

# BOARD OF REGENTS

## AGENDA

7-9 April 2026 | Pohnpei State

Zoom link: <https://comfsm.zoom.us/j/3061339702?pwd=dnM3UmJKWW83V0JFdjhCNDNMbmVsUT09&omn=92114089396>

Meeting ID: **306 133 9702**

Passcode: **133187**

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**Present:** Chair Lynn Sonden (Chair); Secretary/Treasurer Geraldine Mitagyow (joined via Zoom); Pohnpei State Regent Suzanne L. Gallen from (Pohnpei State); Kosrae State Regent Jeffrey Steven L. George; Chuuk State Regent Roger S. Arnold; and President & CEO Dr. Theresa Koroivulaono (*ex officio member*)

**Resources:** Vice-President for Instructional Affairs, Mrs. Delihna Ehmes; Vice-President for Enrollment, Management and Student Services, Mr. Joey Oducado; Vice-President for Innovation & Sustainability, Mr. Steven Young-Uhk; Interim Vice-President for Instructional Effectiveness and Quality Assurance, Mr. Gee L. Bing (HR Manager); A/g Dean of Chuuk Campus Ms. Genevy Samuel; Dean of Career and Technical Education Center Ms. Phyllis Silbanuz; Dean of the Yap and FSM-FMI Campuses, Ms. Lourdes Robomoan; A/g Dean Kosrae Campus, Mr. Skipper Ittu.

**Invited Guests/Additional Resources:** Raymond James representatives, Mr. Jason Miyashita and Ms. Amanda Gima; Comptroller Roselle B. Togonon; IT Consultant Dhiraj K. Bhartu; and Executive Officer Lisa N. Dereas

**Absent/Apologies:** Dean of Kosrae Campus, Andrea Hadik

-----General Session commenced on Tuesday, 7 April at 11:20AM-----

1. Call to Order: Chair Lynn Sonden
2. Opening Prayer: VPIA Delihna Ehmes
3. Reading of the Mission Statement: SBA President, Stephen Mara, Jr.
4. Roll Call; Declaration of Quorum (All Regents present).
5. Review of Agenda: Endorsed
6. Approval of Minutes: Endorsed
  - a. **4-5 December 2025**
7. Communications from the Office of the President (OTP)
  - i. **12-13 January:** ACCJC Transparency, Storytelling and Value Literacy Project Regional Convention
  - ii. **20 January:** Public Hearing Notice for the Education Committee
  - iii. **21 January:** COM-FSM Engagement in the FSM Cybersecurity
  - iv. **23 January:** Lunch meeting with the Pohnpei State Chamber of Commerce
  - v. **28 - 30 January:** COM LG Board Meeting
  - vi. **2 February:** Meeting with Dr. Whitney re: Stacking Credentials
  - vii. **5 February:** COM-FSM 2027 Budget Review (FSM President's Office)

- viii. **24 February – 8 March:** Duty Travel to Yap State for Handover Ceremony (FSM-FMI Campus)
- ix. **12 March:** Meeting with Dr. Lee Ullman
- x. **24 March:** Meeting with Human Rights Team
- xi. **25 March:** Accounting Technician Level II Certification Award Ceremony

8. Regents Reports

a. **Chair, FSM National Government:** The Chair does not have anything to report to the Board at this time.

b. **Secretary & Treasurer, Yap State:**

Yap State is experiencing early impacts from the global energy and oil market fluctuations, reflected in rising costs of goods and services. The Yap State Public Service Corporation has proposed an increase in electricity rates to offset higher fuel import costs, highlighting the State's continued vulnerability to external energy supply shocks.

Preparations for the U.S.-related military buildup are ongoing, particularly in infrastructure planning for airport and seaport improvements. Environmental impact assessments are currently underway, with a draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) scheduled for public release on April 15, 2026. Community consultations are expected to follow throughout late April and early May, emphasizing stakeholder engagement and environmental safeguards.

