

**WESTERN COMMUNITY COLLEGE AREA  
BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

**REGULAR MEETING  
MINUTES**

**Wednesday, March 18, 2026**

The Western Community College Area Board of Governors held a Regular Board meeting at 1:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 18, 2026 at Western Nebraska Community College, Coral E. Richards Boardroom, 1601 East 27<sup>th</sup> 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 Tuesday, March 10, 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 .....	Present (via Zoom)

*Ms. Liggett notified the Board secretary she was unable to attend the meeting due to a personal health appointment.*

**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 requested a moment of silence in remembrance of friend and colleague, Ms. Paula Abbott, Executive Director of the WNCC Sidney Campus.

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.

### **Report from the Board Vacancy ad hoc Committee**

Vice Chair Lehl expressed appreciation to Ms. Richards, Ms. Guzman-Gonzales, and Mr. Kaufman for their willingness to serve on the Board's ad hoc committee, which was appointed to conduct interviews to fill the District Five Board vacancy.

The committee interviewed four applicants, all of whom presented impressive qualifications. After careful consideration, the committee identified Ms. Monica Shambaugh as the top candidate, citing her professional experience, strong community connections, and demonstrated interest in serving on the Board.

### **Consideration of Appointment to Fill District Five Vacancy**

Ms. Schmidt MOVED to approve the appointment of Ms. Monica Shambaugh to fill the District Five Board vacancy. SECONDED by Ms. Guzman-Gonzales. The vote was, Yes: Guzman-Gonzales, Hanson, Kaufman, Kreman, Richards, Savely, Schmidt, Stinner, Lehl. No: None. Abstain: None. Absent: Liggett. Motion carried.

### **Oath of Office**

Mr. Jerry Ostdiek, WNCC attorney, administered the Oath of Office to Ms. Shambaugh and she assumed her role as a member of the Western Community College Area Board of Governors representing District Five.

### **CONSENT CALENDAR**

1. Review Contents of Consent Calendar
  - a. Agenda
  - b. Excuse Absent Board Member(s) Liggett
  - c. Minutes
    1. February 18, 2026, Special Meeting
    2. February 18, 2026, Regular Meeting
2. **Claims:** February 2026
  - a. WCCA Unrestricted Fund - \$3,224,458.25
  - b. WCCA Restricted Fund - \$81,934.67
  - c. WCCA Federal Fund - N/A
  - d. WCCA Agency Fund - \$16,022.99
  - e. WCCA Loan Fund – N/A
  - f. WCCA Plant Fund - \$107,329.46
  - g. WCCA Auxiliary Fund - \$176,796.39
3. City Planning Commission Reports
  - a. City of Gering (tax increment financing)
  - b. Village of Potter (tax increment financing annual report (2025))
4. Approval of Consent Calendar
5. Consideration of Items Extracted from Consent Calendar

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

Ms. Schmidt MOVED to approve the following travel expenses: Ms. Starr Lehl for \$38.00 and Ms. Marjorie Schmidt for \$185.60. SECONDED by Mr. Savely. The vote was, Yes: Kreman, Richards, Savely, Shambaugh, Stinner, Guzman-Gonzales, Hanson, Kaufman. No: None. Abstain: Lehl, Schmidt. Absent: Liggett. Motion carried.

**PRESIDENT'S PERSONNEL REPORT**

**Resignation(s)**

1. Mr. William Loring, Information Technology Instructor  
Effective March 5, 2026

**Appointment(s)**

1. Ms. Michelle Jackson, Administrative Services Administrative Assistant  
Effective March 16, 2026

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

**WESTERN COMMUNITY COLLEGE AREA BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

**Reports and Recommendations from the Board Finance and Operations Committee**

**2026 PC Replacement Bid**

Ms. Nancy Hall, Administrative Management Director, reported that on February 26, 2026, bids were received for the 2026 PC Replacement project. The College computer fleet is on a five-year replacement schedule to have 20% of the fleet replaced each year. This includes approximately 110 desktops, 75 laptops, 60 monitors and 100 docking stations. \$180,000.00 was budgeted for the PC replacement project.

