



# CMI

P.O. box 1258  
Majuro, Marshall Islands, MH 96960

*College of the Marshall Islands*  
Accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges

Tel: (692) 625-3291/3843  
Fax: (692) 625-7203

## Board of Regents Minutes - Approved August 18, 2020

### Members Present

Chairperson Kathryn Relang  
Regent Marie Maddison  
Regent Kino Kabua  
Student Regent Jae Marie Mae Digno

Vice-Chairman Helmer Lang  
Regent Julius Lucky  
Regent Mark Stege

Regent Harden Lelet  
Regent Claire Loeak  
Regent Stiffney Paul

### Member Absent

Regent Ione deBrum

### CMI employees in attendance:

Dr. Irene Taafaki, CMI President  
William Reiher, Executive Vice President (through Zoom)  
Stevenson Kotton, Vice President for Administrative and Business Affairs  
Stanley Lorennij, Vice President for Land Grant  
Dr. Elizabeth Switaj, Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs  
Agnes Kotoisuva, HR Director  
Kelly Sebastian, Executive Officer/Executive Secretary for the CMI Board of Regents (ESBOR)

### The meeting was called to order @ 9:04 AM

### Agenda Items

1. Opening prayer & Roll call and call to order
2. Approval of the Agenda
3. Review of the last BOR meeting minutes
4. Chairperson Relang Update
5. President's update
6. Governance KPIs
7. Accreditation Report - Dr. Elizabeth
  - ISER First Read
8. Standing Committee Reports
9. Action items for approval
  - Proposed New Policies
    - Library Cataloging Policy
    - New Student Orientation Policy



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- 5.6 Remote work or Work from Home Policy
- 5.3.18 Hardship Differential Allowance Policy
- Proposed Revision Policies
  - 6.4 Housing Policy
  - 5.3.14 Recognition on Attainment of Degree
  - i-1 Revised- 8.6 Tuition Waiver & i-2 -6.2.4 Employee Family Education Benefit Policy
  - Financial Aid Policy & Procedure
- Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Budget Portfolio
- Graduates list for the Vocational Carpentry Certificate of Completion
- Proposed Changes to Institution-Set Standards and Institutional KPIs

#### Approval

- A Resolution to Approve the Revised Housing Policy
- A Resolution to Approve the Revised Recognition on Attainment of Degree Policy
- A Resolution to Approve the Revised Employee Family Education Benefit Policy
- Resolution to Approve Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Budget Portfolio
- Resolution to Approve the Revised Financial Aid Policy and Procedure Manual
- Resolution to Confer the Vocational Carpentry Certificate
- Resolution to adopt new institutional Key Performance Indicators, Institution-Set standards, and Stretch Goals

## Minutes

### 1. OPENING PRAYER, ROLL CALL, AND CALL TO ORDER

- Chairperson Relang asked the Vice-Chairman Lang to open the BOR meeting with a prayer, then called the meeting to order at 9:04 am.
- Chairperson welcomed our new Student Regent, Cindy. Whose dream is to become a forensic accountant.
- Welcome back to our third meeting, there are quite a few policies to review on our agenda and possibly a special meeting to look at the new policy.
- The finance committee will update us on the Audit.
- There was a workshop that some of the Regents were a part of, they'll report on it.
- We have great news to share later on from the Academic group about our enrollment this semester.

### 2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

- Regent Maddison moved to approve the CMI Board of Regents Agenda as proposed. Vice-Chairman Lang seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

### 3. REVIEW OF THE LAST BOR MEETING MINUTES



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- **Vice-Chairman Lang moved to approve the May 27, 2020 meeting minutes with the changes and revisions. Regent Kabua seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.**

