



Board of Regents Special Meeting Minutes January 27, 2020

Members Present

Chairperson Kathryn Relang
Regent Julia Alfred
Regent Marie Maddison
Student Regent Alma Capelle

Vice Chairman Sultan Korean
Regent Helmer Lang
Regent Joseph Bigler

Regent Patrick Chen
Regent Jelton Anjain
Regent Alexander Pinano

Apologies:

Regent Benjamin Chutaro

CMI employees in attendance:

Theresa Koroivulaono, CMI President
Agnes Kotoisuva, Director Human Resources Department
Kelly Sebastian, Acting Executive Secretary for the College of the Marshall Islands' Board of Regents (ESBOR)

The meeting was called to order @ 9:10 AM

Agenda Items

1. Opening prayer & Roll call and call to order
2. Welcome (Chairperson)
3. Approval of the Agenda
4. Report from the Presidential Search Committee (PSC)
5. BOR discussion on the PSC Report
6. VOTE for the new CMI President
7. Announcement Plan
 - Contact the successful candidate;
 - Contact the unsuccessful appointable candidate with communication that preserves his/her relationship with the College
 - The College;
 - The Journal;
 - Website;
 - RMI President;
 - Minister of Education, Sport & Training;
 - PPEC;
 - ACCJC;
 - Other stakeholders?



8. Other matters
9. Adjournment

Minutes

1. OPENING PRAYER, ROLL CALL AND CALL TO ORDER

- Chair Relang asked Regent Lang to open the BOR meeting with a prayer, then called the meeting to order at 9:10 am.

2. WELCOME (CHAIRPERSON)

- Happy New Year everyone.
- This is our first meeting since the new year, "welcome."
- This is a special meeting to discuss and appoint the new president of the College.

3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

- Regent Chen moved to approve the January 27, 2020 BOR special meeting Agenda. Regent Anjain seconded the motion. All approved.

4. REPORT FROM THE PRESIDENTIAL SEARCH COMMITTEE (PSC)

- PSC members:
 - Kathryn Relang, Chair, Board of Regents and PSC
 - Ben Chutaro, Regent
 - Sultan Korean, Vice Chair, Board of Regents
 - Kino Kabua, Community Representative
 - Elizabeth Switaj, Administrative Representative
 - Moarieta Ientaake, Employee Representative
 - Ruthy Maun, Employee Representative
 - Ricky Bokadrik, Student Representative
- The Search Committee made its recommendations to the Board: Dr. Irene Taafaki is recommended as the new CMI President and William Reiher was a very close second.
 - This is a recommendation, the Board will make the final decision.
- The Presidential Search Committee commenced its search process on July 30th, 2019. The company Stanton Chase (in Australia) was engaged to undertake a search for potential candidates for the position of President.
- By the end of October 2019, the company sent the list of those that applied and the shortlisted candidates. The PSC received six potential candidates.
- End of November 2019: the Search Committee then conducted a zoom meeting with five of the candidates. The sixth one could not be reached, so there was no further consideration of this candidate.



- From the zoom meeting the Search Committee then shortlisted the list to three candidates with Dr. Rafe Edward Trickey, Mr. William Reiher and Dr. Irene Taafaki as the three finalists.
- The candidates came to CMI where we conducted face to face meetings with them.
- The PSC reconvened on Friday January 24th, 2020 and made the decision that Dr. Irene Taafaki and William Reiher would be recommended to the Board. Dr. Rafe Edward Trickey would not be recommended.
- In the PSC report:
 - Dr. Irene Taafaki
 - Dr. Taafaki had the most relevant experience and had been working a long time (over 10 years) in higher education. Her experience with WASC Accreditation is also relevant. She demonstrated a history of success in growing education in the RMI. Her employment record shows longer tenure in position than the other candidates. Her extensive network at a national, regional and international level has the potential to add value to the role.
 - Mr. William Reiher
 - He has the potential to be a strong leader but it was felt he did not have the experience or length of tenure in a leadership position at this level. Also noted a disciplinary action against him by the President in relation to accreditation. He has a good understanding of CMI having been a past Vice President and CMI's Strategic Planning consultant. The committee also recognized his strong entrepreneurial background.
- The BOR focus will be on Dr. Irene Taafaki and Mr. William Reiher.

