

# NORTHERN New Mexico College



## **BOARD OF REGENTS SPECIAL MEETING** **MINUTES** **JANUARY 30, 2026**

A Special Meeting of the Board of Regents of Northern New Mexico College was held on Friday, January 26, 2026, In Person and Via Zoom in the Board Room of Northern New Mexico College, Española. Campus. Regents Present in person and Viz Zoom: Michael A. Martin, Erica Velarde, Ruben Archuleta, Ron Lovato and Dolores Gurule.

Northern New Mexico College Staff Present: President Hector Balderas, JD, CFE, Theresa Storey, Chief Financial Officer/Compliance Officer, Matthew Baca, General Counsel, Scott Stokes, Chief Information Officer, Juan Gallegos, Windows System/Information Security Administrator, Judith Pepper, Major Gifts Officer, Joseph Padilla, Instructor/Chair, Technical Trades, Christian Gomez, Technical Trades Academic Advisor, Tobe Bott Lyons, Upward Bound Director, Milam Shaw, Communications Coordinator, Martin Shupla, Director of Library, Sara McCormick, Career Services, Nathan Maestas, Events Coordinator, Cindy Martinez, Human Resources, Geno Trujillo, Security Director, Emma Hashman, Admissions Director, Joshua Lopez, Dual Credit Outreach Specialist, Maria Cedillo, Senior Project Manager/Database Administrator, Joseph Weese, Distance Education Coordinator, Kristy Alton, MA Director, Title V, Evette Abeyta, Budget Director, Vince Lithgow, Accountant III, Janice Baca, Registrar, Carmella Sanchez, Director of Institutional Research, Stephanie Sandoval, Interim Director of Human Resources, Sally Martinez, Executive Assistant to the Provost & Vice President for Academic Affairs, Arin McKenna, Staff Writer/Reporter, and Amy Peña, Executive Office Director/Secretary Board of Regents.

Faculty Present: Michael Gideon, David Lindblom, Ashis Nandy,

Others Present: Brandee DeAgüero, Student Senate President, Bernadette & Steve Gallegos, Tim Crone,

### **I. CALL TO ORDER**

Board President Martin called the meeting to order at 9:02AM

## II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Martin stated the following changes would be made to the agenda, Item VI, C, NNMC Foundation will be moved up to right after the approval of agenda and then we will have a couple certificates to pass out right after that. We might lose our quorum so after that, public input and then we will go to the discussion items. Chairman Martin stated if this is not too confusing, he will ask for a motion to approve the agenda.

**Regent Lovato moved to approve the agenda as amended. Second – Regent Archuleta. A roll call vote was taken. Chairman Martin – yes, Regent Velarde – yes, Regent Archuleta – yes, Regent Lovato – yes, Regent Gurule – yes. Motion passed unanimously.**

## III. PUBLIC INPUT

Rhiannon West thanked the Board for the time today. She stated she is joining today in her role as the Northern Federation of Educational Employees President. Northern New Mexico has a really deep history of activism rooted in resisting colonization, fighting for land rights, and protecting cultural identity spanning from the 1680 Pueblo Revolt. The 1970s Chicano movement, to modern work to honor of our rich, multicultural history while acknowledging the harms of colonialism. Today, the University of Minnesota students, the people of Minnesota, and the people of the United States have called for a nationwide shutdown. She thinks this is a moment for moral leadership. By honoring these student groups calls for collective action, Northern would reaffirm its commitment to democratic participation, human dignity and public good.

Ms. West stated she respectfully urges the Board of Regents and the administration to stand in solidarity with them and join the nationwide shutdown and thanked the Board of Regents.

Chairman Martin thanked Ms. West and asked for comments from the Board.

Regent Velarde stated she stands with her. Her son is at home and she is not working.

Regent Lovato stated he is not sure; we are here and asked what it would entail. Is this an action.

Chairman Martin asked Dr. West what she is asking from the Board.

Dr. West stated she is asking that they release the employees and the students and allow them to join the nationwide movement, if that is their preference.

Chairman Martin asked President Balderas for comment.

President Balderas thanked Dr. West for her comments and he would say that he has been in contact with AFT, National, he has reached out to the Secretary of Higher Education, just to gain a sense of what they are considering today. We would say that, we definitely support our employees and our staff and our students to, to free expression and constitutionally how, chose to engage how they want to engage. We will not necessarily retaliate. President Balderas thinks he saw the message that there's concern that employees might not have the ability to do this. We would encourage them to work directly with their supervisor and HR within the framework of those policies, we would support the constitutional exercise of our community being active today if they wish to choose. He would only say that if Dr. West is talking about release, that is supported. He would say though, the only thing that we have to balance is essential services. I know the Secretary commented today that it seems to be, would fly in the face of some of the civil rights if they shut down the legislative session and didn't issue certain funding mandates. So, he would think that as long as we balance essential services here, he would encourage the community to engage. The management teams and we will support the exercise of our community wanting to be active if they choose to be. So, he doesn't think we oppose Dr. West's request but we have to, maybe go through each department to see that we also balance the interests of providing essential services if there are students that wish to have those services met today. The other think he will say is we'll probably be issuing a more clarified position right after the meeting. So, hopefully that will also give our faculty, staff and students some guidance in terms of how they want to participate today.