**TABULATION:**

<b>Company</b>	<b>City/State</b>	<b>Total Amount</b>
Sterling Computers	North Sioux City, SD	\$179,500
CDW-g	Vernon Hills, IL	No Response
Insight	Chandler, AZ	No Response

The selection committee recommended acceptance of the bid amount of \$179,500.00 from Sterling Computers.

Vice Chair Lehl entertained a motion for approval of the 2026 PC Replacement bid presented by Ms. Nancy Hall.

Mr. Kaufman MOVED to approve the selection committee's recommendation to accept the bid from Sterling Computers in the amount of \$179,500. SECONDED by Mr. Savely. The vote was, Yes: Savely, Schmidt, Shambaugh, Stinner, Guzman-Gonzales, Hanson, Kaufman, Kreman, Richards, Lehl. No: None. Abstain: None. Absent: Liggett. Motion carried.

**Reports and Recommendations from the Board Finance and Operations Committee (cont.)  
Fleet Vehicle Replacement**

Ms. Hall reported the College is committed to maintaining safe, reliable, and roadworthy vehicles for the benefit of its students, faculty, and staff. Currently, several fleet vehicles have exceeded 175,000 miles and require replacement.

Due to current conditions in the automotive market, utilizing a traditional sealed bid process would limit the Procurement Department's ability to respond in a timely manner as suitable vehicles become available. Therefore, the Administrative Services Procurement Department is requesting prior approval to purchase two (2) mid-size sedans or SUVs, with a total cost not to exceed \$70,000.

In response to an inquiry, Ms. Hall confirmed that new vehicles will be purchased.

Mr. Kaufman MOVED to approve the Administrative Services Procurement Department's request for prior approval to purchase two mid-size sedans or SUVs with a total cost not to exceed \$70,000. SECONDED by Mr. Savely. The vote was, Yes: Schmidt, Shambaugh, Stinner, Guzman-Gonzales, Hanson, Kaufman, Kreman, Richards, Savely, Lehl. No: None. Abstain: None. Absent: Liggett. Motion carried.

**Faculty Negotiated Agreement**

College attorney, Jerry Ostdiek addressed the 2026-27 Faculty Negotiated Agreement. The primary issue under negotiation this year was total compensation. The parties successfully reached an agreement, which is now before the Board for approval. In summary, the package—comprising base salary and employer-paid benefits—reflects an overall increase of 3.75%.

Minor language adjustments were also made to clarify specific provisions. Matters related to extra duty pay and overload pay were not addressed in this agreement, as both parties agreed those topics are currently being considered through the shared governance process and may be revisited in the future.

Given current economic conditions, the parties agreed to a one-year term rather than the multi-year agreements typical in the past. This follows the precedent set in the previous year and allows for greater flexibility moving forward.

Mr. Ostdiek noted that the negotiations were conducted in good faith and progressed smoothly. He expressed appreciation to Lynne Koski and Lisa Gion for their participation, as well as to Board members Marjorie Schmidt and R.J. Savely for their contributions as Board observers. He also recognized attorneys Phil Kelly and Jason Ossian for their assistance throughout the process and their role in bringing the negotiations to completion.

On behalf of the Board, Mr. Ostdiek requested approval of the negotiated agreement and authorization for the chairperson to sign, noting that the other party has already done so.

In the absence of additional discussion, Vice Chair Lehl entertained a motion for approval of the 2026-27 Faculty Negotiated Agreement.

Mr. Kaufman MOVED to approve the 2026-27 Faculty Negotiated Agreement as presented. SECONDED by Ms. Schmidt. The vote was, Yes: Shambaugh, Stinner, Guzman-Gonzales, Hanson, Kaufman, Kreman, Richards, Savely, Schmidt, Lehl. No: None. Abstain: None. Absent: Liggett. Motion carried.

### **Off-Site Location for the August 19, 2026 Board Meetings – Chadron State College**

Vice Chair Lehl entertained a motion to approve Chadron State College as the off-site location for the August 19, 2026, Informal and Regular Board meetings.

Ms. Shambaugh MOVED to approve the Chadron State College location for the August 19, 2026 Informal and Regular Board meetings. SECONDED by Mr. Hanson. The vote was, Yes: Stinner, Guzman-Gonzales, Hanson, Kaufman, Kreman, Richards, Savely, Schmidt, Shambaugh, Lehl. No: None. Abstain: None. Absent: Liggett. Motion carried.