#### **4. Chairperson Relang Update**

- Attended the Jaluit ABE Graduation in person and virtually attended the Ebeye ABE & CMI Graduation. Expressed appreciation to Regent Harden for representing the Board during the Ebeye graduation.
- Board Chair Relang, Board Vice-Chair Lang, Board Secretary Harden, and Dr. Irene attended an ATTC Governance Leadership Institute workshop that provided valuable information regarding our position as Regents including clarification re: the responsibility of the Chair.
- Workshop sessions highlighted:
  - Fiduciary responsibility: looking beyond budget approval to the Board's duty of care, loyalty and obedience to our policies.
  - Another area heavily discussed was conflict of interests, and the importance of disclosure. Having a yearly disclosure form filled out was a recommendation from the workshop.
  - There were a lot of eye opening things about a chair's responsibilities that I felt I lacked. One of which was acting like a big brother or sister and a Psychologist for the team, and to ensure a healthy relationship amongst us. Feel free to put me aside and talk to me or if it's another Board Regent talk to them. We want to be sure that the relationship in this room and among us is healthy.
  - The meaning of a high functioning Board and the importance of building a cohesive team, able to work together, to share our own perspective, but also be able to come to a decision and support that decision together as a team.
  - Valuing the work of the institution and those that do the work for the institution;
  - Understanding the community that we serve, understanding each of our perspectives and the perspectives of others in the community of their perspective of where the College should go.
  - Emphasis on sharing the vision of where the College needs to go, serving to fulfill our mission.
- Chair invited the other Regents to share their experiences since each was in a different group. This included:
  - Consideration about how the agenda is created and having set agenda items for every meeting - a standard item should be Policy. If there's any policy that we should highlight in the meeting, we'll select that policy and we ensure that Dr. Irene and the responsible team have a run through it and then we can table it at a meeting.



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- Also think about what other new policies, what policies that we don't have but we need. Having that item on the agenda, we'll make sure that we're on top of our policies.
  - The Board should also consider those reports that are submitted to the Board - for example, are we satisfied with how the Financial report or the data report are presented. Do we understand it or does it need to be in a different format? For example when data comes to us, it doesn't just come as numbers but also as graphs.
  - The workshop also addressed advocacy, and the importance of Regents and the President having data and the right message(s) to convey about CMI to ensure that the support to the college continues. Recommendation to all Regents to create their own 3 Minute narrative about CMI
  - Vice-Chair Regent Lang: Appreciated the discussion on policies and also advocacy as you mention earlier, as well as this first Board training experience.
  - The timing was also a new challenge - 3am till 5:30am.
  - Secretary Regent Lelet: Recalled not only the challenge of the time difference with the East Coast but also problems with internet connectivity from Kwajalein.. Particularly appreciated the workshop on Fiduciary responsibility and diligence. Others will have the opportunity, we'll open it up for the Regents.
  - Since the workshop, the Board Chair has communicated with one of the presenters Mrs. Kathy Brown, who's one of the advocates at congress for ACCT.
  - Her presentation was about the U.S. policies and how they advocate to ensure that community colleges receive the funding that they should and that they deserve.
  - There's several items of legislation ahead, including the Heroes Act, which should extend financial assistance to community colleges to support the college and the students. Board Chair Relang asked her if she would be available to do a presentation for us, we can do a zoom. To have her explain these legislation and the advocacy work they're doing to see what we can do here to support that work. We are waiting for her response.
  - Vice-Chair Lang: Understanding our students, so we can set the right policies for them, especially our community.
- For your standing committee, you're welcome to call for a meeting but just to keep the Board Chair and Dr. Irene informed of the meeting.

## 5. PRESIDENT'S UPDATE AND GOVERNANCE KPIS

- The President reiterated her appreciation to the Board for her appointment and acknowledged the support of former President Theresa Koroivulaono during her orientation to the position.



