

## COLLEGE OF MICRONESIA – FSM BOARD OF REGENTS

### Minutes of the 12-14 August 2024 Virtual Meeting

Zoom Link: <https://comfsm.zoom.us/j/3061339702?pwd=dnM3UmJKWW83V0JFdjhCNDNMbMVsUT09&omn=96166806719>  
Meeting ID: 306 133 9702 | Passcode: 133187

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**Present:** Regent Suzanne Gallen from Pohnpei (Chair); Regent Jeffrey Arnold from Chuuk (Vice Chairman); Regent Lyndon Cornelius from Kosrae, (Member); Regent Geraldine Mitagyow from Yap (Member); and President Dr. Theresa Koroivulaono (*ex officio member*)

**Absent:** None.

**Resources:** Vice President of Administrative Services, Mr. Joseph Habuchmai, Vice President of Instructional Affairs, Ms. Delihna Ehmes; Vice President of Enrollment, Management and Student Services Mr. Joey Oducado; Vice President of Instructional Effectiveness and Quality Assurance, Ms. Jennifer H. Helieisar; Vice President of Cooperative Research & Extension, Mr. Steven Young-Uhk; A/g Dean of Chuuk Campus Ms. Genevy Samuel; A/g Dean of Kosrae Campus, George Tilfas; Dean of Career and Technical Education Center Ms. Phyllis Silbanuz; Dean of Yap Campus & A/g Dean of FSM-FMI Campus Ms. Lourdes Roboman; and Comptroller Ms. Roselle Togonon.

**Additional Resources:** Executive Director of the Institutional Advancement and External Affairs Office (IAEA), Fmr. President Emanuel “Manny” Mori; and EO to the Office of the President, Mrs. Lisa N. Dereas.

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Chairwoman Gallen called the meeting to order. Meeting convened at 10:12am on Monday, 12 August 2024.

2. **PRAYER:** Prayer was led by VPIA Delihna Ehmes

3. **READING OF THE MISSION STATEMENT:** Recited by all.

4. **ROLL CALL:** Secretary/Treasurer Mitagyow called roll. Quorum is met.

#### 5. REVIEW OF AGENDA

Regent Mitagyow moved to approve the agenda as is. Vice-Chair Arnold second the motion.

**CARRIED.**

#### 5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES (15-19 April 2024)

Regent Mitagyow moved to approve the minutes. Vice-Chair Arnold second the motion.

**CARRIED.**

#### 6. COMMUNICATIONS

- a. May 16, 2024: President-Dr. Theresa met with Chinese Ambassador H.E. Wu Wei
- b. June 7, 2024: President-Dr. Theresa held an introductory meeting with Australian Ambassador H.E. Jenny Grant-Curnow
- c. June 12-14, 2024: President-Dr. Theresa attended REL Pacific and PPEC meetings in Honolulu, Hawai'i
- d. June 18-20, 2024: President-Dr. Theresa attended FACCSO Meeting in-country
- e. July 11, 2024: Courtesy Call on the Honorable Stevenson A. Joseph Governor of Pohnpei State
- f. July 31, 2024: President-Dr. Theresa met with FSM President H.E. Wesley S. Simina and V-President Aren B. Palik. President-Dr. Theresa also met with the University of the South Pacific Institute of Education representative earlier on the same day.

### **Income Generation Proposals presented to the FSM Office of the President**

#### **i. Tax Break**

#### **ii. Faculty & Staff Housing**

Dr. Theresa shared her recent discussions with external partners and addressed funding concerns for the College. She presented two proposals to the board for consideration: a tax break amendment to incentivize larger donations to the college's endowment fund and the development of a 20-unit housing complex for faculty and staff. 20% of the income generated from the housing project will be set aside to help maintain the building(s). The tax break proposal would allow businesses to deduct qualifying donations from their gross revenue tax filings, with donations above a certain threshold qualifying. The proposed housing complex, costing \$7.5-\$10 million, would generate rental income for the endowment fund.

