



**NEW MEXICO STATE UNIVERSITY BOARD OF REGENTS
SPECIAL MEETING
May 29, 2024 at 3:00 PM**

Live Webcast at the following address: <https://nmsu.zoom.us/j/81547872302>

Regents of New Mexico State University

Chair Ammu Devasthali, Vice Chair Christopher T. Saucedo, Secretary/Treasurer Garrett Moseley, Dina Chacón-Reitzel, Deborah Romero

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

University Officials - Interim President Mónica Torres, Ph.D., Interim Provost Lakshmi Reddi, Ph.D., General Counsel Lisa Henderson, J.D.

MINUTES

A. Call to Order

Special meeting was called to order at 3:00 pm.

1. Confirmation of Quorum, *Chairwoman Ammu Devasthali*

Chief of staff took roll and asked that they state “present” to confirm the Quorum

Regent Romero stated present.

Regent Chacón-Reitzel stated present.

Regent Moseley stated present.

Regent Saucedo stated present.

Regent Devasthali stated present.

Five members present, there is a Quorum.

Chief of Staff Adam Cavotta continued on with the NMSU advisory members, calling on them to state “present”.

ASNMSU President Ala Alhalholy stated present.

Faculty Senate Chair Vimal Chaitanya stated present.

Employee Council Chair Donna Johnson stated present.

Interim President Mónica Torres stated present.

Interim Provost Lakshmi Reddi stated present.

General Counsel Lisa Henderson stated present.

Quorum is confirmed and roll is called.

2. Approval of the Agenda, Chairwoman Ammu Devasthali

Regent Saucedo made a motion to approve the agenda as presented.

Regent Moseley seconded the motion.

Roll call vote was conducted.

Regent Romero voted yes.

Regent Chacón-Reitzel voted yes.

Regent Moseley voted yes.

Regent Saucedo voted yes.

Regent Devasthali voted yes.

With five votes in favor, motion was carried to approve the agenda as presented.

B. Consent Items

1. None.

C. Action Items

1. Human Dimensions of Agriculture (Education, Extension, Communication, & Innovation) - Doctor of Philosophy, Department Head Steve Frazee

Rolando Flores Dean of the College of ACES gives somewhat of an introduction for the PhD. Program, starting off with the fact that the ACES college attracts the most funds in terms of research and the need for PhD programs that the state of NM needs that can impact the Southwest. He goes on to state that another benefit to creating Ph.D. programs is retention and promotion for current faculty / agents in the thirty-three counties. He states that the Agricultural and Extension Education Department Head Steve Frazee and Assistant Dean of ACES Don Conner will present the details of the program.

Agricultural and Extension Education Department Head Steve Frazee explains that he will go over the PowerPoint presentation quickly and states that the human dimension of agriculture is simply the social sciences of agriculture. Not only the four departments are social science departments, Education, Extension, Communication, and Innovation. He goes on to state that this program is designed to be primarily for mid-career professionals such as extension agents. He informs the board that there is a large group of extension agents that are waiting for this program and directs them to the support slide of the PowerPoint and focused on the support from Oregon State who stated they could fill our quota with Oregon people and states that the numbers are not going to be the issue, the big thing is improving the extension programs throughout the state with this Ph.D. program as well as how the Leads 2025 does state the need for more Ph.D. programs especially in the human sciences or the social sciences as well as the part of being and keeping the Tier I status is having enough Ph.D. students. He opened it up to questions.

Regent Chacón-Reitzel did not have a question but a comment that this is a huge opportunity for students in Extension and a great way to retain our students.

Regent Romero had some questions, her first was regarding the salary issue with NMSU not being competitive enough and is not sure how offering a Ph.D. program to be the solution to getting our employees to invest and be able to pay them the wages that we currently pay if this is one of the pipelines we are looking into to retain our employees. She stated that she needs an explanation to make it make sense about having this investment,

but not doing anything to try to adjust the salaries to make sure that we keep more people in CES and in agriculture positions in the state.

Department Head Steve Frazee gave Regent Romero an example of how he believes it will work. He uses the State Director for Agricultural Education that does not have a Ph.D. but that in the budget, if he had a Ph.D., he would make substantially more because the money is there for that degree and there are several others in the same boat.

Regent Romero asked how many students are you anticipating? The reason for her question is that the number of students the program is opening to in comparison to the number of positions that are available is a small percentage. She states that we have set salaries at a point for these positions rather than adjust the salary to fit the position and it sounds like the only way to make more money is to have a Ph.D.?

Department Head Steve Frazee responded to Regent Romero that they do not necessarily have to have a Ph.D. but in certain areas there are categories that people go in based on their education salary wise. He goes on about the numbers and states that a group of 10 Ph.D. students is a large group and that it would be easier for a global campus format to manage more students. He states that it will take time to grow but that NMSU is competitive with neighboring states.

Much discussion ensued regarding the Ph.D. request, through the college of ACES and covered pros and cons for the college as well as how it will attract minorities and any perks and assistance for students and employees to take advantage of this program along with what the cost will actually be for the student, the ACES College and department, and finally the University.