In governance, Yap is preparing for its next general election cycle, with elections for Governor and Lieutenant Governor scheduled for November 2026. This upcoming election is expected to shape policy direction and leadership priorities for the State moving forward.

c. **Regent, Pohnpei State:**

Pohnpei State reported ongoing challenges and developments across governance, infrastructure, health, and regional engagement.

The Regent reported that the State Government previously issued an emergency declaration concerning the landfill due to critical capacity and management issues; however, this declaration was subsequently rescinded by the Legislature. The Governor's Office continues to address the situation, indicating the issue remains unresolved and a priority concern.

During the recent State of the State Address, several key initiatives were highlighted, including the convening of the Chief Executive Council (CEC) to strengthen inter-agency coordination. The release of updated census data is informing policy adjustments at the state level, while the official launch of the State Strategic Plan signals a renewed focus on long-term development priorities. Additionally, progress was noted regarding national-level initiatives, including developments related to seabed resource governance.

The health sector continues to face operational challenges at the state hospital, particularly shortages in medical supplies, equipment, and essential medicines, including those required for dialysis treatment. These issues continue to impact service delivery and require ongoing attention.

In infrastructure development, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) has broken ground on the expansion of Pohnpei Port, a significant project aimed at strengthening maritime capacity and supporting trade. JICA has also deployed a technical team to conduct assessments

related to shipping, imports, and broader trade logistics, which is expected to inform future economic planning.

Under the Skills and Employability Enhancement Project (SEEP), construction of an agricultural building at Pohnpei Island Central School (PICS) is underway, with related developments also taking place in Yap, supporting workforce and technical education initiatives.

Looking ahead, Pohnpei State will host the Micronesian Islands Forum (MIF) and is preparing for the upcoming Micronesian Games next year. The State may seek collaboration with the College of Micronesia-FSM, particularly regarding the use of facilities and logistical support.

**d. Regent, Chuuk State:**

Chuuk State reported ongoing activities across all sectors. In health, a new hospital has been approved with land issues resolved, and dialysis services are being expanded. In education, the SEE Project building is under construction, alongside cultural knowledge initiatives. Youth and community programs, including regional sports events, continue to be implemented.

Economic efforts include tourism activities, aquaculture training, livestock program revival, and validation of national trade and investment policies. Environmental programs are fully funded under the Compact, with continued work in climate change, waste management, and oil spill mitigation.

Infrastructure projects funded by ADB, World Bank, and China ODA are scheduled to begin between late 2026 and 2027, alongside IMF-funded upgrades totaling \$1.9M. Government initiatives include adoption of the State Strategic Development Plan, proposed scholarship funding increases, and workforce reforms such as minimum wage establishment.

**e. Regent, Kosrae State:**

The Regent reported steady progress across infrastructure projects in Kosrae. Several projects are nearing completion, including the Agriculture Citrus Greenhouse, DREA Piggery Rehabilitation, Asphalt Spot Patching, and Hospital Quarantine Repairs (all ~90–95%). The Kosrae Hospital Rehabilitation is approximately 30% complete, with Phase 1 scheduled for August 2026, while Airport Security Fencing is ~75% complete but temporarily on hold.

Major road projects under PRIME, SCORE, and SRIIP are advancing through design and procurement, with bid submissions targeted for April 2026. Additional projects, including the Cultural Center Phase 1 and DT&I facility repairs, are in final design or awaiting technical review.

Key challenges include funding approvals (FSM Congress, ADB, World Bank), contractor coordination, and scope clarification issues (e.g., Utwe Water System). Several pipeline projects remain pending, including Okat infrastructure works, the COM-FSM Kosrae Campus multipurpose building, and the proposed \$20M China road project.

