

COLLEGE OF MICRONESIA-FSM BOARD OF REGENTS
Minutes of the 13 April 2023
Weno, Chuuk State

Present: Regent Suzanne Gallen from Pohnpei (Chair); Regent Jeffrey Arnold from Chuuk (Vice Chairman); Regent Tulensru Waguk (PhD) from Kosrae, (Member); Regent Geraldine Mitagyow from Yap ((Member) via Zoom); and President Dr. Theresa Koroivulaono (*ex officio member*)

Absent: Regent Pelma J. Mingii representing the National Government, Secretary/Treasurer on medical leave.

Resources: Vice President of Administrative Services, Mr. Joseph Habuchmai, Vice President of Instructional Affairs, Ms. Delihna Ehmes; Vice President of Enrollment, Management and Student Services Mr. Joey Oducado; A/g Vice President of Instructional Effectiveness and Quality Assurance, Ms. Jennifer H. Helieisar, A/g Vice President of Cooperative Research & Extension, Mr. Steven Young-Uhk, Dean of Chuuk Campus Mr. Kind Kanto, A/g Dean of Kosrae Campus, George Tilfas, 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 (via Zoom); Director of Faculty & Maintenance, Mr. Francisco Mendiola; Comptroller Ms. Roselle Togonon; and Executive Assistant to the BOR and President, Mrs. Lisa N. Dereas.

Additional Resources: Amanda Gima and Jason Miyashita of Raymond James.

1. CALL TO ORDER: 10am on Thursday, 13 April 2023

Chairwoman 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 Chairwoman. Regents Arnold, Waguk and Mitagyow are present; a quorum was declared. Prior to adopting the agenda, Chairwoman apologized, on behalf of the Board and the Business Office, to Regent Mitagyow for the communication breakdown warranting her not to attend the meeting in person. She also welcomed Dr. Theresa to her first visit to Chuuk, and those who attended and traveled far to be present.

4. REVIEW OF AGENDA

Regent Arnold motioned to approve the Agenda. Regent Waguk seconded. Motion was **CARRIED**.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES (22 November 2022)

Regent Waguk moved to adopt the minutes. Vice-Chair second the motion and it was **CARRIED**.

6. COMMUNICATIONS

- No pressing communications shared with the Office of the President.

7. REGENTS REPORTS

- Regent Dr. Waguk** shared that his nomination to the Director of the Dept. of Education was finally confirmed by the Kosrae State Legislature. Reported that a leadership conference was held in Kosrae to discuss issues with regards to education. Issues such as, shortage of teachers, low performances of students, and staff moving away “for greener pastures”. He also reported that school accreditations were completed the week prior.
- Vice-Chair Arnold** reported that the House of Representative just had their election. It is campaign season in Chuuk. He has visited the Governor’s office, Legislature, Land Commission, and the Court House (also the campus) to gather more information on the land access issue. Unfortunately, he still has not retrieved original copies of the land deed(s); and wished for more time to keep working on this particular issue as it contained a lot of discrepancies and now involved more than one (1) land owner. This issue requires a cultural approach where land ownership is concerned. The good news is, a plot of land is available to be utilized for other useful purposes, such as farming. The College will continue to pursue the access.
- Chairwoman Gallen** reported that Pohnpei has been very busy since the borders have re-opened. It is a good time, economy-wise, for us. Some other good news: a new ADB office recently opened, as well as the opening of a new WB office. Several visits have happened too i.e. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, studying the water resources here in the F.S.M. The U.S. EPA also recertified the Pohnpei State EPA lab, which is beneficial to the assessment of the rivers, streams and ocean. Peacecorp also visited the National Government assessing the possibility of coming back to the F.S.M. to offer assistance where education is concerned (English and Math subjects). Another added benefit for students. Pohnpei State continued its annual Student Take-over Day. A successful program that encouraged the youth to become ambitious future leaders. Pohnpei State

also hosted the current Micronesian Islands Forum (MIF) in February, again opening more doors for partnerships, especially where the College is concerned. At the MIF, Chairwoman reported that the COM Land Grant will be extending its treaty for another 10 (ten) years. Transitioning to the National Government: some seats were forcibly vacated after the elections in March. Fortunately, Education was not one of it because it would greatly affect the College's subsidies received from the Congress. Chairwoman also reported on the success of the 30th Anniversary Dinner fundraiser, which raised more money for the Endowment Fund. There was also the Founding Day event and a couple of ground breaking ceremonies that recently took place at the National Campus. Pohnpei State has a new AG who is a champion for human rights. Something that the College can tap into in terms of UNICEF collaborations and the like. Lastly, New Zealand is re-establishing its scholarship program in the F.S.M. something that COM's students may want to apply for and come back to contribute to the College's nation building efforts.