Regent Chacón-Reitzel made a motion to approve the Ph.D. Program for AXED at NMSU.

Regent Moseley seconded the motion.

Prior to a vote on the motion, Regent Saucedo made a comment on the fact that initially the material provided did not have him convinced, but after the discussions and information provided during the presentation was more convincing.

Roll call vote was conducted.

Regent Romero voted yes.

Regent Chacón-Reitzel voted yes.

Regent Moseley voted yes.

Regent Saucedo voted yes.

Regent Devasthali voted yes.

With five votes in favor, motion was carried to approve the proposed Ph.D. Program for AXED at NMSU.

2. NMSU System: Five-Year Facilities Plans, Associate Vice President Raghu Raghavan

Interim VP for Business and Finance D'Anne Stuart started her presentation to the board on the University's 5-year capital plan for approval which identifies the University's priority projects for consideration in the next funding cycle in August which will be presented to the NM HED Capital hearings and make recommendations for funding. Review of the priorities were presented, and the Creative Media Institute is a top priority with the total cost of \$55 million which includes the \$10 million for FY25. She goes on to elaborate on capital projects amongst the different units of the University. She mentions reviewing the new HED manual that was just

released for any restrictions that would need to be considered.

Interim VP for Business and Finance D'Anne Stuart mentions an opportunity that is not part of the approval presented at this meeting but an opportunity to establish a commercial sound stage next to the creative media institute and the DACC CMT building, stating that this could be an excellent experiential opportunity for the students as well as employment networking; and this is through the Arrowhead Center Inc. She asked Executive Director of Arrowhead Center Wayne Savage to discuss some key points. He lets the board know that they have been working with the New Mexico Economic Development Department since July of last year on plans to develop the sound stage for filming and TV production at Arrowhead Park, and that the primary goal is to attract the industry to Southern New Mexico and grow the workforce with the goal of the workforce largely coming from NMSU students. He goes on to state that this would be the only industry standard sound stage south of Albuquerque. He finishes by stating that once all the agreement is finalized, it will be brought back to the committee and then ultimately to the regents for approval.

Interim VP for Business and Finance D'Anne Stuart discussed the biomedical expansion project that is one of the top 3 priorities and being grant funded by the National Institute of Health (NIH) and asked Associate VP for Facilities and Services Raghu Raghavan and Associate Dean for Arts and Sciences Michele Shuster to elaborate since the grant has some very specific requirements that need to be considered and met. They mention that this project is part of the Ag. Modernization Project and state GO bond funding as well as technology enhancement funds for phase 2 and phase 3 of the Biomedical Research Building and if they are not able to complete the building according to the NIH specifications they run the risk of losing the grant as well as the relationship with the NIH where they have received about \$24 million from them since 2018. She opens it up for questions.

Interim VP for Business and Finance D'Anne Stuart continues with her presentation to address the domestic water infrastructure which rounds out the top 3 priorities and Associate VP for Facilities and Services Raghu Raghavan added that the university is two water wells away from complete shutdown failure so this is mission critical before turning it over to Executive Director of Energy Services Patrick Chavez who reminds the board how important water is to the university not only to sustain business operations but also to support living accommodations for the students. He goes on to elaborate on how much we depend on water and the importance of the water wells and how this is a chance to get another well and finish a transmission line that was started over 10 years ago which improves the capacity to run all wells concurrently and improves the water quality. They move on to discuss the demolition funding and the safety issues that support the need for demolition of Cole Village and Tucumcari Ag Center.

Interim VP for Business and Finance D'Anne Stuart states that they plan to create an executive planning committee that will engage specialized sub teams to help assess and prioritize the capital needs and then concluded the presentation and requested approval of the 5-year plan including the funding priorities as indicated and opened up for questions.

Regent Romer had several questions for the presenters and started off with the CMI project and why there was an increase from \$35 million to \$40 million as well as why was CMI prioritized as #1 over the other two projects.

Interim VP for Business and Finance D'Anne Stuart explains the funding as well as that two years ago the CMI project was approved as #1 and the Biomed project is more recent.

Regent Romero gives information on what should be funded during a severance tax year and how public health and safety projects are funded during this time. She goes on to voice her concerns that CMI does not have anything to do with health and safety and is categorized as the #1 priority, but she feels the Biomed

project should be #1 and is more realistic to get support as well as the water well issues. She goes on to state that this improvement plan never went to a committee for review and it should have gone to the Real Estate Committee and the Finance Committee for review and approval and states that the board is now stuck on having to approve since it is due to the HED by June 3rd and goes on to state that there is a date missing in the timeline, the proposal needed to be submitted to DFA and GSD by July 1 as HED institutions are considered State agencies. She gives the floor back to the board for other questions.

Chairwoman Devasthali ask the question about fundraising for the 10% cost share for the CMI project and Dean of Arts and Sciences Enrico Pontelli let her, and the board know that they have launched a fundraising campaign and have two development officers who have some promising leads.

