

**MINUTES**  
**NORTH CENTRAL MICHIGAN COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES**  
**REGULAR MEETING – Library Conference Rooms 1 & 2**  
**Tuesday, February 24, 2026 (4:00 p.m.)**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Pretty called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

2. ATTENDANCE ROLL CALL TAKEN:

PRESENT: Trustees Etienne, Fought, Keiswetter (via phone), Kromm, Pretty, and Wozniak

ABSENT: Trustee Shirilla

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was moved by Trustee Etienne and supported by Trustee Fought that the agenda be approved as written.

AYES: Trustees Etienne, Fought, Keiswetter (via phone), Kromm, Pretty, and Wozniak

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Trustee Shirilla

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was moved by Trustee Kromm and supported by Trustee Wozniak that the minutes of both the January 27, 2026, Special and Regular Meetings, be approved as written.

AYES: Trustees Etienne, Fought, Keiswetter (via phone), Kromm, Pretty, and Wozniak

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Trustee Shirilla

5. TRUSTEE SERVICE RESOLUTION

Trustee Pretty welcomed former Trustee and Board Chair, Dan Rasmussen. He asked President Finley to share the following resolution to honor his service as a Trustee to the Board and College:

**WHEREAS**, *Trustee Rasmussen has faithfully served North Central Michigan College for over eight years, since his initial appointment to the Board of Trustees in 2017; and*

**WHEREAS**, *during his time at North Central Michigan College, Trustee Rasmussen has provided exemplary service in a variety of positions – serving as Chairman of the Board of Trustees from June 2022, to December 2025, and serving on the Bylaws and Policy Committee, the Finance & Facilities Committee, and as ACCT Delegate; and*

**WHEREAS**, *Trustee Rasmussen was part of awarding the 10,000<sup>th</sup> Associate degree earned from North Central Michigan College, and awarding the 1<sup>st</sup> Honorary Degree to Paul Keiswetter in 2019; and*

**WHEREAS**, *Trustee Rasmussen played an important role in the successful Building Tomorrow Together campaign which provided the college with critical funding for scholarships, student success resources, technology and innovation, and the newly renovated Borra Learning Center; and*

**WHEREAS,** *Trustee Rasmussen played a pivotal role in Career & Technical Education and Enhancement Project design, financing, and fundraising to support programmatic growth in nursing, health sciences, technology and the trades; and*

**WHEREAS,** *Trustee Rasmussen's service was monumental to many accomplishments such as launching the Career Development Center with LTTB Odawa SEDS Grant support, securing Distance Delivery approval from HLC, beginning club sports, and implementation of the Campus Cupboard Food Pantry; and*

**WHEREAS,** *during his time at North Central Michigan College, Trustee Rasmussen played an important role in the adoption of the Timberwolf mascot and the launch of Intercollegiate Athletics (basketball, volleyball, cross county, and eSports); now therefore, be it*

**RESOLVED,** *that the Board of Trustees of North Central Michigan College formally extends to Dan Rasmussen its sincere appreciation for his loyalty, many contributions, and dedication to our students as evidenced by this resolution; be it further*

**RESOLVED,** *that a copy of this resolution of recognition appears in the minutes of this meeting of the Board of Trustees, so that this heartfelt tribute of respect and gratitude will be included in the permanent records of this College.*

It was moved by Chair Pretty and supported by all trustees present that this resolution be adopted as written.

AYES: Trustees Etienne, Fought, Keiswetter (via phone), Kromm, Pretty, and Wozniak

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Trustee Shirilla

## 6. COMMUNICATIONS

President Finley shared the following communications:

a. Partnership preserves 13 acres on Crooked Lake

On Saturday, January 24, 2026, Jillian Fellows of the Petoskey News Review reported:

*A partnership between North Central Michigan College, the Little Traverse Conservancy, the State of Michigan and the Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians will protect and preserve nearly 13 acres and 1,700 feet of Crooked Lake frontage.*

*What started with the Kaine family's generous gift led to multiple partnerships guided by the Little Traverse Conservancy that both strengthen the college's core mission — opening doors for students — and safeguard the natural resources that define Northern Michigan. This investment ensures hands-on learning today and a healthier environment for the communities our graduates will serve tomorrow*

The full story can be found here:

<https://www.petoskeynews.com/story/news/environment/2026/01/23/partnership-preserves-13-acres-on-crooked-lake-shoreline/88283815007/>

b. Project Connect set for March 18 at NCMC

On Saturday, January 31, both Petoskey News Review and Harbor Light News noted:

*Residents of Charlevoix and Emmet counties struggling with financial, housing, employment or health challenges are invited to attend Project Connect, a free day of services and resources.*

*The event is scheduled for 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. March 18 at North Central Michigan College's Student and Community Resource Center. More than 70 local nonprofit agencies and businesses are expected to participate, offering services such as free haircuts, hot snacks and information about available resources*

The full story can be found here:

<https://www.petoskeynews.com/story/news/local/2026/01/31/project-connect-free-services-charlevoix-emmet-march-event/88318893007/>

c. New Skilled Trades Partnership Expands Training Opportunities

On Thursday, February 19, 2026, Olivia Fellows with 9 & 10 News picked up North Central's press release:

*North Central Michigan College has announced a new partnership with the Greater Michigan Construction Academy that expands skilled trades education while strengthening the regional talent pipeline for Northern Michigan employers.*

*The partnership will include construction academy curriculum in core curriculum, plumbing, electrical, welding, HVAC and carpentry.*

A link to the press release can be found here: <https://www.ncmich.edu/community-events/news-and-press-releases/ncmc-gmca-skilled-trades-partnership.html>

d. Harbor Light News Coverage

In addition to the reports above, North Central was featured in the February 18 issue of Harbor Light News four times. Topics include the upcoming Luncheon Lecture on February 27<sup>th</sup> featuring our own Dr. Melanie Leaver, presenting on AI, our full-tuition Presidential Scholarship for a local 2026 home school graduate, Hunger Games basketball fundraiser held on Feb 18<sup>th</sup>, and the Char-Em Taylor School's Transitional Classroom, which was shared with you more in detail last month.

## 7. SCHEDULED PUBLIC COMMENT

Dr. Ben Crockett, President of Association of Faculty Professional Association and Biology faculty, provided updates from the faculty:

- Yesterday, the Faculty Emeritus plaque was unveiled during a ceremony in the Student Commons area. This wonderful event provided the opportunity to honor colleagues who dedicated decades of service to leadership and student success. He also recognized all those who had a hand in the plaque's creation, installation, and unveiling ceremony.
- Offered his support to the faculty members being considered for promotion from probationary to full status. This milestone represents years of dedication to the craft of teaching.
- Noted and congratulated Trustee Keiswetter on her grandson who became the Michigan High School Boys Ski Champion yesterday.

## 8. FINANCIAL REPORT

Dr. Tom Zeidel, Vice President for Finance & Facilities, was asked by Chair Pretty to provide a financial report for January 2026. Tom certified that the financials as of January 2026 are within the adopted tentative budget for 2025-26.

It was moved by Trustee Fought and supported by Trustee Etienne that the financial report and statement of bills be accepted as submitted.

AYES: Trustees Etienne, Fought, Keiswetter (via phone), Kromm, Pretty, and Wozniak

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Trustee Shirilla

## 9. PRESIDENT'S REPORTS

### a. Capital Outlay Request Scoring

For the second year in a row (FY27), North Central has the top scoring community college capital outlay request in the State for the Skilled Trades Education Pathways (STEP) Center.

Also of note, Governor Whitmer and State Budget Director Jen Flood presented the Governor's final executive budget recommendation for FY2027. While the Governor recommended flat funding for community college operations, almost all of MCCA's legislative priorities were included, including additional funding for Michigan Reconnect (to lower the age to 21), additional funding to fortify the sustainability of the Community College Guarantee, \$20M for dual enrollment reimbursement to K12 school districts, and - perhaps most notably - \$33.3M in ITEMS funding for infrastructure and deferred maintenance.

### b. Years of Service Awards

North Central held our annual Years of Service Awards at 4 pm Monday, February 23<sup>rd</sup>. In addition to celebrating our wonderful employee's milestones, of note, we also celebrated Trustee Kromm completing one year of service, and Trustee Keiswetter completing 10 years of service. Thank you both!

### c. OAS AAS Program Inactivation

In alignment with the recommendation from the Curriculum Review and Academic Policies (CR/DAP) Committee, the OAS AAS Program in Office Administrative Services will be inactivated.