Chairman Martin stated he supports the President's statement; everyone has the right to express themselves. He does not have any problem supporting that.

Regent Lovato stated he is okay with it, he will say that he doesn't agree with the, that this is the right way to go about doing it, by shutting down and he just doesn't.

Chairman Martin stated everyone has their opinion.

Regent Velarde stated she shared her thoughts; she stands with them. She appreciates President Balderas comments and support of them being able to practice and demonstrate their rights. She appreciates that there will be no retaliation. So, thank you.

Regent Archuleta stated he is in support but, you know, everybody has their own right, their own civil right to protest, or what they need to do as long as it's peaceful and it's, again, like echoing President Balderas, as long as it doesn't affect certain things.

Regent Gurule stated she does not have any comment right now. Thank you.

President Balderas stated that Dr. West, we should keep an open line of communication after this meeting and can talk a little bit more with clarity. It seems like there is general consensus on some positions in terms of participation and support and solidarity. He thinks where you've heard a little bit of balance of or a little bit of a difference of opinion is maybe approached and to what degree a shutdown is engaged in. He would say that as President, he knows that AFT would also not want certain essential services to be shut down. There's payroll. So, he will work with Dr. West to make sure we have a balance in terms of that clarity or that some of the region's concern about approach not harm our students of our operations in any way. He will give this small example. It's not in contradiction to AFT or his positions on enforcing the civil rights of our nation. He is a lawyer, former prosecutor, so he is deeply concerned about what he has been witnessing. But he knows many of you would not want him to not go to the legislature today and advocate for funding for our students and while, so we have to just balance what essential services means and so hopefully that gives the board a little clarity in terms of where he thinks he is headed but, he does sense today, this conversation, that you've given him at least a broad enough framework and balanced interest that he thinks, northern, we'll have a good position that everyone can feel good about and not concerned.

Chairman Martin stated we will move on.

#### **IV. COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD**

##### **A. Board of Regents Subcommittee Reports**

##### **1. Housing Committee**

Regent Archuleta stated no update at the moment but hopefully next meeting we'll have a better update.

## 2. Audit, Finance, Facilities Committee

Regent Archuleta stated it was a quick meeting and there are some informational items coming up.

## 3. Academic and Student Affairs Committee

No meeting held for this committee

## 4. Governance Committee

### a. 2026 Open Meetings Act Resolution

Matt Baca stated as all the Board is familiar with the New Mexico Open Meetings Act that requires anybody that is subject to the Act to annually pass a resolution that describes how the body will comply with and enforce its obligations under the Act. These are typically things like where, how and where meeting notices are posted, how soon agendas will be available, you know, just how you're informing the public of the work that you do. There have been no substantive changes to the Open Meetings act since last year so there's no substantive change to the resolution that the college passed last year, with the exception of updating the dates to reflect that it is this year's resolution. Mr. Baca stated it is his recommendation that the Board go ahead and adopt this resolution and he stood for questions about it or the meetings after.

Chairman Martin asked if there were questions from the Board and entertained a motion to approve the recommendation. No questions from the Board

**Regent Lovato moved to approve the 2026 Open Meeting Act Resolution. Regent Velarde – second. A roll call vote was taken. Chairman Martin – yes, Regent Velarde – yes, Regent Lovato – yes, Regent Archuleta – yes, Regent Gurule – yes. Motion passed unanimously.**

### b. HED Regent Training

Chairman Martin stated last year the legislature passed legislation signed by the governor that all regents needed to have 10 hours of online training. We received the training on December 19<sup>th</sup> and it had to be done by December 31<sup>st</sup> and he is glad to report that all regents completed the training and passed.

Chairman Martin asked for comments from Mr. Baca regarding the training. Mr. Baca thanked the regents for getting it done in a tight timeline. You are, at this point, under the law, you finished it and so unless you have a new appointment, you may be required

to take it again but he thinks that should be the end of HED's training for the board and then of course Chairman Martin, he is sure will continue to do some version of training, board retreat and things like that but as far as the state-mandated, just again, thanks to the board for getting it done. He thinks this should be all for the board during their terms of service.

Chairman Martin asked for the Board's thoughts on the trainings.

Regent Lovato, no comment.

Regent Velarde stated it was pretty standard. It was a lot of good information as far as like constitutional and other things like that so she appreciated it.

Regent Archuleta stated no thoughts other than he's been doing this similar training for the last 12 years as a board member so he is not sure if it is counted because it's pretty much almost the same exact thing that he does for board members because they have to do 10 hours a year. Other than that, it was relatively the same and it was not too difficult for him but thank you.

Regent Gurule stated thank you so much for that training that was provided to us. For her, as a newcomer to the Board of Regents it was very, very beneficial and it really cleared a lot of things up for her with questions that she still had. So, thank you.