### **8. REGENTS REPORTS:**

a. **Chair Gallen** reported that the new administration (Stevenson & Ioanis) has been quite busy. There was the Micronesian Forum; the Micronesian Games in Majuro; FestPac in Hawai'i; Micronesia Expo in Chuuk. There are new cabinet members, new director of Health, Fisheries and Agriculture and State Public Auditor. Stevenson's vision is having a high school in every municipality in Pohnpei. SLT members may even serve on the Education Board to help serve what the new admin would like to do in terms of implementing public services. New power plant to open in 2025. There will be a special election for a new Nett senator to replace the deceased senator from that municipality. The courtesy-call on the Governor also included the possibility of moving the Land Grant office to Palikir. Governor Joseph did not make a comment, but perhaps he will soon. Currently, the area where LG is located, plus the new multi-purpose building is heavily congested; therefore, is in desperate need for re-designing. Several summits feeding into the National Government's Strategic Plan Development. New Director of the Veterans Affairs office. Reach out to the office and try to get them to teach some classes.

Update on the meeting with JEMCO in Honolulu: Unfortunately, the College's funding went down for FY2024. They approved to maintain the \$1million. The concern is that JEMCO is operating on the assumption that the resolution limiting the College is still in full force. However, SEG is now absorbed by the Education grant. Huge concern to look at. Chair has reached out to OIA to see how this can be resolved. JCRP missed to include the College's proposals to JEMCO, but the Chair was able to share these

with the members of OIA she reached out to. She is hoping that this will help for the next Fiscal Year 2025.

**b. V-Chair Arnold**

1. The 2024 AIP for the amended compact has been approved. Chuuk's local revenue will no longer bear the cost of operating major sectors like health and education, which it has done for the past 6 pay periods. The local revenue will be reimbursed when the compact fund becomes available.
2. The Infrastructure Development Plan (IDP) for Chuuk State is currently in draft form and includes over 100 proposed infrastructure projects. The plan will prioritize which infrastructure projects will be funded from Compact Infrastructure funds over the next 5 to 10 years.
3. Two major road projects to pave the Northern and Southern sides of Weno Road:
  - a. ADB PRIF Project: The paving road from Mwan to Wichap is done awarding the bid and will commence construction in October 2024.
  - b. WB PRIME & SCORE project: pave the road from Iras to Mechitiw along with both east and west Pou roads. Bidding will commence in December 2024 and construction in June 2025.
4. Chuuk State Strategic Development Plan (SDP) is in its final review phase, another round of consultations with stakeholders is scheduled for late August to September awaiting the green light for submission to the national government. 14 sectors were proposed but streamlined to 7 sectors.

*Note: a strategic action plan for workforce development will be created to emphasize the capacity-building needs of Chuuk.*
5. Chuuk State Leadership will convene on September 10 to 11. The primary areas of discussion include (1) usage of the fishing fee revenue, (2) state infrastructure priorities, (3) a constitutional convention for the Chuuk State Constitution, and (4) the amended compact direction with state plans – IDP and SDP.
6. Chuuk State recently adopted a new adjusted pay scale for the public sector – increasing salaries up to 45%. The wage group is currently holding consultations with the private sector for a new state minimum wage.
7. The National Direct Assistance initiative is assisting with projects at the community and municipal levels. Municipal governments can receive direct funds through the program for specific projects related to food security, water needs, and climate resilience. Chuuk State will collaborate with municipal governments to enhance their capacity.
8. Chuuk State will participate in the ODA round table discussion on August 15-17. Priority projects to be submitted include roads and docks developments. They will be part of the 2-year cycle of ODA projects.
9. On August 11, the consulting group for the new hospital design arrived to make final decisions on the three designs presented. Once a design is selected, it will be put out for bidding.
10. Tonoas has been identified as the next island to expand economic activities to reduce pressure on Weno. Road projects, including ODA from China as part of the FSM Pave the Nation Initiative, are underway. Further development plans include the establishment of fiber optic connectivity from Weno, funded by Japan ODA. Two years ago, Tonoas was illuminated through a partnership between CPUC

and Vital/FSMPC.

