



# MONTANA UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

Board of Regents

## MINUTES

### Montana Board of Regents

Montana Tech of The University of Montana

Butte, Montana

September 25 & 26, 2008

#### Thursday, September 25, 2008

The Board convened at 8:00 AM.

Roll call indicated a quorum present.

**Regents Present:** Stephen Barrett Chair, Clayton Christian Vice Chair, Lynn Morrison-Hamilton, Lila Taylor, Todd Buchanan, Janine Pease, Mitch Jessen and Commissioner Sheila Stearns *ex officio*.

**Absent and Excused:** Superintendent of Public Instruction, Linda McCulloch *ex officio* and Governor Brian Schweitzer *ex officio*. Evan Barrett represented Governor Schweitzer.

Regent Taylor moved approval of the minutes of the July 8-9, 2008 regular meeting, July 8 Board of Regents and Montana Higher Education Student Assistance Corporation (MHESAC) Board joint meeting, and the August 19, 2008 conference call meeting. Motion passed 6-0, with Regent Pease not yet in attendance.

Regent Stephen Barrett introduced Jamie Jutila, Senator Baucus' representative, who read a letter from Senator Baucus in which he pledged his continued support for higher education, education tax credits, the renewed Higher Education Act, and working to make education more affordable.

## INFORMATION

### Commissioner's Report

- Strategic Plan & Initiatives Update
  - ✓ Transferability
  - ✓ Distance Learning

Tyler Trevor, Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education (OCHE), presented an update on the initiative benchmarks. New goals included distance learning, transferability, student assistance (unmet need) and remediation. He explained that OCHE worked with the legislature to create the accountability measures. The Distance Learning Initiative included the development of a system-wide portal for distance education, increasing student enrollment, expanding offerings in high demand areas, and the development of on-line capabilities.

Mary Sheehy Moe, OCHE, explained the final phase of the twelve disciplines of the transferability initiative. Once everything is finalized, IT and registrar staff from each of the



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campuses would be involved in a time-intensive process to implement the common course numbering for the courses.

Discussion followed which addressed the support of the campuses, the complexity of the process and what level of commitment had occurred from the campuses. It was noted that the two-year campuses and tribal colleges had been involved with the transferability project.

Regent Barrett emphasized the Board of Regents were determined the transferability project be completed and that there would not be an alternative to participate. Regent Hamilton asked campuses what the communication process had been with this with the faculty, and what kind of leadership had been provided with this on the campuses.

The board discussed the goal of reducing the amount of unmet student need for financial aid. Mr. Trevor stated that unmet financial need continues to grow when the cost of attendance outpaces financial aid resources.

Mr. Trevor asked for a recommendation from the board to include these initiatives in the strategic plan.

Senator Rick Laible, Darby, stated that the Postsecondary Education Policy and Budget Subcommittee (PEPB) and the Legislative Education and Local Government Interim Committee recently passed a resolution in which shared policy goals already in place for the PEPB committee to be incorporated as goals for the Education and Local Government Interim Committee. Regent Barrett stated the board agreed to approve this.

- Legislative Correspondence Related to Additional Dental Slots

The board expressed support of the recommendation that the professional student exchange program student slots for dental students be expanded by 5.0 slots per year starting with the 2011 biennium.

- College Readiness: ACT/SAT, MUS Writing Assessment

Commissioner Stearns said this allowed campuses to know what level of remediation needed to be taken if the students were not ready for a college level course. There is room for improvement in Montana when considering up to 50% of high school graduates that need some remediation.

- Montana Indian Education for All (MIEA) Resolutions

Commissioner Stearns told the group these were draft responses to the resolutions most directly involved with the Montana University System. The final results will be shared at the MIEA spring 2009 conference.

- Proposed Changes to Schedule of Meetings



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Regent Barrett explained the board may reconsider the idea of reducing the number of meetings at a later time.

- Campus Reports (*Report Only*)

**UM CAMPUSES OPERATING BUDGETS and ITEMS**

**UM-MISSOULA**

- ✓ UM-Missoula COT
- ✓ Forestry and Conservation Experiment Station

**ACTION**

Increase Spending Authority – Native American Center; The University of Montana-Missoula ITEM 140-1002-R0908

President Dennison, UM-Missoula, explained that the cost of construction had increased substantially. UM-Missoula had a substantial donor who wanted to see this project to fruition and that the donor had requested the bids for this project be opened yet in 2008 and that construction be completed as soon as possible.