## **INSTITUTIONAL REPORTS**

### **End-of-Semester Enrollment Report Fall 2025**

Mr. Arich Knaub, Enrollment Research Director presented a comprehensive review of Fall 2025 enrollment figures, noting continued institutional growth. Total enrollment reached 1,744 students, reflecting a 10.8% increase from Fall 2024 (1,574 students). This growth was driven by gains in both full-time and part-time populations. Full-time enrollment increased to 672 students, up from 618 the previous year, while part-time enrollment increased to 1,072 students from 956. Additionally, fall-to-fall retention among full-time, first-time, degree-seeking students showed notable improvement, rising to 52.8%, a 6.7 percentage point increase compared to Fall 2024 (41.1%).

Mr. Knaub also reported that duplicated headcount reached 2,262 students, up 10.2% from 2,053 in Fall 2024. Scottsbluff remained the largest in-person campus with 724 students, although this represented a decline from 790. In contrast, online enrollment experienced significant growth, increasing to 811 students from 706. The Alliance and Sidney campuses also saw growth in headcount, though Alliance experienced a slight decrease in total credits taken. Approximately 518 students were enrolled across multiple campuses.

In terms of credit load and full-time equivalency (FTE), total credits increased to 15,630.0, an 8.4% rise from 14,412.5 in Fall 2024. FTE grew to 521.6, up from 480.6 (an 8.5% increase). Online FTE saw notable growth, rising to 156.8 from 132.6 (18.3%), while High School Select FTE increased significantly to 104.8 from 74.5 (40.7%). Scottsbluff FTE declined to 211.1 from 230.7 (down 8.5%), Alliance remained steady, and Sidney increased to 24.6 from 17.7 (up 40.0%).

Regarding awards and completions, a total of 42 awards were earned by 39 students, including 18 associate's degrees, 22 certificates, and 2 diplomas. Welding produced the highest number of credentials (13), followed by Health Information Technology and Medical Lab Technology with five each. The average time to completion for associate degrees was four semesters.

Mr. Knaub shared student demographic data related to awards. Hispanic/Latino students earned 12 awards (30.8%), while international students earned 2 awards (5.1%). The gender distribution among award recipients was 54% female and 46% male, representing a shift from overall enrollment demographics, which typically reflect a 59% female to 41% male distribution.

## **Spring 2026 – Census Report**

### **Total Enrollment:**

Total Enrollment: 1,676 students, up 13.4% from Spring 2025 (1,478)

- Full-Time: 592 students, up 7.1% from Spring 2025 (553)
- Part-Time: 1,084 students, up 17.2% from Spring 2025 (925)

Persistence: 74.4% of students who took classes in Fall 2025 persisted to Spring 2026

Total Dual Enrollment: 749 students (44.7% of overall headcount), up 28.5% from Spring 2025 (583)

### **Credit Load and Full-Time Equivalency (FTE):**

Total Credits: 14,269.5, up 7.6% compared to Spring 2025 (14,536.5)

FTE: 475.8, up 7.6% from Spring 2025 (442.2)

- Online FTE increased significantly, up 23.5%
- Sidney decreased significantly, down 30.6%
- High School Select, courses taken at the high school, continues to see strong growth, up 16.3% compared to Spring 2025.

### **Student Demographics:**

Gender: Female students remain the majority at 59.0% overall (989 students); males make up 41.0% (683 students), with 4 non-reported.

Hispanic/Latino Enrollment: 423 students (25.2%), consistent with prior years.

Age Distribution:

- Students under age 18 account for 31.1% (521 students), showing continued growth for CollegeNow! with Juniors.
- Students ages 18–21 account for 42.3% (703 students), while those 22 and older comprise 26.7% (447 students).

### **Service Area:**

Scotts Bluff county accounts for 987 students (58.9%) and 58.5% of all enrolled credits.

Box Butte (131 students), Cheyenne (96 students), and Morrill (94 students) counties are the next largest contributors to enrollment.

Each county within the service area has enrollment this semester.

Out-of-state enrollment (85 students) and international enrollment (75 students) is consistent with previous years.