**c. Regent Mitagyow**

Yap continues to see rotation of military unit teams, but no major works on the airport and docks have started. Logistical and planning work is ongoing with major construction work slated to begin in 2025.

Yap Governor Charles Chieng, 11<sup>th</sup> Legislature Speaker Ted Rutun, DY&CA Director Alex Gilfiley, and other leaders will be attending the SNLC meeting in Pohnpei.

The U.S. Department of the Interior's Office of Insular Affairs awards \$644,386 in Maintenance Assistance Program grants to the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM). Of that, \$280,000 goes to the Yap State Public Service Corporation's Pacific Lineman Training Program to train 75 professionally certified power linemen for the public power utilities from the CNMI, Guam and Palau, as well as the utilities from Chuuk, Kosrae, Pohnpei, and Yap. An additional \$276,286 is awarded to Pacific Mission Aviation to convert a storage facility into an airplane hangar maintenance bay in Yap for the MPA's MAP to Hope 2024 – Yap project.

The Yap Department of Health Services Director position has been filled, with two vacant Director positions remaining in the Department of Resources & Development, Office of Administrative Services, and AG Office.

The Acting R&D Director recently attended a meeting in Pohnpei for the 2024 FSM Trade Policy Implementation Plan along with other States and National Government key staff to review and endorse the plan. No other new initiatives are currently in the works for Yap. The Acting Director, however, noted that the vocational Ed training conducted by Yap Campus in coordination with the R&D department was very well received. He wondered if there are plans to continue with such training and noted that funding from the R&D Department is available under the Workforce Enrichment Program. If the college provides trainers, he noted that the department can continue to help with funding. He was advised to contact the Yap Campus Dean for more information on possible future training.

**d. Regent Cornelius** shared a need for the Kosrae Campus: housing, especially for the incoming faculty. Kosrae Campus seeks the possibility of the program for the legal training (Trial Counselor courses), and would appreciate night courses. Kosrae Regent further asked if the number of zoom meetings can be minimized due to the power issues in the state.

*Side note: The generator is able to power up the Rose Mackwelung Library, however, it is waiting on KUA to install the necessary parts to connect the machine to the building.*

**9. New Business**

**a. Board Policy No. 2003:** Institutional Planning and Integrated Educational Master Plan Presented by the President- Dr. Theresa (hyperlink President's PP presentation)

Question by the V-Chair: *When do we know when to check on our budget so we are aware of how much we have spent in order to start the process of replenishing?*

Comment by the Chair: *Institutional memory is key and important to ensure the framework and sustainability of the College.*

The Chair reminded the Board and the SLT that all requests to use the FSM-China gym to come to the OTP. The Chair also recommended to the EO to minimize the information written in the minutes. EO asked if reports could be hyperlinked depending on approvals from respective reporters (BOR and SLT). The Chair and the SLT agreed to the EO hyperlinking reports to shorten minute pages.

All Board members will commence reviewing and signing off on Actions & Directives, starting with the April 2024 Board meeting.

V-Chair opted to tune in the next BOR meeting in Kosrae via Zoom. The Board asked if we can cut back costs on these travels to attend Board meetings and only have those important staff members travel for very important matters. Further discussion on this will be had during the next Executive Session in September.

b. Process of change between the former IEMP and the new draft IEMP

c. Draft Strategic Plan 2024-29

Dr. Theresa discussed the unique challenges and opportunities presented by COMFSM's vast ocean delivery area and the need for careful planning and resource allocation. She highlighted recent changes to the College's strategic planning process, which now involves simultaneous development of both an integrated educational master plan and a strategic plan, with a focus on **access, innovation, and resilience**. Dr. Theresa also presented the results of a SWOT analysis and emphasized the importance of integrating short- and long-term plans to meet student needs and the potential for collaborative partnerships. She introduced a 1-stop shop monitoring platform for regular progress reports and quarterly reviews and reiterated the College's mission-driven focus on student success.