- d. **Regent Mitagyow** does not have much to report being a very new member of the Board. She did report that she met with Dean Lourdes at the Yap Campus and her staff in her capacity as an employee of SBDC.

8. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

- a. Dr. Theresa prefaced the presentation with the introduction of a newer way of presenting reports by the Senior Leadership Team (formerly Cabinet) using PowerPoint slide presentations. She also reported on the meetings that she has participated in since her first day of work. Some of these meetings include a courtesy call with some members of the BOR on FSM President David W. Panuelo; Micronesian Presidents' Summit (MPS); MIF; Land Grant Board; FACCSO (FSM Association of Chief State School Officers); SEEP (Skill Enhancement & Employability Project); and PPEC (Pacific Post-secondary Education Council). Dr. Theresa briefly addressed what the respective meetings and conferences entail and how they benefit the College, especially PPEC, FACCSO and SEEP. She also reported on the events that successfully took place at the College i.e., the Accreditation Fair, which should be shared across the four campuses. The VPIA has officially assumed her new position as of last week. The VPIE&QA, a very important position, was also reinstated with Jennifer Helieisar as acting. The Director of CRE position is awaiting to be upgraded back up to VPCRE, which is currently occupied by Steven Young-Uhk. Dr. Theresa went on to report the one-off COLA payment distributed in early April. This one-time payment was meant to assist especially those whose salaries have been frozen for many years. Tying into this and to address the "hemorrhaging" of employees,

an RFP for Personnel Audit is underway. Dr. Theresa also reported on the “Works in Progress” which include a mentor contract for VPIA & VPIEQA; a contract for Board training; Strategic Plan Development; a plan for the Board and the President to request a \$1million increase in the Government subsidy relating to the Personnel Audit; secure PeopleAdmin as the online platform for talent search, management and hiring; and a performance evaluation component. Based on 300 employees, the cost is \$43K/annum.

- b. **Financial Status Report:** Comptroller Togonon reported that there has been a 26% increase in the Endowment Fund (\$2.240m) due to unrealized market gain of 14% (or \$1.165m) and an additional investment of \$1.075m, as of 31 March 2023. Cash Reserves also increased by 9% (\$283K) due to unrealized market gain. Total Investments increased by 22% (\$2.523m) due to unrealized market gain. The Cash in Bank balance as of 10 April 2023 is:
- i. Bank of Guam: \$3.736million
 - ii. Bank of the FSM: \$3.137million
- Total: \$6.873million

The financial status, as of 31 March, the budget balance is at 47% (\$5.6m).

The Comptroller also discussed ASC or the retirement plan, and the possible increase from 3% to 5%. This will be tabled until the next Board meeting in May as it has not gone through the proper channel – the SLT – for finalization.

The other item is the College Credit Card – the BOR to decide if it will be returned to the Office of the President (OTP). As per policy, it should be with the OTP.

- c. **VPEMSS** Oducado reported on the steady enrollment of students, with over 1,500 enrolled as full-time. Since the pandemic there has been a steady rise in enrollment. The registrar’s office reported to VPEMSS that the Yap and National campuses surpassed the Spring 2023 enrollment target in both headcounts and registered credits. He also reported that the College was awarded \$3.210million in Pell Grant to 1,040 students who are enrolled this Spring. VPEMSS also reported on the COMET, which resulted in 77% of the 938 seniors to be placed in the College’s degree ACE and Certificate programs. VPEMSS reported that there will be collaboration with IC for more attractive courses for the recruitment of more students. The month of March hosted several activities which the students participated, such as an on campus Community Service (mini trash-a-thon), Movie Night and the COM-FSM Annual Fun Walk.
- d. **VPIA** Ehmes reported on the highlights of her department which included faculty development workshops that were held at all the campuses on 4 April. The

