



# Montana University System

---

## Minutes Montana Board of Regents OCHE Offices/Zoom January 14, 2026

**Wednesday, January 14, 2026**

Meeting convened at 1:01 pm

Regents Present: Todd Buchanan, Chair, Loren Bough, Joyce Dombrowski, Jeff Southworth, Dean Folkvord, Heather Hoyer, and Carter Jasper. Ex officio members present: Commissioner of Higher Education Clayton Christian. Governor Greg Gianforte and Superintendent Susie Hedalen were excused.

Comments by Chair Buchanan | *00:00:51*

Chair Buchanan welcomed everyone to the meeting. He congratulated both the UM and MSU football teams and all the student athletes.

Approval of Minutes | *00:02:25*

- November 20-21, 2025, Meeting Minutes

With no corrections offered, the minutes were approved as distributed.

Chair Buchanan congratulated recent MUS graduates and gave a brief agenda overview.

Commissioner's Report | *00:03:45*

Commissioner Christian congratulated the MSU football program staff, MSU staff, and student athletes for winning the FCS National Championship. He said this kind of visibility on a national stage can provide good opportunities for the system. He congratulated the over 2,000 fall graduates and thanked the campuses for their commitment.

- Introductions and Acknowledgments | *00:06:40*

Chancellor Reid, UM Western introduced Dr. Estee Aiken, Interim Provost and Vice Chancellor, and Mike Piazzola, Dean of Students.

Commissioner Christian acknowledged the retirement of Great Falls College MSU Dean Erdmann and said that a search will begin soon. He said that a search committee for a new chancellor at UM Western has been formed.



## **CONSENT** | 00:10:02

### **Staff Items:**

- a. Labor Agreements; OCHE/MUS ITEM 222-100-R0126 | Attachment #1

### **Emeriti:**

- b. Ganesan; MT Tech ITEM 222-1503-R0126

### **Tenure:**

- c. MSU Bozeman ITEM 222-2000-R0126

### **Facilities:**

- d. Request for Authorization to Make Repairs to the Adams Center; UM Missoula ITEM 222-1001-R0126 | Attachment #1
- e. Request for Authorization to Construct Renovations in Eck Hall, Phase 8; UM Missoula ITEM 222-1002-R0126 | Attachment #1 | Attachment #2
- f. Request for Authorization to Complete Constructions of Shelled Space in Rooms 443 and 446; UM Missoula College ITEM 222-1003-R0126 | Attachment #1 | Attachment #2
- g. Request for Authorization for Montana PBS/Montana State University to Purchase 465 Kelly Creek Road, Miles City, MT; MSU Bozeman ITEM 222-2003-R0126

A motion for approval of consent items a.- g. was made by Regent Hoyer; motion passed (7-0).

## **ACTION** | 00:11:17

- a. Request for Authorization to Renovate Main Hall; MT Tech ITEM 222-1501-R0126 | Attachment #1

Dan Stevenson, MUS Director of Facilities Planning, presented this item requesting authorization for Montana Technological University to expend up to \$25,500,000 to renovate Main Hall. He said that the Board authorized Montana Tech to spend up to \$4,500,000 for planning and design in March 2024, adding that the building hasn't been renovated in 120 years and this project will significantly improve its utilization and accessibility.

- b. Request for Authorization to Renovate Engineering Hall; MT Tech ITEM 222-1502-R0126 | Attachment #1

Director Stevenson presented this item for authorizing Montana Technological University to expend up to \$8,000,000 for renovations of Engineering Hall. He said the Board authorized Montana Tech to spend up to \$1,200,000 for planning and design in March 2024, adding that the



# Montana University System

---

building hasn't been renovated in more than 100 years and this project will significantly improve its utilization and accessibility. He said this project will be joined by a connector with Main Hall to facilitate accessibility to both buildings with a single elevator.

- c. Request for Authorization to Plan & Design Housing Improvements; MSU Bozeman ITEM 222-2001-R0126 | Attachment #1

Deputy Commissioner Trevor presented the request for authorization to plan and design housing improvements at MSU, noting that this was an information item presented at the November meeting. He said this item is the planning and design phase related to renovation, deferred maintenance, and new construction and the funds will come from auxiliary revenue reserves.

- d. Request for Authorization to Transition from Self-Insured Workers' Compensation Structure to Montana State Fund Coverage; OCHE/MUS ITEM 222-101-R0126

Commissioner Christian reviewed the self-funded workers' compensation program and said that consultants advised use of a fully insured company. He said this item is a request to transition the MUS workers' compensation program to Montana State Fund which will cost less and eliminate risk as well as offer other services. He added that OCHE will continue convening the Workers Compensation Committee. Discussion followed.

## **ACTION** | 00:23:13

- a. Request for Authorization to Renovate Main Hall; MT Tech ITEM 222-1501-R0126 | Attachment #1

A motion for approval of action item a. ITEM 222-1501-R0126 was made by Regent Jasper; motion passed (7-0).

- b. Request for Authorization to Renovate Engineering Hall; MT Tech ITEM 222-1502-R0126 | Attachment #1

A motion for approval of action item b. ITEM 222-1502-R0126 was made by Regent Hoyer; motion passed (7-0).

- c. Request for Authorization to Plan & Design Housing Improvements; MSU Bozeman ITEM 222-2001-R0126 | Attachment #1

A motion for approval of action item c. ITEM 222-2001-R0126 was made by Regent Southworth; motion passed (7-0).

- d. Request for Authorization to Transition from Self-Insured Workers' Compensation Structure to Montana State Fund Coverage; OCHE/MUS ITEM 222-101-R0126

A motion for approval of action item d. ITEM 222-101-R0126 was made by Regent Jasper; motion



# Montana University System

---

passed (7-0).

Public Comment | 00:26:35

No public comment was received.

Meeting Adjourned at 1:30 pm

## Executive Session

The Board convened an executive session at 1:34 pm. Chair Buchanan determined the discussion related to matters of individual privacy and the demands of individual privacy outweigh the merits of public disclosure.

## Executive Session

- Honorary Doctorate Nomination #1 – MSU
- Honorary Doctorate Nomination #2 – MSU
- Honorary Doctorate Nomination #3 – UM
- Honorary Doctorate Nomination #4 – UM
- Honorary Doctorate Nomination #5 – MT Tech
- Honorary Doctorate Nomination #6 – MT Tech

Executive Session adjourned at 2:25 pm.

Approved by the Board of Regents on

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Clayton T. Christian  
Commissioner of Higher Education  
and Secretary to the Board of Regents

\_\_\_\_\_  
Todd Buchanan  
Chair, Board of Regents