

**MINUTES**  
**NORTH CENTRAL MICHIGAN COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES**  
**REGULAR MEETING – Library Conference Rooms 1 & 2**  
**Tuesday, September 23, 2025 (4:00 p.m.)**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

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

**2. ATTENDANCE ROLL CALL TAKEN:**

PRESENT: Trustees Kromm, Pretty, Rasmussen, Shirilla, and Wozniak

ABSENT: Trustees Etienne and Keiswetter

**3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

It was moved by Trustee Rasmussen and supported by Trustee Pretty that the agenda be approved with one modification: item 10. Student Success be moved up to item 5. Student Success.

AYES: Trustees Kromm, Pretty, Rasmussen, Shirilla, and Wozniak

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Trustees Etienne and Keiswetter

**4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

It was moved by Trustee Kromm and supported by Trustee Shirilla that the minutes of the August 26, 2025, Regular Meeting, be approved as written.

AYES: Trustees Kromm, Pretty, Rasmussen, Shirilla, and Wozniak

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Trustees Etienne and Keiswetter

**5. STUDENT SUCCESS**

Chelse Hawkins Olivo, Outreach Recruiter, introduced Taylor Owens. Taylor just started her second year at North Central and is a student in the nursing program. She is a member of our Welcome Desk Staff, Student Senate, Presidential Scholar, and serves as a Student Ambassador and tour guide. Taylor spoke of the tours she often hosts here on campus. Student led tours offer visitors a student's perspective of our campus. She is most proud to show others the high level of education we offer as a Community College, and the benefits we offer students on a more individual and personal level.

**6. COMMUNICATIONS**

President Finley shared the following communications:

a. Volleyball Team's Successes

Our Volleyball Team has been featured twice in the news since we last met, both articles written by Petoskey News Review's Drew Kochanny.

On September 5, the paper highlighted the Timberwolves 3-0 trip to Port Huron for the SC4 Quad, where they won against Mott Community College, Lansing Community College, and Lake Michigan College.

On September 16, the paper highlighted team member, Gimiwanokwe (Gimi) Keller.

*The North Central freshman and Harbor Springs native is just beginning her collegiate career with the Timberwolves' volleyball team and she's smiling from ear to ear every step of the way. Keller is proud of the fact that she's able to be where she is, attending college right next to her hometown, something she wasn't always sure would happen.*

b. NCMC's New Dean of Workforce Education

On September 13, 2025, Janis Reeser of the Petoskey News Review reported on our recently named Dean of Workforce and Continuing Education, Cassandra Hernandez.

*Hernandez began her tenure in mid-July, following the retirement of longtime dean Christy Lyons, according to a college announcement.*

*Hernandez brings more than a decade of experience in workforce development, public policy and community leadership. She will lead efforts to strengthen workforce and continuing education programs that align with employer needs and regional economic development strategies.*

Read the full story here:

<https://www.petoskeynews.com/story/news/education/campus/2025/09/13/cassandra-hernandez-joins-north-central-michigan-college-as-workforce-continuing-education-dean/85928161007/>

## 7. SCHEDULED PUBLIC COMMENT

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

- The faculty voted unanimously to make a \$500 donation to the student emergency fund.
- The Human Science faculty will meet with GVSU faculty and staff to strengthen our relationship and outline steps for expanding critical transfer pathways in medical and health careers.
- Faculty will be actively involved in preparing for Senior Preview Day on October 18. This provides meaningful opportunities for faculty to talk directly to potential students and their families and highlight their areas of expertise.
- Recognized the Employee Engagement Committee for organizing the Timberwolf Tributes, providing the opportunity to celebrate our colleagues.

Ben introduced Psychology faculty Erick Haight. Professor Haight shared the work he is doing in preparation for Senior Preview Day. He will be sharing what psychology adds in value to: knowledge, skills, and abilities. He shared a handout with the board outlining the skills, evidence, and degree content areas in the field of psychology.