**9. President's Report**

**a. President**

The President & CEO reported on major institutional initiatives and progress since the last Board meeting, emphasizing accreditation, strategic planning, curriculum reform, and external

relations. She highlighted participation in an ACCJC convening in Honolulu on *return on investment* and a regional workshop on stackable credentials, which directly informed COM-FSM's new employer-driven short-credential strategy and immediate faculty professional development (online course and PD day focused on stackable credentials, with strong faculty engagement). She confirmed completion of a comprehensive college-wide curriculum review (200+ page report covering students, faculty, staff, alumni) and receipt of the phase 1 Workforce Needs Assessment, which together identify priority workforce gaps in infrastructure, financial management, and accountability and will guide program redesign; later phases will drill down at state level. The President provided the first results from the new 2024–2030 Strategic Plan, reporting on eight KPIs/ISSs across the three goals (Access, Innovation, Resilience): all eight KPIs met their institutional set standards, while two hit stretch targets and six fell slightly short, showing progress but clear room for improvement in areas like course completion and persistence. She requested Board approval for technical revisions to the KPIs/ISSs (numbering, clearer definitions, alignment with IPEDS and ACCJC language) and briefed Regents on strengthened engagement with the Office of Compact Management, including data being submitted to support raising or restructuring the current \$1M compact cap for the College. Additional highlights included: evidence of a diverse but FSM-majority workforce (15 nationalities, 269 FSM full-time employees); successful Founding Day celebrations and endowment fundraising (goal restored to \$100K after surpassing \$80K, including a \$10K private donation); and early implementation of the Board-approved AI policy, with staff in the President's Office trained as AI champions and now providing AI-related training to campuses, positioning COM-FSM to leverage AI ethically for administration and teaching while responding to sector-wide expectations noted at recent ACCT conferences.

b. **Vice President for Innovation & Sustainability (VPIS):**

VP Steven reported chiefly on operations, facilities, and long-term infrastructure planning, separate from the Comptroller's financial status. He highlighted completion of key capital projects (new FMI classrooms and dormitory, the Student Services Center at National, roof repainting, and other repairs), and a new generator maintenance contract with Vital covering 11 generators across campuses. He described targeted improvements to student housing—especially at National's dorms—where limited vendor reliability forced the team to build durable PVC bed frames in-house and replace broken washers and refrigerators, while also addressing student complaints about desks and general dorm condition. Major challenges include aging infrastructure, reactive rather than preventive maintenance, dependence on off-island vendors (advance payments, price changes, and long delays), rising utility and operating costs, and shortages of qualified technical and accounting staff. To respond, he presented a transitional Facilities Plan for 2026–2028 (a bridge until a new 10-year Facilities Master Plan is developed), focused on: systematic, campus-wide assessment of buildings and space needs; shifting to preventive maintenance; strengthening procurement and vendor accountability; building internal capacity to implement projects instead of relying solely on external contractors; and prioritizing critical projects such as a water reservoir system at National Campus (for reliable water, fire safety, and resilience during outages). He emphasized that this plan will guide project prioritization, support compliance with Accreditation Standard III (physical resources), and underpin future requests to the National Government for IMF/IDP and other capital funding.

i. Financial Status Report:

The Comptroller reported that the College remains in a stable and sound financial position, with the FY 2026 operating budget set at approximately \$12.62 million, including the additional \$1 million in Compact funding, and with personnel costs at about 80% of total expenditures supporting over 400 employees across all campuses. As of February 28, 2026, total expenditures and encumbrances were about \$5.06 million (40% of the annual budget), indicating spending is on track with roughly 60% of the budget available for the remaining months; all campuses are operating within their approved budgets, with utilization ranging from roughly 39–45%, except the Board of Regents' budget, which is higher due to March meeting costs. She highlighted strong balance sheet metrics: the Endowment Fund is about \$15.37 million, cash reserves stand near \$3.09 million (covering roughly 3–4 months of operations), and combined investments total about \$18.46 million, reflecting prudent long-term stewardship. Revenue performance across the National Campus, state campuses, and restricted funds totals an estimated \$18.38 million for the year, with about \$6.34 million already received and \$7.27 million in expenditures to date, all within approved levels. She noted that the College is current on its audits, is already working on the FY 2025 audit (targeting completion by June 30, 2026), and has sufficient cash to support operations through the end of the current (spring 2026) term, while cautioning that rising personnel, utilities, and other operating costs will continue to be closely monitored to protect long-term financial sustainability.