The Chair initiated a discussion about the timing of self-study during the IEMP and sought advice from the team. V-Chair raised concerns about potential budget issues due to decreasing donor funds and questioned where to find a realistic budget plan for the next five years. Dr. Theresa acknowledged the financial constraints the College is facing, leading to reevaluating plans, considering increasing student fees, exploring sustainable ways to operate auxiliary services like leveraging technology for e-books, and reviewing vacant positions for efficiency. Dr. Theresa emphasized the need for proactive partnerships to assist with funding, as relying on a single source is no longer viable. This discussion also highlighted the importance of alignment, streamlining processes, and maintaining institutional memory.

***Meeting recessed from 12:17pm to tomorrow, 13 August at 10am.***

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**DAY 2**

***Meeting reconvened at 10:06am and was opened by the Chair. The prayer was led by A/g Dean Tilfas.***

d. IEMP reports 2018-2023 by each Vice Presidents

#### **i. VPEMSS Oducado**

VP Joey then presented the Evaluation Report, detailing the Department's performance against the 2018-2023 Integrated Educational Master Plan (IEMP). The department successfully implemented four major plans, addressing 13 out of 18 specific plans, and adapted to the challenges of the pandemic by diversifying its service delivery and implementing a first-year experience course. However, there were still challenges to be addressed, including the development and implementation of a developmental service program and increasing student engagement in extracurricular activities. Despite these, the department managed to cope with a decline in enrollment due to the pandemic.

VP Joey presented the organization's headcount and credit enrollment trends over the past five years, noting a slight increase in headcount enrollment but a significant decrease in credit enrollment. He also discussed the results of their strategic plan assessment, which informed the development of their 2024-2029 actionable improvement plan based on three themes: access, innovation, and resilience. VP Joey further discussed the need for a conservative approach to resource allocation and the potential need to revisit budget allocations in the upcoming summit. He also reported on efforts to simplify the FAFSA process, including securing a \$52,500 grant to increase FAFSA completion and purchase Starlink subscriptions for each state campus. The challenges of the FAFSA process, the importance of focusing resources on underperforming areas, and the potential of leveraging technology to enhance operations were also discussed.

Chair Gallen raised concerns about social inclusion and gender issues in the student population, to which VP Joey assured that the institution is committed to ensuring gender equality and respect. VP Joey also mentioned that they have addressed some minor cases of gender-related harassment and have a third restroom to accommodate all gender identities.

#### **ii. VPCRE Young-Uhk**

VP Steven outlined the new strategic direction for the CRE department, which included strengthening the department's structure, improving resource management, and increasing access to innovative technologies. He also revealed that CFE would now be included in the CRE department's scope. Chair Gallen sought clarification on this change. Additionally, VP Steven presented on the export and marketing program, which aimed to improve marketing and explore opportunities through CFE in response to concerns raised by Congress.

#### **iii. VPAS Habuchmai**

VPAS Habuchmai provided updates on various ongoing projects, including expected completion dates and new goals for the upcoming fiscal year 2020-2029. He also discussed the annual balanced budget submission and the approval of purchase orders as part of the ongoing implementation plan. VPAS further discussed the transition of the

college's bookstore to include e-books and the establishment of an online bookstore account, along with plans to evaluate the bookstore's operational outcome in 2025. He also presented the Actionable Implementation Plan and its expected outcomes

- **Comptroller's report:**

The Chair raised concerns about the distribution of revenue sharing and the need for clear advocacy talking points, which the Comptroller confirmed were being prepared. Comptroller Roselle also highlighted the increasing cost of education as a key issue. Chair Gallen emphasized focusing on funding for elementary and secondary education due to historical underfunding, and encouraged advocating for increased funding. The team discussed an upcoming presentation to government officials, with Suzanne suggesting a practice run. The Comptroller presented assessments and plans for upgrading technology and learning management systems.

