

**WESTERN COMMUNITY COLLEGE AREA
BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

**REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES**

Wednesday, April 15, 2026

The Western Community College Area Board of Governors held a Regular Board meeting at 1:00 p.m. on Wednesday, April 15, 2026 at Western Nebraska Community College, Panhandle Conference Room, Alliance Campus, 1750 Sweetwater Avenue, Alliance, Nebraska, in the County of Box Butte, in the State of Nebraska, as per the publicized notice in the Star-Herald Tuesday, April 7, 2026.

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

AREA BOARD

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

Ms. Liggett notified the Board secretary she was unable to attend the meeting due to personal business. Mr. Stinner notified the Board secretary he was unable to attend the meeting due to personal health.

QUORUM

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

COMMUNITY COMMENTS

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

BOARD CHAIRPERSON COMMENTS

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

Vice Chair Lehl announced that 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) Liggett, Stinner
 - c. Minutes
 1. March 18, Informal Meeting
 2. March 18, 2026, Regular Meeting
2. **Claims:** March 2026
 - a. WCCA Unrestricted Fund - \$2,283,817.79
 - b. WCCA Restricted Fund - \$29,558.46
 - c. WCCA Federal Fund - N/A
 - d. WCCA Agency Fund - \$4,712.53
 - e. WCCA Loan Fund – N/A
 - f. WCCA Plant Fund - \$303,467.96
 - g. WCCA Auxiliary Fund - \$139,691.23
3. Approval of Consent Calendar
4. Consideration of Items Extracted from Consent Calendar

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

BOARD MEMBER MILEAGE AND/OR EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT

Ms. Richards MOVED to approve the following travel expenses: Mr. Josh Hanson for \$110.20 and Mr. Allan Kreman for \$28.28. SECONDED by Ms. Guzman-Gonzales. The vote was, Yes: Kaufman, Richards, Savely, Schmidt, Shambaugh, Guzman-Gonzales, Lehl. No: None. Abstain: Hanson, Kreman. Absent: Liggett, Stinner. Motion carried.

Ms. Schmidt MOVED to approve the following travel expenses: Ms. Starr Lehl for \$76.00 and Mr. R. J. Savely for \$130.50. SECONDED by Ms. Guzman-Gonzales. The vote was, Yes: Kaufman, Kreman, Richards, Shambaugh, Stinner, Guzman-Gonzales, Hanson. No: None. Abstain: Lehl, Savely. Absent: Liggett, Stinner. Motion carried.

Mr. Kaufman MOVED to approve the following travel expense: Ms. Marjorie Schmidt for \$185.60. SECONDED by Mr. Savely. The vote was, Yes: Kreman, Richards, Shambaugh, Stinner, Guzman-Gonzales, Hanson, Kaufman, Lehl. No: None. Abstain: Schmidt. Absent: Liggett, Stinner. Motion carried.

PRESIDENT'S PERSONNEL REPORT

Review Contents of President's Personnel Report

Resignation(s)

1. Jared Gruber, Powerline Program Coordinator
Effective March 27, 2026
2. Connor Larsen, Esports Coach
Effective April 23, 2026

PRESIDENT'S PERSONNEL REPORT (cont.)

Appointment(s)

1. Brandon Davenport, Foundation Development Director
 Effective May 5, 2026

Continuing Contracts (Info Only)

1. Tiffany Wasserburger, Criminal Justice Instructor
2. Whitney Satur, Nursing Faculty

Approval of President's Personnel Report

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

WESTERN COMMUNITY COLLEGE AREA BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Resolution (legal services)

This resolution states that the College retains and employs Douglas, Kelly Ostdiek, Snyder Ossian and Vogl, P.C. to act as legal counsel and render legal services for the WCCA Board of Governors and Western Nebraska Community College. Furthermore, the Western Nebraska Community College Board of Governors authorizes and agrees to pay for and/or reimburse Douglas, Kelly, Ostdiek, Snyder, Ossian and Vogl, P.C. for expenses incurred while the College attorney is attending seminars specifically related to higher education law and ratifies prior reimbursement by the College of these expenses. The College's attorney agrees to not bill the Western Nebraska Community College Board of Governors for the attorney's time while attending the higher education law seminar. A copy of the Resolution will be included in the 2026 official Board meeting minutes book.