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- You can view the President's report using this link:  
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1QTneEGpsRp6om-e44lpazxtRiQ62UH0T/view?usp=sharing>
- Presenters at the ACCT conference reminded participants that at community college education is not the heart of the students lives, family and work are.
  - 46% of our students have families even though the average age is from 20 to 21 and are parents of at least one child at home they are responsible for.
- Regent Loeak asked about REL, which is the Regional Educational Laboratory. REL adapted the Carnegie Foundation Math transition program for the Pacific.
- Regent Stege: confirmed the relevance of the program to the standing committee on Academic & Student Affairs, which is interested in the question of retention and the courses and curricula, not only at the College but in primary and secondary levels of education. Regent Kabua asked for information from the President regarding a report on the incident involving 2 PUA went out of quarantine at the Arrak Campus. VPBAA Kotton explained the background to the incident and differentiated the role of campus security and the police with respect to the MOU for the use of CMI's facility. He also described the new security measures being put in place including installing 5 more CCTV, so there are no blind spots. President Taafaki described measures to improve Retention and completion rates.
  - expanding student orientation to focus not only on the information they need to be successful but also on the social emotional aspect of college life (the feeling of belonging).
  - revising the first year experience course, currently underway by a task force that includes faculty and student services personnel.
  - commencing an initiative for champion navigators, - students who can complete in three years and enable the college to meet its 150% target. .
- Regent Loeak: Requested clarification on the online access to students and whether we actually incorporated any policies into the current policies that we have to incorporate these changes. In response, the President advised:
  - Online policy is developed by Dr. Theresa as a consultant, in collaboration with Manny Mottelang and FNU. It will be reviewed through the CMI Participatory Governance process. It will be ready for the December meeting.
  - Regent Maddison asked for information about partnerships and collaboration, specifically the College of Micronesia Land Grant treaty and how it will be affected by the Compact renegotiations. VPLG Stanley Lorennij responded that it will not be affected, as the Treaty is Long Term

## 6. ACCREDITATION REPORT - DR. ELIZABETH SWITAJ

- Dr. Elizabeth Switaj presented her report and updates on the Accreditation process and from ACCJC.



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- You can view Dr. Elizabeth's report using this link:  
[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Y-xgkip\\_NYgDK5IBtFgjMnaPI2eYa3zvLcLXyYyWhg/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Y-xgkip_NYgDK5IBtFgjMnaPI2eYa3zvLcLXyYyWhg/edit?usp=sharing)
- Chairperson Relang requested the Regents to provide comments on the ISER by August 31 comments and focus on Standard IV.

## 7. STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

- Strategic Planning Committee: Regent Lelet presented by EVP
  - 1 year update on the implementation of the strategic plan (2019-2023).
  - Mission review process underway with recommendations to the Board in December.
  - The integrated planning cycle is driven by the Mission, which in turn drives the planning framework, and which then drives the strategic plan.
  - Activities have been prioritized and implementation has begun, including resource allocation to support the priorities.
  - Of the 292 Strategic Activities being monitored on Asana (project management software).
    - 242 (83%) were identified as no-cost activities - the departments can go ahead and implement them without additional funding.
    - 50 (17%) were identified as needing additional budget in order to implement.
      - \$50,000 has been allocated to 14 out of 50 activities (28%) of the activities needing additional budget were funded in 2020.
      - The remaining activities that didn't receive the funding from the budget committee were asked to work with our Grant coordinator Hatty Kabua to identify some sources of funding
      - If they can't find funding, we still have 4 years left of the strategic plan, maybe they can be funded next year or the following year.
    - 22 out of 292 activities (7.5%) have been marked as completed in the first year of implementation – to be on track, this should have been 58 activities (or 20%) completed in the first year.
      - Asana user guidelines have been developed and pasted by the IT Committee, HR committee and EC.
      - The IT Director is doing training for the department heads and directors.
    - 133 activities are labelled as on-track
    - Chairperson Relang: Asked if Asana is something that we can be trained to use for Board activities. Regent Kabua: Asked if the College two infrastructure projects are reflected in the asana?