### c. Onboarding

Chairman Martin stated at the December meeting the board conducted a self-assessment and realized we were deficient in our training for incoming regents. So, we sent some information to Mr. Baca to come up with a binder as far as to give new regents an idea of what all goes on at Northern. Chairman Martin asked Mr. Baca how it is progressing. Mr. Baca stated we will have a binder for new regents that includes northern specific information. The function of the same statute that we just described will require those regents to take the 10 hours of training within the first six months of their service and so they'll get that high-level overview that you all saw during the training but then we also intend to supplement that with a northern specific binder that you were talking about. So, we'll have a financial overview to include how the budgets are laid out from state appropriations, mill levy, land grant and permanent funds, federal funding, etc. We'll have information about tuition, what the current historical rates are, how tuition impacts the school and then we'll have program specific information on current degree programs to include the technical trades and a lot of this information our fantastic IR department already creates but they, annually, they have a really data-rich report on what our, what our student profile looks like, what, you know, just sort of what the whole organization looks like in terms of faculty and staff hiring, what percentage is full-time versus adjunct, what our demographic data is, all of that kind of stuff will also be included in this and then

other programmatic stuff will include some of this, other academic programming around adult ed school credit, things like that. So, that's the, and he is sorry, he's trying to go through the whole list here. So we have some, we'll have also historical information to include obviously, both the El Rito campus, but one little thing that you brought up, sir, I that that was good, we don't really often talk about the El Vado property and kind of what that looks like for the college and so I think it'll be pretty northern-rich, piece of information that will really supplement that 10 hours of training so that a new regent will get that high-level state perspective, but then also get a lot of northern. So, that will be our plan.

Chairman Martin stated he is looking forward to seeing that.

#### 5. HERC Committee

HERC – nothing to report.

### V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Martin entertained a motion to approve the December minutes.

**Regent Velarde moved to approve the minutes. Second – Regent Archuleta – second. A roll call vote was taken. Chairman Martin – yes, Regent Velarde – yes, Regent Lovato – yes, Regent Archuleta – yes, Regent Gurule – yes. Motion passed unanimously.**

### VI. PRESIDENT'S REPORT AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

#### A. Celebrate Northern

President Balderas stated we have a lot to celebrate coming into January.

We once again have great news on enrollment. I am pleased to share that, compared to last year's census data, we have increased headcount by 16% (226 students) and Student Credit Hours (SCH) by 22% (2689). Many thanks to everyone whose hard work keeps our numbers growing.

We welcomed 59 new Northern Eagles at New Student Orientation.

I want to congratulate Dr. Lori Baca and Dr. Ashis Nandy for the reaccreditation of our Business and Engineering Departments. Their hard work and dedication to their students, supported by the efforts of their great faculty, continues to bring accolades to Northern.

I also want to thank all our facilities department who have worked so hard to bring about an historic transformation on our campus. Because of them, we're ready to move out of

the phase of emergency response to a phase where we can plan what we want the campus to look like in the next 10, 15 or 20 years.

It was good to see all our faculty and staff at Convocation and to celebrate everything we've accomplished together.

I want to thank everyone who showed up to represent Northern at Higher Ed Day at the Capitol. It was a hectic day with the first day of the legislature, but we were well represented.

I want to congratulate all our students who made the Fall 2025 Dean's List. All of them completed a minimum of 12 graded credit hours and received a 3.5 GPA or better to earn this distinction.

A shout out to our Women's Basketball star Jayden Jenkins, who has been named Offensive Player of the week for the California Pacific Conference three times.

A big thank you to Dr. Ana Vasilic and everyone who helped her host the Julia Robinson Math Festival. 160 seventh- and eighth-grade students joined us this year, ready to explore and experiment with math.

Four of our students from the Video Art class captivated audiences with an immersive digital art experience called "Immersitricity." Artists Jonathan Dominguez, Alan Kapulski, Lukas LeDeux, and Jayze Maestas used projection mapping, interactive and performance elements, outdoor projections, and FullDome works in Northern's planetarium to bring their visions to life.

We had a wonderful El Rito Holiday Celebration. It's always great to welcome the El Rito community to campus and to see their appreciation for that campus and our programs there. I want to thank everyone who helped organize that event and DJ Dave for providing music. We built a toy drive off that event and several students received their packages for toys who worked behind the scenes.

I also want to thank our students and staff who carried on Northern's tradition of participating in the Española Light Parade. This is such a beloved community event it's good to be a part of it.

Northern Rising, we have been on an epic directional growth and President Balderas thanked all student support and student success employees. Many thanks to all professionals and committed individuals.

## B. CUP/NMICC Report

President Balderas stated the legislature is starting still and they're holding at a 1% pay increase and he will keep the community posted whether that goes up or down. We're also concerned about the rising costs and benefits, and so hopefully the legislature will at least, if they don't do pay raises, they'll infuse an offset so that our employees and our faculty don't go backwards in terms of compensation. Right now, we're in the process where the executive and the legislature have put forth budget recommendations, but that will be a moving target. We are supporting the LFC recommendation, which that is a slightly or better recommendation at this time but a lot of politics to still occur in the next week or so and then we are in aggressive posture right now with what they call capital infrastructure dollars, we're not done. President Balderas is going to go back and try to put a little bit more money into the fund but right now we're he would say that we're very grateful were we're at in our position right now but he has to make sure that we don't get money taken out of our budget and the legislature at this point has done a good job. In showing somewhat of a targeted investment approach to Northern and that's a recognition of all the amazing work we're doing here. However, that could always get pulled out last minute in the Senate in the last couple weeks, but with that those conclude President's CUP report.