Regent Chacón-Reitzel voiced her concerns with the priorities as well as the Ag Science centers and where they fit in the request and how that has moved from a priority.

Interim VP for Business and Finance D'Anne Stuart goes on to reiterate that there are a number of projects, and she does not believe that projects are being removed and suggest that Assistant VP for Government and Community Relations Clayton Abbey could create a list of projects that were funded. She also mentions that the completion of the facility condition assessment may help but that we will have a lot of tough decisions to make going forward.

Assistant VP for Government and Community Relations Clayton Abbey adds to the discussion and suggests that the University look into the Ag Science Centers becoming a separate entity for funding similar to the UNM Health Sciences which funds its own entity.

Associate VP for Facilities and Services Raghu Raghavan steps in to explain that they were working under the impression that they could not request funding for outside centers due to the severance tax bond year and that is why we did not prioritize the Ag Science Centers this year. Regent Romero stepped in to clarify that what was not funded last year should be the priority this year as that is what HED and DFA are looking for when they review the projects. She goes on to state that when we have deferred maintenance of \$600 million, we have a responsibility to start addressing those deferred maintenance projects.

Chairwoman Devasthali stated that she had a few questions for Executive Director of Arrowhead Center Wayne Savage on the sound stage project regarding who has access to the \$15 million? Who will be building the sound stage? Who is going to be responsible for staffing it?

Executive Director of Arrowhead Center Wayne Savage answered that the funds will be transferred either to NMSU or Arrowhead Center Inc. and that Arrowhead will be the ones to hire the construction management team and a design build team to deliver the project. NMSU will be responsible for leasing the facility to a commercial sound stage operator. Funding did not cover office space so that was removed.

Chairwoman Devasthali asked about the Biomed project and when it is that they may lose the funds and Associate Dean for Arts and Sciences Michele Shuster informs her that it is May or 2027.

Regent Romero made a motion that the board consider changing the priority order and the amount. She asked that the Biomed facility be priority #1 with the justification being that the project needs to be completed and the grant funds may go away if not used in time at \$4.5 million. Priority #2, the water well project, the critical water system upgrade at \$12 million. Priority #3, the Ag Science Centers at \$30 million and making CMI priority #4 at \$35 million, giving us time to use the \$10 million from appropriations for the plan and design so then we will know the construction costs when we go into the GO year. She states that this is her recommendation, and she is open to discussing.

Interim VP for Business and Finance D'Anne Stuart had a clarifying question regarding only being able to submit three priorities and if that makes the Ag Science Centers supplemental.

Regent Romero clarified that only three priorities can be submitted and those will be #1: Biomed, #2: Water Project and #3: Ag Science Centers. CMI will be #4 and next year it will be one of the top three.

Faculty Senate Chair Vimal Chaitanya made a comment on the CMI building and how it could draw in more enrollment and federal funding and hoped that the BOR will consider that in their deliberations and then asked Dr. Shuster about the funding for the biomed facility. She states that it would probably be part of a course like model for maintenance, she did not have the answer for the amount of funds it will take to support the facility and will get back to the board with that answer.

Interim President Monica Torres added to the discussion about it being the honorable thing to do to prioritize the deferred maintenance issues and understood that academically CMI is for the students and curriculum options but wanted to add some context to the discussion as to why deferred is being prioritized.

Regent Romero clarified her initial motion that was made to reprioritize the projects. #1 will be the biomed expansion project at \$45 million. #2 will be the critical infrastructure upgrades to the water system at \$12 million and #3 will be the Ag Science Centers renovation and improvements including demolition at \$30 million.

Regent Chacón-Reitzel seconded the motion.

Roll call vote was conducted.

Regent Romero voted yes.

Regent Chacón-Reitzel voted yes.

Regent Moseley voted yes.

Regent Saucedo voted yes.

Regent Devasthali voted yes.

With five votes in favor, motion was carried to amend the 5-year Facilities plan.

D. Informational Items

1. None.

E. Announcements and Comments, *Chairwoman Ammu Devasthali*

There were none.

F. **Adjournment, Chairwoman Ammu Devasthali**

Regent Moseley made the motion to adjourn.

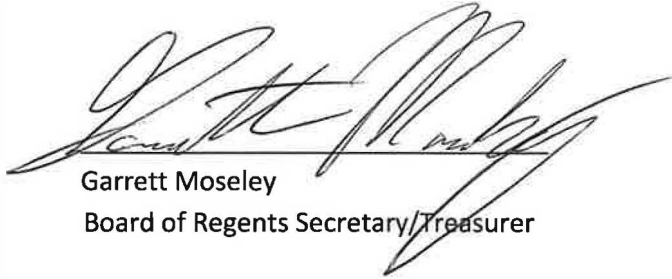
Regent Saucedo seconded the motion.

Chairwoman Devasthali adjourned the meeting at 4:57 p.m.

Meeting Minutes Approved on August 19, 2024 by the New Mexico State University Board of Regents.



Ammu Devasthali
Board of Regents Chair



Garrett Moseley
Board of Regents Secretary/Treasurer