Ms. Richards MOVED to approve the amended Legal Services Resolution. SECONDED by Mr. Hanson. The vote was, Yes: Savely, Schmidt, Shambaugh, Guzman-Gonzales, Hanson, Kaufman, Kreman, Richards, Lehl. No: None. Abstain: None. Absent: Liggett, Stinner. Motion carried.

2026 Board Standing Committee Assignments

Ad Hoc Committee	Executive Committee	Finance & Operations Committee	Institutional Effectiveness Committee	Policy Committee	Risk Oversight Committee
(as needed)	Josh Hanson	Tony Kaufman	Linda Guzman-Gonzales	Lori Liggett	Linda Guzman-Gonzales
	Starr Lehl	Starr Lehl	Josh Hanson	**Coral Richards	Allan Kreman
	Marjorie Schmidt	R. J. Savely, Jr.	**Tony Kaufman	R. J. Savely, Jr.	Coral Richards
	Monica Shambaugh	Marjorie Schmidt	Allan Kreman	Monica Shambaugh	**R. J. Savely, Jr.
	**John Stinner	**John Stinner	Lori Liggett		
Representatives to Nebraska Community College Association (NCCA) Starr Lehl & John Stinner					
Representatives to Western Nebraska Community College Foundation Board Starr Lehl & Monica Shambaugh					

Ms. Schmidt MOVED to approve the 2026 Board Standing Committee assignments as presented. SECONDED by Ms. Shambaugh. The vote was, Yes: Schmidt, Shambaugh, Guzman-Gonzales, Hanson, Kaufman, Kreman, Richards, Savely, Lehl. No: None. Abstain: None. Absent: Liggett, Stinner. Motion carried.

Reports and Recommendations from the Board Finance and Operations Committee

Resolution (Redemption and Payment of Called Bonds)

Ms. Koski, Vice President of Administrative Services, presented a resolution regarding the Student Facilities Revenue Refunding Bonds, Series 2021. The bonds were originally issued on June 30, 2021, in the principal amount of \$1,105,000. The called bonds were authorized by a bond resolution approved on April 21, 2021, and by a Bond Purchase Agreement dated May 28, 2021. They are redeemable at the option of the College at any time on or after June 30, 2026, at a redemption price equal to 100% of the principal amount plus accrued interest to the date set for redemption. A copy of the resolution will be included in the 2026 official Board meeting minutes book.

Mr. Savely MOVED to approve the resolution regarding the Student Facilities Revenue Refunding Bonds, Series 2021. SECONDED by Ms. Shambaugh. The vote was, Yes: Shambaugh, Guzman-Gonzales, Hanson, Kreman, Richards, Savely, Schmidt, Lehl. No: None. Abstain: Kaufman. Absent: Liggett, Stinner. Motion carried.

Audit Services

On April 1, 2026, responses were received for the Financial Audit Services Request for Proposals (RFP). A selection committee reviewed the proposals and interviewed three (3) firms. In addition to the bids, consideration was given to the completeness of the proposal, the firm's ability to meet WNCC deadlines, higher education experience and process used to complete field work and audit statements.

TABULATION:

Company	Location	Amount 2026	Amount 2027	Amount 2028
Casey Peterson	Rapid City, SD	\$53,000.00	\$56,100.00	\$59,475.00
WNCC		\$35,150.00	\$37,200.00	\$39,375.00
Foundation		\$17,850.00	\$18,900.00	\$20,100.00
<i>Consulting services regarding implementation of new standards, as needed: \$200-\$300 per hour.</i>				
Clifton Larson Allen	Denver, CO	\$72,765.00	\$0	\$0
WNCC		\$58,590.00	-	-
Foundation		\$14,175.00	-	-
<i>If additional major programs are identified, CLA will discuss additional fees based on audit requirements.</i>				
Eide Bailly	Fargo, ND	\$88,500.00	\$91,100.00	\$93,800.00
WNCC		\$69,000.00	\$71,100.00	\$73,200.00
Foundation		\$19,500.00	\$20,000.00	\$20,600.00
<i>*Single audit fees are quoted for one major program. If additional single audits are required, a fee of \$8,500 will be charged per single audit.</i>				
<i>Out-of-pocket fees at actual cost.</i>				

The selection committee recommendation is CLA (Clifton Larson Allen LLP) as the highest ranked firm from the selection process.

