

**WESTERN COMMUNITY COLLEGE AREA
BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

**REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES**

Wednesday, July 15, 2026

The Western Community College Area Board of Governors held a Regular Board meeting at 1:00 p.m. on Wednesday, July 15, 2026 at Western Nebraska Community College, Coral E. Richards Boardroom, Scottsbluff Campus, 1601 East 27th Street, Scottsbluff, Nebraska, in the County of Scotts Bluff, in the State of Nebraska, as per the publicized notice in the Star-Herald Tuesday, July 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	Absent
Mark A Kaufman.....	Present
Allan D. Kreman.....	Absent
Starr Lehl, Vice Chair	Present
Lori J. Liggett	Present
Coral E. Richards.....	Present
R. J. Savely, Jr.	Present
Marjorie A. Schmidt	Present
Monica R. Shambaugh	Present
John P. Stinner, Chair.....	Present

Mr. Josh Hanson informed President Dart that he would be unable to attend the meeting due to business commitments. Mr. Allan Kreman informed the Board secretary that he would be unable to attend the meeting due to personal commitments.

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, Chair Stinner reminded community members who wish to make comments will be limited to a five-minute presentation. There were no comments.

BOARD CHAIRPERSON 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 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) Hanson, Kreman
 - c. Minutes
 1. June 15, 2026, Informal Meeting

2. June 15, 2026, Regular Meeting
2. **Claims:** May 2026
 - a. WCCA Unrestricted Fund - \$3,282,442.40
 - b. WCCA Restricted Fund – \$26,703.30
 - c. WCCA Federal Fund - \$3,780.00
 - d. WCCA Agency Fund - \$1,051.30
 - e. WCCA Loan Fund – N/A
 - f. WCCA Plant Fund - \$970,024.04
 - g. WCCA Auxiliary Fund - \$32,297.02
3. City Planning Commission Reports
4. Approval of Consent Calendar
5. Consideration of Items Extracted from Consent Calendar

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

BOARD MEMBER MILEAGE AND/OR EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT (May and June)

Ms. Shambaugh MOVED to approve the following travel expenses: Mr. Allan Kreman for \$84.84 and Ms. Starr Lehl for \$152.00. SECONDED by Ms. Guzman-Gonzales. The vote was, Yes: Kaufman, Liggett, Richards, Savely, Schmidt, Shambaugh, Guzman-Gonzales, Stinner. No: None. Abstain: Lehl. Absent: Hanson, Kreman. Motion carried.

Ms. Richards MOVED to approve the following travel expenses: Ms. Lori Liggett for \$249.70 and Mr. R. J. Savely for \$261.00. SECONDED by Ms. Schmidt. The vote was, Yes: Lehl, Richards, Schmidt, Shambaugh, Guzman-Gonzales, Kaufman, Stinner. No: None. Abstain: Liggett, Savely. Absent: Hanson, Kreman. Motion carried.

Ms. Shambaugh MOVED to approve the following travel expense: Ms. Marjorie Schmidt for \$371.20. SECONDED by Ms. Lehl. The vote was, Yes: Liggett, Richards, Savely, Shambaugh, Guzman-Gonzales, Kaufman, Lehl, Stinner. No: None. Abstain: Schmidt. Absent: Hanson, Kreman. Motion carried.

PRESIDENT'S PERSONNEL REPORT

Resignation(s)

There were no resignations.

Appointment(s)

Mr. Evan Hoschouer, Sidney Campus Maintenance Coordinator, effective July 1, 2026.

Mr. Preston Vantine, Information Security Administrator, effective June 29, 2026

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

WESTERN COMMUNITY COLLEGE AREA BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Reports and Recommendations from the Board Finance and Operations Committee

Consideration of Authority to Exceed the Budget Limit for 2025-2026 Fiscal Year by an Additional 1% and Carry Forward all Unused Authority to 2026-2027

Ms. Lynne Koski, Vice President of Administrative Services explained that this request is for an override related to budget authority; it is not related to actual expenditures.

The information included in the meeting packet provides definitions that come directly from the State Auditor's Office. Also included are two examples. The first example shows the budget authority calculation without the proposed override (3.70% - \$1,296,517.78 or 4.70% - \$1,646,297.99). The second example illustrates the calculation with a 1% budget authority override approved by the Board. These examples demonstrate the difference the override would make. If the Board approves the 1% override, it will result in an approximately \$350,000 increase in budget authority.

This increase in budget authority allows the college to receive and generate restricted funds, which are primarily defined as state aid and property tax revenue. While the override may not have a significant impact during the current fiscal year, it carries forward into future years. That is likely the most significant consideration. If the state's economic conditions improve and additional funding becomes available for community colleges, maintaining adequate budget authority will ensure the college is authorized to receive those funds.

Mr. Kaufman MOVED to approve the authority to exceed the budget limit for 2025-2026 fiscal year by an additional 1% and carry forward all unused authority to 2026-2027. SECONDED by Mrs. Guzman-Gonzales. The vote was, Yes: Savely, Schmidt, Shambaugh, Guzman-Gonzales, Kaufman, Lehl, Liggett, Richards, Stinner. No: None. Abstain: None. Absent: Hanson, Kreman. Motion carried.