### **Student Report**

Mohammed Bittaye shared that students had the opportunity to meet with President Dart to discuss student needs and concerns. During the meeting, several issues were outlined, and recommendations were provided for improvements.

In summary, while students face some challenges with Internet connectivity, database access, and account services, proactive steps are being taken to address these issues.

Mohammed shared updates on student engagement activities. This week, a skate night has been scheduled for Friday at 8:00 p.m. at a campus venue. In response to an inquiry regarding student participation, Mr. Bittaye confirmed that these events typically see strong student participation and continue to foster engagement on campus.

### **Faculty Report**

Mr. Croft reported that it has been an active semester for the faculty, with progress in multiple areas. Student enrollment in classrooms has increased, which, while adding to grading workloads, has enhanced in-person discussions. Faculty are seeking a balance between online and live classes, recognizing the ongoing migration toward online offerings. Online classes tend to fill quickly, offering flexibility for some students who cannot attend in person, while others benefit from direct classroom interaction.

Faculty continue to meet through the faculty assembly, addressing proposals and participating in shared governance while remaining receptive to board input. Online classes vary, some are fully virtual, some are concurrent with live sessions, and most include interactive components like discussion boards and video assignments. Attendance for live virtual sessions can be low, reflecting the challenges of scheduling and student availability.

### **Nebraska Community College Association**

Vice Chair Lehl extended thanks to Alliance Campus Director Misty Curtis for attending the NCCA Legislative Day. Her participation provided valuable representation alongside other community colleges, allowing the association to introduce its members to senators and maintain a visible presence at the Capitol. Ms. Curtis mentioned that attendees were recognized from the gallery, and the association's story was shared, making it an excellent advocacy opportunity.

Chair Stinner mentioned that Board members should have received a copy of the *Rotunda Review*, circulated by the NCCA Executive Director, Courtney Wittstruck, which highlights ongoing legislative developments. Ms. Wittstruck, the Association's lobbyist, has been closely monitoring legislative activity, particularly regarding the budget. Recently, Ms. Wittstruck identified proposed language in the Appropriations Committee that would have significantly altered the community college funding formula. Thanks to her diligence—and with Senator Dover's support—the changes were removed from the budget. The NCCA remains fully engaged with legislative developments, recognizing the critical importance of staying informed on both legislative actions and budget decisions.

### **WNCC Foundation**

Ms. Alena Haun, WNCC Foundation Development Director, provided an update on recent activities and accomplishments.

The Foundation has successfully secured several grants to support the Monument Marathon. Since January, \$4,125 was received from a Nebraska Tourism grant for marketing efforts. Additionally, the Scottsbluff/Gering Visitors Bureau awarded \$8,000 to support targeted marketing within a 100–450-mile radius and to fund participation in an eastern Nebraska race expo, which previously contributed to a noticeable increase in half marathon registrations. Most recently, the City of Scottsbluff approved \$11,000 for social media and Google marketing, as well as funding for a summer intern. Thanks to strong support, the Foundation has surpassed the halfway mark toward its \$42,000 fundraising goal.

In collaboration with the Health Sciences department, the Foundation also helped secure a \$36,000 grant from the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) to support the Health Information program.

### **WNCC Foundation (cont.)**

The Foundation is transitioning between scholarship cycles, wrapping up this year's awards and preparing for the next. It recently hosted its annual scholarship luncheon, welcoming approximately 30 donors and 20 students. The event fostered meaningful connections between donors and recipients, as well as with Board members and community supporters. Several memorable connections were made, highlighting the personal impact of donor support.

Since 2019, the Foundation has facilitated more than \$2.25 million in donor-funded scholarships and increased the number of such scholarships from 70 to over 100. This growth reflects a continued commitment to expanding student support as enrollment increases. The Foundation also acknowledged the essential partnership with the Financial Aid office in successfully distributing scholarships.

### **President Comments**

President Dart shared news about the Nebraska statewide workforce and education reporting system (NSWERS) and its partnership with the Strategic Data Project through the Center for Education Policy Research at Harvard. Two WNCC staff members, Eric Knaub and Justin Kumbal, were selected as fellows through a highly competitive process. Their participation and upcoming project work are expected to bring meaningful benefits to the institution.