Mr. Savely MOVED to approve the selection committee's recommendation for Audit Services to Clifton Larson Allen LLP in the amount of \$72,765.00. SECONDED by Ms. Richards. The vote was, Yes: Guzman-Gonzales, Hanson, Kaufman, Kreman, Richards, Savely, Schmidt, Shambaugh, Lehl. No: None. Abstain: None. Absent: Liggett, Stinner. Motion carried.

2026 Higher Learning Commission Annual Conference

Ms. Lehl and President Dart attended the 2026 HLC Conference, held March 21–24 in Chicago. Approximately 200 sessions were offered, covering topics such as AI and technology in the workplace, workforce training, noncredit credentials, and microcredentials. The event also provided an opportunity to connect with colleagues, exchange ideas, and explore new strategies.

INSTITUTIONAL REPORTS

Student Report

Ms. Shurron Fleming is currently enrolled in the ADN Advanced Placement program at Western Nebraska Community College on the Alliance campus. She will graduate in May and plans to sit for the NCLEX (National Council Licensure Examination) shortly thereafter to begin her career as a registered nurse.

Her decision to pursue nursing came from a deeply personal place. She witnessed firsthand the impact that compassionate, skilled nurses can have—not only on patients, but on entire families. That experience inspired her to follow this path. What she did not anticipate, however, was how profoundly this program and its people would support her along the way.

The nursing program is rigorous and demanding. Like many students, Shurron navigated significant life challenges alongside her academic responsibilities. There were times when the weight of it all felt overwhelming and uncertain, yet she never felt alone.

Western Nebraska Community College became more than an academic institution; it became a support system. That support extended beyond coursework and exams. It was found in phone calls offering guidance, in emails that were always answered, and in meaningful conversations where instructors took the time to listen and help her determine her next steps. Often, those moments centered not on academics, but on life itself.

The instructors did more than teach—they consistently showed up. Even across campuses, their presence, encouragement, and compassion were felt. They noticed when something was wrong, reached out, challenged students when needed, and responded with understanding during difficult times.

Each day, Shurron arrived carrying more than just academic responsibilities. Yet, through the support she received, she was able to keep moving forward. That level of care does more than help a student succeed academically, it changes outcomes. It is the reason she stands here today, preparing to graduate, rather than someone who almost did.

Her clinical experience, particularly at Box Butte General Hospital, played a vital role in her growth. Training within her own community, alongside dedicated nurses, helped her build confidence and step fully into her future role.

Because of her experience at Western Nebraska Community College, Shurron does not feel she has simply completed a program, she feels prepared, supported, and ready. As she looks ahead, she plans to continue her education and give back to rural healthcare by serving communities like Alliance—places that depend on strong, compassionate nurses.

Ms. Fleming thanked Board members for their time and investment in this program. The impact of the instructors and their support of the students extends far beyond education, it changes lives.

Faculty Report

WNCC Performing Arts completed a successful tour last week, bringing live performances to communities across the region. Over the course of five days, students from Theatre Arts, Vocal Music, and Instrumental Music presented programs at eight schools in eight different communities spanning three states. In total, the group performed for more than 1,150 audience members. The reception was overwhelmingly positive, with enthusiastic feedback from both students and staff at each stop.

These tours are a regular part of each semester and serve multiple purposes. They provide meaningful educational outreach, particularly to schools in small or underserved communities that may have limited access to live performing arts. At the same time, the performances introduce prospective students to opportunities at WNCC. During each 60–75-minute program, audience members learn about a variety of academic pathways—both within the arts and beyond—as well as the unique opportunity to offset college tuition through participation in the arts.

For the students involved, the tour is often a highlight of the semester. In addition to performance experience, participants gain practical technical skills such as setting up sound equipment, conducting sound checks, and managing load-in and load-out procedures. Equally important, they develop essential interpersonal skills, including collaboration, time management, and professionalism while traveling and working closely with peers.

Instructors, Violette Briggs and Patrick Newell and their colleagues extend their gratitude to the entire college community for its continued support of this valuable program, which benefits all students involved.

Nebraska Community College Association

The legislative session proved more eventful than anticipated. Although it was a short session—typically limiting expectations for major policy movement—significant developments emerged in its final weeks.