- President described medium term facility development goals to finish 2 projects that have been identified.
  - One is to connect the administration building around to the Library and create another building at the front of the campus. These facilities will provide the space for Marshallese Studies.
  - Since the infrastructure improvements are currently not on Asana, this needs to be corrected
  - Another Clarification to the SP has also been identified -, To replace the objective for 'Open Learning' to 'Online learning and Open Learning'.
- Finance/Risk Assessment/ Audit Committee: Chairperson Relang
  - Chairperson Relang presented the report for the Finance/Risk Assessment/ Audit Committee.
  - Since April the 2018-2019 audit has been of great concern., Discrepancies in our system have delayed CMI putting together the trial balance to get the audit going. Several issues with the system date back to 2018. These have been compounded with human error, all of which delayed the trial balance..
  - Although 80% of the field work has been completed, the Financial Aid and restricted funds remain to be audited by the auditors.
  - A staff member has been demoted and a new staff hired, and the President is now hiring an internal auditor to conduct these audits on a more regular basis so we wouldn't come to the end of the year and face these issues again.
  - The Finance Committee is paying close attention, to ensure the 2019-2020 audit proceeds correctly, November is the deadline to submit the trial balances. The new director of business starts in October.
  - To date the Government subsidy fund of 1.4M is outstanding.
  - The Endowment fund was at 1.6M pre-covid, and then 1.5M when covid hit the market, and it currently sits at 1.7M .
  - The Contingency and Maintenance funds remain the same because those are annual deposits to those funds.
  - The new Arrak MOU will be professionally drafted to avoid some of the issues that have arisen with the first agreement..
  - Payment for the first MOU from the MOHHS, has been received by the college.
  - VPBAA will create the statement that the Board of Regents use t if approached - about the audit. A press release will also be prepared.
  - A Policy and Procedure on Federal Grants is under preparation.r.
  - Regent Maddison asked about the date set for the budget hearing and recommended data from the student profile be included as good information to present to the Nitijela. The other points that they might want to hear about



would be the status of the Marshallese Studies, maybe something about the Nuclear studies program and the climate change curriculum.

- Chairperson Relang stated that we have yet to be informed of the date but are preparing. The 17% cut across the board is actually a 7% cut, requiring changes in the budget and VPBAA will provide the new budget portfolio.
- Regent Stege requested information regarding the grants (DOI 10 and R2R) received by the college to create a national spatial analytical facility with a database manager to be housed at CMI and a server and a bandwidth quota so maintained. The fourth component was a course that is already on the catalog to be adapted. He recommended that the Board pay attention to ensuring that initiatives like this have the right personnel to carry them forward.
- Chairperson Relang recommended discussions regarding the specifics of programs and courses be confined to the Academic Committee with recommendations then presented to the Board for consideration of policy and strategic direction to the President..meeting discussions.
- Regent Stege presented the report for the Academic & Student Affairs Committee.
- A 2020 Certificate of Completion in Vocational Carpentry Graduates, which there were 10 such graduates.
  - The committee moved to get the Board of Regents to accept these certificates of graduates and award them to these 10 individuals that are listed.
  - a special meeting of this committee will be held Friday at 9:30am or 2pm. The purpose of the meeting is to analyze the data in order to assess policy. The Chair recommended the Director of Institutional Research be invited to participate in the meeting.

## 8. ACTION ITEMS FOR APPROVAL

- Proposed New Policies - The following were deferred to a Special meeting that we'll call upon on a later time.
  - Library Cataloging Policy
  - New Student Orientation Policy
  - 5.6 Remote work or Work from Home Policy
  - 5.3.18 Hardship Differential Allowance Policy
- Proposed Revision Policies
  - 6.4 Housing Policy
    - It is recommended that the decision of the former President to vary the housing allowance for administrators be included in housing policy:
      - 'Housing Allowance. When College housing is not available, or if the eligible Employee chooses to live off campus, the College will pay the Employee's rent directly to the Employee's landlord,



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to a maximum of \$750.00/month for a single renter, and to a maximum of \$1000.00/month for two people sharing an accommodation when both people are under full-time contract with the College or up to \$500 when the spouse/partner is working for another organization and also receiving a housing benefit. [Administrators are eligible for a rental allowance of up to \\$900/month.](#) Rent payment shall be made by the College Business Office directly to the landlord.'