Turning to legislative matters, President Dart noted that the Nebraska Legislature is nearing the end of its session, with approximately 10–15 days remaining. A proposed \$5 million cut to community colleges is likely to move forward, which could impact the institution by an estimated \$190,000 to \$360,000 annually, depending on how the reduction is applied. More concerning, however, was a late-stage proposal from the Appropriations Committee to alter the funding formula tied to the Community College Future Fund. This change would have significantly reduced institutional control over funding and removed critical safeguards. Thanks to advocacy efforts and support from Senator Dover, the proposed language was removed from the budget bill. While the funding cut remains likely, the removal of the formula change is seen as a significant positive. He cautioned, however, that similar proposals could resurface in the future, particularly concerning long-term state revenue projections.

President Dart highlighted preparations for upcoming commencement activities on May 8 and 9. Events will include the nursing pinning ceremony on Friday evening, followed by the main commencement ceremony Saturday morning and the adult education ceremony in the afternoon. This year's commencement speaker will be Oscar Gonzales, an alumnus who progressed from the adult education program to earning an associate degree and now co-owns a local funeral home. His story reflects perseverance and the impact of the institution. A student speaker will also be selected through a new application and speech submission process.

President Dart mentioned the upcoming Vocal Music Gala, "Songs of Protest," scheduled for March 27 and 28 at the Gering Civic Center. The event will showcase student talent and include a meal, with tickets available through the box office or by contacting the Board secretary.

### **Board Member Comments**

Mr. Savely expressed appreciation to faculty member Scott Winters and his team for their ongoing work in active negotiations and acknowledged the progress being made. Mr. Savely also extended thanks to the students, faculty, staff, administration, and fellow board members who attended Ms. Paula Abbott's memorial service.

### **Board Member Comments (cont.)**

Addressing recent decisions with the Negotiated Agreement, it was noted that the approved 3.75% salary increase exceeds current inflation estimates (approximately 2.4%–3%) and helps maintain alignment with peer institutions. It was clarified that, during the COVID years, salary increases had lagged behind higher inflation rates, making the current adjustment partly a measure to catch up. Board members were encouraged to share this context if questions arise within the community.

Chair Stinner stated that looking ahead, financial uncertainty remains, particularly given unpredictable legislative actions and state priorities such as property tax and income tax reductions.

Vice Chair Lehl encouraged Board members to increase their presence at upcoming events, particularly graduation, noting that participation had been low the previous year. Members were asked to review the schedule of local events and attend, when possible, to support students. Vice Chair Lehl also highlighted the upcoming NCCA Board of Directors' fourth-quarter meeting, to be held at WNCC on October 4 and 5, as an important opportunity for Board engagement.

### **Upcoming Meetings and Events**

1. **2026 Higher Learning Commission Annual Conference**  
March 20-24, 2026  
Chicago, Illinois
2. **2026 Vocal Music Spring Gala**  
March 27 and 28, 2026, 6:00 p.m.  
Gering Civic Center
3. **2026 AACC Annual Conference**  
April 10-14, 2026  
Seattle, Washington
4. **2026 Instrumental Music Jump, Jive and Swing**  
May 3, 2026, 5:15 p.m.  
Scottsbluff Hampton Inn and Suites
5. **2026 NCCA Board of Directors Second Quarter Meeting**  
Monday, May 11, 2026  
Southeast Community College, Lincoln, NE
6. **2026 NCCA Board of Directors Third Quarter Meeting**  
Monday, August 17, 2026  
Southeast Community College, Lincoln, NE
7. **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
8. **2026 ACCT Leadership Congress**  
October 21-24, 2026  
Hyatt Regency, Chicago, Illinois

**Upcoming Meetings and Events (cont.)**

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

[WNCC Athletics](#)

[WNCC Performing Arts](#)

[WNCC Athletic and Academic Calendar](#)

**Next Regular Meeting:** Wednesday, April 15, 2026, 1:00 p.m., Western Nebraska Community College, Alliance Campus, 1750 Sweetwater Avenue, Alliance, NE.

**Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent at 2:12 p.m.

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Starr Lehl, Vice Chair

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Susan L. Verbeck, Secretary