



**NEW MEXICO STATE UNIVERSITY BOARD OF REGENTS  
SPECIAL MEETING  
April 30, 2025 at 8:00 AM**

Educational Services Building, Regents Room  
1780 East University Avenue, Las Cruces, NM

Webcast at the following address: <https://regents.nmsu.edu/regent-meetings/>

**Regents of New Mexico State University**

Chair Ammu Devasthali, Vice Chair Deborah Romero, Secretary/Treasurer Christopher T. Saucedo, Marisol Olivas, Ricardo Gonzales

**Non-Voting Advisory Members** - ASNMSU President Ala Alhalholy, Faculty Senate Chair Vimal Chaitanya, Ph.D., Employee Council Chair Donna Johnson

**University Officials** - President Valerio Ferme, Ph.D., Interim Provost Lakshmi Reddi, Ph.D., General Counsel Lisa Henderson, J.D.

**MINUTES**

**A. Call to Order, Chairwoman Ammu Devasthali**

Chairwoman Devasthali called the special meeting of the NMSU Board of Regents to order at 8:02 AM.

**1. Introduction of the Media and Elected Officials, Chief of Staff Justin Bannister**

**2. Introductions**

**a) Introduction of Berta Zubiarte, University Architect, Chief Facilities Officer Luis Campos**

Chief Facilities Officer Luis Campos introduced Ms. Bertha Zubiarte as the new University Architect. Mr. Campos highlighted her background in project management, construction coordination, and space planning across public and private sectors. Ms. Zubiarte expressed her excitement to join NMSU. Chair Devasthali welcomed Ms. Zubiarte to the Aggie family.

**3. Confirmation of Quorum, Chairwoman Ammu Devasthali**

Roll call was taken, and the regents present include Ammu Devasthali (Chair), Deborah Romero (Vice Chair), Christopher T. Saucedo (Secretary/Treasurer), Marisol Olivas, and Ricardo Gonzales.

Advisory Members present include Ms. Ala Alhalholy (ASNMSU President), Ms. Sonia White (Employee Council Representative, on behalf of Donna Johnson). Faculty Senate Chair, Dr. Vimal Chaitanya was excused to attend Vice President for Research interviews.

University Officials Present: Dr. Valerio Ferme (President), Ms. Lisa Henderson (General Counsel), and Dr. Lakshmi Reddi (Interim Provost).

**4. Approval of the Agenda, Chairwoman Ammu Devasthali**

A motion was made by Regent Gonzales and seconded by Regent Olivas to approve the agenda as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

## **B. Approval of Minutes and Confirmation of Closed Session**

### **1. Special Meeting on April 1, 2025**

A motion was made by Regent Gonzales and seconded by Regent Olivas to approve the minutes from the April 1, 2025, special meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

### **2. Confirmation of Closed Executive Session on April 1, 2025**

The Board of Regents held a closed executive session on Tuesday, April 1, 2025, at 2:15 PM. The purpose was to complete an interim performance assessment of the President under his contract, as permitted under the personnel matters exemption of the New Mexico Open Meetings Act (NMSA Section 10-15-1, Subsection H.2). Regents Gonzales, Olivas, Saucedo, Romero, and Devasthali each certified that only matters permitted under this exemption were discussed during the closed session.

## **C. Regent Committee Reports**

### **1. Financial Strategies, Performance and Budget Committee Report, *Regent Deborah Romero***

- Regent Romero reported that the committee met on April 22, 2025.
- Several action items were approved and appear on the consent agenda: Disposition/Deletion of Property (D.2) and Capital Improvement Projects (D.3 through D.6).
- The committee reviewed and approved the FY25 Budget Adjustment Request (BAR), which is an action item.
- The committee reviewed the FY26 Operating Budget proposal (due to HED May 1) and approved it contingent upon receiving responses to committee questions.
- The committee reviewed and approved the University's 5-Year Capital Plan, which is also an action item.
- An item regarding a proposed amendment to the Sodexo Master Collaboration Agreement was postponed.
- The Quarterly Financial Report was approved and submitted to HED, under the authority delegated to the Finance Committee Chair by the Board.
- No questions were asked following the report.

## **D. Consent Items, *Chairwoman Ammu Devasthali***

A motion was made by Regent Olivas and seconded by Regent Gonzales to approve the consent agenda items as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

- 1. Acceptance of New Mexico Higher Education Department (HED) Endowment Grants, *NMSU Foundation CEO Sylvia Y. Acosta***
- 2. Disposition/Deletion of Property, *Associate Vice President for Administration & Finance D'Anne Stuart***
- 3. PSL SCIF -Budget Revision Request, *Chief Facilities Officer Luis Campos***
- 4. Corbett Center -Dishwasher Replacement, *Chief Facilities Officer Luis Campos***

5. **Agrovoltaics Research Project Installations**, *Chief Facilities Officer Luis Campos*
6. **Martinez Hall, Grants Campus, Classroom and Lab Improvements**, *Chief Facilities Officer Luis Campos*
7. **Third Amendment to Communication Site Lease Agreement – New Cingular Wireless PCS, LLS (AT&T) at Aggie Memorial Stadium**, *Special Assistant to the President Scott Eschenbrenner*
8. **Regents Tunnels, Pan American Center to Milton Hall – Qwest Corporation (f.k.a. US West Communications, Inc.) Communications Easement Renewal**, *Special Assistant to the President Scott Eschenbrenner*

E. **Action Items**, *Chairwoman Ammu Devasthali*

1. **FY 25 Budget Adjustment Request**, *Chief Budget Officer Kim Rumford*

Chief Budget Officer Kim Rumford presented the FY25 Budget Adjustment Request (BAR). She explained its purpose is to provide spending authority for the remainder of FY25, reflecting developments since the original budget. She described the collaborative process used to develop the BARs, including the use of new Anaplan software, and the methodology involving estimated actuals, contingencies, and fund balance requirements. The BARs are submitted to HED and DFA for approval.