## 8. FINANCIAL REPORT

Dr. Tom Zeidel, Vice President for Finance & Facilities, was asked by Trustee Rasmussen to provide a financial report for August 2025. Tom certified that the financials as of August 2025 are within the adopted tentative budget for 2025-26. As the State of Michigan has not yet adopted a budget, the status of our appropriations is yet unknown. Our budget is based on a 3% increase. The first payment would normally be expected on October 16. However, without an accepted budget in place, that payment will be delayed.

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

AYES: Trustees Kromm, Pretty, Rasmussen, Shirilla, and Wozniak

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Trustees Etienne and Keiswetter

## 9. PRESIDENT'S REPORTS

President Finley shared the following:

- a. Emmet County Commissioners' Update

At the request of Emmet County Administrator David Boyer, President Finley provided a brief College update to County Commissioners at their September 8 meeting. In this update, our recent Economic Impact Study was highlighted, as well as successes over the past year, and our bold future plans to better serve students and our community.

b. NCMC's Annual College Fair

North Central will host its annual College Fair on Wednesday, October 1, from 6-7:30 p.m. in the NCMC Athletic Center gymnasium. This free event gives high school juniors and seniors and their families — in addition to NCMC students considering transfer for bachelor's completion — the chance to meet with representatives from more than 40 colleges and universities. Representatives from the military will also be present, and Michigan Student Aid will be available to answer questions about state and federal financial aid programs.

c. First Home Cross Country Meet

The Timberwolves will host our first ever home cross country meet this coming Friday, September 26<sup>th</sup> at Camp Petosega at 1:00 p.m. This event is the MCCA Northern Conference Championship, so we invite you all to come out and cheer on our runners!

d. Senior Preview Day

Senior Preview Day will be held Saturday, October 18 from 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. here on campus. This event will allow area High School Seniors to learn about admissions and Financial Aid, explore academic programs, meet faculty and future Timberwolves, tour campus and enjoy lunch.

e. Harvest Howl

Immediately following Senior Preview Day from 1:00 - 4:00 p.m., we will be hosting NCMC's first Harvest Howl. Join us for lawn games, prizes, food and fun, and attend the Timberwolves volleyball game beginning at 3:00 p.m.

f. Strategic Plan Annual Report

VP for Marketing and Special Projects, Carol Laenen, and Associate VP of Institutional Effectiveness, Erin Sonneveldt, presented an overview of the 2024-25 Strategic Plan performance. This was our best year yet with 73% of our goals met. This was also the first year evaluating strictly 'met' and 'not met' and no longer utilizing 'partially met' or 'deferred'.

An overview of the 2025-26 Strategic Plan was reviewed, with 4 goals, 18 action plans, and 52 objectives. There are a few minor adjustments to be made to align with President Finley's Goals Point Grid once that has been established by the board.

## 10. COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Bylaws & Policy Committee

Trustee Kromm shared that the Bylaws & Policy Committee met on Tuesday, September 16, 2025, to review Board Policies 100 – 105 as a part of a review of all Board Policies. Some of these policies had not been modified in over 20 years. As such, changes were required to policies 100, 101, 102, and 105 in order to modernize and adjust for inflation.

Trustee Kromm motioned and Trustees Wozniak and Pretty supported that the board adopt the comprehensive revisions to policies 100, 101, 102, and 105 as detailed in pages 15-18 of the board packet

AYES: Trustees Kromm, Pretty, Rasmussen, Shirilla, and Wozniak

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Trustees Etienne and Keiswetter

b. Finance & Facilities Committee

Trustee Pretty shared that the Finance & Facilities Committee met on Tuesday, September 16, 2025, to review August Financials, best practices grid, enrollment, corporate memberships, the CATEE project, and Dental Hygiene.

i. Corporate Membership – Bay Harbor Yacht Club

Background: The Finance & Facilities Committee has discussed the benefits of a corporate membership to Bay Harbor Yacht Club, with concurrence and support of the Foundation Board for half the cost. Transitioning from part-time to full-time membership will strengthen our connections within the community during the summer months and create enhanced opportunities for fundraising.