**ii. Raymond & James Investment Report:**

Jason Miyashita and Amanda Gima from Raymond James provided a market update and brief performance review of the College's endowment and reserves funds. They noted that despite heightened global uncertainty and higher oil prices, the portfolios remain stable, with the endowment now around \$14.2M and long-term returns since 1998 (about 7.3% annually) exceeding both the benchmark and the College's target return. The more conservative reserves fund has also performed well, with recent multi-year returns above its 4.2% target. However, they highlighted that two equity managers, Aristotle and Lazard, have underperformed their benchmarks in recent periods and are on formal watch; Raymond James will return with specific recommendations on whether to reduce or replace these mandates, including potential shifts to lower-cost passive strategies or alternative active managers, and they offered additional investment training for new Regents.

**iii. Cooperative Research and Extension Report:**

The CRE/Land Grant report highlighted a wide range of research and extension activities across all four states, focused on food security, health, youth and family development, and aquaculture. The VPIS reported that programs are being delivered in close partnership with state departments (agriculture, R&D, public health, education) and communities, with strong data tracking on numbers of farmers, youth, and families served to demonstrate return on federal USDA investment. Key initiatives include: support for traditional staple crops (taro, breadfruit, banana, sweet potato, coconut) and agroforestry systems; new research projects on taro, tomato in protected systems, citrus disease management in Kosrae, and coconut production surveys to inform the FSM coconut export strategy; and multi-site aquaculture work on giant clam, mangrove crab (using new tank-based technology from Thailand), and Rabbitfish in Yap, Chuuk, Pohnpei, and Kosrae. The report emphasized a strategic shift back toward local staples and climate-resilient food systems, youth engagement and skills training (including entrepreneurship via the Center for Entrepreneurship), and regional collaboration with other land-grant institutions (e.g., UOG, KIOST, USC/Rutgers and others). CRE also noted persistent challenges, especially limited local technical staff in agriculture and marine science, land and facility issues

(e.g., need for secure aquaculture sites), and export/logistics constraints, but stressed that ongoing external grants (e.g., R&D/Italy funds), state co-funding, and upcoming presentations to the Land Grant Board will help sustain and scale these priority programs.

**c. Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Services (VPEMSS):**

VP Joey reported that for spring 2026 the College enrolled 1,440 students taking 17,536.5 credits, an average of 12.18 credits per student, yielding an FTE of 1,461.38, and achieving about 95% of both headcount and credit-hour targets (a manageable 5% shortfall against the budgeted enrollment. Overall headcount is down 3.4% vs. spring 2025 but only 0.55% vs. spring 2024, while total credits are up 1.14% vs. spring 2024, showing relatively stable enrollment with slightly higher average loads. Performance by campus is mixed: Chuuk and Kosrae exceeded their targets (Chuuk by about 10% in both headcount and credits; Kosrae by ~48–50%), while National, CTEC, and Yap were below target but within a 10–15% band. On student success, a degree audit identified 198 potential spring 2026 completers (including 24 bachelor's, 13 third-year certificates, and 70 AA candidates) across all campuses, and midterm data show a decline in academic deficiency rates college-wide, with all campuses reporting fewer students on warning compared to the previous semester. On financial aid, over the last three academic years the College has awarded roughly \$28.27M in Pell to 10,111 unduplicated students, and as of March 30, 2026, has disbursed about \$1.9M in Pell for spring alone across all campuses, along with Federal Work-Study, FSM State and National scholarships, and the FSM Special Scholarship, which together remain critical to affordability, given that an estimated 95% of students rely on some form of financial assistance.

