

**NORTHERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
Minutes of the Formal Session  
of  
Friday, September 22, 2017**

A formal session of the Board of Trustees of Northern Michigan University was held on Friday, September 22, 2017 in Cohodas Hall of Northern Michigan University, Marquette, Michigan. The meeting was convened at 9:07 a.m. in the Board Room, 602 Cohodas Hall, by Chair Scott L. Holman.

Trustees present included:

Mr. Scott L. Holman, Chair	Mr. Steven M. Mitchell
Ms. Lisa I. Fittante	Mr. Richard M. Popp
Ms. Alexis M. Hart	Ms. Tami M. Seavoy
Mr. James K. Haveman	Dr. Fritz J Erickson, ex officio
Mr. Robert E. Mahaney	

Senior Staff and Counsel present included:

Mr. R. Gavin Leach, Vice President for Finance and Administration and Treasurer of the Board  
Dr. Kerri Schuiling, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs  
Dr. Steven A. VandenAvond, Vice President for Extended Learning and Community Engagement  
Ms. Cathy A. Niemi, Secretary of the Board of Trustees  
Mr. Kurt McCamman, Legal Counsel

Senior Staff absent included:

Mr. Brad Canale, Chief Executive Officer – NMU Foundation

**MOMENT OF SILENCE**

Mr. Gavin Leach, Vice President for Finance and Administration, read the following memorials:

- Mr. Christopher McMahon, interim lab director at the Upper Michigan Brain Tumor Center, who died on August 18, 2017.
- Mr. Benjamin Constance, Plant Operations Preventive Maintenance Technician, who died on May 27, 2017.

Chair Holman read the following memorials:

- Mrs. Roberta “Bobbie” Roberts, wife of Trustee Emeritus Dr. Douglas Roberts, who died on June 4, 2017.
- Mr. Gilbert L. Ziegler, Trustee Emeritus, who died on July 29, 2017.

The Board of Trustees observed a moment of silence in their memory.

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

Ms. Catherin Chastain addressed the Board regarding how sexual assault and domestic violence are handled on college campuses across the country. Ms. Chastain is proposing that Northern Michigan University adopt the Owsia Initiative, from *Watership Down*, which is an initiative she lobbied for at the University of Montana in Missoula. The initiative states that a four-year public university such as NMU, grant in-state tuition to people from out of state who are running from their abusers; assist with on-campus food and shelter until they are settled; have on-campus security escort them building-to-building; and assist with getting medical and mental health issues worked on. This would make NMU a safer place for everyone. She is asking that the vulnerable and the youth at NMU be protected. The Trustees thanked Ms. Chastain for her comments.

### **MISSION AND VISION STATEMENTS**

President Erickson reviewed the process for the proposed revised NMU Mission and Vision Statements. These proposals came through a collaborative effort of working closely with the Strategic Resource Budgeting Committee that put together a subcommittee that took an inclusive approach to engagement. The leadership of that committee, Drs. Brent Graves and Leslie Warren, were instrumental in leading the dialogue of this process. The proposed statements are:

Mission Statement – Northern Michigan University’s distinctive academic mission and career programs are nurtured by exceptional teaching and extensive opportunities for scholarship, creativity, and engagement. Our supportive, connected community empowers students, graduates, faculty, and staff to contribute to a diverse and sustainable world.

Vision Statement – Northern Michigan University promotes an active environment to foster strong minds and bodies, inspires innovation and inclusion through community engagement, and develops leaders capable of local and global impact.

The following action was taken:

**It was moved by Trustee Seavoy, seconded by Trustee Haveman, and passed unanimously, to approve the new Mission and Vision Statements.**

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

#### **Academic Affairs**

Mr. Mitchell, Chair of the Academic Affairs Committee, reported on a meeting held Thursday, September 21, 2017. A copy of the report is appended to these minutes. (Addendum #1)

#### **Finance**

Ms. Seavoy, Chair of the Finance Committee, reported on meetings held on Monday, September 11, 2017 and Thursday, September 21, 2017. A copy of the reports is appended to these minutes. (Addendum #2 and #3).

Based on a recommendation from the Finance Committee, the Board took the following action:

**It was moved by Trustee Haveman, seconded by Trustee Fittante, and passed unanimously, that the Board instruct the Administration to address Athletic Department targeted operational support needs for fiscal year 2018, and to develop a three-year comprehensive strategic plan to be presented to the Committee at the December 14, 2017 Board meeting.**

Mr. Haveman said he wanted to acknowledge Trustee Rick Popp's work. Trustee Popp is a strong advocate for athletics and we appreciate his work on this. He also congratulated Trustee Popp on his induction into the Sports Hall of Fame this evening, which is a real achievement.