Regent Barrett stated he received a note from student government leaders explaining the students support this project.

Discussion points made:

- Amount of costs used from students fees
- Concern of the nearly tripled cost since this project began
- Continued concern regarding the future costs of new buildings and the impact on students
- Concern re: operation and maintenance costs (O&M)
- UM does not expect any additional O&M costs due to energy conservation practices to be implemented

Regent Pease moved approval of item ITEM 140-1002-R0908. Motion passed 6-1, with Regent Taylor voting no.

**Level II**

- a. Masters Degree & Doctorate in Medicinal Chemistry; UM-Missoula ITEM 140-1001-R0708



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Regent Hamilton moved approval of ITEM 140-1001-R0708. Motion passed 7-0.

- b. Minor in Mountain Studies; UM-Missoula ITEM 140-1002-R0708

Regent Christian moved approval of ITEM 140-1002-R0708. Motion passed 7-0.

**CONSENT**

- a. Staff Items; The University of Montana-Missoula ITEM 140-1000-R0908
- b. Certificate of Completion, 2004 Series I, Construction Project Revenue Bond The University of Montana-Missoula ITEM 140-1001-R0908

Regent Taylor moved approval of the consent items. Motion passed 7-0.

**INFORMATION**

Hamilton Higher Education Center (HHEC) Annual Report, UM-Missoula

President Dennison explained UM had continued discussions with the Proposed Bitterroot Valley Community College (BVCC) work group. He added that UM would complement BVCC programs if a community college is established. The courses UM offered were in response to demand in the area.

**UM-MISSOULA OPERATING BUDGET**

President Dennison explained the UM-Missoula budget. Strengths listed were enrollment, improved affordability, research, students' success and world class faculty. Challenges included declining number of high school dual enrollment students, math & writing preparedness, salary competitiveness, and retirement issues.

**MT TECH of UM**

- ✓ MT Tech COT
- ✓ Bureau of Mines and Geology

**CONSENT**

- a. Staff Items; Montana Tech of The University of Montana ITEM 140-1500-R0908
- b. Level I Memorandum
- c. Authorization to Accept the Donation of Real Property; Montana Tech of The University of Montana ITEM 140-1501-R0908



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Regent Taylor moved approval of the consent agenda. Motion passed 7-0.

**INFORMATION**

Level II Memorandum

**MT TECH OPERATING BUDGET**

Chancellor Frank Gilmore explained the MT Tech operating budget. Strengths listed were the 59,000 square foot building for the petroleum engineering program currently under construction, natural resource related engineering program, and a fairly low but steady enrollment increase in the four-year campus. Challenges consisted of decline of students in the two-year campus due to the lineman program students often not beginning until the second semester, faculty and staff recruitment and retention, aging facilities and deferred maintenance, and expanding the international student base.

Ed Diehl, Bureau of Mines and Geology, explained the Bureau of Mines budget and the challenges of staff recruiting and retention, possessing insufficient funds to fill authorized positions.

Per Regent Hamilton's request for information on how they have decreased cost for operations and maintenance (O&M), Chancellor Gilmore responded that they would get information on best practices and how they accomplished the decrease in O&M.

**UM-WESTERN**

**CONSENT**

Staff Item; The University of Montana-Western ITEM 140-1600-R0908

Regent Hamilton moved approval of the consent agenda. Motion approved 7-0.

**UM-WESTERN OPERATING BUDGET**

Chancellor Richard Storey explained the UM-Western budget.

Strengths listed were academics, people, planning and vision. Challenges included sufficient funding for competitive compensation and institutional goals, enrollment retention and marketing.

**SYSTEM ISSUES**

**ACTION**

- Campus Executive Board Appointments

Regent Christian moved approval of the campus executive board appointments. Motion passed 7-0.