**i. Student Body Association (SBA) President/Representative:**

The Student Body Association (SBA) president presented a system-wide report summarizing student activities and needs across all campuses. At National Campus, SBA organized a 14-day basketball and volleyball tournament leading into Founding Day, a back-to-school party, and regular community service (campus clean-ups, assisting staff, and external service in local communities). National SBA also helped host visiting Tokai University students from Japan, supported Founding Day fundraising, and highlighted a student-led gym mural/beautification project. Kosrae SBA reported mental health training, cultural skills workshops (e.g., traditional basket weaving), and sports clubs to keep students active. Yap and FMI SBAs coordinated joint sports and Friday clean-ups, took part in the Micronesian Culture Day with booths and games, and celebrated Founding Day together. Chuuk SBA held welcome activities, talent shows, and campus events to build community. System-wide, the SBA raised several priority student concerns: need for covered walkways between key buildings (e.g., dorms/agriculture area/gym and upper–lower campus), better outdoor lighting (especially near courts), extended Wi-Fi coverage to outdoor study areas and dorm surroundings, improvements or relocation of the weight room for safety, more textbooks and laptops in campus bookstores (noted especially by Kosrae), and additional study space for students.

**d. Vice President for Instructional Affairs (VPIA):**

VP Delihna reported continued progress in strengthening instructional quality, faculty development, and student support services across all campuses. Key efforts included expanding the part-time instructor pool, improving course scheduling, and enhancing teaching through technology such as Moodle.

Professional development remained a priority, with faculty participating in multiple trainings and workshops, including the Teaching Professor Program and Stackable Credentials initiative. Collaborative partnerships were strengthened through regional and international programs supporting workforce development, healthcare training, and student mentorship.

Library and learning resource services were improved through updated materials, inventory reviews, and expanded student support services. While usage was highest at the National Campus, all campuses maintained access to essential resources.

Notable campus highlights included increased student engagement activities, recruitment of new faculty, and improved instructional planning. The Fisheries and Maritime Institute achieved a major milestone with the launch of its inaugural Class 4 Master and Marine Engineering Program, positioning FSM as a regional leader in maritime training.

Overall, the department continues to align instructional services with student achievement, workforce needs, and national development priorities.

*Day 2 commenced at 1119 (Skipper Ittu, Acting Dean Kosrae joined today, opened the meeting w/a prayer.)*

Main struggle, per A/g Dean Kosrae: shortage of staff.

**e. Interim Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness and Quality Assurance (IVPIEQA):**

Regent Sue: Refreshers for staff to be more current with the times in terms of training opportunities. Mandatory areas of training: Health, especially mental health.

- Media Office: An area that needs a lot more attention from the BOR and the College taking into consideration the students of today that the College serves.
- Micro-learning is stackable.

10. Old Business

a. Review of **Chapter 6 (Human Resources) Policies**

i. **Board Policy No. xxxx – Compassionate Support**

Motion to defer to the next Board meeting. Seconded by Regent Roger. **PASSED.**

ii. **Board Policy No. 6010 – Leave (Carry-over cap)**

320 annual leave hours carry-over will kick in after a 3-year transitional period; 240hrs cash payout. If all annual leave hours are not used, it does not get carried over.

Regent Sue moved to adopt. Seconded by Regent Roger. **PASSED.**

iii. **Board Policy No. 1490 - Consolidated Policies for the Endowment Fund**

Question by Regent Sue: initially targeted \$60,000 and is now increased to \$100,000? Per policy, the targeted amount is \$100,000. Follow up question: Is there an AP for this? No AP.

Regent Sue moved to adopt. Seconded by Roger. **PASSED.**

b. Review of **Chapter 7 (Facilities & Maintenance) Policies**

i. **Board Policy No. 7001 – Facilities Operation and Maintenance Fund**

A policy which was deferred in December 2025 in order to get the students' feedback. If policy is endorsed, it will be reviewed every 3 years. Increase to \$250 for Fall & Spring Terms and \$65 for Summer term.