**Rationale for Program Inactivation:** The AAS in Office Administrative Services has not produced any graduates or transfer activity over the past three academic years, and application numbers have remained consistently low despite completion of a formal program review.

### d. Zoning Board of Appeals public hearing regarding use variance

A public hearing with the City of Petoskey's zoning board of appeals will be held Tuesday, March 3, 2026 at 6:00 pm. This public hearing is to consider a use variance request to utilize the vacant building north of the 7<sup>th</sup> Day Adventist Church across Howard St. from the College for a child care center. This action is being taken to support the College's Child Care Initiative. We have secured a MiLEAP grant for this purpose.

## 10. COMMITTEE REPORTS

### a. Finance & Facilities Committee

Trustee Fought noted that the Finance & Facilities Committee met on Wednesday February 18, 2026 to review January Financials, and address the following items, requiring action:

#### i. **CATEE Furniture Proposal**

**Background:** The CATEE project is progressing nicely, and it is now time to give consideration to the furniture, fixtures and classroom and office equipment required for this addition,

Requests for proposals including price quotes for good, better, and best furniture, fixtures and equipment were distributed to furniture vendors and three responded. The responses were evaluated by Cornerstone Architects based on each bidder's experience working with the College, their ability to deliver, and price.

It is the College's desire to furnish the CATEE facilities with the best furniture, fixtures and equipment. Accordingly, price considerations were directed to prices for the "best" equipment.

All things considered, Cornerstone Architects recommended the bid from Custer at \$468,118.60 be accepted.

Trustee Fought motioned and Trustee Etienne supported that the bid from Custer in the amount of \$468,118.60 be accepted for furniture, fixtures and classroom and office equipment for the CATEE project.

AYES: Trustees Etienne, Fought, Keiswetter (via phone), Kromm, Pretty, and Wozniak

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Trustee Shirilla

#### ii. Dental Hygiene Clinic Design Proposal

**Background:** During a recent NCMC Board meeting, the board approved proceeding with the purchase of the Matthews Building on US 31 west of town for the purpose of converting it into a dental hygiene clinic. That process is now ongoing with the goal of completing the due diligence phase of the process within the time limit stipulated in the preliminary purchase agreement.

It is now anticipated that the purchase will move forward to its completion and that the College needs to be ready at that time to undertake the structural modifications needed to convert the building into a dental hygiene clinic. Now is the time to initiate the planning necessary to make the changes.

Cornerstone Architects have submitted a proposal that covers the preconstruction design phase of the building conversion. These services include working with management to develop a design concept, preparing specific design and infrastructure plans, preparing construction drawings, assistance in the construction bidding process, and construction administration. The proposed fee for these services is \$283,350.

Trustee Fought motioned and Trustee Kromm supported that Cornerstone Architects be retained to complete the preconstruction design phase of converting the Matthews building located on US 31 west of town into a dental hygiene clinic at a fee of \$283,350 contingent upon completion of the College's purchase of the building.

AYES: Trustees Etienne, Fought, Keiswetter (via phone), Kromm, Pretty, and Wozniak

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Trustee Shirilla

iii. Single Audit

**Background:** As a part of the audit of the College's June 30, 2025 financial statements, the auditors also audit the schedule of expenditures of federal awards and the College's internal control over financial reporting and compliance with the rules and regulations of the various federal financial aid programs the College administers, the most prominent being the Pell Grant Program and ADN-BSN Completion Grant Program.

This year the federal government was late in publishing audit requirements therefore delaying the auditor's report on the various federal financial aid programs. Because this report emphasizes compliance with a number of federal aid programs, it is referred to as the Single Audit Act Compliance report. This is the report that has been provided.

The auditors expressed a clean opinion on the Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards found on page two of the report. They also gave what amounts to a clean report on internal control over financial reporting and on compliance with requirements of the federal programs. However, the auditors did have four findings that are set forth on pages 11 through 14 of the report. The findings deal with how the College can improve internal controls over financial reporting and compliance with federal rules and regulations applicable to federal programs and suggest corrective action. The findings do not qualify in any way the auditor's clean opinion.

The final four pages of the report set forth the College's plans addressing the findings.

