's vice President, Frankie Wilson, the club was able to resurrect one of NMU's longest standing events – the NMU Coding Competition – for the first time since it stopped in 2020 where sixteen teams ranging from Duluth, MN, Algoma, and Canada, participated. Vice Chair Hart noted that Ms. Shopfer plans to continue working for Kall Morris Inc (KMI) as an Internal Program Developer. KMI is a space company based in Marquette that is focused on removing orbital debris. Mr. Teagan Blohowiak and Ms. Reagan Cox also received the Leadership Scholarship Award but were unable to attend the meeting this morning. A photo was taken.

- Chair Young recognized and congratulated Trustee Missie Holmquist, CEO of Upper Peninsula Health Plan (UPHP). UPHP was recently recognized as one of the top Medicare / Medicaid Health Plans in the nation. The plan was rated using a survey that was completed by the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services where enrollees were asked to rate their health care experience over the previous six months, rating their health plan on a scale from 0 to 10. UPHP received a score of 91 out of 100 for 2023.

### **MOMENT IN NMU HISTORY**

Dr. Russell Magnaghi, NMU historian, provided a report on “*Philanthropy at NMU to 1959.*” (Addendum #2)

### **ASNMU UPDATE**

Ms. Gwen Feamster, President – ASNMU, and Ms. Dana Hinckley, ASNMU President-elect, provided a report on the semester accomplishments. (Addendum #3)

Chair Young thanked Ms. Feamster for her work during the past year and presented her with a gift on behalf of the Board of Trustees. A photo was taken.

### **STAFF REPORT**

Mr. Steve Terres, Vice President – AFSCME Local 1094, representing the Staff Labor Council, provided an update on university staff. Mr. Terres stated the following: since the last update they have continued to meet and gather information from all NMU employees on what they would like to see happen at NMU to help retain its existing professional workforce; each group put out a set of surveys and the Staff Labor Council received a lot of feedback – the most common point received was the struggle to financially keep up with the rise of inflation and the cost of living. He noted in the past some concessions had been made by the employees to keep NMU heading in the right direction over the recent years and when there was a lot of uncertainty heading forward. They are happy to see the recent agreement that was reached between the faculty and NMU and are looking forward to seeing NMU’s future commitment to investing in its people.

### **PRESIDENT’S REPORT**

President Tessman reported on university accomplishments since the last meeting. His report is appended to these minutes. (Addendum #4)

At the conclusion of his report, President Tessman announced the selection of NMU’s new Alma Mater. He noted submissions were received by current students, alumni, faculty, and staff. A Working Group made up of students, faculty, staff, and alumni met to review the submissions and had the difficult choice of selecting the new Alma Mater. He thanked those who submitted compositions and the selection work group for their service on the committee.

The second runner up, “*Golden Shores,*” was composed by NMU alumni Heidi Hummel and William Ragnone and the first runner up, “*NMU, Our Alma Mater,*” was composed by Northern alumni Abigail O’Connell and Benjamin Gronvall.

The winning selection, “*Northern Pride,*” was composed by NMU broadcasting professor, Dr. Dwight Brady which demonstrated Northern’s strong connection to the pristine local environment,

Indigenous culture and people, and rigorous learning (Addendum #5) and will officially debut at the NMU homecoming football homecoming. The new Alma Mater was played for the audience.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

#### **Academic Affairs**

Trustee Fittante, Chair of the Academic Affairs Committee, reported on a meeting held earlier today, May 3, 2024. A copy of the report is appended to these minutes. (Addendum #6)

#### **Finance Committee**

Vice Chair Hart, Chair of the Finance Committee, reported on a meeting held Thursday, May 2, 2024. A copy of the report is appended to these minutes. (Addendum #7)

### **AMENDED BOARD OF TRUSTEES BYLAWS**

The following action was taken:

**It was moved by Trustee Hart and seconded by Trustee Toutant, that the NMU Board of Trustees approve the amended Board of Trustees Bylaws. (Addendum #8)**

Discussion followed.