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- 6-Mill Levy Resolution ITEM 140-103-R0908 Attachment

Regent Barrett explained this was not a new tax and had been in place since 1920, comes up every 10 years for passage, and has had a considerable impact on the Montana University System. He further clarified the board would take no position on the levy. The resolution provides analysis and explanation of the impact of this resolution on the Montana University System.

Regent Buchanan moved approval of ITEM 140-103-R0908. Motion passed 7-0.

### **Making Opportunity Affordable (MOA) Proposal**

Deputy Commissioner Mary Sheehy Moe explained the motivation for the Making Opportunity Affordable initiative, a national initiative advanced by the Lumina Foundation for Education, was that the United States was losing its advantage as a country with a highly educated citizenry at the very time that higher educational attainment levels are crucial to economic competitiveness.

Montana's MOA proposal was one of eleven state proposals currently being considered for funding. Montana was the only state proposal to focus on redesigning its two-year college system as the key to filling the degree gap.

Some of the key points presented:

- Montana's two-year colleges are under-utilized.
- Two-year education plays a major role in bringing more people into higher education and ensuring more people successfully complete a degree.
- Montana's high school enrollments are declining.
- There is a positive correlation between educational attainment and prosperity.
- Fully deploying the two-year college mission in Montana is the most promising strategy to get more Montanans to go to college and complete a degree.
- Montana has a negative image of two-year colleges and that perception needs to be changed.
- Inconsistent programming exists among Montana's two-year colleges.

Possible solution options:

- Engage in an intensive marketing campaign.
- Split into two different systems, one for two-year and one for four-year.
- Develop a two-year college consortium committed to producing key results.
- Provide two-year autonomy sufficient to preserve and advance two-year interests on an equal, but distinct, basis with four-year interests.
- Provide stronger coordination.
- Make two-year education more affordable for students and more cost-effective for the state.



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Public Comment:

- Victoria Clark, BVCC advocate
- Dixie Stark, BVCC advocate

Regent Hamilton requested the regents receive a copy of Mary Moe's presentation.

**TWO-YEAR UNITS OPERATING BUDGETS and ITEMS**

**UM-HELENA COT**

Dean Daniel Bingham explained the UM-Helena COT budget. Strengths listed were access, portfolio of programs, student success and affordability. Challenges listed were non-competitive salaries, perception of two-year education, funding for program growth and need for instructional equipment.

**UM HELENA COT OPERATING BUDGET**

**MILES COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

**CONSENT**

Level 1 Memorandum

Regent Lila Taylor moved approval of the Level I memorandum. Motion passed 7-0.

**MILES COMMUNITY COLLEGE OPERATING BUDGET**

President Stefani Hicswa and Tad Torgeson explained the budget presentation for Miles Community College.

Strengths listed were the legislatively approved funding formula, debt reduction, distance education and local board oversight. Challenges stated were eastern Montana demographics, program development to meet workforce needs, recruitment & retention of faculty and staff and deferred maintenance.

**FLATHEAD VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

**ACTION**

Level II

Approval of Proposal to Designate an Associate of Arts Degree in Substance Abuse Counseling ITEM 140-301-R0708

Regent Hamilton moved approval of ITEM 140-301-R0708. Motion passed 7-0.



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**FLATHEAD VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE OPERATING BUDGET**

President Jane Karas explained the FVCC budget. Strengths listed were partnerships, transferability, student success, affordability, innovative programs, and community responsiveness. Challenges included retirements, recruitment and retention of faculty, utilities and student retention.

**DAWSON COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

**DAWSON COMMUNITY COLLEGE OPERATING BUDGET**

President Jim Cargill explained the DCC budget. Strength listed was the role of the college in economic development. Challenges include the declining regional population and its effect on enrollment.

**MSU-GREAT FALLS COT**

**ACTION**

- a. Approval of Proposal to Designate an Associate of Science Degree in Graphic Design Technology, MSU Great Falls COT ITEM 140-2851-R0708 | Supporting Material ITEM 140-2851-R0708 [ 1 | 2 ]

Regent Pease moved approval of ITEM 140-2851-R0708. Motion approved 7-0.

- b. Staff MSU-Great Falls COT [ITEM 140-2850-1108](#)

Regent Pease moved approval of ITEM 140-2850-1108. Motion passed 7-0.