Trustee Fought motioned and Trustee Kromm supported that the Single Audit Act Compliance report on the College's participation in various federal financial aid programs during the year ended June 30, 2025, be accepted.

AYES: Trustees Etienne, Fought, Keiswetter (via phone), Kromm, Pretty, and Wozniak

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Trustee Shirilla

b. Personnel Committee

Trustee Etienne noted that the Personnel Committee met on Thursday, February 19<sup>th</sup> to discuss the faculty evaluation process, three-year employee retention/turnover data, and review three faculty full-status recommendations.

**Background:** In accordance with the 2023-2028 Association of Faculty and Professional Staff (AFPS) Collective Bargaining Agreement, Section 27 Full Status,

President Finley has provided a recommendation to grant full status to three of our probationary faculty members.

Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs, Dr. Stephen Strom, provided background information on each candidate and their achievements while here at North Central.

i. Full Status Recommendation – Shae Long-Kish

Trustee Etienne motioned and Trustee Wozniak supported that the board accept President Finley's recommendation to accept Shae Long-Kish's request for full status. Ms. Long-Kish's new status will take effect beginning with the 2026-2027 contract.

AYES: Trustees Etienne, Fought, Keiswetter (via phone), Kromm, Pretty, and Wozniak

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Trustee Shirilla

ii. Full Status Recommendation – Gary Matelski

Trustee Etienne motioned and Trustee Wozniak supported that the board accept President Finley's recommendation to accept Gary Matelski's request for full status. Mr. Matelski's new status will take effect beginning with the 2026-2027 contract.

AYES: Trustees Etienne, Fought, Keiswetter (via phone), Kromm, Pretty, and Wozniak

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Trustee Shirilla

iii. Full Status Recommendation – Breann Wozniak

Trustee Etienne motioned and Trustee Kromm supported that the board accept President Finley's recommendation to accept Breann Wozniak's request for full status. Ms. Wozniak's new status will take effect beginning with the 2026-2027 contract.

AYES: Trustees Etienne, Fought, Keiswetter (via phone), Kromm, and Pretty

NAYS: None

ABSTAIN: Trustee Wozniak

ABSENT: Trustee Shirilla

c. Curriculum Committee

Trustee Wozniak noted that the Honorary Degree Committee met this month to review proposed Honorary Degree Recipients. This broad-based internal committee, consisting of six staff and two faculty, met to review a potential honorary degree recipient for the 2026 Commencement Ceremony. They have recommended to the board's Curriculum Committee that Phil Millard be awarded honorary degree at this year's commencement ceremony.

Per Board Policy 116, we would like to recognize Phil Millard.

Trustee Wozniak motioned and Trustee Etienne supported that Phil Millard be awarded an Honorary Degree to recognize outstanding contributions to the community in the areas of Educational Service, Humanitarian Service, and Servant Leadership at the Commencement Exercises to be held May 8, 2026.

AYES: Trustees Etienne, Fought, Keiswetter (via phone), Kromm, Pretty and Wozniak  
NAYS: None  
ABSENT: Trustee Shirilla

11. OLD BUSINESS. None.

12. NEW BUSINESS.

a. Foundation Report

V.P. for Advancement/Executive Director of the Foundation, Chelsea Platte provided a bi-annual Foundation report, and a document showing both the breakdown of dollars raised fiscal year 2025-26, and fund balances as of December 31, 2025.

To date, \$1,077,944 of their \$4M goal of dollars raised has been met, and \$250K in gifts have been entered. The number of donors is 343, very close to the goal of 400. Dental Hygiene has received over \$200K in outright gifts and \$2.5M in pending and upcoming asks.

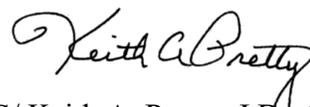
She thanked the Board for approving new Foundation Board member, Dr. Mark Mercer.

13. UNSCHEDULED PUBLIC COMMENT. None

14. ADJOURNMENT.

There being no further business, Trustee Fought motioned, and Trustee Kromm supported the meeting be adjourned at 4:47 p.m.

AYES: Trustees Etienne, Fought, Keiswetter (via phone), Kromm, Pretty and Wozniak  
NAYS: None  
ABSENT: Trustee Shirilla



/S/ Keith A. Pretty, J.D., Chairman



/S/ Melissa Keiswetter, Secretary