

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF REGENTS  
NEW MEXICO STATE UNIVERSITY  
November 17, 2008

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

The Board of Regents of New Mexico State University met in the Regents Room of the Educational Services Center on the main campus in Las Cruces, New Mexico, on Monday, November 17, 2008. Chair Gallagher called the special meeting to order at 2:05 p.m.

Regents Present	Mr. Bob Gallagher, Chair Mr. Blake Curtis, Vice Chair Mr. M. Steven Anaya, Secretary/Treasurer Ms. Laura Conniff, Member Mr. Ed Kellum, Member
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Ex-officio Regents Present	Dr. Joe Pfeiffer Mr. Justin O'Connell
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Interim President	Dr. Waded Cruzado
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Interim Executive Vice President/Provost	Dr. Robert Moulton
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Regents Chief of Staff	Dr. Pat Williams
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2. **INTRODUCTIONS**

- (a) Introduction of Press, Elected Officials, and Others by Maureen Howard, Associate Vice President for University Communications and Marketing Services

Associate Vice President Howard introduced Evan Woodward from KRWG-FM.

3. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Regent Conniff moved, seconded by Regent Curtis, to approve the agenda as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

4. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

No one signed up for public comment.

## 5. ACTION ITEMS

### (a) Presidential Search

Regent Gallagher gave an update on the presidential search. The search started in July 2008 with the selection of the search firm R.W. Funk and Associates in Dallas, TX. For two months the firm advertised the job opening. In late August, a 25 member search committee was formed made up of staff, faculty, students, alumni, and supporters of the university. Out of approximately 1,000 applicants there were 43 active candidates. From the active candidates, the search committee chose twelve, and through further elimination, eight. Those eight were interviewed at an off-site location during the weekend of October 12-13. The committee's intention was to recommend the top five choices to the Board of Regents and to bring the candidates to the NMSU campus for interviews. Immediately after the off-site interviews, three of the candidates withdrew from the search. The search consultant completed the background investigations on the remaining candidates and began to set up the on-campus interviews. Between travel schedules and other problems, the interviews were delayed once or twice and other candidates withdrew. One of them was named an acting president of a major university and the others had various reasons, but there was one universal reason. That reason being New Mexico state law that requires the university to publicly identify five candidates no less than 21 days and no more than 30 days before the selection. The candidates manifested concerns. There were four sitting presidents and eight provosts in the final 12. In the final five, there were three sitting presidents. The concern was that, if any of these did not get the job, they would go back to their campuses and not have a job. NMSU ended up with no candidates as of early November. The search committee met on November 7 and was asked if they wanted to go back to the other 35 candidates and select some for off-site interviews. The search committee voted unanimously "no." They felt the candidates they selected were the highest qualified and they did not believe the others would meet the qualifications of those selected. The search committee recommended to the Board that the remaining 35 candidates not be reviewed. Chair Gallagher stated that the Board of Regents would study the state law requirements and evaluate future steps.

Regent Gallagher asked for a discussion about potential options and stated that if the Board wanted to take some kind of action, they could.

Regent Anaya indicated there were two options: either identify five candidates and make their names public, or suspend the search process, because it did not produce the results they were looking for.

Regent Gallagher said that if the Board decided not to continue with the search with the remaining 35 active candidates, the Board needed to have an official vote ending the search. Once this was done, the statutory requirements will have been met. Regent Gallagher suggested that, since three of the five seats on the Board are up for appointments at the end of the year, a new search might wait for future Board appointments.

Regent Gallagher explained why the interim president was not included in the search. When asked to take on the position of interim president, Dr. Waded Cruzado had informed the Board that she was not interested in applying for the position of president. Chair Gallagher

stated that, had there been an interest on her part initially, an exception to the Regents' policy could have been made, as it was done five years ago, allowing the interim president to apply for the position. While the current interim president is now indicating an interest in the position, the process is set and the integrity of the university and the search process would be damaged greatly if she were allowed to apply.

Regent Curtis moved, seconded by Regent Kellum, to end the search for a new President for New Mexico State University and under discussion, make some comments.

Regent Curtis indicated a sense of frustration regarding the search because so many people worked so hard to bring a good list of people to NMSU. In his view, the search committee had had an excellent opportunity to select and choose a president from a wonderful slate of candidates. The state law of having five names submitted was hampering an otherwise excellent search. In his opinion, a new search at this point would be futile because of the environment. Possible candidates would not apply because of the past history surrounding the present search.

Regent Anaya commended Dr. Cruzado's work as interim president and said he hoped she would formally put in her name as a candidate if there is a new search.

Regent Conniff commended the search committee, stating that the committee's recommendation to suspend the search made the Board's decision easier.

Chair Gallagher concluded the discussion by stating that he was confident that NMSU is in good hands with Dr. Cruzado as interim president, and that he was sure she would represent NMSU well at the upcoming Legislative Session.

The motion carried unanimously.

Regent Gallagher indicated that it would be appropriate to address, at some point, the contractual agreement between the Board and Waded Cruzado concerning the interim president's position which goes through July 31, 2009.

**6. OTHER**

**7. ADJOURNMENT**

Regent Gallagher adjourned the meeting at 2:28 p.m.

Minutes recorded by Socorro Saenz-Lobato.

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Robert M. Gallagher, Chair  
Board of Regents

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M. Steven Anaya, Secretary/Treasurer  
Board of Regents