Trustee Popp said he appreciates the action of the Board as this is not for athletics, it's for the broader NMU mission. There is still untapped potential for opportunities for community engagement – the diversity our students bring to campus, pride in NMU, student life, enrollment, leadership development – there are so many aspects to it. The importance of the fan experience, anyone who comes to any sports event, we want them to walk away with a feeling that NMU is remarkable, regardless of the event. The action that we are taking today will enable that even more.

#### **Executive**

Mr. Holman, Chair of the Executive Committee, reported on a meeting held on Thursday, September 21, 2017. A copy of the report is appended to these minutes. (Addendum #4)

Based on a recommendation from the Executive Committee, the Board took the following action:

**It was moved by Trustee Seavoy, seconded by Trustee Fittante, and passed unanimously, that based on the President's performance, as provided in his contract for the period ending June 30, 2017, he be awarded a \$50,000 performance bonus, and that the President's goals for Fiscal Year 2018 be approved.**

Trustee Seavoy said that the Board is happy to be able to award an incentive bonus that reflects the accomplishments over the past year which include the double digit increase in freshman enrollment, the new residence halls, which were funded in an innovative way, and the EAN that is bringing educational WiFi to the rural communities in the Upper Peninsula.

Trustee Holman said that he has had the opportunity to work with the President closely throughout the past year, and he is impressed with his energy, vision, and the hard work he puts in and implements, as well as his relationship with all of NMU's constituents – including faculty, students, and the community. He very much appreciates his hard work and accomplishments.

President Erickson thanked the Board.

#### **BYLAW REVISIONS**

The following action was taken by the Board:

**It was moved by Trustee Haveman, seconded by Trustee Mitchell, to amend sections 2.6.1 and 2.6.2 of the Board's Bylaws to shorten the notice period required for a person who desires to address the Board at a formal session from 14 days to 5**

**business days. Each Trustee was given a copy of the proposed amendments as required by Article XII of the Bylaws.**

Discussion followed:

Trustee Haveman said this will make it easier to speak to the Board while giving the University enough time to prepare for any special needs.

Trustee Mitchell stated that he thinks this a great idea. A board ought to be as transparent as possible, and that they should be able to listen to the people who are part of the university community. By moving the timeframe to 5 days instead of 14, we add to the transparency that is fundamental in any organization.

Being no further discussion, Chair Holman called the question and the following action was taken:

**The motion passed with eight (8) for and zero (0) against.**

### **AFSCME CONTRACT**

Trustee Fittante said that AFSCME group provides so much to the NMU campus – everything looks beautiful and the members of this group communicate with the students and assist them in many ways. The negotiation process was swift and the document being offered for the Board’s approval is aligned with the other bargaining units on campus.

The following action was taken:

**It was moved by Trustee Fittante, seconded by Trustee Mitchell, that the negotiated agreement between Northern Michigan University and Council No. 25 of the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employee’s Union (AFL-CIO) (AFSCME), Local 1094, covering the period October 1, 2017 through September 30, 2020, be approved.**

Discussion followed.

Trustee Mitchell said when you have a good culture in an organization you can see in the ability to get contracts settled, and settled quickly. He congratulated the President and the AFSCME group for the great work that they did.

President Erickson said that so many of the AFSCME employees are really front door employees to the university. They are folks that when we have events such as Wildcat Weekend coming up in a few weeks, they will be there welcoming, greeting, and supporting. We are delighted with the work that the AFSCME employees do for the campus and very appreciative of working through a contract, settling it, and participating in an enrollment bonus because their connection to what we do in enrollment is as important as all of our other employees.

Trustee Holman added his appreciation and congratulated the AFSCME employees, as well.

Trustee Popp said that he has been involved in many labor bargaining sessions and some not as smooth as that. He wanted to acknowledge NMU union leaders across the board. It's a tough job but the strong leaders manage it. He wanted to recognize this and use it as an opportunity for leadership for our university and our unions.

