



CMI

BOARD OF REGENTS

College of the Marshall Islands

Accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges

P.O. Box 1258
Uluga Campus

Tel: (692) 625-3394/3291/4931
Fax: (692) 625-7203
Email: bor.regents@cmi.edu

Special Board of Regents Minutes - Approved April 7, 2025

Members Present

Chair Meitaka Kendall-Lekka
Regent Katt Chonggum
Regent Dr. Yukiko Muller

Regent Jelton Anjain
Regent Kino Kabua
Regent Roanna Zackhras

Regent Julius Lucky
Regent Timothy Owens
Student Regent Wilmer Joel

Member Absent/Excused

Vice Chair Thomas Kijiner Jr.

Regent Morean S. Watak

CMI employees in attendance:

Dr. David A. Newnham, President

David Strauss, Legal Counsel

Kelly Sebastian, Executive Officer/Executive Secretary for the CMI Board of Regents (ESBOR)

The meeting was called to order @ 9:31 AM

Agenda Items

1. Opening prayer & Roll call and call to order
2. Approval of the Agenda
3. Closed Session (Personnel/Legal)
4. Special Session
 - 4.1. PAC Report - Action Plan
 - 4.2. BOR Workshop follow-up and President's Action Plan
5. BOR requests for future items and information

Minutes

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

Chair Kendall-Lekka commenced the BOR meeting at 9:31 AM.

Regent Ownes led the opening prayer.

2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA



CMI

BOARD OF REGENTS

College of the Marshall Islands

Accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges

P.O. Box 1258
Uliga Campus

Tel: (692) 625-3394/3291/4931
Fax: (692) 625-7203
Email: bor.regents@cmi.edu

3. CLOSED SESSION (PERSONNEL/LEGAL)

The Board of Regents entered a closed session to discuss personnel and legal matters.

4. SPECIAL SESSION

4.1. PAC Report - Action Plan

- 4.1.1. Chair Kendall-Lekka emphasized the need to prioritize key issues from the PAC Report and set a timeline for the Board's response.
 - 4.1.1.1. Suggested addressing the most significant issues rather than responding to all items simultaneously.
- 4.1.2. President Newnham referenced Dr. Bruce Leslie's recommendation to focus on 4–5 main issues for an action plan.
 - 4.1.2.1. Noted that the PAC Report was extensive, covering a broad range of concerns, some of which had already been addressed by the college.
 - 4.1.2.2. Emphasized the importance of gathering evidence and demonstrating accountability.
- 4.1.3. Regent Kabua raised concerns that the Board was not involved in PAC hearings and recommended listening to the recordings for clarity.
 - 4.1.3.1. Suggested that hearing from students, faculty, and staff would provide a better understanding.
- 4.1.4. Chair Kendall-Lekka acknowledged the frustrations expressed during the PAC hearings, attributing them to unresolved concerns and a lack of communication.
 - 4.1.4.1. Noted that open sessions might help bridge the communication gap and build trust.
- 4.1.5. President Newnham outlined improvements in communication since his tenure, including weekly meetings with the Academic Senate and Staff Senate.
 - 4.1.5.1. Emphasized efforts to address student concerns promptly.
- 4.1.6. Student Regent Wilmer confirmed that many student issues raised during PAC hearings had been addressed under President Newnham's leadership.
 - 4.1.6.1. Noted students were not prepared to participate fully in the PAC hearings.
- 4.1.7. Regent Kabua and President Newnham discussed concerns about the grievance process, with Regent Kabua questioning why issues went directly to Parliament.
 - 4.1.7.1. President Newnham explained the importance of using established grievance channels and proposed annual reviews of policies and procedures.
- 4.1.8. Chair Kendall-Lekka suggested conducting a survey to gauge stakeholder trust in the grievance process and evaluate the effectiveness of responses to PAC concerns.
 - 4.1.8.1. President Newnham agreed to initiate an anonymous survey and work with HR to ensure inclusivity.
 - Committed to revisiting HR policies to improve understanding of grievance procedures.
- 4.1.9. Chair Kendall-Lekka and President Newnham agreed to prioritize the grievance process and AG report investigation in the next Board meeting.



