

What to Expect in the Regent Election Process and Beyond 2021 Regent Candidate Cycle

If you are recommended to the Legislature by the RCAC:

Being recommended by the RCAC for consideration by the Joint Higher Education Committee for the position of Regent is the first step in the election process. Some of the subsequent steps in the election process include:

1. Presentation to the Joint Higher Education Committee:

Each candidate recommended by the RCAC may be invited to present their qualifications at a hearing of the Joint Higher Education Committee, which must statutorily occur by February 28th. The Joint Higher Education Committee may also nominate candidates other than those recommended by RCAC. The purpose of the meeting is for the Joint Higher Education Committee to learn more about each candidate in order for the Committee to provide its recommendation to the Joint Legislative Convention of the House and Senate ahead of the election vote.

For Regent seats for specific congressional districts, a delegation of legislators from that district may hold their own meeting to screen candidates and may make a separate recommendation to the Joint Higher Education Committee.

2. Presenting Your Candidacy to the Legislature:

One of your primary tasks after recommendation by the RCAC is to ensure that members of the Legislature – both House and Senate – are aware of your candidacy and your qualifications for the position of Regent. This typically includes spending time at the Capitol personally meeting with legislators until the Joint Legislative Convention is held. Given limitations of the pandemic, the candidate cycle in 2021 will likely include a greater reliance on phone calls, video calls, emails, texts and other socially distant approaches.

3. Attending Candidate Events:

There generally is at least one event - the Regent Candidate Forum - hosted by the University of Minnesota Alumni Association. This forum is intended to provide an opportunity for legislators and others to meet candidates and learn more about their qualifications. The 2021 forum may be adjusted due to COVID-19 restrictions and social distancing requirements.

4. The Joint Legislative Convention:

The legislature elects Regents at a Joint Legislative Convention of the Minnesota House and the Senate, which takes place on the floor of the House of Representatives. Typically, candidates recommended by the Joint Higher Education Committee are automatically nominated for possible election at this Joint Legislative Convention. Other nominations may also be accepted at the Joint Legislative Convention as part of this process. The date of the Joint Legislative Convention is decided by House and Senate leadership and is governed by the joint rules of the House and Senate.

If you are elected Regent by the Legislature:

The following information is provided by the Office of the Board of Regents:

Service as a Regent of the University of Minnesota can be time-intensive, fast-paced, and demanding. If elected as a Regent, you can expect to spend significant time on the following:

1. Onboarding:

Newly elected Regents undergo an extensive onboarding process, which includes but is not limited to:

- Time with Board leadership, other Regents, and the President.
- Briefings on public governance, including the University's constitutional autonomy, Open Meeting Law, Data Practices Act, the Board's code of conduct, and financial disclosure.
- Briefings on the Board's oversight role, its authority and delegations, its committee structure, and meeting fundamentals.
- Time with the Provost and a variety of other University senior leaders regarding key academic and operational aspects of the University.
- Group visits to the Crookston, Duluth, Morris and Rochester campuses.

2. Board of Regent Meetings:

The Board of Regents has 8 regular meetings a year. These regular meetings take place every month except January, April, August and November; the meeting schedule is set each June. In addition, the Board may hold a varying number of special meetings, which are held as needed to respond to the needs of the University.

Regents are provided with meeting materials – called a “docket” – seven days prior to a regular meeting. Dockets provide the information, background, resolutions, policies and other materials necessary for full engagement and sound decision making. Dockets for all committees and the full Board can run into the many hundreds of pages. They are delivered electronically to the Board via its portal; printed materials are not provided.

All meetings of the Board are public, livestreamed, and available on YouTube. The RCAC strongly encourages all Regent candidates to attend or watch online meetings of the full Board of Regents and its committees to better understand their typical work, meeting processes, and issues facing the University. In addition, 10 years of meeting agendas, docket materials, and minutes are available on the Board's website at regents.umn.edu/meeting-materials.

3. Leadership and Committee Membership:

The small size of the Board of Regents means each of its members plays a significant role, and is encouraged to be prepared for a leadership role. The Board has five standing committees, with each Regent sitting on four of the five committees. The Board elects a chair and vice chair every two years, and every two years the Board chair appoints a chair and vice chair to each standing committee. In addition, Regents are appointed by the Board chair to represent the Board on the boards of affiliated organizations and to chair other, non-Board committees.

4. Representation at University Events:

In addition to its public meetings, Regents:

- Confer all University degrees, through attendance at the nearly 30 graduation ceremonies systemwide each spring. Each Regent is expected to confer degrees at 2-4 graduations annually.
- Participate in accreditation meetings.
- Deliver remarks at awards ceremonies, groundbreakings, building openings, and other significant University events. Regents are frequently invited to address University student, alumni and retiree groups, as well as civic, community and business gatherings.
- Receive invitations to dozens of optional University and related events each year.