second year cadets at the FMI campus were dispatched for a 2-week sea-time in order to satisfy their course requirements. IA and EMSS offices working together to accommodate incoming freshmen for Summer 2023. VPIA also reported on the possibility of grant opportunities for Pre-service in Associate of Science (AS) Early Childhood Complementary Special Needs. She also provided an overview of the Summer 2023 course scheduling – courses offered system-wide by full-time faculty members. As reported by the Dean of Academic Programs to the VPIA, Course Outlines were reviewed and updated and will continue to be updated through collaborative work with the IC and Curriculum committee. VPIA continued to report on the challenges the department faced with regards to faculty vacancies, the need to have consistent SLOs reporting and improvement plans; the need to have an assessment office to review and provide for PRs; bring faculty members to competency level for online courses; establishing a systematic way of course-scheduling that can guide decision-making, allocation of resources, including personnel, finances and services; and difficulty in hiring due to “a very unrealistic pay-scale”.

- e. **VPAS** Habuchmai started by informing the Board that as of 15 January the College submitted the FY2023 Budget to the (FSM) President’s office with copies to the FSM Speaker and Budget Office. He touched upon the Accreditation Carnival, the completion of the ISERS and his part in the Core Inquiry 3&5 during the Accreditation Week last month. Reporting on behalf of the HRO, VPAS provided the number of retained and full-time personnel as of November 2022, which is 341 (94%), while the Attrition Rate is at 6% (or 23 in total). There are about 58% males employed at the College, 42% females with 82% being FSM citizens and 18% non-FSM citizens. Reporting on behalf of the Facilities & Maintenance Office, VPAS updated the Board on the CTEC Multi-technical building that is still under construction. At the beginning of this month, there were two groundbreaking ceremonies for the National Campus’ Teaching Clinic and Student Center. There were other developments, such as the Chuuk Campus site, which Vice-Chair already elaborated on. Additionally, VPAS reported on various projects that were funded by the CARES Act, such as the: National Campus perimeter fencing project; Yap Campus onsite electrical distribution system with backup generator; Kosrae Campus perimeter fencing project; Kosrae onsite electrical distribution system with backup generator; CTEC perimeter fencing, AC unit replacement; and new shuttle bus.

Note: Director Mendiola clarified that the Yap – FSM-FMI classrooms and dormitory projects are funded by a \$3.1m grant given by Japan.

- f. **A/g VPIEQA** Helieisar briefly talked about the Accreditation Carnival which served a very useful purpose of familiarizing Faculty, Staff and students with the accreditation process and the ACCJC Standards. She also summarized the Accreditation Team visit on 13-17 March which resulted in both Commendations and Recommendations (for improvement).
- i. Commendations: Significant Strength – Support for diverse personnel, professional development and incentive programs, support growth and development for staff, employees and family members. Strategic use of funding sources and financial resources support the response to student needs in a changing environment. Exemplary practice of outcomes assessment across six campuses in four states.
 - ii. Recommendations for improvement: Strengthen integration of short and long-term plans for allocation of human, physical, technological, and financial resources to meet student needs in a post-pandemic world. Improve its practices and systems for personnel evaluation and management as stated in the President’s work plan and other plans.
- g. **A/g VPCRE** Young-Uhk reported review of the COM Land Grant office operations to help the CRE components of the three partner colleges better align their needs for improved support and collaboration. He also reported on the extended Land Grant Treaty with the three Micronesian countries – FSM, RMI and Palau. VPCRE further informed the Board of meetings held between the months of February and March which included CRE’s collaboration with GCF/MCT on the *SAP2020: Climate Resilient Food Security for Farming Households Across the FSM* project. VPCRE reported that he updated the Organizational chart for CRE, completed requests for recruiting additional four (4) aquaculture extension agents, and four (4) aquaculture researchers for the four state CRE sites.
- h. **Dean Kanto of Chuuk** reported on the dual enrollment being a service offered at the Chuuk Campus. Currently, there are eight (8) dual-enrollees who are being assisted by the CDOE. He expressed a grave concern about the COMET if it is at all in line with the high school curriculums. Suggested that this be looked into further, make sure it is aligned with the COMET so when come the entrance test, students are interested and ready to take it. But it has to be materials learned in the classrooms, not something completely different from what is taught. Dean Kanto also shared that some students struggle with online learning because most of them live off-island (commuters), or come from schools where easy access to computers is difficult, or even non-existent. However difficult, Dean and his Faculty and Staff members have taken some efforts to assist each other and their students. Dean also highlighted the 11 students, out of 12, who passed the Teacher Certification Exam (TCE).

