

**WESTERN COMMUNITY COLLEGE AREA BOARD
OF GOVERNORS**

INFORMAL MEETING MINUTES

April 16, 2025

The Western Community College Area Board of Governors held an Informal Board meeting at 10:30 a.m. on Wednesday, April 16, 2025, at the Western Nebraska Community College Sidney Campus located at 371 College Drive, Sidney, NE, in the County of Cheyenne, in the State of Nebraska, as per the publicized notice in the Star-Herald on Wednesday, April 9, 2025.

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

Community Comments

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

Board Chairperson Comments

A copy of the Nebraska Open Meetings Act was available on the table at the back of the room.

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

Budget Update

President Dart shared a document that contained information regarding the General Fund Budget Preliminary Statement of Changes.

The Governor's and Legislature's Appropriations Committee's proposed budgets maintain flat state aid, meaning total funding remains unchanged and is allocated based on enrollment. Due to enrollment growth, Metro Community College and Southeast Community College are expected to receive increased funding. The remaining four community colleges will see a decrease in state aid. If the proposed budget passes, WNCC may receive a \$20,000 increase in state aid. The Community College Future Fund, established two years ago to replace property tax funding, will provide a 3.5% increase, estimated at \$426,000 for WNCC. President Dart emphasized that all figures are estimates and subject to change as the budget process continues.

Regarding sources of revenue, it is projected that the College will have significantly less revenue coming in this year. As we go through the process, substantial cuts have been made from the budget, with about \$900,000 more that needs to be cut because revenues will be down this next year.

There has been positive momentum in the Legislature this past week regarding the request for continued support of dual credit programs. Specifically, lawmakers are considering ongoing funding to replace the now-discontinued ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) funds previously allocated to dual credit initiatives. This is a crucial step toward ensuring the long-term sustainability and accessibility of dual credit opportunities for students.

President Dart addressed the changes that have been implemented thus far.

- *The executive vice president and director of enrollment management positions were not filled, and two vice president positions were created.*
- *With the resignation of the Human Resources Director, that department was reorganized.*
- *The soccer coach and admissions counselor positions were merged.*
- *The College will move to a zero-based budget process.*
- *The College will move to \$0 tuition for high school dual credit courses. In recent years, the process involved collecting tuition and then using those funds to reimburse high schools for instructional costs. With the new policy, the College will no longer charge tuition for these courses, nor will it be issuing payments to high schools for instruction. This change results in an estimated savings of approximately \$114,000.*
- *As software decisions were reviewed, one software package was eliminated.*
- *A trades position was merged with a division chair position.*
- *Approximately five positions are vacant or will be vacant and will be considered for elimination.*
- *One application has been submitted for voluntary separation.*
- *Faculty release and overload time is currently being reviewed by a task force.*

This brings the College's total reductions to approximately \$1.4 million. However, the budget still reflects a shortfall of about \$800,000. Additional adjustments are anticipated before the budget is finalized and adopted in September.

In response to an inquiry, President Dart stated that based on the current assumptions and projections in the budget, the organization would not need to use a line of credit to meet its financial obligations. The fact is, the budget may be stepping from \$900,000 down to \$400,000 incrementally. We do not want to pull all our reserves for operating costs.

Board Training

iPad/Paperless Meeting Info Discussion

The Board has a long history regarding how meeting information is received. With the significant change in membership and budget concerns, a change may be in order. Large meeting packets involve several reams of copy paper along with the cost to mail the information to each member. Additionally, some Board members do not receive the mailed packet of information until the day of or after the meeting.

A few years ago, iPads were purchased and distributed to each Board member. The idea was to move toward a paperless version which could be viewed on the iPad. The proposal is that perhaps now is the time to rethink a paperless approach the Board can utilize. Training could be provided as well.

In response to an inquiry, President Dart stated that there is no significant concern about confidential information being accessed. The information that is shared is already public and is distributed internally as well as to local media. Rarely do we manage information that is not publicly available.

Board Training

iPad/Paperless Meeting Info Discussion (cont.)

This option may not be everybody's preference and ability, which should be recognized as well. Both options, electronic or paper meeting packets can be accommodated, based on preference. It was suggested that Board members select how they would like to receive information then try the paperless option for six months if that is their preference.

Board Member Comments

There were no Board member comments.

Next Regular Meeting: Wednesday, April 16, 2025, 1:00 p.m., WNCC Sidney Campus, 371 College Drive, Sidney, NE.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent at 11:54 p.m.

John P. Stinner, Chairperson

Susan L. Verbeck, Secretary