CMI

BOARD OF REGENTS

College of the Marshall Islands

Accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges

P.O. Box 1258
Uluga Campus

Tel: (692) 625-3394/3291/4931
Fax: (692) 625-7203
Email: bor.regents@cmi.edu

- 4.1.9.1. An open session with community input was also proposed to enhance transparency.
- 4.1.10. Regent Anjain asked about the impact of these issues on ACCJC accreditation.
- 4.1.10.1. President Newnham clarified that ACCJC seeks evidence of continuous quality improvement, not immediate closure.
 - Outlined the three levels of action: warning, probation, and show cause, affirming that as long as CMI shows progress, accreditation remains secure.

4.2. BOR Workshop follow-up and President's Action Plan

- 4.2.1. Chair Kendall-Lekka suggested creating action plans following the Board Workshop, focusing on specific outcomes from the training and setting clear expectations for the President moving forward.
 - 4.2.1.1. Expressed uncertainty on how to proceed with the PAC Report, citing its complexity and the volume of issues listed.
 - 4.2.1.2. Acknowledged that the previous Board had prepared a response but questioned how much of it reflected the concerns of students, faculty, and staff at CMI.
- 4.2.2. Chair Kendall-Lekka proposed gauging community agreement with the responses by revisiting key issues and validating whether the internal stakeholders (students, faculty, staff) support the Board's actions as stated in the report.

5. BOR REQUESTS FOR FUTURE ITEMS AND INFORMATION

President Newnham reported that the FY22 audit has been uploaded to EY, and FY23 is nearly ready. EY is hiring two extra auditors to meet a five-month timeline for completion. The Ministry of Finance agreed to release the remaining quarterly funds upon successful FY23 upload.

- Board Chair Kendall-Lekka emphasized public transparency and the importance of setting clear timelines.
- Student Regent Joel offered to help relay key updates to the media (press release).
- Regent Chong-Gum stressed accountability with EY; President Newnham committed to providing contract details and updates.

The President and Board Chair discussed the cost and logistics of increasing board meetings and proposed working sessions to reduce length and cost while improving preparation. Tentative dates for meetings and sessions were shared, including:

- April 14: Working session
- May 19: Board meeting & graduation approval
- June 23: Budget working session
- July 21: Board training
- August 25: Budget approval board meeting



CMI

BOARD OF REGENTS

College of the Marshall Islands

Accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges

P.O. Box 1258
Uliga Campus

Tel: (692) 625-3394/3291/4931
Fax: (692) 625-7203
Email: bor.regents@cmi.edu

Chair Kendall-Lekka recommended that the Board focus on the President's action plans, including the grievance process and Auditor General (AG) report.

- The Board discussed survey development for stakeholders to assess PAC issues and concerns.
- President Newnham confirmed HR would develop an anonymous survey using SurveyMonkey.
- Student and employee-specific surveys were also suggested.
- Chair Kendall-Lekka emphasized prioritizing stakeholder input and suggested separate surveys for students and employees to identify key concerns.

Regent Anjain requested updates on dormitory concerns raised in the previous board meeting.

- The Chair affirmed that these issues will be included in the upcoming survey.

Student Regent Joel requested clarification on whether the Board's PAC responses fully addressed student and staff concerns and if any items were omitted.

- President Newnham responded that the College went line by line through the official PAC charges and welcomed feedback on any missed or misaligned items.

Regent Kabua suggested inviting the Auditor General to the April 14 working session to discuss the AG report. The Chair confirmed the session will be closed.

- President Newnham reiterated the importance of specific, evidence-based feedback and emphasized the value of engagement through participatory governance.
- The Board discussed the need to rebuild trust in the grievance process.
- President Newnham proposed sharing the HR manual and reviewing the grievance process during the next working session.

Chair Kendall-Lekka concluded by affirming expectations for the April 14 working session and highlighted follow-ups on grievance policies and the AG report as priorities for the next meeting.

6. EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Next Working Session is scheduled for April 14 at 10 AM.

The Next Regular Board Meeting is scheduled for May 19 at 9 AM.

- **ABE Graduation: May 20, 2025**
- **CMI Graduation: May 22, 2025**

Meeting adjourned @ 1:08 PM



CMI

BOARD OF REGENTS

College of the Marshall Islands

Accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges

P.O. Box 1258
Uluga Campus

Tel: (692) 625-3394/3291/4931
Fax: (692) 625-7203
Email: bor.regents@cmi.edu

Scribe

Kelly Lucc Sebastian,
Recording Secretary

Reviewed & Approved by

Meitaka Kendall-Lekka,
Chair, Board of Regents

May 19, 2025

Date Approved