Regent Sue moved to adopt. Seconded by Regent Roger. **PASSED.**

## 11. New Business

### a. Review of **Chapter 1 (Board of Regents) Policies**

- i. **Board Policy No. 1340** – Annual Report
- ii. **Board Policy No. 1350** – Periodic Survey
- iii. **Board Policy No. 1400** – Financial Management

Note: Chapter 1 Policies were presented by the VPEMSS on behalf of the OTP. Minor changes (editorial and structural) to be consistent with the **PL 7-79**, nothing substantial since it is embedded in said Public Law.

Regent Sue moved to adopt. Regent Roger seconded. **PASSED.**

### b. Review of **Chapter 3 (Instructional Affairs) Policies**

- i. **Board Policy No. 3203** – Course Discontinuation
- ii. **Board Policy No. 3204** – Program Deletion
- iii. **Board Policy No. 3206** – Course Outlines

Note: Changes were made for clarity and readability - more informed reason of the discontinuation of **BP No. 3203**. **BP No. 3204** was struck out for clarity, readability and reduction of wordiness. **BP No. 3206** has a completely new wording to follow current standards encouraging improvement rather than remain stagnant. Also has a new title, which is Course Outline Development and Maintenance.

Regent Sue moved to adopt all Chapter 3 policies as presented. Seconded by Regent Roger. **PASSED.**

### c. Review of **Chapter 4 (Student Services) Policies**

- i. **Board Policy No. 4500** – Early Warning Deficiency Notices
- ii. **Board Policy No. 4501** – Readmission
- iii. **Board Policy No. 4335** – Transcript
- iv. **Board Policy No. 4406** – Auditing Courses

Note: **BP No. 4500** presented to the Board AS IS. **BP No. 4501** presented to the Board with minor amendments. **BP No. 4335** presented to the Board AS IS. **BP No. 4406** presented to the Board with minor amendments striking out the last sentence of the existing policy, which did not need to be a part of the policy.

Regent Sue moved to adopt the four (4) policies as presented. Seconded by Regent Roger. **PASSED.**

### d. Review of **Chapter 5 (Fiscal Affairs) Policies**

- i. **Board Policy No. 5111** – Indirect Cost

Note: 50% goes to the VP managing the grant; 25% goes to the OTP; and 25% goes to the VPIS. Policy was put in place so there is a standardized process to follow.

Regent Question: Why this distribution?

VPIS answered: For better equitable use. Not so much about the distribution, but how it is managed, especially, where it is needed the most. This is not removing the revenue from the state campus, but moving it to the VP level for better management.

Regent Sue's concern: Historical data.

- ii. **Board Policy No. 5301** - Procurement Policy
- iii. **Board Policy No. 5500** - Financial Reporting

- iv. **Board Policy No. 5607** - Non-payment of Plant, Trees and Crops Planted on College Property
- v. **Board Policy No. 5700** - Bookstore Operation (number changed to 5017)
- vi. **Board Policy No. 5721** - Dining Hall Operation (number changed to 5018; and change of name to “Dining and Food Services”).

Question by Regent Sue: “Is there a policy that covers outside vendors?” “Are vendors allowed to sell food on the Campus?” The comptroller answered that yes, there are vendors who sell food on campus, but are asked to provide health licenses. The VPIS should consider another policy addressing outside vendors for the safety of the students.

Regent Sue moved to adopt. Regent Roger seconded the motion. **PASSED.**

e. Review of **Chapter 8 (Information Technology) Policies**

- i. **Board Policy No. 8800** – College-owned Devices

Note: Consolidated policies into one. Regent Sue moved to adopt. Seconded by Regent Roger. **PASSED.**

12. Miscellaneous

- a. Retirement Plan:
- b. COM-FSM Facilities Fee Schedule: The Board deliberated on the proposal presented by the VPIS and because this is an operational issue, it has been returned to the SLT (College) for further discussions and eventual implementation. The Board has acknowledged the proposal and supported it, but feels that it should really be approved by the administrators of the College.

13. Next Meeting: First week of June 2026 in Kosrae State

14. Executive Session: Thursday, 9 April 2026 @ 0900

15. Adjournment: General Session adjourned on Wednesday, 8 April at 3:30pm.

\*\*Action Item