

**WESTERN COMMUNITY COLLEGE AREA
BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

**REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES**

October 15, 2025

The Western Community College Area Board of Governors held a Regular Board meeting at 1:00 p.m. on Wednesday, October 15, 2025, at Western Nebraska Community College, Scottsbluff Campus, 1601 East 27th Street in the City of Scottsbluff, in the County of Scotts Bluff, in the State of Nebraska, as per the publicized notice in the Star-Herald on Tuesday, October 7, 2025.

A current agenda was available in the Board Secretary's office on the Scottsbluff Campus at the time of the publicized notice.

ROLL CALL

AREA BOARD

Linda A. Guzman-Gonzales.....	Absent
Joshua R. Hanson	Present
Mark A. Kaufman	Present
Allan D. Kreman.....	Present
Starr Lehl, Vice Chairperson	Present
Lori J. Liggett	Present
William M. Packard.....	Present
Coral E. Richards	Present
R. J. Savely, Jr.....	Present
Marjorie A. Schmidt	Present
John P. Stinner, Chairperson.....	Present

Ms. Guzman-Gonzales informed the Board Secretary she was unable to attend the meeting due to personal health.

QUORUM

Chair Stinner declared a quorum was present for the transaction of business.

COMMUNITY COMMENTS

Chair Stinner asked for comments from the community. Pursuant to Board Policy BP-106, community members who wish to make comments will be limited to a five-minute presentation. There were no comments.

BOARD CHAIR COMMENTS

Chair Stinner announced for public information there was a copy of the Nebraska Open Meetings Act available on the table at the back of the room.

Chair Stinner announced the Board reserves the right to enter a closed session if deemed necessary for any item on the agenda per Section 84-1410 of the Nebraska Revised Statutes.

CONSENT CALENDAR

1. Review Contents of Consent Calendar
 - a. Agenda
 - b. Excuse Absent Board Member(s)
 - c. Minutes
 - i. September 17, 2025 Informal Meeting
 - ii. September 17, 2025 Public Hearings
 - iii. September 17, 2025 Regular Meeting
2. Claims: September 2025
 - a. WCCA Unrestricted Fund - \$3,433,484.83
 - b. WCCA Restricted Fund - \$17,938.25
 - c. WCCA Federal Fund - \$4,458.40
 - d. WCCA Agency Fund - \$8,723.56
 - e. WCCA Loan Fund - 0 -
 - f. WCCA Plant Fund - \$156,506.85
 - g. WCCA Auxiliary Fund - \$427,579.79
 - i. City Planning Commission Reports (no reports)
3. Approval of Consent Calendar
4. Consideration of Items Extracted from Consent Calendar

There were no extractions. Chair Stinner entertained a motion for approval of the Consent Calendar as presented.

Mr. Savely MOVED to approve the Consent Calendar. SECONDED by Mr. Kaufman. The vote was, Yes: Hanson, Kaufman, Kreman, Lehl, Liggett, Packard, Richards, Savely, Schmidt, Stinner. No: None. Abstain: None. Absent: Guzman-Gonzales. Motion carried.

PRESIDENT'S PERSONNEL REPORT

1. Review Contents of Personnel Consent Calendar
 - a. Resignation(s)
 1. Ms. Courtney Medina, Women's Head Softball Coach
Effective October 9, 2025
 - b. Appointment(s)
 1. Dr. Kate Steinbock, Associate Dean of General Education and Academic Transfer Programs
Effective August 26, 2025

Chair Stinner entertained a motion for approval of the President's Personnel Report as presented.

Ms. Lehl MOVED to approve the President's Personnel Report. SECONDED by Mr. Savely. The vote was, Yes: Kaufman, Kreman, Lehl, Liggett, Packard, Richards, Savely, Schmidt, Hanson, Stinner. No: None. Abstain: None. Absent: Guzman-Gonzales. Motion carried.

WESTERN COMMUNITY COLLEGE AREA BOARD OF GOVERNORS

WNCC Master Site and Facilities Plan

The WNCC Master Site and Facilities Plan was shared earlier during the Informal meeting. This plan serves as a guide over the next ten years, helping us assess our needs and determine how they align with our available cash flow projects.