**iv. VPIA Ehmes**

VPIA Ehmes discussed the department's efforts to enhance academic practices, including classroom research, peer-to-peer evaluations, and the implementation of a first-year experience course. She highlighted the success of the academic advising program and the establishment of clear pathways from high school to graduation and transfer. Despite budgetary and technical challenges, new career and technical education programs were introduced, and efforts were made to improve the quality of basic education. VPIA Ehmes also noted the achievement of several objectives, including the approval and implementation of teaching equivalency in response to COVID-19, increased community service, and the development of an early college program for high school students.

VPIA further presented on the progress of various initiatives and plans implemented over the past two weeks, as well as the challenges faced and proposed action plans for the next five years. She also provided updates on training programs and the reactivation of law enforcement, among other achievements. The board discussed the upcoming strategic plan summit and addressed some technical difficulties. Chair Gallen expressed her appreciation for VPIA's comprehensive presentation and the efforts of the team.

***Meeting recessed from 1:30pm today to 10am tomorrow, 14 August.***

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**DAY 3**

***Meeting reconvened at 10:10am and was opened by the Chair. The prayer was led by A/g Tilfas.***

e. Evaluation of the 2018-2023 Strategic Plan – reported by VPIEQA

VPIEQA Jenni presented the institutional set standards report, which was developed based on the 5-year strategic plan from 2018 to 2023. The report focused on nine measures of success under the strategic direction of innovating academic quality to ensure student success. The college exceeded all five benchmarks of the Community College Survey of Student Engagement

and met 13 out of 15 standards set by the institution. However, the institution failed to meet the stretch targets for enrollment, degrees awarded, certificates awarded, and transfer to four-year colleges and universities. Chair Gallen asked if questions could be asked during the presentation, to which VP Jenni responded affirmatively.

VP Jenni further presented on the institution's set standards and the need for a strategic plan for 2014 to 2029. Chair Gallen raised concerns about data trends not meeting their targets and the need for improved statistics. VP Jenni acknowledged these issues and emphasized the importance of timely data and proper systems. They both agreed to present these concerns at the upcoming Strategic Plan Summit. The summit would include group discussions based on strategic goals for the new 2024-2029 strategic plan, with an emphasis on understanding stakeholders' needs and future visions.

Logistics and audience engagement strategies for the upcoming summit were discussed. VPIEQA confirmed that invitations had been sent to various external stakeholders, including government bodies, private sectors, NGOs, church communities, students, faculty, and staff. The potential of incorporating innovative elements like apps for information sharing and prizes to engage attendees, especially students were discussed as well. The roles of the Regents, the importance of ensuring attendance, and the potential for state campuses to attend the event either in person or virtually were emphasized. Lastly, the discussion over organizing endowment pledges and the upcoming university fundraising summit, emphasizing the need for effective communication and proper technology setup across campuses for the virtual event.

Chair Gallen, VPIEQA and the President discussed the process following this summit where it was clarified that the IEQA office would compile a report from the summit, which would be presented to the Board after receiving feedback from external stakeholders between August and September. The report would then be reviewed by the senior leadership team and resented to the Board of Regents for endorsement by September. The Chair expressed satisfaction with this plan and indicated that a special meeting might be needed before September for further feedback.

**Action Items:**

- Dr. Theresa and the EO to work on organizing an orientation/reorientation session for the Board; and to draft a letter to the FSM President and state governors regarding plans to assist with teacher certification challenges.
- EO to include all board member signatures on directives going forward; update the Board master planning calendar to reflect recent policy consolidations and reviews with the help of VPIEQA and to have it available at the September Board meeting.
- SLT to continue and explore innovative ways to increase enrollment and revenue, especially for the Kosrae campus.
- Comptroller Roselle to follow up on getting hard copies of the 2022 audit report distributed; and to address auditor concerns around federal grant compliance.
- Board and SLT to continue advocacy efforts with national and state governments for increased funding.