**CONSENT**

Level I memorandum

Regent Hamilton moved approval of the level 1 memorandum. Motion passed 7-0.

**MSU-GREAT FALLS COT OPERATING BUDGET**

Dean Joe Schaffer explained the MSU-Great Falls COT budget. Strengths and challenges included balancing stability with responsiveness, the healthcare & trades programming and needing room to grow.

**Bitterroot Valley Community College District Proposal – Status Update**

Deputy Commissioner Moe explained the process and timeline to be used for a recommendation to be given to the legislature by the Board of Regents.



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**OCHE BUDGETS and ITEMS**

**ACTION**

- a. Family Education Savings Plan (FESP) ITEM 140-105-R0908

Regent Barrett clarified this was authorization for staff to continue to explore this option and was not a decision to approve the actual partnership with the Utah program.

Regent Buchanan moved approval of ITEM 140-105-R0908. Motion passed 7-0.

- b. Community College Tuition Scholarship ITEM 140-110-R0908

This will be deferred to a later date.

**CONSENT**

OCHE Staff ITEM 140-100-R0908

Regent Pease moved approval of ITEM 140-100-R0908. Motion passed 7-0.

**INFORMATION**

- a. [Negative Fund Balance Report](#)  
b. [Outstanding Indebtedness Report](#)

Mick Robinson, Associate Commissioner of Fiscal Affairs, explained the negative fund balance and the outstanding debt report. He said MSU-Bozeman was in the process of a re-marketing program to move from an "Auction Rate Bond to a Variable Rate Demand Obligation bonds."

Regent Buchanan requested information on policies relating to bonds with the campuses.

**OCHE OPERATING BUDGET**

Frieda Houser explained OCHE budget, federal and state programs, and one time only funding.

Public comment: Senator Laible

The board recessed at 5:30 PM



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**Friday, September 26, 2008**

The Board reconvened at 8:30 AM.

**Kindergarten-College Reports**

Angela McLean, Vice Chair of the Board of Public Education, gave a presentation entitled "Class 8 Montana Teaching License – A Cooperative Effort of the Montana Education Community."

Commissioner Stearns requested that one more person from one of the MUS two-year college campuses should be placed on the task force regarding the Class 8 Montana teaching license. Concerns were stated regarding faculty currently teaching college classes who would now be required to obtain certification. Ms. McLean agreed to report the MUS concerns and appreciation to her board.

**Montana Green Campus – A Virtual Gateway to the Montana University System**

Tyler Trevor demonstrated the Montana Green Campus website which entailed the three components of study green, work green, and live green. The website was the result of collaborative work between the Montana University System and the Office of the Governor to increase distance education and improve energy development. The website highlights energy related courses, programs and businesses throughout the state and is a one stop place for parents and students to find energy-related options for courses and programs. The website can be found at <http://mtgreen.mus.edu/>.

Evan Barrett, Governor's Office, explained the website options of locating a comprehensive list of energy related jobs and energy production in Montana. The links will take interested people to company names with lists of jobs and projects at each location, which promotes economic growth opportunities.

Governor Brian Schweitzer stated that Montana is heavily involved with energy production. He also stressed the importance of transferability, dual credits, and affordable education.

**MSU CAMPUSES BUDGETS and ITEMS**

**MSU-BOZEMAN**

- ✓ Agriculture Experiment Station
- ✓ Extension Service
- ✓ Fire Services Training School

**ACTION**

Aerospace Minor MSU-Bozeman ITEM140-2004-R0708

Regent Taylor moved approval of ITEM 140-2004-R0708. Motion passed 7-0.



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**CONSENT**

- a. Staff MSU-Bozeman ITEM 140-2000-R0908
- b. 407 Agreement-Hardy MSU-Bozeman ITEM 140-2001-R0908 Attachment 1
- c. 407 Agreement-Jutila MSU-Bozeman ITEM 140-2002-R0908 Attachment 1
- d. Aerospace Minor MSU-Bozeman ITEM 140-2701-R0708
- e. Operating Agreement – MSU Foundation MSU Bozeman ITEM 140-2003 R0908
- f. Expend Computer Fees MSU-Bozeman ITEM 140-2004-R0908
- g. Terminate Minor in Human Development MSU-Bozeman ITEM 139-2013+R0508 Attachment 1
- h. Level I Memorandum

Regent Taylor moved approval of consent agenda. Motion passed 7-0.