Chair Stinner entertained a motion for approval of the Master Site and Facilities Plan presented by Wilkins Architecture.

Mr. Kaufman MOVED to approve the WNCC Master Site and Facilities Plan presented by Wilkins Architecture. SECONDED by Ms. Schmidt. The vote was, Yes: Kreman, Lehl, Liggett, Packard, Richards, Savely, Schmidt, Kaufman, Stinner. No: Hanson. Abstain: None. Absent: Guzman-Gonzales. Motion carried.

2026 Nebraska Community College Association Membership Dues

Ms. Lehl MOVED to approve the 2026 NCCA membership dues in the amount of \$77,041.44. SECONDED by Dr. Packard. The vote was, Yes: Lehl, Liggett, Packard, Richards, Savely, Schmidt, Hanson, Kaufman, Kreman. No: Stinner. Abstain: None. Absent: Guzman-Gonzales. Motion carried.

INSTITUTIONAL REPORTS

Fall 2025 Census Report

Arich Knaub presented the Fall 2025 Census Report, which reviewed enrollment trends over the past five fall semesters and the current term. The college experienced significant increases in both full-time and part-time enrollment. Full-time enrollment rose by 10 percent, while part-time enrollment increased by 6.5 percent. Retention efforts were reported as successful; excluding students who graduated last spring and summer, 60 percent of students who were eligible to return from last spring re-enrolled this fall, and 70 percent of students who took summer courses returned for the fall semester.

Dual credit enrollment reached its highest level since tracking began in 2011, with 729 students participating from across the College's service area. All partner high schools now have at least one dual credit student, and several schools reported that 60 to 70 percent of their senior class is enrolled in dual credit courses. Dual credit students now make up 43 percent of total enrollment, representing an 18.7 percent increase from last fall. These students continue to demonstrate higher persistence, retention, and completion rates compared to non-dual credit students.

On the credit enrollment side, overall enrollment increased by 8 to 9 percent, and credit FTE rose by 6.5 percent to a total of 517. This marks the first fall semester to exceed 500 FTE in several years. Online FTE grew by 18 percent, while the Scottsbluff campus experienced a small decrease in FTE, offset by online growth. High School Select courses also increased by 17 percent compared to last fall. Mr. Knaub explained that Full-Time Equivalency (FTE) is calculated by dividing total credit hours by thirty, representing the number of full-time students over the academic year.

Fall 2025 Census Report (cont.)

Despite continued enrollment growth, student demographics at WNCC have remained consistent. The female-to-male ratio stands at approximately 60:40, and Hispanic enrollment remains around 25 percent, closely aligning with regional population trends.

A notable shift has occurred in age distribution due to the expansion of the dual credit program. For the first time in WNCC history, students under age 18 represent the largest age group. Students aged 18 to 21 comprise 36 percent of the student body, while those over twenty-two account for 25 percent.

Within the service area, Scotts Bluff County continues to represent the largest share of enrollment, with 957 students and approximately 55–56 percent of total credits. Box Butte and Cheyenne counties also contribute significantly to enrollment. Online course participation has seen strong growth, particularly among students in counties adjacent to campus centers—providing expanded access for those unable to travel regularly to the main campuses.

Out-of-state enrollment includes 111 students, and there are 78 international students currently attending. The presentation concluded by highlighting that Hispanic enrollment continues to reflect the demographics of the surrounding region.

Student Report

President Dart introduced Muhammed Bittaye, the new Cougar Council President. Muhammed reported that a formal resignation had been submitted by the previous president, after which the Council convened to appoint new leadership. The group now has an established structure in place to support ongoing activities and initiatives.

Muhammed provided an update on several upcoming student events, including bowling and skating nights, a winter clothing drive to assist international students in need, and visits to the Alliance and Sidney campuses to engage students at those locations.

The winter clothing drive will take place during the first week of November. Many students, particularly those from regions without cold climates, are in need of warm attire as winter approaches. The drive aims to provide essential items to help students stay comfortable throughout the season. Drop-off areas will be designated across campus, and once the drive concludes, donations will be sorted and distributed to students in need.