## C. NMMC Foundation

President Balderas stated he probably has the best job in the State of New Mexico getting to work with great students, faculty and staff but every now and then, there'll be a very particularly special day at Northern, in addition to the amazing work and magic that our students provide our community. President Balderas stated he would like to recognize the Gallegos family and asked that they join the Board of Regents. They tend to be understated and amazing people and to our northern community, Bernadette and Steve approached us quietly several months ago, their business leaders, community leaders but Most importantly they really have a sense of how special this entire valley is and they've been in community service for many years but they've express kind of a. President Balderas doesn't know if it is a willingness that we're all going to be there, we want to do maybe a little bit more time with the family or drink a little more coffee and a little bit less work but they were transitioning, an amazing nonprofit that they had and they expressed really a desire to have some of their legacy live on and so we talked about the El Rito campus, we talked about the amazing students that are here at Northern. Bernadette also expressed an interest in a particular passion for young women and adult women that want to start businesses and build businesses here in our community and have a real sense of cultural and economic sustainability. President Balderas stated he is going to recognize them but also wants to thank them because we have them here and we want to take a photo of them. We want to really personally thank them for the donation of \$250,000 that they're providing Northern for scholarships.

President Balderas stated he would like to recognize someone that we have with us, we are very lucky to have her. She lives in warmer climate now; she doesn't live in Santa Fe. President Balderas called Judith Pepper to join the Board of Regents and share a few words about how she brought the Gallegos family to us and then he would like the Gallegos family to say a few words.

Ms. Pepper stated Tres Semillas Foundation was founded in 2007 and Bernadette and Steve are the original founders with some other community people and have both been president of the board at different times. Bernadette happens to now be fulfilling that position. The mission of Tres Semillas was for economic development in the mission of Tres Semillas is economic development in Rio Arriba, and particularly Abiquiu community. They are passing the torch to Northern, to President Balderas and to the Board of Regents and to all of you, too, their founding, the Tres Semillas Second Chance Endowed Fund for Unconventional Students and non-traditional students. The endowment will start in a year. We will be able to work with financial aid and get those scholarships provided. Ms. Pepper stated the whole community of Northern New Mexico is vital, full of people who love the community, who love the students, who love Northern New Mexico College and who are very humble. Bernadette and Steve are some of the humblest yet incredibly involved community people in the region and Ms. Pepper stated she just wanted to say an applause for them too.

Bernadette Gallegos stated she would like to sincerely, Steve and Bernadette both want to extend their sincere gratitude to the current and past board members of Tres Semillas. They gave a lot of their time; their expertise and it was a true labor for the foundation and it was just so gratifying to see that come full circle and that commitment is now a positive impact on the community and it was easy to do the donation because of the vision and community at Northern.

Ms. Pepper stated Mr. & Mrs. Gallegos have the check to present to Chairman Martin.

Ms. Pepper stated we started a million-dollar campaign in April of 2024 and with the \$250,000 we were able to complete that and we've exceeded that campaign by \$53,000. That's one of the first million-dollar campaigns that has been done at Northern. It is a lot of money for our college and the way these dollars have been distributed, some of the donors like to know where their money is going to go specifically. So, for this campaign, technical trades about a half a million. President's Eagle Discretionary Fund, which are special projects that students and faculty have that there's no source of real funding for, that President Balderas can use \$103,000. Endowed Scholarships with \$250,000 that's coming from Tres Semillas, \$359,000 and then the Northern Scholarship Fund which has been ongoing for some time, \$125,000. Ms. Pepper stated she would like to say to the community and we will do a story on this and to the faculty, to the students and to the Board of Regents and particularly President Balderas. The college is very visible now. We've all seen the growth, we've all seen the progress. People want to support Northern

New Mexico College and Ms. Pepper stated she wants to; she has worked with a lot of presidents and President Balderas has made her job so easy in the last three years. She stated she would like to thank the President, thank the community, to the students, faculty for us being able to do this in 18 months, she is really pleased with that, so, thank you.

President Balderas stated he would like to add a contextual for the community and faculty and staff, you know, Judith is right, we, she works out of Texas and Judith is effectively part-time but she has a full-time impact and President Balderas stated he wants to thank Judith because she decided to continue to serve the students. When, in fact, she wanted some warmer climate and weather, and she deserves to prioritize what makes you happy in life, but yet she chooses to still, she was in Santa Fe with President Balderas last night and they were meeting with a very successful donor. This is an example of that, that has given millions of dollars to Highlands but he sought us out and said we want to help Northern, and we are kind of recognizing what's going on in their southern mountains. So, President Balderas stated he wants to thank Ms. Pepper because he thinks we have a lot of good staff and faculty that do that, that choose to serve here and then secondly, the million dollars is something that is kind of unheard of, because we don't have the standard foundation infrastructure and President Balderas stated he will tell everyone that and it makes him angry. President Balderas stated he and Matt Baca have talked about the legislature funds certain foundations like UNM but he doesn't make excuses in our community. The only think he will say is you always get a critical opinion of what it is that the real challenge is, and what it is that we can positively get to work and not make excuses. So, when Judith said yeah, let's shoot for a million dollars, it was a little bit scary at times, because we didn't have the infrastructure, we don't have the foundation staff. It's me and Judith. We don't have the receptions, we don't have the 14 employees that UNM Foundation does have, but that doesn't mean that we're not making an impact or most importantly like the Gallegos, those donors want to invest in our students, and me and Judith, we look at it more as a privilege to try to find time and make sure those things happen so Northern's high standards of accountability are really getting a lot of attention and we see it. So, President Balderas stated he would give Judith a round of applause.