Regent Buchanan said the Montana University System was investing large amounts of money in people, which is our number one investment. He stated concern for campuses that have incurred large amounts of variable debt in their planning and budget forecasting. Buchanan requested the board consider how to address priorities for the next two to ten years as a system and for the board to have a discussion to determine the fiscal and policy plan. He reminded the group that the economic environment in the country may be such that the Montana University System may not be able to continually count on expansion and growth. Regent Buchanan excused himself from the remainder of the meeting.

**INFORMATION**

Level II Memorandum

**MSU-BOZEMAN OPERATING BUDGET**

President Gamble explained the MSU-Bozeman budget. Strengths listed were curriculum, strong support for student success, high placement rates, improved retention rates, and out-of-class instructional assistance. Challenges included competitiveness of nonresident tuition, program fee increases in 2010, the Bozeman high cost of living, meeting the two-year educational need of Gallatin Valley and salaries. He requested that the Board of Regents seriously consider the demand for two-year education in the Gallatin Valley.

Federal funding for agencies has remained flat for over the past decade which is a concern because of increased costs. President Gamble stated he wanted the state to look at this as a partnership of federal and state funds since they do not receive any funding from tuition.

Strengths listed were equipment purchases with one-time-only money, agriculture research centers and fundraising, and active research. Challenges include faculty and staff recruitment and retention.



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Challenges included declining federal funding, lack of funding to cover present law adjustments, increasing overhead assessment for institutional support, and termination costs for long-term employees.

Priorities consisted of developing education outreach efforts, efforts to become an electronic portal, expansion of work with rural communities, and the increase of technological capabilities for delivery of education programming.

It was noted that the Fire Services Training School helps reduce the state's cost in firefighting and that there was a steady increase in demand for their assistance from local responders. Priorities included reaching 75% of Montana's firefighters with training and completion of a hazardous materials technician program.

**MSU-BILLINGS**

- ✓ MSU-Billings COT

**ACTION**

- a. Level II
- b. Amend the Mission and Vision Statements MSU-Billings ITEM 140-2701-R0708

Regent Pease moved approval of ITEM 140-2701-R0708. Motion passed 6-0.

**CONSENT**

- a. Staff; MSU- Billings 140-2700-R0908
- b. Professor Emeritus of Modern Languages: Dr. William Plank; MSU-Billings ITEM 140-2701-0908
- c. Level I Memorandum

Regent Christian moved the consent agenda. Motion passed 6-0.

**MSU-BILLINGS OPERATING BUDGET**

Chancellor Sexton explained the MSU-Billings budget. Strengths stated were collaborative work with the system and MSU on distance learning, safety and emergency preparation measures, business process redesign, and the evaluation of programs to address local and regional needs. Challenges listed were retention and recruitment of faculty and staff, delivery of different models of distance education, the need for new investments, and increased expectations for safety and security of students.

John Cech, MSU-Billings COT, said their goal is to increase university transfers and that they have been moving toward more of the community college type of model.

Regent Hamilton requested more information on adult learners.



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Commissioner Stearns commented on the strategic goal of increasing on-line education and pledged that Deputy Commissioners Moore and Moe will continue working on the goal of educating life-long learners. Commissioner Stearns noted that her office was well aware of the issues faced by the campuses relating to market issues and further noted her staff's work with the campuses to be responsive to these market factors.

**MSU-NORTHERN**

**CONSENT**

- a. Staff MSU-Northern ITEM 140-2800-0908
- b. Level I Memorandum

Regent Taylor moved approval of the consent agenda. Motion passed 6-0.

**MSU-NORTHERN OPERATING BUDGET**

Chancellor Rolf Groseth explained the MSU-Northern budget. Strengths listed were base-plus budget model, stabilizing enrollment, and the strong support from MSU-Bozeman. Challenges included debt, past enrollment declines, fixed costs and deferred maintenance, and the increasing cost of utilities and transportation. MSU-Northern's goals were to get the budget in the black, stop the slide in enrollment and to look at long term sustainability.

