

**COLLEGE OF MICRONESIA-FSM BOARD OF REGENTS**  
**Minutes of the 21-22 November 2022**  
**Maite-Toto, Guam**

**Present:** Regent Suzanne Gallen from Pohnpei (chair); Regent Jesse Salalu from Yap (vice chairman); Regent Pelma J. Mingii representing the National Government (secretary/treasurer); Regent Tulensru Waguk, PhD, from Kosrae; Regent Jeffrey Arnold from Chuuk; and Interim President Emanuel “Manny” Mori (*ex officio member*)

**Absent:** Vice President of Administrative Services Joseph Habuchmai (fell ill during APAFS in the Philippines).

**Resources:** A/g Vice President of Instructional Affairs, Ms. Jennifer Helieisar; Vice President of Enrollment, Management and Student Services Mr. Joey Oducado; Dean of Chuuk Campus Mr. Kind Kanto, A/g Dean of Career and Technical Education Center Ms. Phyllis Silbanuz; Dean of Yap Campus Ms. Lourdes Roboman; Dean of FSM Fisheries & Maritime Institute (FMI, Yap) Mr. Tioti Teburea; Director of Cooperative Research and Extension Mr. Steven Young-Uhk; and Comptroller Ms. Roselle Togonon

**1. CALL TO ORDER: 3:30pm on Monday, 21 November**

Chair Gallen called the meeting to order and requested a moment of silence.

**2. READING OF MISSION STATEMENT**

Recited by all.

**3. ROLL CALL**

Called by Regent Mingii. Regents Gallen, Salalu, Waguk and Arnold present; a quorum was declared.

**4. ELECTION OF OFFICERS:**

Regent Mingii moved to postpone item #4 to the *Executive Session*. Seconded by Regent Dr. Waguk. Since the “Reflection Meeting” slated for Sunday, 19 November, was cancelled due to the delay of board members, executive members and IP Mori out of the P.I., it has been decided to move this item until further deliberation. **CARRIED.**

**5. REVIEW OF AGENDA**

Regent Dr. Waguk moved to postpone this item along with item #4 since there is a long and full agenda ahead. **CARRIED.**

6. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES** (September 9, 2022 Meeting)

Regent Dr. Waguk moved to suspend item #6 to the *Executive Session* the next day due to the lack of time to carefully review it. **CARRIED.**

7. **COMMUNICATIONS**

1 communication from the Office of the FSM President H.E. David W. Panuelo. An administrative directive for:

- The establishment of the Digital FSM Office as the new name of the former ICT unit under the FSM TC & I. President nominated Mr. Edward Albert as the head of, or Director.

8. **REGENTS REPORTS**

- a. **Regent Dr. Waguk** reported that this year is election year for Kosrae. The election is not completed yet and it is possible there will be a run-off for the Lt. Governor seat; and the establishment of a new cabinet for the victorious party is still underway. Regent Waguk also reported that schools have resumed normal schedules after being on virtual mode. Due to shortage of teachers (specifically Math and Science subjects), this school year has been very difficult for Kosrae. Dean Mike Nena is unwell, was admitted into the hospital and recently discharged, but the status of his health is still unclear.
- b. **Regent Mingii** said there is not that much to report, however she brought up three issues, which were: Frozen Salary, Retirement Plan and Direct Deposit.  
*Frozen Salary:* How many employees have had their salaries frozen and for how long? Regent Mingii asked that there be a table or an analysis prepared so that the Board can see what can be done to assist these employees.  
*Retirement Plan:* (Has been) A request from the Board to see how the College employee share can be increased from the existing 3%. Considered as a benefit; the Board is trying to see if this can be increased.  
*Direct Deposit:* It is not an issue anymore since the Comptroller shared that effective 1 January 2023, all employees will be paid through direct deposit.
- c. **Chairwoman Gallen** expressed her concern of a COVID-19 spike during the holiday season. The state is also experiencing a widespread of the flu. On a brighter note, the State just opened a new wing of the Pohnpei State Hospital, funded by Congress. Touched on the possibility of the College opening up a new clinic on campus not just for the College but also for members of the community to alleviate the hospital, as well as provide immediate help for people living in the outskirts of town. Chairwoman Gallen also shared the great news of the PICS Robotics team doing an excellent job in Switzerland. She acknowledged the presence of JEMCO which means the Compact renegotiations are in motion; special elections for the replacement of the late Lt. Governor Perman, and the onset of the Congressional elections already in full-swing.