- i. **Dean Tilfas of Kosrae** shared the graduation date for Kosrae Campus, which is 16 May 2023. There will be about 16 graduates. And also that the hydroponic greenhouse will be dedicated next week on 19 April.
- j. **Dean Silbanuz of CTEC** informed the Board that she has shared her report with the VPIA during their meeting the night before. Dean has nothing else to add since VPIA has already shared most of what was discussed at the meeting.
- k. **Dean Roboman of Yap** reported that this academic year Yap campus is very fortunate to have a very active SBA that is involved both on and off campus, especially the youth. Dean reported too on the activities on campus the week before, such as Founding Day, Faculty Professional Day and Faculty & Staff Day. Team Building Day being the most highlighted activity since it is not often done.
- l. **Dean Teburea of Yap FMI Campus** No report to add.
- m. **Raymond James update:** Amanda updated BOR on the Performance Report as of 31 March 2023. A lot of recessions happening beginning last year. There will be some recession this year, but very mild compared to 2022. Hopefully, as the year progresses, there will be less “Volatility”. Bond Market is doing really well this year too. Inflation is starting to be under control. Interest rates will slowly go down, and it will show in a lot of people reinvesting and borrowing. Equities are expected to go higher. There is still some growth in the bond and equity portions of the College’s portfolio.

9. OLD BUSINESS - NONE

10. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Review of Board Policies – to be moved to the Executive Committee session.
- b. Next Board meeting – 2nd week of June. To be discussed at the EC session.

11. EXECUTIVE SESSION (items to officialize)

I. Review of Board Policies

- a. Chapter 1: Review of Board of Regents Policies
 - i. BP No. 1350 – Baccalaureate Programs: **To be revised**

b. Chapter 3: Review of Instructional Affairs Policies

- i. BP No. 3116 – Academic Honesty: **Leave as is.**
- ii. BP No. 3117 – Withdrawal for Students for Absences: **To be revised**
- iii. BP No. 3118 – Credit Load and Credit Overload: **Leave as is.**
- iv. BP No. 3119 – Credits: **Leave as is.**

c. Chapter 4: Review of Student Services Policies

- i. BP No. 4902 – Student Clubs and Organizations: **To be revised**
- ii. BP No. 4907 – Deadly Weapons and Dangerous Devices: **To be revised**
- iii. BP No. 4909 – Violence and Threats of Violence, Including Accessory to Violence: **To be revised**
- iv. BP No. 4908 – Threat of Violence: **To be deleted and included under BP No. 4909**
- v. BP No. 4910 – Being an Accessory to Violence: **To be deleted and included under BP No. 4909**
- vi. BP No. 4911 – Use of Banned Weapon with Any Other Forms of Violence: **To be deleted and included under BP No. 4907 & BP No. 4909.**
- vii. BP No. 4912 – Use of Alcohol in the Commission of the Act of Violence: **To be deleted and included under BP No. 4909.**

d. Chapter 5: Review of Fiscal Policies

- i. BP No. 5102: **To be revised and renumbered to BP No. 5005**
- ii. BP No. 5103: **To be renumbered to BP No. 5006**
- iii. BP No. 5104: **To be revised and renumbered to BP No. 5007**

The Board approved all proposed revisions, amendments and deletions of the outlined Board Policies.

II. Personnel Audit RFP – **Approved**

III. Recruitment of Dr. David Newnham to conduct Board training during the next Board meeting. A contract should be drafted and shared with the Board prior to finalization.

12. MISCELLANEOUS – None.

13. NEXT MEETING- The next Board meeting has been decided to take place the second week of June, **12-17 June 2023**, in Kosrae State. There will be a Board training in the interim, hence why the whole week is necessary.

14. ACTION ITEMS:

I. Comptroller to:

- a) ensure the retirement plan goes through the proper channels i.e. Finance Management Team and SLT prior to presenting it to the Board at the next meeting;
- b) finalize recommended Board of Regents Budget and share it;
- c) return the bank credit back to the Office of the President, as well as find and review the policy regarding the use of the bank CC.