5. BOR DISCUSSION ON THE PSC REPORT

- Regent Chen: Cited the example about how he runs BOMI; he's been working there for 37 years; really believes in local capacity building, because it's very time consuming if we are always looking for Presidents. We can create an acting president position and the local candidate can be trained, so when the President's term expires the local employees can automatically be the President. It's about time that we learn to be active in this area. Regent Chen's recommendation: that we create a position for William Reiher to be the acting president.
 - Regent Pinano: Good recommendation. The Vice President can do that, if the President is off island he/she can do it. If we come up with a succession plan, someone who is really well versed on the education system, not only locally but internationally is a good idea. All for it.
- Regent Alfred: His presentation was well presented and it showed that he has potential to learn and move forward. In the committee you have a *student Representative who* also voted, who did the students want to vote for? Did the committee consider



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preferences from the faculty, staff, student and President? The part of William's presentation that was especially significant was when he mentioned that students felt like this was not their College? Who would they prefer to be their President?

- Regent Relang: There was no voting process, but we did have an evaluation form that people fill out but the committee didn't receive a lot of them back, just a few.
- The student representative was not in the meeting last Friday. He was at his practicum session.
- Student Regent Capelle: The students that attended the interviews, they were favoring Mr. William Reiher because it's rare to see a local in this kind of position. He had good points and was able to answer all the questions, and the way he answered the questions was what they expected.
- Dr. Theresa: Just to clarify Regent Alfred's question about students saying that this is not their College. In this area, Mr. Reiher comments came directly from his experience 2 years ago when he was developing the strategic plan; he held a workshop for every constituent body of the College including students and they had a workshop at Arrak. The students said that they didn't feel like they "belonged" at the College.
- In regard to on the job training, in higher education you are usually considered as competent from experience gained from on the job training if you already possess the required knowledge in terms of your qualifications.
 - When Mr. Reiher was here, he already had his Masters degree, so possessed the minimum qualifications requirement that a Vice President should have in the CMI system.
 - In terms of Pacific experience, many times even before Dr. Theresa became President, he was the Vice President with Carl Hacker. He would have had to act as President. All Vice Presidents have the opportunity to act and they make all of the decisions that Presidents make and communicate these directly to the President.
- Regent Alfred: Regent Chen's suggestion is good. Prefer that the Marshallese be in that position and maybe the other person be the adviser/mentor.
- Regent Lang: There's a great push for Marshallese to take over and understand that. Respect him for that but through all the interviews and meetings one of the things that was a great concern for the College is WASC. Believe that we really need to have someone that understands this situation. Looking at the recommendation for Mr. William here, think we should be cautious on who should be on board to lead the College going into the next cycle of accreditation. Dr. Irene Taafaki understands this situation. Like the idea that Regent Chen shared. But I am really concerned about the 4% graduation rate.
- Regent Chair Relang: The College for the past years, has been supporting and grooming locals to take up positions. It's been William, Stevenson and Stanley for example, but



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William was the only one who applied. Hope that if we do have another round of looking for a President that all three of them would apply.