- d. **Regent Arnold** reported that the 2022 Sports Games in Chuuk are still ongoing to promote health and discipline among the youth. It is also used as a tool to foster cooperation and collaboration among the communities. Chuuk is gradually opening its doors to all the sister states post-COVID-19, but still very much requires incoming travelers to be fully vaccinated. Chuuk is also awaiting a courtesy call by the IP and the BOR Chair (or designee) to inspect the College's permanent site, among other issues to discuss pertaining to the Chuuk Campus.
- e. **Regent Salalu** reported on the hectic months he has had leading up to the current Leadership election in Yap. The event was currently concluded and the State is now awaiting the official announcement of the newly-elect members of the government.

## 9. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

- a. Interim President reported on the areas that, in his opinion, the College can improve on: **Finance** and **Strategic Plan**. He encouraged everyone to be "forward looking" but overall, the College is going in the right direction. There seems to be a balance in the FY 2023-24 Budgets and Financial Statements. IP Mori also reported on the need to outsource for RFP for the Strategic Plan and then in-house the rest of the work. He also suggested that there should be restrictions to the Endowment Fund so that the College could use the fund from "operations". IP also briefly mentioned the Compact, which is still has its "sticky" components i.e., *Post Office* and *Search and Rescue*; and continued to add that AmeriCorp is not a disruptive issue to the ongoing negotiations – the College should not worry about it.
- b. **Financial Status Report:** Comptroller Togonon reported that there has been a 5% increase in the Endowment Fund (\$390K) due to unrealized market gain as of October 2022. Cash Reserves also increased by 2% (\$67K) due to unrealized market gain. Total Investments increased by 4% (\$457K) due to unrealized market gain. The Comptroller also reported that the \$1million shortfall for FY2023 will be addressed by requesting funds from the Fund Balance, re-assessment of projected revenues and additional funding from the National Government. Comptroller further reported on the ongoing process to establish a Student Services Center at the National Campus. It is projected to be completed in December 2023. Still no progress to report on the Chuuk Campus due to land issues. Kosrae Campus has no funding, so no progress to report; and Yap Campus will receive funding from JICA. Through the CARES Act grant, minor assets were procured. \$667,000 of this grant will be invested in FY2023.
  - i. Maternity Leave is still ongoing because data is still being collected. Same as annual leave. Employees are encouraged to take leave.
  - ii. Frozen salaries issue is still ongoing due to insufficient salary comparison.

- iii. Retirement Plan has increased from 3% to 4%
  - iv. Remote Working is still in review mode by the HRO.
  - v. Mental Health Care – take 1 day off to address mental health.
  - vi. Direct Deposit payroll will be implemented in January 2023, and will change from Friday to Wednesday.
  - vii. Financial Status Report is usually reported on by Richie “RJ” Valencia
    - 1. A budget of \$11.3million is approved
      - Net investment loss of \$20million
      - \$30million gained in Pandemic fund
- c. **VPEMSS** Oducado reported on the increase of full-time enrolled students at the National Campus. There has been a 16% increase since the pandemic (due to the availability of online courses). He estimated a total of 205 students to graduate in December 2022; and the College receiving about \$3.1million from Pell Grant.
- d. **A/g VPIA** Helieisar reported on the updates with accreditation. She has been in constant communication with ACCJC Liaison Staff over ISER. VPIA also mentioned that the Annual Fiscal Report was submitted on 21 September; and that between today and December, she will be receiving the *Core inquiries Report*.
- e. **Dean Kanto of Chuuk Campus** reported that school continued throughout the pandemic. 100% procurement of Pell Grant came from enrolled students. Mid-term deficiency: challenge of online mode of learning/teaching. The Dean also brought up the Campus’ lease agreement, which will be \$104,000/year beginning 2023.
- f. **A/g Dean Silbanuz of CTEC** reported that the Hotel Management & Tourism building held its soft opening on 10 November – fully opening on 24 November. CTEC has more than 2% mid-term deficiency rate, the same as Chuuk Campus.
- g. **Dean Robomon of Yap Campus** reported that, like the Chuuk Campus, school continued. The Campus was on a 3-week online class mode, but returned to Face-to-Face soon after. The enrollment increased because of the virtual classes; the Student Body Association (SBA) officers are all females; and the generator project will soon to be completed. Dean Roboman said that there is still much work needing to be done where *student services* is concerned.
- h. **Dean Teburea of Yap-FMI Campus** reported that the Japan International Corporation Agency (JICA) will fund the Master Class that was to be reinstated in December, after the outer islands are fully vaccinated. Dean also shared that the World Coconut Day was celebrated on campus. The ship used for the Master Class, which enables the students to complete their studies at the FMI, is currently decommissioned, rendering insufficient *sea time* for the students. Dean has reached out to the Marianas Maritime to do a complete round-trip for students to meet this essential requirement.