Being no further discussion, Chair Holman called the question and the following action was taken:

**The motion passed with eight (8) for and zero (0) against.**

**ACTION ON FORMAL RECOMMENDATIONS** (Addendum #5)

The following action was taken:

**It was moved by Trustee Seavoy, seconded by Trustee Popp, and supported by the full Board, to approve the Formal Recommendations.**

**ASNMU REPORT**

Mr. Connor Loftus, Vice President of the Associated Students of Northern Michigan University made the following report:

- Mr. Loftus thanked the Board and the President for the opportunity to speak at the meetings.
- Mr. Ruiz, President of ASNMU, is at ROTC training this week so is not available to speak today.
- Two new representatives have been added to ASNMU since the beginning of the year, both of which are lower classmen. This is important to ASNMU because it goes along with their recruiting strategy of getting younger members of the student body in the organization so the information can be passed down. Overall the ASNNU board is split 50/50 with upper and lower classmen.
- Projects for this year include revamping the bike share program, updating the university phone app, and opening the food pantry.
  - Bike Share Program – the budget was passed last night for much needed maintenance on the bikes. This program is one of the most popular programs so ASNMU wants to continue to support it to ensure it runs smoothly.
  - University Phone App – this is a new project. It's a tool that one of the representatives is looking at and reaching out to different people and groups across campus that can help upgrade it and be more in line with what other schools have to offer as an application.
  - Food Pantry – the committee has been working very hard and has made a lot of progress. The room is ready to go and they are looking at moving in and opening sometime during the fall semester, with a grand opening in the winter semester.
- A referendum for the student activity fee will be coming to the Board of Trustees for approval. In accordance with the ASNMU Constitution – every two years ASNMU looks at the student fee to see what groups get more or less or the same. This requires the Board of Trustees' approval once it's voted on by the student body.
- Indigenous Peoples Day Resolution – ASNMU was very disappointed as a campus community to see this item not on the agenda today. It would have served the campus

community very well to have this resolution passed prior to the second Monday of October when Indigenous Peoples Day is celebrated. They see a sorely missed opportunity to unify the campus community around a center that we pride very much on this campus. He stated the following: “We pride ourselves as innovators for the future at Northern. Our campus has a dedicated Center for Native American Studies, we are the first and only university in the State to host a Native American Studies major, and it is a foregone conclusion, at least in the campus community side, that passing the Indigenous Peoples Day resolution will have it. Passing the resolution stands to draw more potential Native American students interested in the area of study in this major program that we have to offer. This is also in line with the President’s recruiting strategy for Native American students, as well. This Resolution also provides a day in which the entire campus community can partake in a civil dialogue about a particularly important and under highlighted part of our country’s history; the outcome of which will create a campus-wide educational platform which is critical for the health of Northern as an institution of higher education. The Resolution stands as a way for the university to acknowledge and celebrate cultures that have faced severe adversity for 500+ years. It’s a time for Northern Michigan University to take a stand and acknowledge the history – the good, the bad, and the ugly. It doesn’t matter what the history is; it’s time to acknowledge it. Only if we take the stand do we have the chance to write our own piece of history. There are other schools across the State, including both of the universities within the U.P., who are looking to pass similar resolutions and we expect that to happen in a very short amount of time. I think it would be a great opportunity for Northern Michigan University to be a leader in that and take that resolution on board and pass it.”

Trustee Popp said that he has been thinking a lot about this. He and his fellow Trustees have read the Resolution and it’s an important topic for many reasons. He said he believes it is safe to say that this Board supports the fundamental concepts of:

- Celebrating indigenous peoples – we should. This is the Board that approved the first Native American Studies program, that approved having Dr. Marty Reinhardt be our Commencement Speaker, which was voted on by the students, and that you wouldn’t find bigger champions of that type of program than this group.
- Being the leader in Native American Studies, educating students, educating the community – the local community, the world community – on the complete history of Native Americans, of indigenous peoples. He said completely support that, and it’s something we need to do.
- Truly honoring the essence of inclusion, especially when there are opposing views. That’s what this is all about. It’s about Indigenous Peoples and it’s about inclusion; even when it’s painful to include an idea you disagree with.
- Protecting the rights and responsibilities with freedom of speech, freedom of expression. Trustee Popp said that that is also fundamental to this and that’s where his observation is – we want to be a leader in cultivating a campus where you can have debate – which Mr. Loftus also mentioned – how do you have disagreement, stand up for your beliefs, principles, and causes, and at the same time take the time to understand and honor the different and even opposing views.

