

**Board of Regents (BOR) Quarterly Meeting  
Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute (SIPI)  
April 21, 2021  
9:00 AM – 12 Noon (MDT)  
ZOOM**

**MINUTES**

**A. Call the Meeting to Order**

Chair Muniz called the meeting order at 9:08 a.m. and welcomed meeting attendees.

**B. Welcome and Invocation**

Dr. Johns Bush offered a welcome and invocation in his native Apache language.

**C. Roll Call**

Esther Peterson called roll; the following were in attendance:  
Ms. Haeyalyn Muniz, Chair, Jicarilla Apache Nation  
Mr. Adam J. Begay, Vice Chair, Navajo Nation-New Mexico  
Ms. Esther Peterson, Secretary/Treasurer, Navajo Nation-Arizona  
Dr. John Bush, Member, Inter-Tribal Council of Arizona-South  
Dr. Curtis Chavez, Southern Pueblos Council  
Kathleen Yeppa for Student Government Association, SIPI  
Mr. Francis Tafoya, Eight Northern Pueblos at 919a  
Dr. Sherry Allison, Ex-Officio member, President, SIPI

Absent:

Dr. Damon Clarke, Member, Inter-Tribal Council of Arizona-North  
Mr. Darrell Flyingman, Vice-Chair, Oklahoma Tribes  
Mr. Anthony Mendez, Mescalero Apache Tribe

Quorum established.

**D. Approval of the Agenda**

Dr. Allison reviewed the agenda. Dr. Bush requested to add background check and finger printing for Board members. Dawn Ami, Human Resources Specialist, was available to answer questions, therefore, item was placed under Old Business #1.

Dr. Bushed motioned to approve the agenda with the addition of add background check and finger printing for Board members under Old Business. Seconded by Esther Peterson. Call for questions. Motion APPROVED.

**E. Approval of the Meeting Minutes**

**1. February 17, 2021**

Francis Tafoya motioned to approve the meeting minutes from February 17, 2021. Seconded by Dr. Curtis Chaves. Call for questions. Motion APPROVED.

## 2. March 29, 2021

Dr. Allison noted an error in the March 29, 2021 meeting minutes on the agenda. F.1. Academic Calendar.

Francis Tafoya motioned to table the March 29 meeting minutes due to discrepancy until a solution to fix is determined. Seconded by Dr. Chavez. Call for questions. Motion APPROVED.

### F. Reports (Action)

#### 1. SIPI Quarterly Report

##### a. Overview

Dr. Allison reviewed her quarterly report with Board members. She indicated the report is for February and March 2021 only. April to be included in the next report.

SIPI plans to open in Fall 2021. Classes begin on Start September 8, 2021. Planning needs to be done to ensure safety before campus open. SIPI may not be able to accommodate all students requesting residential accommodations to ensure safety. Dr. Cometsevah and Student Affairs team are planning appropriately. SIPI leadership will have an alternative plan should there be another upswing in COVID cases and there is a need to move back to online course delivery.

The Spring 2021 trimester ended there were 387 students. Campus remained closed, everything was provided online, students were provided laptops and hotspots if they needed and student fees were waived. There was small group of Vision Care students on campus, the final weeks of the trimester, for required lab classes. The Kellogg program provided hotel accommodation and Chef Baily prepare meals.

Leadership was presented a list of student concerns. She asked that student concerns be address as they occur. Most the items on the list were already resolved but asked that Kathleen Yeppa and Dr. Cometsevah develop a communication plan with Students and the Student Government Association to ensure SIPI is effectively communicating with students.

SIPI's virtual Commencement was beautiful however, there were two disappointed Jemez Pueblo students who were not included in the commencement. They were graduates from last year. Student Affairs has been communicating Mr. Shendo and supervisor of students. to apologize and rectify. The commencement video was edited, to include their names, and reissued, but the students feel that they will ever get back the celebratory feeling of commencement. Student Affairs is still in discussion on what can be done.

Monte Monteith will represent SIPI at the May 11 Tribal Consultation on Reopening for Residential and Higher Education.

SIPI is getting ready for summer trimester. Fees will be waived and laptops and hotspots will be provided to those who need. There will be a minimal number of student on campus for lab courses in Natural Resources, Vision Care and Culinary Arts. Ten of these students will be houses at the residential halls. A Nurse will be contracted to be on campus and the Union was notified that CRAs will be returning to campus work.

Monte updated the Board on facilities projects and preparations for the Fall 2021. SIPI will hire two custodians for touch point cleaning. Safety signage will be placed around campus. Dr. Cometsevah is working on a new food service contract. The majority of students who attended classes at the end of the Spring trimester were vaccinated. He also reported SIPI inquired, with the Office of the Solicitor, whether vaccinations can be mandated for staff and students. SIPI is awaiting a ruling. SIPI also purchased Healthy Roster which requires a daily self health assessment. Staff and students will utilize prior to accessing campus.

**b. Appropriated Funds**

Bella Lujan reviewed the summary of federal funding with the Board

**c. Grant Funds**

Karen Coffey reviewed the summary of the grant funds with the Board.

**2. Board of Regents Development Office**

Bill Lohr reported Abby is working with Laguna Pueblo on a grant to being a drawing course and master artist to SIPI. Marvin Brown is hosting his first SIPI alumni webinar with Dr. Allison at 6pm on April 22, 2021. Board members are welcome to join if available. Bill also reported the Jaramillo Accounting group complete the 2019 and 2020 audits. The office is now up to date.

Karen Coffey reported she is working with Bill to drawn down approved Title III funding.

**3. Student Government Association (SGA)**

Kathleen Yeppa reported the SGA is planning for virtual meetings and activities for the summer trimester. She presented student concerns to leadership regarding SIPI student eagle mail and is working with a committee to resolve.