- i. **Director Young-Uhk of CRE** reported that CRE continues to extend programs to elementary and high schools to supplement/support their instructional programs in agriculture and food sciences, including vegetable gardening, aquaculture, food and water safety, health and nutrition, and climate change. CRE implements seven main extension programs to address the needs of the communities and audience.

## 10. OLD BUSINESS

- a. Presidential Search. Chairwoman Gallen announced that a Search Committee was formed. After many meetings and deliberations/discussions, it has been that Dr. Theresa Koroivulaono will be the next president of COMFSM. Dr. Koroivulaono is expected to start in February 2023.

## 11. NEW BUSINESS

- a. FY2024 Operations Budget- The proposed budget by Comptroller for FY2024 was approved. **CARRIED**
- b. FY2024 FSM-FMI Budget- \$1.08million prepared and proposed by Dean Teburea, a 12% increase from the FY2023 budget, was approved. **CARRIED**
- c. FY2024 Auxiliary Enterprise Budget
  - i. Bookstore: Proposed budget of \$131,491, a 6% increase from the FY2023 budget was approved. **CARRIED**
  - ii. Dining Hall: Proposed budget of \$261,399, a 5% increase from FY2023 budget was approved. **CARRIED**
- d. FY2024 Board of Regents Budget- The same proposal of \$120,000, but is open for adjustments, or an increase due to inflation, most especially *Travel*. Regent Arnold moved to discuss further. Regent Dr. Waguk proposed to increase it to \$150,000 and it was approved. A breakdown will be shared shortly. **CARRIED**
- e. FY2024 Supplement Education Grant (SEG) Budget- Proposed to keep the same amount at \$689,948 and was approved. **CARRIED**
- f. Review and Approval of Policies, Chapter 1 (Board of Regents)- *Board Policy no. 1440-Investment Policy* and *Board Policy no. 1450-on Endowment Fund* are repetitive and redundant. It was proposed to have the two policies merge into one. Regent Dr. Waguk moved for further discussion and clarification. Regent Dr. Waguk motion to table the proposal until the updated language has been presented. **TABLED**
- g. Review and Approval of Policy, Chapter 3 (Instructional Affairs) – *Board Policy no. 3105-Student TOEFL Scores*. A/g VPIA moved to keep the policy ‘as is’, as it was just recently reviewed. **CARRIED**

**12. EXECUTIVE SESSION** (items to officialize)

- a. Micronesia Regional College Boards
  - i. Community colleges invited were College of the Marshall Islands, CNMI Community College, Palau Community College and Guam Community College.
  - ii. Conference slated for **9-10 December** in the FSM, at the COM-FSM National Campus.
- b. Succession Planning – update the existing plan and further look into the Human Resources Office.
- c. Approval of minutes from the September 9<sup>th</sup> BOR meeting was motioned by Regent Dr. Waguk to pass ‘as is’ but BOR will revisit it in case of errors, etc.
- d. Election of Officers (BOR) - Regent Dr. Waguk nominated current Chairwoman Suzanne Gallen to remain Chair, Regent Arnold as Vice-Chair and Regent Mingii as Secretary/Treasurer of the COMFSM Board. None opposed.

**13. MISCELLANEOUS** – None

**14. NEXT MEETING-** to meet in Chuuk in March 2023. Dates to be later confirmed. None opposed. **CARRIED.**