Mr. Popp said he sees this as an opportunity for NMU to be a leader, to really be a leader. As this Board approved the first Native American Studies program and other things that go around

this, it is especially important that we are leaders in education of Native American Studies, of the history. And today, the Board modified the vision of NMU to include the words “inspires inclusion.” He said that this was on purpose; those just aren’t words to us. Sometimes people say a vision statement does not matter, well it does matter – that’s why we have one – to inspire inclusion. He stated that Northern does not have a celebration of Columbus Day though it has been a federal holiday since 1937. As he looks at the resolution and reads it, this is not ignoring the resolution. It’s very important that we recognize all that hard work that’s gone into this resolution, and yet he does not see this proposed resolution as inspiring inclusion. Thinking about the essence of inclusion he does not see the need for the Board to take an action that would preclude any of what they said before.

Trustee Holman said he agreed with Trustee Popp’s assessment.

Trustee Popp said that as mentioned, as leaders in Native America studies, it is clear that this Board supports the concept of celebrating indigenous peoples, educating our campus and the broader community, and encouraging more dialogue on our campus and broader community, and truly honoring, fostering, and inspiring inclusion. And as important as this topic is, he wanted to thank Mr. Loftus, Tristan, and everybody who has been involved in this topic for their leadership, passion, and hard work on this topic. He especially wanted to thank them for the approach – the approach up until now, the approach moving forward – in a way that will enable us to achieve that vision of inspiring inclusion. He said he is confident that we’ll do it, and then we can continue to be leaders.

Mr. Loftus said he “understands that there is a lot of hesitation around this specific date, but this date was chosen because it is in line with the Resolution, it’s what’s happening statewide and nationwide. He understands the hesitation that it seems like the finger is being pointed at Columbus and being pointed at Anglo European decent, which is not the case. Columbus has his place in history in the world, but when you look at the context of his history, the entire context, what he symbolizes is colonization of a land that was already colonized by people with a deep culture, much deeper than our own country’s culture. We have a long way to go and grow as a country and I think this is one of the important ways to do that. By picking what was traditionally known as Columbus Day, is important because we can then have that dialogue from each side. You mentioned that the State does not recognize Columbus Day, Northern Michigan University does not recognize Columbus Day, so in my mind I don’t understand why this day has any value for not putting this Indigenous Peoples Day on the second Monday of October. Tristan and I would love to have an informal dialogue with the Board to address any concerns and look at a way that we can move forward to recognize this on campus.”

Trustee Holman thanked Mr. Loftus for his remarks and how he articulated them very well.

### **PRESIDENT’S REPORT**

President Erickson reported on activities and accomplishments since the May meeting. He said that Northern has really had a great year and it is a direct result of all the great work of so many people, faculty, staff, and students. The level of engagement on campus is really at an all-time high. He said he enjoys coming to work every day when you get to work in that kind of an environment. There is just a buzz on campus which is a great thing to see. Whether it comes from the facilities that we’ve done and the innovation around that or the academic programs. He said he would like to see this buzz not only here in Marquette or across the Upper Peninsula, but

in Lansing. He said we are very much the “it” university across the State. We’re gearing up for a great weekend starting tonight with the Homecoming parade, and sports hall of Fame Induction, and the all alumni reception at the Landmark Inn. Tomorrow we have the football game, distinguished alumni event, tailgating, and the hospitality gala. There is a new Wildcat Willy coming also being introduced on Saturday. He thanked the Board for all they have done for him and his family.

Trustee Holman thanked the President for his report and congratulated him on a very successful year.

**ANNOUNCEMENT OF INFORMAL CLOSED SESSIONS TO BE HELD IN CONNECTION WITH THE THURSDAY – FRIDAY, DECEMBER 14 – 15, 2017 SESSIONS OF THE BOARD**

President Erickson made this announcement for the public record.

**BYLAWS REVISION**

Trustee Seavoy said that one item on the Bylaw revisions that were discussed earlier in the meeting was missed. She has asked that the Board eliminate the Nominating Committee in lieu of a procedure where the Board has a discussion during informal session and elect the Chair and Vice Chair just in accordance with the Bylaws.

The following action was taken:

**It was moved by Trustee Seavoy, seconded by Trustee Popp, and supported unanimously, to eliminate the Ad Hoc Nominating Committee in favor of a procedure that involves open discussion and voting for a Chair and Vice Chair at a formal meeting.**

**ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Holman adjourned the meeting at 9:56 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Cathy A. Niemi  
Secretary of the Board of Trustees