Chairman Martin asked if there were any questions from the Board.

Regent Velarde stated this is amazing, this is an amazing feat. This is so awesome, a million dollars. Regent Velarde stated she would like to congratulate Ms. Pepper and President Balderas. This is an amazing feat. Our little school being able to raise this money, honestly, such little time, it's amazing. Judith, you're a rockstar. I appreciate you completely and to the Gallegos family, thank you so much for trusting us and knowing that this will go towards so many students and changing their lives, so thank you.

Regent Archuleta thanked everyone for their hard work especially the people behind the scenes. Thank you, this is very impressive.

Regent Gurule thank you so much for all your hard work and dedication. I really appreciate everyone. This is really wonderful, wonderful news. Thank you so much and she knows that our students appreciate it as well.

President Balderas stated he would like to recognize Geno Trujillo and two of his staff members. Mr. Trujillo stated he wants to recognize two of our folks for some things that they've done recently. He does not think that we do this enough and sometimes, on the safe food security side it's thankless because checking doors, and lights, and securing things, and going to games and making sure everybody's not bringing anything they are not supposed to and sometimes it gets monotonous, mundane. This week has been anything but that. We have had all kinds of fun this week, because that's what we're here for, to make it better for everyone else and these two are pretty outstanding and he wanted to recognize them for that. In one case, Javen is a fairly new employee, he's been here for about six months. He used to be a supervisor at Hacienda but he's really taken it upon himself to step up. He's always visible, he's always walking around campus. He is always saying hello to people. He's provided a number of escorts to students and faculty to get to and from their vehicles, back into the buildings, or from the building to their vehicle. Mr. Trujillo wanted to recognize him for that and thank him and acknowledge the fact that he's a true asset to our team and he wanted to the President to help him, both Presidents and the Board of Regents and our Executive team took notice of the fact that these guys are pretty awesome, and he just wanted to recognize them for that today.

Mr. Trujillo stated the next one, and he will go really quick, we just got this gentleman about two months ago. Trinidad Lucero came to us from corrections, he was a supervisor there. He did a lot over there with the CERT team, transport teams. He filled a number of shoes over there and we were, it was amazing for us to be able to get him to help us in El Rito, because it's really tough to get people up there, and with his qualities and the fact that he's bringing all this experience and knowledge. We had a runaway missing juvenile that got away from us in Abiquiu somewhere and law enforcement plastered social media with the fact that we really needed to find this kid. We don't know the semantics behind it, but he does know that they were searching pretty high and low for this person and it just so happened that Trinidad was paying attention that they saw this kid near campus, befriended the student and he thinks that there was a male subject with this girl and the male subject just left her and he dropped her off and took off and fled. Trinidad took it upon himself to go up, introduce himself, calm her down, explain who he was about. He put her in the vehicle and called law enforcement and they were there within minutes to pick her up and in his book that's a heck of a kudos and that's a beautiful feather in his hat and that's why he wants to recognize him.

President Balderas will keep the Board posted on fundraising efforts.

#### D. Introduction of Staff and Faculty

President Balderas introduced the following:

##### **Taylor Brooke Denton**

###### **Lecturer, Arts & Human Sciences**

Brooke Denton has been promoted from adjunct faculty to Lecturer in our Arts and Human Sciences Department. She received her M.A. in Critical Theory and the Arts from the School of Visual Arts and her B.F.A. in Studio Art from the University of New Mexico. Brooke was born and raised in New Mexico. She is a painter who works primarily in oil and maintains an active studio practice.

##### **Nathan Maestas**

###### **Facility & Events Coordinator**

Nathan Maestas is our new Facility & Events Coordinator. He was born in Los Alamos in 1986 and raised in the Española Valley by a ranching family. He was previously the Inventory Manager for Portmeirion Group-USA, under their Nambé brand. He graduated from Northern in 2020, with an Associate of Arts in Film & Digital Media Arts.

##### **Kimberly Spray**

###### **Assistant Professor, Nursing & Health Sciences**

Kim Spray joins us as an Assistant Professor in our Nursing & Health Sciences Department after spending the last 28 years working in emergency medicine, first as a paramedic and as an emergency nurse since 2010. After completing a BSN in nursing in 2014, Kim took a position with Partners in Health (PIH) to care for Ebola patients in Sierra Leone. Upon returning to the U.S., she took a position as the ED Educator at a Level-3 Trauma Center. She has volunteered with multiple international NGOs, including International Medical Corps at Maimonides Hospital in Brooklyn, NY, during the COVID-19 pandemic. She worked overseas for Doctors Without Borders in Sierra Leone and has started her own NGO, Nursing's Edge, to improve nursing education globally. Kim is enrolled in a Nursing Ph.D. program at the University of New Mexico, studying psychological safety and ED nurse turnover intentions.

#### **VII. FACULTY SENATE PRESIDENT REPORT**

**None.**

#### **VIII. STUDENT SENATE PRESIDENT REPORT**

President DeAgüero stated does not have much information to provide now. They are now focusing on bringing in new members. They are trying recruit new students and working on events for the new semester. They don't have dates set but once they do, she will provide them at the next meeting.

No questions from the Board.