Most notably, the Legislature approved a \$5 million reduction in funding for community colleges, a cut not applied to state colleges or universities. This translated to an approximate \$360,000 decrease in state aid for the institution, compounding a decline already experienced the previous year. While some level of reduction had been expected, the scale and specificity of the cut were unforeseen.

Amid these challenges, there were also key positive outcomes. Several issue bills advanced favorably, and a potentially harmful change to the funding formula was successfully averted. That proposal would have eliminated the institution's ability to backfill funding gaps, undermining a critical financial safeguard. Timely advocacy and strong legislative relationships played an essential role in preventing that outcome.

As part of the broader agreement, the institution committed not to seek additional property tax revenue to offset the funding shortfall, meaning the reduction will need to be absorbed internally.

Overall, the final weeks of the session were particularly volatile and impactful for community colleges. Much of the public focus had centered on issues such as school vouchers and the farm bill, but less visible decisions carried significant consequences. The experience underscored the importance of consistent presence, effective advocacy, and maintaining strong alliances throughout the legislative process.

WNCC Foundation

Mary Sheffield, Alumni Director at WNCC, spoke on behalf of the Foundation. Ms. Sheffield highlighted two primary initiatives. First, the College's growing tradition of inviting 50-year graduates to return for commencement.

These alumni participate in the ceremony by presenting alumni pins to new graduates, symbolically welcoming them into the alumni community. This year, members of the Class of 1976 will take part. The event also includes a reception held the morning of graduation, continuing a newer addition to the tradition aimed at fostering connection and storytelling among returning alumni. The initiative has been well received and is intended to expand in future years.

Ms. Sheffield discussed her role as chair of the Legacy and History Committee for the College's upcoming Centennial Celebration. A key project underway is a commemorative coffee table book, tentatively titled *Our Community, Our College: A Century of Impact*. After securing a publisher, establishing a budget, and setting timelines, the committee—composed of faculty and staff—is now focused on gathering content under tight deadlines.

The book aims to document the College's history through a blend of archival materials and human-centered storytelling. While the institution has undergone many changes over the decades, Ms. Sheffield emphasized that its defining constant has been its people, students, faculty, staff, and the relationships formed among them. Content sources include extensive photo archives, student publications, and marketing materials.

Ms. Sheffield requested assistance in identifying knowledgeable individuals who can help ensure historical accuracy in key areas. These include the origins of aviation maintenance programs, the Alliance campus, the host family program, international student history, the nursing program, and the story behind the "Pursuing Cougar" statue. She also expressed interest in verifying rumors of a campus time capsule.

In conclusion, Ms. Sheffield noted that the book's visual concept may feature a mosaic of hundreds of student images, reflecting the central theme of people as the heart of the institution.

President Comments

President Dart introduced guest, Ms. Sarah McCaffrey and asked her to share information about her role in the Alliance community.

Ms. McCaffrey introduced herself as the Chamber Director in Alliance, explaining that she works closely with Alliance Campus Director, Misty Curtis, who facilitates their leadership class. She described Ms. Curtis as a strong source of support, both in that role and as she adjusts to her position. Ms. McCaffrey reflected that while she had previously served on a board, transitioning to working for one has been a different experience than expected. She expressed gratitude for the partnership between the Chamber and WNCC, noting its value to her both personally and professionally.

President Dart asked Ms. Curtis, Alliance Campus Director to provide an update on current developments in Alliance and any new initiatives.

Ms. Curtis shared an update on recent improvements and ongoing initiatives at the Alliance campus. Attendees were invited to view newly added photos highlighting a refresh project currently underway. Aligned with the institution's strategic plan—specifically Goal 4, re-envisioning institutional vitality, the campus has begun a series of targeted upgrades designed to enhance the environment without requiring a large-scale capital investment.

President Comments (cont.)

Ms. Curtis noted that the updates have already been well received by both students and staff. Students, in particular, have responded positively to the more welcoming atmosphere, expressing that the space now feels more like a true college campus. Plans for the summer include additional painting, new flooring, and the introduction of blue accent walls in classrooms to further strengthen campus identity.