Trustee Pretty moved and Trustee Wozniak supported that the Board approve a corporate membership at the Bay Harbor Yacht Club, with half the cost to be provided by the NCMC Foundation.

AYES: Trustees Kromm, Pretty, Rasmussen, Shirilla, and Wozniak

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Trustees Etienne and Keiswetter

ii. 2025-2026 Local Strategic Value

Background: Each year the College is required to report to the State Budget office, Office of Education how it is meeting “best practices” under three categories, one, Economic Development and Business or Industry Partnerships, two, Education Partnerships, and three, Community Service, with each category containing five required subparts. This reporting requirement is established in Sec. 230 of the State School Aid Act. The State requires that the Board certify that best practices have been met. This certification is critical for the State appropriation process.

A 9-page document has been prepared and distributed to each board member identifying the three categories, the five required subparts of each category, and how the College is meeting each requirement.

Trustee Pretty moved and Trustee Kromm supported that the Board certify that the College meets the best practices standards required for State appropriations under Section 230(2) of the State School Aid Act, as documented in “North Central Michigan College Local Strategic Value Table.”

AYES: Trustees Kromm, Pretty, Rasmussen, Shirilla, and Wozniak

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Trustees Etienne and Keiswetter

c. Personnel Committee

Trustee Shirilla shared that the Personnel Committee met yesterday to review two hiring recommendations and review President Finley’s 2025-26 Goals Point Grid.

i. Helpdesk Manager

Background: VP Zeidel shared that a search committee consisting of six employees reviewed nine applications and invited two candidates for in-person interviews.

The committee recommends Ivy Neuhart for the position of Helpdesk Manager. Ivy has been part of the Helpdesk team in a student role for the past two years while working on her associate degree in Computer Information Systems. She also studied game design at Lawrence Tech. Ivy brings strong leadership experience from her experience working at two local restaurants. As a Helpdesk

Manager, in addition to overseeing daily operations, Ivy will also mentor and inspire the students who gain hands-on experience through the Helpdesk.

Trustee Shirilla motioned, and Trustee supported that the College hire Ivy Neuhart for the position of Helpdesk Manager, starting September 24, 2025.

AYES: Trustees Kromm, Pretty, Rasmussen, Shirilla, and Wozniak

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Trustees Etienne and Keiswetter

ii. Early Learning Center Lead Teacher

Background: Jen Wixson shared that a search committee consisting of four employees interviewed three candidates for the position of Early Learning Center Lead Teacher/Program Director.

The committee recommends Sadie Riley-Flemming. Sadie has extensive experience as a child care director, licensing compliance expertise, strong leadership, and long-term commitment to the field. Sadie brings licensing and program administration experience, is two courses away from completing her bachelor's in early childhood education, is committed to wanting a long-term position, and demonstrates a strong connection with the current staff.

Trustee Shirilla motioned, and Trustees Kromm and Wozniak supported that the College hire Sadie Riley-Flemming for the position of Early Learning Center Lead Teacher/Program Director starting September 24, 2025.

AYES: Trustees Kromm, Pretty, Rasmussen, Shirilla, and Wozniak

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Trustees Etienne and Keiswetter

11. OLD BUSINESS

None.

12. NEW BUSINESS

None.

13. UNSCHEDULED PUBLIC COMMENT.

John Penfield, community member and pickleball player, requested that class auditors not pay fees for use of the pickleball courts. He provided his contact information for follow up.

14. ADJOURNMENT.

There being no further business, Trustee Etienne motioned, and Trustee Pretty supported the meeting be adjourned at 4:52 p.m.

AYES: Trustees Kromm, Pretty, Rasmussen, Shirilla, and Wozniak

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Trustees Etienne and Keiswetter



/S/ Daniel D. Rasmussen, Chairman

*Melissa Keiswetter*

/S/ Melissa Keiswetter, Secretary