#### **XIV. STAFF SENATE**

Tobe Bott Lyons stated he is the director of UB and was just here talking about getting the constitution approved in November. They had their first meeting in December. They sat all areas of the constitution represented. They have all 11 senators. They elected executive officers. He is the President, Anjel Romero, Vice President, Cindy, Secretary. There are five committees that are up and running and meeting. The SAC met with the President and they will have monthly meetings. Not much to present substantively.

Chairman Martin stated it sounds like they are busy.

Regent Velarde had no questions but congratulated Dr. Tobe Bott Lyons.

Regent Archuleta, no questions.

Regent Gurule congratulated Mr. Bott Lyons and stated he brings such a vibrant energy to Northern. She has always appreciated every time he speaks. She just feels so much energy even just hearing him speak for five minutes. So, number one, congratulations and number two, thank you so much for bringing a voice to the staff as well through this thing that he is starting. Thank you.

President Balderas congratulated them and he has seen them building, discussing and now they're executing and they've been to our office and so they will continue to engage them as a shared governance body.

Chairman Martin thanked Dr. Bott Lyons.

#### **IX. VICE PRESIDENT FOR FINANCE**

##### **1. BARS**

Ms. Storey presented the Recommendations to the Board of Regents (attached). It is the Budget Adjustments for FY2026. This item was informational. Pages 28 through 45 of the packets is the detailed information of the budget adjustments to this point. This report represents about 104 adjustments. 38 of those are line to line, which represent, essentially, categorial changes. 54 of those adjustments are increased and 12 decreases. Those represent cleanup. Grant notice, as you're aware, this was a unique year in which we were waiting for a lot of notices and or new awards. Just for reference, a matter of timeline, this body approves our budgets in May for the following fiscal year and then as an institution, we are, able to provide, budget adjustments to the higher education

department, twice a year, or once a year. This institution elects to request those only once a year so that also comes in May of, the end of the fiscal year. So, again, this is just for informational purposes. The lengthy report doesn't offer to much valuable information so she did include in the board packet sort of a table that expresses those changes by function. So, on page 27 of the packet is that table. Exhibits 10-14 represent our I&G funding and then we have student life and cultural research, public service, internal services. Student aid and grants, auxiliary enterprises, athletics, and then, of course our renewal replacement and investment and plan. So, these adjustments in the I&G were about \$4.7M and about \$2.8M in the plant area of the budget, representing about \$7M increase to the budget. Ms. Storey stood for questions.

Chairman Martin asked if there were questions from the Board.

Regent Archuleta – no questions.

Regent Gurule – no questions. Regent Gurule stated she would like to express her sincerest gratitude for Ms. Storey and her staff. They are an incredible team and she thanks them for everything that they do for our college.

#### 1. Executive and LFC Budget Recommendations

Ms. Storey stated President Balderas already touched on a lot of the high-level elements of these requests that are before the legislature. In the packet on page 46 is a two-page document. These are final unified priorities out of the CUP/NMICC and the other associations. This is not necessarily a new document but she just wanted to include it in the packet. For reference and refresh our memories, it is laid out with recurring requests, non-recurring requests, and then sector-specific requests. In the recurring request, the Unified Priorities had, we're seeking 4.7% increase in formula funding. Compensations equivalent to that being given to state agencies and then a request to fully fund legislative mandates. In the non-recurring area, there was a focus on campus safety expanded cybersecurity, building renewal replacement and equipment renewal on what is appropriated. It has an algorithm or a distribution model, and then we see those a little bit later, which, again, is partially why we have those budget adjustments post this body approving the budget, so that we can get those appropriations budget.

Ms. Storey stated on page 48 of the packet is tabled that sort of just does those side-by-side comparisons. It looks at what the higher ed request was what the LFC recommendation was and what the executive recommendation is.

Ms. Storey stated as President Balderas mentioned, the associations are in support of the LFC recommendation at least to that, to this point. It looks like this is the recommendation moving forward. It is the bigger ask out of the general fund, which is not difficult for that to move forward but we're fortunate in this case. So, for our

recurring or formula increases, the LFC's recommendation is at 4.7% executive recommendation at 3.4%. Again, as President Wilder has mentioned, the compensation increase is at about 1%.and then as far as the non-recurring requests, I think you can see here that the LFC is a larger investment and again those distributions are typically dished out through the higher ed.

Ms. Storey stated on page 49 of your packet is a little bit more in the weeds of how these impacts Northern. You will see that the table, reference our I&G appropriations, our athletic appropriations and then our RPSPs which is Teacher Pipeline STEM. Nurse expansion, demonstration farms, arts and culture engagement and then there were two new RPSPs that the institution put forward that were supported by HED and the executive but did that in the LFC recommendation. That was for a new career services center and a structured literacy coordinator which was basically a higher ed initiative. Percentage wise for us and I&G, if the LFC recommendation does continue to move forward, it's 3.2% increase in I&G and then the nursing expansion is highlighted here because the recommendation across all those bodies is to role that RPSP into I&G for fiscal year 27.

Ms. Storey stated there is a small box that speaks to numbers. What does that mean in investment for us in formula funding, non-formula funding, RPSP and the total change? Bottom line for Northern, it does not necessarily appear that the LFC recommendation is the favorable, but rest assured, it really is, because it invests in those formula dollars and gives us more recurring funding to the institution.

Mr. Storey stood for questions.