Reports concluded

Dr. John Bush motioned to approve the SIPI Quarterly, Board of Regents Development Office and Student Government reports as presented. Seconded by Dr. Curtis Chavez. Cal for questions. Motion APPROVED.
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**G. Old Business**

**1. Background and finger print for BOR.**

Dawn Ami reported Darrell Flyingman, Dr. Curtis Chavez and Dr. Damon Clarke completed and received favorable for their background checks. No further action is needed from them. Several Board members still need to submit items or they may have to restart the process over. Board member will receive a discontinued e-mail if they need to restart the process. She also reported Ramon Suarez, Emergency Hire, is working for Human Resources (HR). He will e-mail Board members their status and items needed as soon as he received his BIE e-mail.

She informed Board members the HR office is able to do finger printing and asked that they inform her if they need assistance to locate out of state center.

Bill Lohr clarified that Esther Peterson needs access to e-mail to complete and submit the information needed for background checks.

**2. Action: Memorandum of Understanding: Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute And SIPI Board of Regents**

Dr. Allison reported Board members should have received a draft MOU between SIPI and the Board as well as a Building Floor Plan for review and consideration. She is has been working with the Office of the Solicitor on the MOU. She is asking for the Board approval to forward the MOU, without signatures, to Director Dearman for approval.

Abby Webb ask for costs associated for items and rooms for in-kind purposes. Per the MOU the services are provided at no charge. Dr. Allison asked her to touch base with Monte Monteith. Abbey needs the a list of in-kind services for applying for grants.

Francis Tafoya motioned to approve the *Memorandum of Understanding: Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute and SIPI Board of Regents* be forwarded to Director Dearman for approval. Seconded by Dr. Chavez. Call for questions. Motion approved,

**3. Update: Plan for Name Change**

Alena Chalan reviewed potential times for a name change. She indicated, per BIE- DC, there may need to be a tribal consultation. Chair Muniz appointed Dr. Bush to be the point of contact for the Board for planning purposes.

**4. Update: Proposed Change from Trimester to Semester**

Val Montoya reported SIPI changed from a semester to a trimester in 1992 due student not able to finish degree programs. Trimesters allowed students to remain on track. The semester system also posed a hardship to employees because they were employed two semesters and unemployed in the summer. Due to NM laws and regulations they were unable to receive unemployment. It was hard to recruit and retain quality employees.

Twenty plus years later higher education has changed. Colleges are now changing how they structure their terms to ensure students complete programs as fast as possible. They are looking at changes semesters to trimester and/or eight week terms.

She also reported she has a cross divisional working group looking at the impact to SIPI students to change from a trimester to a semester. SIPI will need to remain in compliance with the U.S. Department of Education Title V regulations for financial aid, the Veteran’s Administration and the Higher Learning Commission. Any change to the terms needs to be data driven and have internal/external stakeholder input.

**5. Update: Transition to Interim SIPI President**

Dr. Allison reported she, Monte Monteith and Alena Chalan have been meeting regularly to ensure a smooth transition for to the Interim President. She will pack up her home office on April 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Monte Monteith discussed the interview process for the new President. He said it would be similar to the Haskell’s interview process. The Board had two member as part of the interview committee, the candidate received a campus tour and met with student government, the faculty senate and held an open forum with faculty and staff where the candidate presented why they should be President. The interview committee attended the forum then interviewed the candidate.

Dr. Allison delegated Alena Chalan, Monte Monteith and Dr. Muskett to be the SIPI's coordinating for the interview. Dr. Milford has experience from other colleges and valuable input.

## **H. Introduction of New Business**

### **1. Proposed Dental Therapy/Allied Health Programs**

Val Montoya reviewed the history of authorizing legislation for dental therapy. It is now authorized in New Mexico. She hopes SIPI can establish a regional training program. On campus.

SIPI was awarded a grant from the National Indian Health Board (NIHB) to conduct a feasibility study to establish and implement the program at SIPI. SIPI is awaiting the Memorandum of Understanding between SIPI and NIHB from the Office of the Solicitor.

. There is an established working group in Arizona and New Mexico. Arizona tribes can establish a training program similar to Alaska's. Northern Arizona University is looking to establishing a Master's Dental Therapy Program. Right now one program accredited to and offered in Alaska another program is awaiting accreditation in Minnesota but pandemic has delayed accreditation

Overall this would be a program for SIPI, good for tribes but will be expensive. It will address dental health care for tribal members and train community members to go back to their tribal communities.

### **2. Amendment to By-laws and Constitution of SIPI Board of Regents**

Bill Lohr reviewed the proposed amendments to the SIPI Board of Regents Constitution. The Amendments included the removal of the Northern Plains Tribe from the membership list and added the President Emeritus. They also included term lengths for the Student Government Association President and the President Emeritus. Mr. Lohr explained that the amendments were necessary due to the resolution passed in March 2021. Mr. Once the amendments are approved he will update the Board letterhead

Dr. Curtis Chavez motioned to approve the amendments to the Constitution of the Board of Regents. Seconded by Esther Peterson. Call for questions. Motion APPROVED.
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## **I. Public Comments**

There wasn't any public comments.

## **J. Future Meeting Schedule/Calendar**

### **1. Quarter 3: July, August, September, 2021**

### **2. Quarter 4: October, November, December, 2021**

It was noted that face to face meetings are dependent on pandemic situation. There may be a need for a Special Board meeting for Facility items and a Fall 2021 Board Resolution. Bill Lohr will work with SIPI to find dates for a 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarterly Board and any Special meetings.

## **K. Adjournment**

Dr. John Bush motioned to adjourn. Seconded by Francis Tafoya. Call for questions. Motion APPROVED. Meeting adjourned at 11:54 a.m.
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