Regent Romero noted the Finance Committee's prior detailed discussion and comfort level with approval, acknowledging future clarifications needed for budget-related items. She confirmed with Dr. Rumford that another BAR is expected in December. Chair Devasthali confirmed that committee questions were circulated and answers were provided.

A motion was made by Regent Romero and seconded by Regent Olivas to approve the FY25 Budget Adjustment Request. The motion passed unanimously.

2. **2025-2026 Original Operating Budget**, *Chief Budget Officer Kim Rumford*

Chief Budget Officer Kim Rumford presented the FY26 Operating Budget. She outlined the collaborative preparation process, the use of sources/uses guidelines, state mandates, revenue estimates, and the review process. Highlights included successful legislative outcomes (4% compensation increase), projected revenue growth (especially NMSU Global), and total university expenditures exceeding \$1 billion for the first time. Federal grant funding is being monitored. Sources/uses summaries for branch campuses were briefly mentioned.

Regent Romero inquired about a negative state appropriation figure for the Grants campus; Dr. Rumford clarified it resulted from a non-recurring appropriation ending while recurring funds increased. Regent Gonzales commented on NMSU Global's impressive growth. Mr. Kinsley added that the finance team is increasing engagement with Global leadership as it matures fiscally. Chair Devasthali questioned a historical reference to a \$2.9M state appropriation for Alumni Relations. Staff (Chris Kinsley, Kim Rumford, and D'Anne Stuart) clarified there is no current direct state appropriation; the figure likely relates to historical internal university budget allocation for the former Advancement unit (prior to the Foundation separation), which was repurposed to cover the Foundation fee. Staff agreed to provide historical details. Regent Romero requested more transparency on such items in future budgets. There was consensus on needing a 'middle ground' level of detail in future budget presentations.

A motion was made by Regent Romero and seconded by Regent Saucedo to approve the 2025-2026 Original Operating Budget. The motion passed unanimously.

**3. 5-Year Capital Outlay Funding Request, Chief Facilities Officer Luis Campos, Interim Senior Vice President for Administration & Finance Chris Kinsley**

Chief Facilities Officer Luis Campos and Interim SVP Chris Kinsley presented the revised 5-Year Capital Outlay Funding Request. They explained the rationale for redirecting the plan, focusing on supporting student success, addressing the inefficiency and high maintenance costs of the current dispersed footprint (many small, old buildings), the significant deferred maintenance backlog (\$541M+ for instructional space), and aligning facilities with modern academic, student, and faculty needs (tech-rich, flexible, collaborative spaces). The current \$5M BR&R allocation is insufficient (\$9.6M needed to maintain, \$21M+ to reduce backlog).

The proposed plan prioritizes: 1) A large, centralized Academic Building ("Hub") potentially near McAfee Circle; 2) Infrastructure upgrades; 3) Consolidated Ag Science Center funding (\$30M); 4) Branch campus projects; 5) Cole Village demolition. The plan emphasizes a data-driven approach, supporting the academic mission, right-sizing the campus, and potentially repurposing buildings via Aggie Development. Visioning sessions are planned.

Extensive discussion followed. Chair Devasthali raised points about integrating academic program audits, the usability of the Center for the Arts, and the potential hub location. Provost Reddi spoke about the need for a paradigm shift away from departmental space ownership. Regent Gonzales questioned the historical link between square footage and state O&M funding (Mr. Kinsley confirmed no current direct link) and the prioritization of infrastructure vs. the hub. Regent Romero noted state-level requirements for campuses not to increase their net square footage. ASNMSU President Alhalholy inquired about phasing (both hub and renovations proceed) and expressed support for the hub's potential to foster inclusivity. Regent Romero expressed excitement but noted the need for education and collaboration with state agencies (Mr. Campos confirmed meetings are scheduled). Regent Saucedo supported the shift, aligning with private sector trends. Regent Olivas supported the shared hub concept. Chair Devasthali stressed incorporating historical preservation. Chair Devasthali and Regent Gonzales reiterated the importance of addressing infrastructure, particularly the tunnels. Mr. Campos explained they work concurrently; right-sizing enables focused infrastructure investment. Collaboration with Aggie Development was confirmed.

A motion was made by Regent Romero and seconded by Regent Saucedo to approve the 5-Year Capital Outlay Funding Request. The motion passed unanimously.

**F. Informational Items, Chairwoman Ammu Devasthali**

**1. None.**

**G. Announcements and Comments, Chairwoman Ammu Devasthali**

**1. Good News for NMSU!**

Chair Devasthali congratulated President Ferme on his recent inauguration and thanked the Inauguration Committee for the successful events.

President Ferme shared that summer enrollment numbers are significantly up compared to the past, indicating strong collaboration across campus units.

ASNMSU President Alhalholy gave a shout-out to the NMSU Women's Rugby team for winning two games, including one against the top-ranked team, during their first-ever appearance at Nationals earlier in the week.

**H. Adjournment, Chairwoman Ammu Devasthali**

A motion was made by Regent Gonzales and seconded by Regent Olivas to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:16 AM.

**Meeting Minutes Approved on May 8, 2025 by the New Mexico State University Board of Regents.**



Ammu Devasthali  
Board of Regents Chair



Christopher Saucedo  
Board of Regents Secretary/Treasurer