Chairman Martin asked for the Career Services Center and the Structured Literacy Coordinator since the LFC didn't fund it, does that create a problem for us or that's part of further negotiations. Ms. Storey stated she thinks it part of the negotiations. She believes executive recommendations did focus somewhat on RPSP where the LFC focused more on the recurring formula dollars. So, they saw it more favorable to kind of address some of the federal funding and things of that nature through the funding formula. So, it's not to say they couldn't come back in but it's not likely.

Chairman Martin stated so we are asking RPSPs to fund some of our federal programs, was that correct and that did not work out or? Ms. Storey stated we did submit three new RPSPs. One was for HEP/CAMP combination, one was for the Career Services and one was for Upward Bound. What came out of HED recommendation was for the career services and we do prioritize those. We were prioritizing federal funds. But HED's recommendation included career services as an RPSP, and then in their non-formula adjustment is where they kind of accounted for lost federal funding. Of course, that's just an agency recommendation. Executive recommendation took semi-similar approach of funding through non-formula adjustments which is in your small table on page 49 and then again, LFC took the approach of investing through the formula.

Chairman Martin asked if we'll just have to see what happens when the position ends, is that right? President Balderas stated yes and asked Ms. Storey to you reference just the, like, the tangible dollar amount on the adjustment. Ms. Storey stated on page 49 for HED, the formula dollars is worth about \$284,000, we'll call it that. The non-formula dollars, again, is where they're adjusting for loss of federal funding. They wanted to infuse with \$72,000 for Northern and then RPSP, again, \$553. Executive recommendation dropped that non-formula adjustment to \$360,000, again, where they were addressing. Loss of federal funds and then the LFC. The non-formula adjustment is \$790,000 but that is targeted for student support services as they have done in the past.

President Balderas stated he thinks what you're highlighting is the, he wanted to give him kind of a specific on a more focused context in terms of the administration, what they are projecting to be federal cuts is much more of a financial impact to our institution than what the legislature's willing to step in and so they're not willing to replace dollar for dollar the Trump cuts. So, that's one of the disclosures he wants to make clear to the board, is that it's a, it's a critically risky position where the feds are and what the state is proposing to come in and backfill or bail us out, so to speak. However, he doesn't want people to panic. However, he does want to make people aware it's an extremely big lift what Northern is being asked to analyze. His priority is going to be hopefully that we continue to serve the number of students that we're serving. That there continues to not be a break in services but right now for the President the state is sending us a clear message that they're not backfilling the federal cuts so those are the, we as fiduciaries and as education leaders need to be aware of what the realities are of you know, who's willing to put gas in the tank and who's not and we can plan accordingly. So, over the next probably three months, we'll be putting together some recommendations on how we can structurally still succeed but yet deal with this potential risk of several millions of dollars in terms of the federal cuts as it relates to 79 to 300,000 like, there's a big, that's a very different reality than our infrastructure dollars. We are flowing and we can't keep up with the amount of construction. Yet, when it comes for direct dollars of staff or services, I want to be very clear, the legislature is not that bullish in terms of replacing those services with the federal cuts, so that's a risk, sir, that you already instinctually picking up n and will continue to provide information and we'll probably have a fiscal sustainability plan w=very soon by the summer.

Chairman Martin asked if there were questions from the Board.

No questions from the Board.

Chairman Martin thanked Ms. Storey.

## **X. PROVOST & VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS**

### **1. Approval of Certificate in Technical Trades (Carpentry)**

Provost Vellanoweth stated we have a couple of action items for the provost. One is an action item that we discussed last time, December, whatever date that was and he is looking for the Board's approval for the Certificate in Technical Trades – Cybersecurity. So, one in approval, the other is informational at this point. If the Board has any questions, we have folks here to answer those. Chairman Martin stated great, we covered the Certificate in carpentry pretty well last month and asked if there are any questions from the Board. No questions from the Board.

Chairman Martin entertained a motion to approve the Approval of the Certificate in Technical Trades (Carpentry).

**Regent Lovato to approve the Certificate in Technical Trades (Carpentry). Second – Regent Gurule. A roll call vote was taken. Chairman Martin – yes, Regent Velarde – yes, Regent Lovato – yes, Regent Archuleta – yes, Regent Gurule – yes. Motion passed unanimously.**

### **2. Certificate of Engineering and Technology (Cybersecurity)**

Provost Vellanoweth stated this is a first reading item, a Certificate of Engineering and Technology focused on cybersecurity. It's part of our expanding avenues in career and technical education, part of our trying to be entrepreneurial and meet the needs of not only the community, our local agencies, but also, students in the, in higher education in general. We do have Dr. Nandy and Dr. Gideon who drafted the certificate, curriculum if there are any questions or comments.

Chairman Martin asked Dr. Nandy and Dr. Gideon to join the Board meeting.