During lunch, several performing arts students joined members of the Board, fostering discussion and connection between students and college leadership. Instructors Patrick Newell and Violette Briggs shared insights about the performing arts programs, as well as personal experiences and the paths that brought them to WNCC.

Faculty Report - Brian Croft, Amy Winters

Mr. Croft reported that the semester is progressing past midterm, and faculty have observed an increase in student enrollment. This rise in numbers has positively affected class discussions and overall participation. Larger class sizes bring more diversity and perspectives, allowing for greater interaction among students. Faculty members expressed appreciation for the livelier discussions but acknowledged that grading responsibilities have also increased with the larger classes.

Faculty Report - Brian Croft, Amy Winters (cont.)

On September 25, Tom Robinson's astronomy class participated in a night sky presentation for the STEM Club at the Scottsbluff monument. Conditions were favorable for viewing, and the students discussed constellations, issues with light pollution, and observed various celestial objects using a college telescope. The event was considered a success and provided a valuable hands-on learning opportunity for students.

Faculty members are currently collaborating with Lisa Blair, VP of Academic Affairs, and others, on the development of a faculty load procedure. The goal of this effort is to recognize differences among faculty and programs across the College while maintaining a consistent and fair structure. The process is complex, but participants are committed to finding a balanced and equitable solution.

Ms. Winters reported that Phi Theta Kappa advisors shared that the organization has been very active this semester, with two student groups currently engaged in major projects: the College Project and the Honors in Action Project.

For the College Project, students decided to create a new initiative called the "Cougar Spotlight," which highlights personal stories and achievements from across the campus community. Each month, a new feature will focus on different individuals or programs, including students, employees, and college services. The first spotlight features WNCC men's basketball coach, Roy Bell Baez. A high school student who has been active in PTK helped with the interviews and production of the piece. The students worked with the College Marketing Department to meet publication specifications, and the spotlight will be available in both print and electronic formats, appearing on campus TVs, social media, and distributed around campus. The next month's spotlight will highlight student internships, with input from Katie Moser. Students have created a schedule for monthly spotlights through May, and the advisors emphasized that this is a student-led initiative.

The Honors in Action group is focusing on human trafficking awareness and prevention. An awareness event is planned for November during the WNCC/EWC basketball game. The first one hundred students to attend will receive free t-shirts, and anyone wearing blue will receive one dollar off admission. The State Patrol will be present to share information and resources, and local individuals who have been directly affected by human trafficking will speak and share their experiences. Students are also preparing a tri-fold informational pamphlet that will be distributed at the event. In addition, PTK will attend the Fall Conference in Wichita, with thirteen students and two advisors, including Muhammed, participating in the trip.

Nebraska Community College Association (NCCA)

Board members were reminded to reserve November 2nd and 3rd for the NCCA Annual Conference, hosted by Southeast Community College. The Board Secretary will share additional details as they become available.

Western Nebraska Community College Foundation

Ms. Jennifer Reisig, Foundation Executive Director shared a few updates. Homecoming Week is next week, and the theme this year is *Cougar Carnival*, taking place October 19th through 25th. There is a detailed list of events available on the WNCC alumni webpage. Tuesday is the volleyball game, and there are events on both the Alliance and Sidney campuses. The Alumni Banquet will be held on Friday, October 24th.

Western Nebraska Community College Foundation (cont.)

This year, two awards previously presented at the Alumni Banquet have been combined. The *Friend of the College Award* recognizes a person, organization, or business demonstrating a commitment to the educational advancement of people in Western Nebraska. The *Kara Perkins Meritorious Service Award* honors a person or organization that has served WNCC and its students in a special or extraordinary way. Since these awards are similar—and the *Friend of the College* award is no longer presented at graduation—the Alumni Committee decided to combine them into a single award.

The new *Tom and Kara Perkins, Friend of the College Award* will be presented next Friday, October 24th, to Karen Anderson, who will be the first recipient. Jennifer extended an invitation to anyone wishing to attend the Alumni Banquet, which will be held at 5 p.m. at the Scottsbluff Country Club.

RSVPs are due by Sunday—Board members were asked to please let the Board secretary know if they plan to attend so they are ensured that they receive a ticket. Ms. Anderson will be one of five honorees recognized that evening. This is a small, special event that is free to all attendees, thanks to Riverstone Bank's sponsorship.