- It is recommended that a provision to ensure the safety of employees in rented properties is part of lease agreements.
- Chairperson Relang reminded of a previous decision to consider the number of rooms and facilities that might be offered at that particular compound and include those in our policy on how we calculate the rent. The discussion raised the following:

- PSC gives it's an employee an allowance of \$750 a month;
  - The college staff inspects properties and advises on value and suitability;
  - College policy should reflect the current real estate market because there are places that are a little bit higher than the maximum of \$750.00;
  - reason to maintain \$750 a month or \$9,000 a year is tax exemption, anything above is taxable by the government;
  - The issue is whether or not we're getting value for money;
  - Inspection may not be a reasonable conclusion - a 2 bedroom house versus a 1 bedroom house has different values. An inspector can make that conclusion or it could be in a policy that they just in fact have different values.
  - Inspection is an operational matter that is why it is not part of the policy, HR is doing that as part of they're mandated operational process here at CMI.
  - The college collects a list of potential accommodation for employees and conducts an inspection, we also negotiate with the landlords because we can compare different accommodations and it's not just about the number of bedrooms because you can have a really good place, a studio apartment and it's worth \$750. You can have a 4 bedroom house not worth \$750. It's really about the quality as well as the accommodation.
- CMI has no choice but to be market based because whatever is available is what is paid for as rentals compares the accommodations list and takes the employee around so they themselves can see the different



options. In the end, the employee makes the decision of which place they choose to stay in but whenever something isn't measured up to our standards, HR strongly advises them against it.

- **Regent Maddison Moved to approve the revised Housing policy. Regent Lelet seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.**
- 5.3.14 Recognition on Attainment of Degree by employees
  - A revision to the current policy was presented to better align with the current CMI salary schedule. The change proposed: A regular, full-time Employee who attains a degree that meets or exceeds the minimum degree required for the job held by the Employee shall, on the date official transcripts are received by the Human Resources Director, receive a one-time bonus payment equivalent to one month's salary.
  - The purpose and wording of the revision was discussed at length and the Chair proposed that the College reconsider the language - especially the terms 'meets' and 'exceeds' and then resubmit to a Special Meeting of the Board that will be called in the near future.
- i-1 Revised- 8.6 Tuition Waiver & i-2 -6.2.4 Employee Family Education Benefit Policy
  - HR Director: Rationale for change:
    - The current policy on 'Tuition Waiver' for studies at CMI addresses both employee dependents and employees. The proposed revision will separate employee professional development from employee dependent benefit by incorporating tuition waiver for dependents into policy 6.2.4 Employee Family Education Benefit Policy' under Chapter Six: Employee Benefits. Employee get \$500 dollar assistance per employee towards their tuition or their dependents tuitions
  - HR Director: Tuition waiver is employees and dependents.
  - **Regent Maddison moved to approve the Tuition Waiver & Employee Family Education Benefit Policy. Regent Stege seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.**
- Financial Aid Policy & Procedure
  - Deferred to the Special Meeting of the Board.
- Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Budget Portfolio
  - Deferred to a Special Meeting of the Board.
- Graduates list for the Vocational Carpentry Certificate of Completion
  - **The Academic and Student Affairs Committee has moved to approve the Graduates list for the Vocational Carpentry Certificate of Completion to the 10 program participants. Regent Loeak seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.**



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- Proposed Changes to Institution-Set Standards and Institutional KPIs
  - This is an item that was introduced in the last meeting.
  - Deferred to a Special Meeting.

## 9. FUTURE ITEMS

- Regent Stege: There is an Compact Steering Committee on Economic and Trust Fund Affairs, as a member of the Board of Regents and on behalf of the Marshall Islands Chamber of Commerce and the Economic steering committee Regent Stege encourages a visioning exercise 15 year or 20 years visioning exercise for the College in line with the compact and provision. Some comments were made today that kind of touched on that. A request without overstepping, just be made more aware of some of those details regarding the compact funding that's coming to the College. I'll be asking for a meeting with the President to discuss this and maybe recommend this to the members of the compact steering committee to ask the President to be in that meeting tomorrow at 12pm Riwut.
- In response the President proposed a separate meeting for the CMI and NTC due to the similarity of their TVET objectives. The VPBAA recommended a separate meeting from PSS since there are some competing financial implementations that particularly impact the students which is the work study program, FSEOG. Those funding in the second compact amended they funnel them through SAG, we lost in this.

**Meeting adjourned @ 1:07 PM**

**Scribe**

Kelly Luce Sebastian,  
Recording Secretary

**Reviewed & Approved by**

Kathryn Relang  
Chairperson, Board of Regents

**Date approved**