Dr. Nandy thanked everyone for the opportunity to talk about their new proposed certificate program and we have Dr. Gideon if he would like to add anything. He is the subject matter expert. Thank you Dr. Vellanoweth for giving some kind of background to that. He will just add to that this is a program that we've developed, designed. We are still working on it a little bit but it's pretty much done. It's a smaller component of a much larger project that we have in collaboration with the Los Alamos National Lab, our mental prodigy, agreement that we have with them and under that umbrella, we also have institutional, an institutional agreement with them, from National Employer Security Administration. We have a two-year grant, so this is part of that as well. What we are proposing is a certificate program, 15 credits and it's stackable with our Bachelor of Information Technology program and I forgot to mention that we are working on this larger project. We are calling it Center of Excellence for IT and Cybersecurity. So, the

cybersecurity part, we had some forces there, but it wasn't really a new crisis in our bachelor program. So right now, there's a huge need for cybersecurity professionals, as we all probably know, in terms of data security and all that stuff, and again. So, we are working with the lab and the subject matter experts, and we drafted this program, and we are continuing to work with them on the content, the content area and so on. The idea is to have it stackable program so we are expecting stand-alone certificate students as well as hopefully, dual grade students, giving them a pathway to workforce-ready type of program so that they can quickly get their certificates in two or three semesters that they are working. At the same time, we hope to retain some of these students through this, stackable kind of nature of the program and move them forward with the bachelor or the associate in software or IT. So that's our approach to that and we did this kind of similar follow the similar approach for CAT certificate program which we launched like two and a half years back and it's very, very successful so we hope we'll have the same level of success, if not more. So, with that, you know, if anyone has any questions. Chairman Martin asked if the classes will be online or in person. Dr. Nandy stated we are ready for both, or you know, hybrid model as well, most likely we will start many of them as traditional face-to-face but we are also Dr. Gideon is also working on developing these courses on line. Many of these classes, one of the courses we already have in our degree plan and some of the other courses have, we have offered them in the past as elective courses so it's not totally new but we have with his expertise have now have the confidence to move forward with something, like, ore concentrated in that area. So, we intend to offer them, online as well, both hybrids depending on the demand.

Chairman Martin asked if there were questions from the board. No questions from the board.

Regent Gurule stated she does not have questions but she would like to thank you for all the work both of you put into this certificate and she has first-hand experience with both Dr. Gideon and Dr. Nandy and seeing the determination that they have, that all of their students are successful and all the sacrifices they make in their own schedules to make sure that they're flexible to meet the needs of all their students. So, it's not been unnoticed, it's not gone unnoticed and she appreciates everything they do for the success of all the students. Thank you so much.

Chairman Martin asked what the timeline is, when do they think they will come back to the Board for approval. Dr. Nandy stated this is the last stage for the internal process. With the Board's approval, he thinks the way it works, they just need to notify the State, HLC and HED but it is not like our bachelor program that needs, you know, full approval from them, so it's a quicker process. He certainly hopes that officially we will be able to launch the program in the fall of this year, fall of 2026.

Chairman Martin asked the provost for his thoughts.

Provost Vellanoweth stated he thinks it's great. Cybersecurity certainly is here to stay and it's an important part of not only our curriculum here at Northern, but the entire nation, if not the entire world, so there's a lot that goes into it, geopolitics, information technology, engineering and these conversation sort of avenues of interest are what's exciting about this, and very much interested in seeing that. The next will, so the next meeting February, meeting, he believes, then he will bring it up for approval and then they are free to go. President Balderas stated he wants to express some gratitude. A lot of times this doesn't happen overnight and he remembers LANL approaching the institution on what's called a Mentor Protégé Program and that's basically a partnership between this institution, we were one of the first governing entities in the country. President Balderas flew to San Diego and visited one of the Cal State, Long Beach, maybe. Long story short, there was a group and you were part of the group that when the protégé program, recognized us that we would be partners, LANL and Northern and that we were one of the few governing, public entities in the nation to be a partner, mentor, protégé. This came from the feds and the Department of Energy, we kind of set out as just normal participant. One of them was to convene thought leaders, and recognize what we can build to build a better workforce, a pipeline and also the national mission. President Balderas remembers the group identifying cybersecurity is one, so he wants to thank them for being in that group. It's not always easy to pull people from their schedules. So, there was some skeptics in the room in terms of LANL and faculty, what is this? Can we afford it? And so, with all the obstacles and barriers, President Balderas really wants to commend them and their department. Because those kinds of partnerships often identify a goal, and then we don't always execute on the goal. So, for them to identify it and then to see the culmination here of a tangible opportunity and pathway. President Balderas is really excited to tell the Board is amazing that we're not flexing in the cybersecurity area and see the provost and faculty really meet the market needs and the demands. Thank you for allowing us to playing that national conversation but he wanted to recognize the Mentor Protégé program that was quietly convened about three years ago and then faculty in the department and he would say that now, at the culmination of this, we'll probably engage a group to go up on the hill and report back to them that we're also executing on the word that we gave them. Some exciting things to come. Thank you.

Chairman Martin thanked Dr. Nandy and Professor Gideon.

## **XI. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**None.**

**XII. VOTE TO REOPEN MEETING** - Certification that only those matters described in the Executive Session Agenda were discussed in the closed session; if necessary, final action with regard to certain matters will be taken in Open Session

**None.**

**XIII. ADJOURNMENT**

Chairman Martin entertained a motion to adjourn.

**Regent Velarde moved to adjourn. Second – Regent Archuleta. A roll call vote was taken. Chairman Martin – yes, Regent Velarde – yes, Regent Archuleta – yes, Regent Gurule – yes. Motion passed unanimously.**

The Board of Regents adjourned at 10:16AM.

Approved:



Michael A. Martin  
Chair



Erica Rita Velarde  
Vice Chair