Vice Chair Hart drew attention to the following:

- The Ad hoc Policy Review Committee was established to enable the Board to look at various policies within the University and the Board Bylaws, which is something that should be done often to ensure the continued relevance of those bylaws and identify any opportunities.
- Housekeeping language updates were made (e.g., address changes, expanding additional approval for the Vice Chair in the absence of the Chair, etc.).
- Updated language that focuses on gearing public comments to focus on the governance and oversight of the university.
- Removed “Roberts Rules of Order” reference and added a statement to conduct the Board’s meetings in accordance with the Bylaws.
- Added clarity to dissolve ad hoc committees when needed.
- Updated copy of the Bylaws, if approved, will be provided online.

Being no further discussion, Chair Young called the question:

**The motion was approved unanimously by a vote of 7 – 0.**

### **ACTION ON FORMAL RECOMMENDATIONS**

The following action was taken:

**It was moved by Trustee Holmquist, seconded by Trustee Toutant, and supported by a vote of 7 – 0, to approve the Formal Recommendations. (Addendum #9)**

**ANNOUNCEMENT OF INFORMAL CLOSED SESSIONS TO BE HELD IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE JULY 18 – 19 AND SEPTEMBER 19 – 20, 2024 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:

- Always great to be on campus – this is a different campus now than it was eight years ago when appointed to the Board.
- Always exciting to hear about the amazing, wonderful initiatives happening at NMU.
- Many positive things going on, especially with enrollment which sometimes create other opportunities (e.g., housing, meeting different needs, etc.).
- Feels comfortable and good about everything NMU is focusing on (e.g., mental health and wellbeing, student success, etc.).
- 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary week – exciting to see where NMU came from 125 years ago and where this campus is today.
- Great to hear Dr. Magnaghi’s historical reflections and philanthropy and how some things change so much and some things never change – remembering where NMU came from helps guide the future path.
- Congratulated the 900+ graduates and their families.

Trustee Fittante touched on the following:

- Congratulated the graduates and their families.
- Welcomed Dr. Anne Dahlman to her first meeting and is excited to see what she’s going to do for NMU.
- Happy with the direction NMU is going under President Tessman’s leadership.
- Congratulated Dr. Brady on the new Alma Mater.

Trustee Holmquist touched on the following:

- Impressed with the amazing work that’s being done at NMU.
- Excited with the initiatives and forward movement with the focus on students, which would not happen without amazing faculty and staff.
- Good news regarding enrollment and noting that NMU has to continue to think through the housing issues and how to help the students.
- Excited to hear more about the Work Scholars Program and continuing to have the blend between education and real-life work experience.
- Congratulated the graduates and the student speaker which is always one of the highlights of commencement.

Trustee LaPointe-Dunham said the following:

- Acknowledged what the teams are doing with incorporating the Anishinaabe language and values behind what NMU is doing – noting it is not going unnoticed and is impactful, and will be for years to come – she is appreciative of all these efforts.

Trustee Lindberg made the following comments:

- Noted the wonderful news at NMU and the challenges ahead of the university; however, is very comfortable with the team on board who is more than ready to take those challenges on.
- Extremely fortunate to have been appointed to the Board at this time.
- Sees great things coming for Northern in the near future and planning for seven generations down the line.
- Northern is becoming a place everyone will be proud to have been a part of.

Trustee Toutant touched on the following:

- Pointed out a theme that emerged for him – Campus for All – that played out in everything that was done in presentations, interactions, Multicultural Graduation Celebration, Hard Hat Ceremony, Okanagan Charter, the Wellbeing Center, etc. – so much inclusion happening in the student experience – a place for all.
- Parent interaction at Lavender Graduation saying her son felt safe at NMU to be who he is which is wonderful to hear.

Chair Young made the following comment:

- Noted he had a chance to be in the production of *Anything Goes* on campus – what he took away from the experience was getting out of your comfort zone – he learned so much from the students in the production and was truly humbled by the experience – NMU has an enormous level of talented students across the entire campus.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Young adjourned the meeting at 11:48 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Cathy A. Andrew  
Secretary of the Board of Trustees