- One concern during the presentation, both their answers regarding the financial and investment opportunity for the College, Dr. Irene had a better answer to the question than William did. The financial sustainability for this College from a Broad's perspective is the greatest importance especially in the year 2023.
- Regent Bigler: Follow up, heard through second hand that the new cabinet has sent out a letter instructing all SOEs and agencies to hold off on hiring top position for SOE institutions.
 - Nothing has come to the College.
 - We'll follow up, there is a problem for the College if that's the case. In the CMI Act, we have autonomy according to our mission and standards.
 - Dr. Theresa will speak directly to the Chief Secretary.
- Regent Anjain: Over the past few days, people visited or emailed saying to make sure we choose Dr. Taafaki or Mr. William. William worked in the College, and looked at his experience here but the others are his short term experiences and the WASC. and how strong is his network. These are the things that are holding him back. Don't really know about Dr. Taafaki, it wasn't in her presentation.
- Regent Maddison: Have known Dr. Irene for a long time. USP takes the top students so they can become professionals, like lawyers and doctors. That's how it started. Now USP and the College are working together. I'd like to see William coming back to the College because he's a great asset to the College, he is very enthusiastic and young. Bringing Dr. Irene will bring everything together, making everything smooth, more sustainable and more transformational. It's not just on the job, it's more than that. Agree on the PSC recommendation.
- Regent Bigler: if the Board doesn't make the decision today? What will happen? Will we go through the process again?
 - Regent Chair Relang: The Board would have to set another meeting. We'll have to go through the process again only if we do not think neither of them can be our potential president. Just through the discussions we have a very strong candidate for the position.
 - Regent Pinano: Do we have enough time frame? Dr. Theresa will be leaving. Looking through the documents, I have my decision.
 - Regent Chair Relang: Dr. Theresa's contract does not end until March.
- Regent Bigler: Thank the Presidential Search Committee for all the work that they put in, and Dr. Theresa for what she's done for the College. Dr. Theresa if you weigh the candidate, know do you rank 1 through 3, is this something you'll be doing?
 - Dr. Theresa: I am an ex-officio member of the Board, and do not have a vote. Have listened closely to the comments made. When I started, I did not have any networks, the only network was through USP. To prepare for my interview, read parts of the compact, the accreditation reports and went through the CMI



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website. Coming in blind, never been a president or CEO, no entrepreneur experience and had no experience in senior management; never trained in accounting, business or management. Believe whoever the Board chooses, you should know the potential they have to fill this position. Have every little in terms of orientation, in fact there is no orientation program for the president, I am currently working on one. This is based on what I have learned from experience. I came in blind but passionate about education. No management training. Was not used to the US system. CMI has a great team. In terms of the weighing in, thank the PSC for the work they have done and I applaud Regent Chen's recommendation, that is the piece that we' have been missing, a kind of leadership academy in the College.

- Regent Bigler: Whomever the Board choses will go with the majority. All the points that were made were good.
- Regent Alred: Before the Vice President's title? Were they called, 1st and 2nd Vice President's before? Who would be the next?
 - Regent Chair Relang: We have 2 Vice Presidents, Vice President for Business and Administrative Affairs and Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs. Soon there will be a third one, Vice President for Land Grant.
 - Dr. Theresa: Normally when the President is on duty travel or leave, discussions are conducted with the 2 VPs about whom will cover and will also depend on their schedule of meetings. Vice Presidents usually act as the President.
- Regent Korean: Thank HR and the PSC for their work. Also acknowledge William's experience and commitment to the College. But really do believe that Dr. Irene will do a good job, she has a long experience working in the RMI, also a Marshallese citizen and knows that she is committed to working with Marshallese. She has a strong network with the government.
- Regent Anjain: After hearing Dr. Theresa's comment the way William will gain those experiences is if we give him the chance especially to form networks.
- Regent Maddison: If the Board makes the selection of the Candidat, and if there were an appeal made from the unscussful candidate due to for example, discrimination what would be the procedure be, should it happen?
 - Agnes: Any claim of unfair or discriminate, it will be for the Board. Have not seen any procedure like that. It will be a hard claim to make, you'll have to provide evidence. It will be using the Law of this country to claim discrimination because every candidate is an applicant, there is no oblication to a person to appoint them unless they meet the requirements of the position as the selection committee determines. Following this process it is quite clear that we have followed the procedure, there is no discrimination.
- Regent Chair Relang: We'll put it to a vote, and will have Agnes facilitate the voting.
- Regent Chen: Before we vote, we want to know who has the authority to create new jobs. Make a motion to create a job for the acting president title.