**MUS Operating Budgets Summary (Action) ITEM 140-101-R0908**

Mr. Robinson gave a brief overview of the budget summary for the MUS. Commissioner Stearns pointed out the \$13 Million impact of the Six-Mill Levy on the university system budget.

Regent Christian requested receiving updated information on expenditures per student, the amount of money spent on instruction and efficiency measures for the campuses. Mr. Robinson responded that he would work with the campuses to obtain more information. Regent Christian requested more conversation on the money involved to help determine the plan for two-year education.

Discussion followed on the following points:

- The decision to have embedded Colleges of Technology to greatly reduce the costs for the Colleges of Technology.
- The need to look at the cost of duplication of programs in response to workforce demands.
- When addressing two-year education, the need to be mindful of non-credit classes as well.
- The need for a more educated population throughout the country in an affordable manner. This cannot be totally accomplished by four-year degrees.



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- How to increase the number of high quality two-year degrees.
- How to use under-utilized capacity and do so cost effectively.

Regent Hamilton moved approval of the MUS budgets. Motion passed 6-0.

Financial Aid Presentation/Discussion

- Montana Guaranteed Student Loan Program (MGSLP) Update  
Bruce Marks

Bruce Marks, Director, Montana Guaranteed Student Loan Program, explained the low 2.3 % default rate and was pleased with the decline of defaults in Montana. There will be \$160 million in student loan dollars delivered in Montana this fiscal year with no interruption of services for the students.

Mr. Robinson explained the availability of student loans for the 2009-2010 academic year. He noted the positive development of both the U.S. House and Senate passing HR 5715, which extended the student loan legislation. The extension of the legislation would make it possible for students to get loans for the 2009-2010 academic year and allows the federal government to participate with the private lenders in the issuance of loans to students and also allows for the selling of loans back to the federal government to help with loans that had already been issued. The federal legislation allows loan activity to go forward as in the past. He noted that MGSLP was the lender of last resort and is federally recognized as such.

Commissioner Stearns said the Higher Education Reauthorization Act was enacted in August 2008. She noted that the main points in the reauthorization were:

1. Attention to the costs of colleges and universities, including reducing textbook costs
2. Transparency to parents and public
3. Easier FAFSA forms
4. Aid to military veterans and their families
5. Increase in Pell grants from \$4800 to \$6000
6. Strengthening of Educational Talent Search (ETS) and Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP)
7. Funding for teacher preparation grants
8. Expanding and strengthening of funding related to healthcare faculty

- MHESAC/SAF Update  
Jim Stipcich

Jim Stipcich, President of the Student Assistance Foundation (SAF), spoke on the current situation in the student loan industry and what is expected for the future in the student loan arena. MHESAC had \$80 million in loans so far this year and will have \$60-\$80 million available for the remainder of 2008. Mr. Stipcich said he anticipated there would be \$150 million available for loans for 2009. Due to increased borrowing costs, MHESAC has had to reduce benefits previously offered to students, including the elimination of payment of origination fees and default fees on behalf of students, which means the students must now



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cover those costs. He reassured the Board of Regents that MHESAC would continue to service loans for Montana students.

Mr. Stipcich pointed out that due to the reduction in cash flow, SAF had reduced support for complementary programs, including contributions to charitable and civic organizations.

Meeting adjourned at 2:15PM.

**Posted on**

**Approved by the Board of Regents on**

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Sheila M. Stearns  
Commissioner of Higher Education  
and Secretary to the Board of Regents

Stephen M. Barrett  
Chair, Board of Regents

Other than the meeting starting time, times listed are approximate. In addition, agenda items may be rearranged unless an item is listed as having a "time certain." Action may be taken on any item listed on the Board or Committee Agendas. Public comment is welcome on all items. The Board of Regents will make reasonable accommodations for known disabilities that may interfere with an individual's ability to participate. Persons requiring such accommodations should make their requests to the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education as soon as possible before the meeting to allow adequate time for special arrangements. You may call or write to: ADA Coordinator, P. O. Box 203201, Helena MT 59620-3201, 406-444-6570, 1-800-253-4091 (TDD)