She emphasized that much of the work has been completed in-house, recognizing the efforts of her small team—Tammy, Sue, and Kaylee—for their hands-on contributions. Curtis also expressed appreciation to President Dart, Administrative Services, and the maintenance team for their support in bringing the project to life, as well as to the Board for backing the initiative. She highlighted the intentional design elements incorporated into the space, including artwork that reflects WNCC's brand and local heritage, as well as contributions from community partners such as a locally fabricated metal "W."

Beyond facility improvements, Ms. Curtis highlighted progress in community engagement and leadership development. She revitalized the Leadership Box Butte program in partnership with the Chamber of Commerce, transforming it into a collaborative, community-focused initiative aimed at developing local leaders.

The program emphasizes practical leadership skills, including conflict resolution, staff motivation, and addressing both technical and adaptive challenges. She acknowledged guest speakers and local leaders who contributed to the program and noted strengthened relationships with key stakeholders across the region.

Ms. Curtis also reported strong performance across academic programs. The Powerline program has exceeded enrollment capacity, with additional students on a waitlist. Nursing programs continue to grow, with Alliance students comprising a significant portion of WNCC's graduating class. Increased consistency in offering basic nursing assistant courses has led to higher enrollment and stronger student pathways into advanced nursing programs.

The Alliance campus continues to serve a diverse student population, including dual-credit high school students, nontraditional learners, and those pursuing general education or transfer pathways. Ms. Curtis concluded by emphasizing the positive momentum on campus and expressed optimism about future phases of the refresh project, with plans to showcase further progress at next year's board meeting.

President Dart shared College updates noting that Kim Reichert and Grant Wilson were not present, as they were in Lincoln participating in the Strategic Data Project, which is a partnership with NSWERS and Harvard. Two WNCC data scientists, Arich Knaub and Justin Kumbal, were attending as fellows. Based on a report Ms. Reichert sent the previous evening, the kickoff meetings had been exceptionally positive. The meeting provided opportunities for discussions, collaborative focus, and opportunities to integrate new ideas—particularly through connections with Harvard partners, which were seen as highly valuable. Overall, it was viewed as an exciting opportunity for growth and connection.

President Dart reminded Board members that April marks the release of his annual management review statement, which had been distributed. This document serves as the starting point for his evaluation process, which will take place next month.

President Comments (cont.)

It was noted that an executive session would be scheduled at the next meeting and encouraged anyone with questions to reach out in advance.

President Dart highlighted several upcoming events. "Jump Jive and Swing" is scheduled for May 3rd, and student one-act plays will take place over the weekend, along with various performing arts and athletic events. Commencement exercises are set for May 8th and 9th, including the nursing ceremony on May 8th and the main commencement and adult education graduation on May 9th. All were invited to attend.

Board Member Comments

Mr. Savely congratulated the performing arts department and shared that he was able to attend their performance at the Sidney High School. Mr. Savely noted it was a pleasure to hear the performance and expressed appreciation for the group's work.

Ms. Lehl mentioned that the Gala event was very nice and added that Mr. Kaufman and Ms. Shambaugh also attended.

Upcoming Meetings and Events

1. **2026 Instrumental Music Jump, Jive and Swing**
May 3, 2026, 5:15 p.m.
Scottsbluff Hampton Inn and Suites
2. **2026 NCCA Board of Directors Second Quarter Meeting**
Monday, May 11, 2026
Southeast Community College, Lincoln, NE
3. **2026 NCCA Board of Directors Third Quarter Meeting**
Monday, August 17, 2026
Southeast Community College, Lincoln, NE
4. **2026 NCCA Board of Directors Fourth Quarter Meeting and Annual Conference**
Sunday, October 4, 2026 - Scottsbluff Hampton Inn
Monday, October 5, 2026 - WNCC John N. Harms Center
5. **2026 ACCT Leadership Congress**
October 21-24, 2026
Hyatt Regency, Chicago, Illinois

****Follow links to access information.**

[WNCC Athletics](#)

[WNCC Performing Arts](#)

[WNCC Athletic and Academic Calendar](#)

Next Regular Meeting: Wednesday, May 20, 2026, 1:00 p.m., Coral E. Richards Boardroom, Western Nebraska Community College, Scottsbluff Campus, 1601 East 27th Street, Scottsbluff, NE.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent at 1:57 p.m.

Starr Lehl, Vice Chair

Susan L. Verbeck, Secretary