- Regent Chair Relang: The Board can make a recommendation and request that the President implement the decision in our role as her supervisors. Looking at a specific Vice President that can take over the President.
- Dr. Theresa: what we need at the College is a type of leadership academy, Regent Chen's idea we consider CMI to be a leader in innovation. Always believe that the College should be exemplary in many of our practices and our aspirations. In terms of whether or not the Board has the power to do this, the Board has the authority to make the decision to improve. The president is the Board's direct report.
- Regent Alfred: Coming back to the structure, a long time ago there were 1st, 2nd and 3rd Vice President. The 1st Vice President is really working directly with the President and when they are not here the 2nd one takes over.

6. VOTE FOR THE NEW CMI PRESIDENT

- Agnes: Voting by a show of hands.
 - Dr. Irene Taafaki: 7 aye
 - Mr. William Reiher: 3 aye

7. ANNOUNCEMENT PLAN

- Contact the successful candidate;
 - The contract will state when the successful candidate starts.
 - Dr. Theresa's contract ends March 31st, but the Board has approved the Orientation with the New President.
- Contact the unsuccessful appointable candidate with communication that preserves his/her relationship with the College;
- Minister of Education, Sport & Training;
- RMI President and cabinet;
- The Journal;
- Website;
- The College;
- PPEC;
- ACCJC;
- Other stakeholders
- Regent Pinano: Between now, if for some reason Dr. Irene walked out because of some other reasons, is there anything in the HR policy state who would take over?
 - Dr. Theresa: The practice is at the College, we decide and PSC have recommended 2 out of 3 candidates. We have 2 ranked, If Dr. Irene doesn't accept for some reason we go to the second candidate.
 - **Motion:** Should Dr. Irene Taafaki not accept for whatever reason, that William Reiher is offered the position of President. *Regent Korean moved the motion,* and Regent Pinano seconded the motion. All Approved.



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- **Motion:** Should both candidates not accept the position that a request from the Board to the current President to stay on for a longer period of time for the research process again. Regent Pinano seconded the motion. All Approved.
- The recommendation made by Regent Chen about the Vice President position, this would be a different type of Vice President then our existing Vice President position. That position will be that the next President should the incumbent President depart. To assign the President to work on creating such a position, that is, acting president for William as part of the succession plan.
 - Regent Pinano: That's a very good recommendation, we should also open it to out if possible. If an acting president automatically succeeds and he or she does not perform to the standard or criteria for selection what happens next? So if there are several indicators in that pool, we can make a choice.
 - Regent Alfred: We all agreed that it is Dr. Irene as President, that the Marshallese candidate, in this case, William, be appointed in the acting president position to be trained to be the next President. We're creating an opportunity for this Marshallese who is interested to work alongside this new president.
 - Regent Korean: Was there any other Marshallese Vice President that held the title or interested in applying for the President position?
 - Only William applied out of the 3 potential Marshallese in recent CMI history. The three potential candidates are: Stevenson Kotton, William Reiher and Stanley Lorennij.
- **Motion:** Regent Chen: Develop a succession plan for such a position for the acting president for William Reiher. Regent Alfred seconded the motion. All Approved.

8. OTHER MATTERS

- Regent Anjain: CMI MOU with MOE, talked to Stevenson. PSS is willing to pay stipends to Education students in preparing for the new classroom on Ebeye.
 - Dr. Theresa will follow up on this with VPBAA Stevenson.
- Outgoing Regent Chutaro and Bigler.
 - Need a list of Regent candidates
 - Dr. Theresa is working on the Regents position and the year of service.

Meeting adjourned @ 10:50 AM


Scribe
Kelly Luce Sebastian,
Acting Recording Secretary


Reviewed & Approved by
Chairperson, Board of Regents

2/27/20
Date approved