

November 20-21, 2014

**ITEM 165-1502-R1114**

**Authorization to Confer the Title of Professor Emeritus of General Engineering upon  
Neil K. Wahl; Montana Tech of The University of Montana**

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**THAT**

Upon the occasion of the retirement of Neil K. Wahl from the faculty of Montana Tech, the Board of Regents wishes to express its appreciation for his service to Montana Tech, the Montana University System, and the people of the State of Montana.

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**EXPLANATION**

Dr. Neil K. Wahl was born and raised in Montana and he exemplifies the strong work ethic of the great people of Montana. In 1973 Neil earned a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering from Montana State University (MSU). Just one year later in 1974 he earned a M.S. in Mechanical Engineering from MSU. Upon graduation Neil immediately took a job at the Montana Power Company. There he rapidly progressed through a series of positions with increasing responsibility and early in 1981 had risen to the position of Mechanical Engineering Supervisor. In that position through 1984 he was responsible for commissioning fossil-fired Generator Units 3 and 4 at the Colstrip Montana Power Plant. Neil prepared start-up procedures, supervised or personally commissioned HVAC systems, small and large turbine systems, large steam generator systems, lube oil systems, fuel oil systems, fans, pumps, electrical systems and instrumentation and controls. From 1984 to 1988 Neil acted as a Performance Engineer for Montana Power where he was involved in monitoring of plant operation, providing daily equipment operational reports, supervising junior engineers and general troubleshooting of technical problems, including management of a repair on an 800 MW electrical generator that suffered a major fault.

In August of 1988 Neil was hired as an Assistant Professor, Mechanical Engineering faculty, at Montana Tech of The University of Montana. Neil developed lectures and laboratories for undergraduate and graduate courses in electrical and mechanical engineering subjects. Similar to the progress he achieved in his previous career, Neil achieved the rank of Associate Professor and was awarded tenure. At that level, Neil decided to continue his own education and in 2001 he completed a PhD in Mechanical Engineering from MSU. Soon after his PhD graduation, Neil was promoted to Full Professor at Montana Tech. He served on academic committees, chaired numerous faculty search committees, served as interim department head, and supervised over thirty master's candidates. He is a role model for junior faculty to emulate.

During his tenure at Montana Tech Dr. Wahl was active as a consultant. He was contracted numerous times over the years by Pennsylvania Power and Light, Montana Power and REC, in a variety of technical and training capacities.

Dr. Neil Wahl has been highly praised by his students and colleagues. Dr. Wahl was never known as an easy teacher. He demanded a high level of effort from his students. Neil desired all Montana Tech graduates to be the type of employees that industry would hire and rehire emphatically. Dr. Wahl made his desire a reality.

For all the years that Neil worked at Montana Tech, he also maintained his love for ranching and drove every day from his ranch in Helena to Butte. In 2012 Dr. Wahl decided to retire. However, his love for teaching young minds was strong and he continued to dedicate a portion of his post-retirement time to teaching upper-level mechanical engineering courses through 2014.

For these and other contributions, the Board of Regents of Higher Education is pleased to confer upon Neil K. Wahl the rank of Professor Emeritus of General Engineering at Montana Tech together with all the rights, privileges, and honors thereto appertaining.

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**ATTACHMENTS**

None.