Ms. Reisig shared an update on the Monument Marathon. There were 669 registered runners, an increase of 67 over 2024—an 11% rise from last year and 13% higher than in 2023. The goal is to continue growing the race by 10–15% annually, which is manageable and helps attract more community and grant support. Increased support means more funds for WNCC students.

Ms. Reisig shared feedback from Marathon runners:

"Absolutely amazing event, and I want to tell everyone to come. Thank you, thank you, thank you."

"I really enjoyed the warm, cheering welcome from the WNCC basketball players when we got off the bus. It was a great start to the day."

"Every person associated with the race was friendly and welcoming. The views were spectacular."

Ms. Reisig added that the Monument Marathon remains an official Boston-qualifying marathon. Seventy-five percent of the runners are new each year, coming from outside the area. Their positive feedback and social media posts help attract more participants in future years. A financial report will be available in about a month. All proceeds from the Monument Marathon remain in the Nebraska Panhandle and directly support students across all three WNCC campuses.

Alena Haun and Jennifer attended the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) conference, which takes place annually about a week and a half after the marathon. This was a valuable conference, and they returned with great insights focused on collaboration between foundations and colleges to expand the workforce. This aligns perfectly with ongoing conversations about working with industry partners to meet community needs.

President Comments

President Dart mentioned the upcoming play, *Theory of Relativity*, scheduled for Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. Friday and Saturday performances will begin at 7:30 p.m., and Sunday's show will begin at 2:00 p.m. Those interested were encouraged to attend and support the students.

It was noted that the governor recently announced the creation of a new State Office of Apprenticeships, along with an appropriation of approximately six to seven million dollars. The funds will be directed to community colleges to support the development of apprenticeship programs. While specific details are limited at this time, there is enthusiasm about collaborating with partners across the state to expand apprenticeship opportunities. The initial focus will be on welding and manufacturing, and input is requested regarding potential employers or areas within the region that could serve as strong apprenticeship partners.

President Dart provided an update about the Fall General Assembly and Wellness Day, which took place during fall break. Although students were not on campus, faculty and staff participated in a series of professional development activities, including workshops and a guest speaker. The day concluded with a threat assessment training led by Ty Frohbieter, Occupational Health and Safety Director, during which police officers conducted a live demonstration using blanks to simulate the sound of gunfire in a building. While the exercise was intense, it was acknowledged as an important part of campus safety preparedness.

Three faculty members were recognized for moving to continuing contracts: Betsy Mitchell, EMT faculty and program director; Danielle Dorshorst, nursing faculty; and Joe Julius, aviation faculty. Their achievement marks an important milestone in their professional progression.

An athletics update noted that the men's soccer team will compete in the playoffs on Saturday in Powell, Wyoming. It is a "win or go home" match, and if victorious, the team will advance to the following weekend's games.

Finally, it was announced that today is Financial Aid Day. Attendees were encouraged to express appreciation to financial aid professionals for their important work and contributions.

Board Member Comments

There were no Board member comments.

Upcoming Meetings and Events

2025 Fourth Quarter Meeting and Annual Conference

Southeast Community College Area

Sunday, November 2nd and Monday, November 3rd, 2025

2026 Community College National Legislative Summit

February 8-11, 2026

Marriott Marquis, Washington DC

2026 Higher Learning Commission Annual Conference

May 20-24, 2026

Chicago, Illinois

Upcoming Meetings and Events (cont.)

2026 AACC Annual Conference

April 10-14, 2026

Seattle, Washington

2026 ACCT Leadership Congress

October 21-24, 2026

Hyatt Regency, Chicago, Illinois

[WNCC Athletics](#)

[WNCC Performing Arts](#)

[WNCC Athletic and Academic Calendar](#)

Next Regular Meeting: Wednesday, November 19, 2025, 1:00 p.m., Western Nebraska Community College Scottsbluff Campus, 1601 East 27th Street, Scottsbluff, NE.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent at 1:27 p.m.

John P. Stinner, Chairperson

Susan L. Verbeck, Secretary