Reports and Recommendations from the Board Policy Committee

a. First Read: BP-710 Alcohol and Controlled Substances

Info Only: AP-710.01 Alcohol and Controlled Substances – Student Athletes

**The purpose of this policy is to establish a policy on the manufacture, possession, and consumption of alcoholic beverages and controlled substances on WNCC owned or controlled property or facilities.*

b. First Read: BP-620 Attendance in Classes

Info Only: AP-620.01 Absence from Class and Attendance Reporting

**The purpose of this policy is to establish a standard for attendance in classes at WNCC.*

c. First Read: BP-304 Purchasing Approval

Info Only: AP-304.01 Purchasing Approval Process

**This policy authorizes the College President to implement procedures required to incorporate review to assure that purchases are legal and meet state and federal requirements.*

d. First Read: BP-551 Confidentiality of Student Records

Info Only: AP-551.01 Confidentiality of Student Records

**The purpose of this policy is to ensure student records are maintained in compliance with federal and state retention and privacy laws and protected by the College.*

Reports and Recommendations from the Board Policy Committee (cont.)

Policy Repeals

- a. 500.0100.86 (Admission of Students)
- b. 500.0400.79 (Admission to High Demand Programs)
- c. 500.0500.79 (Right to Deny Admission)

**These three policies have been incorporated into other Board policies as part of the ongoing policy review and consolidation process. Through the continued efforts of the Board Policy Committee and Kimberly Reichert to streamline and update the Board's policies. Several policies have been consolidated to improve clarity, eliminate redundancy, and maintain a more efficient policy framework.*

Mr. Kaufman MOVED to approve the repeal of 500.0100.86 (Admission of Students), 500.0400.79 (Admission to High Demand Programs), and 500.0500.79 (Right to Deny Admission). SECONDED by Ms. Shambaugh. The vote was, Yes: Schmidt, Shambaugh, Guzman-Gonzales, Kaufman, Lehl, Liggett, Richards, Savely, Stinner. No: None. Abstain: None. Absent: Hanson, Kreman. Motion carried.

INSTITUTIONAL REPORTS

Summer 2026 Census Enrollment Report

(Report was prepared by Arich Knaub, Enrollment Research Director)

On the Census Date for the Summer 2026 Semester

Enrollment

Total enrollment: 507 students, reflecting 26.8% increase over Summer 2025 (400 students).

Returning students: 26.0% of students enrolled in Spring 2026 enrolled for Summer 2026, which is consistent with seasonal trends.

Credit Load and Full-Time Equivalency (FTE)

- **Total FTE:** 79.0, an increase of 16.5% from Summer 2025 (67.8)
- **Total REU:** 102.5, an increase of 14.8% from Summer 2025 (89.3)

Delivery Methods:

- **Online Instruction:** largest instruction modality, comprising 78.1% of all students. Nearly all enrollment growth came from online instruction, which grew by 45.1% compared to last year.

Demographics:

- **Female-to-Male Ratio:** 68.0% to 32.0% - widening the typical gender gap by approximately 8% compared to Fall/Spring terms.
- **Average Age:** 25.0 years, which is 2.7 years older than the average during Fall/Spring terms. Female: 25.4 years and Male: 24.3 years.
- **Hispanic Enrollment:** 144 students (28.4%), up 33.3% from Summer 2025 (108)

Summer 2026 Census Enrollment Report (cont.)

Geographic Reach:

Representation from all but two counties (Cherry and Sioux) in the WNCC service area. Students from 16 states outside of Nebraska and 28 international students spanning multiple countries.

End-of-Semester Enrollment Report - Spring 2026

(Report was prepared by Arich Knaub, Enrollment Research Director)

Total Enrollment and Campus Usage

- **Total Enrollment:** 1,704 Students, a 13.4% increase from Spring 2025 (1,502 students)
 - Full-Time Enrollment: 558 students, compared to 550 in Spring 2025
 - Part-Time Enrollment: 1,146 students, compared to 952 in Spring 2025
- **Duplicated Headcount:** 2,241 students, up 12.6% from 1,990 in Spring 2025
 - Scottsbluff remains largest in-person campus (670 students), though essentially flat compared to Spring 2025 (672 students).
 - Online saw significant growth, serving 904 students, up from 714.
 - High School Select experienced strong growth, serving 579 students, up 21.1% from 478.
 - Alliance and Sidney both declined in total students served.
 - Approximately 486 students utilized multiple campuses or instructional modalities.

Credit Load and Full-Time Equivalency (FTE)

- **Total Credits:** 14,295.5, up 7.8% compared to Spring 2025 (13,262.5)
- **FTE:** 476.7, up significantly from 442.2 (7.8%) in Spring 2025
 - Online FTE increase to 164.7 from 132.7 (up 19.4%)
 - High School Select also increased to 96.3 from 83.3 (up 15.6%)
 - All three in-person locations (Alliance, Scottsbluff, and Sidney) saw FTE decline compared to Spring 2025.
 - Alliance: 23.0 (-4.6%) from 24.1 in Spring 2025
 - Scottsbluff: 181.1 (-2.2%) from 185.2 in Spring 2025
 - Sidney: 11.7 (-30.4%) from 16.8 in Spring 2025

Awards and Completions

- **Total Awards:** 246 Awards earned by 180 students (118 associate's degrees, 88 certificates, 44 diplomas)
 - Nursing awarded the most credentials (53), followed by Powerline Construction and Maintenance (28), and Information Technology (26)
 - Average time to completion for associates degrees was 5.1 semesters
- **Student Demographics (Awards Data)**
 - Hispanic/Latino students earned 28 awards (15.6%)
 - *International* students earned 15 awards (8.3%)
 - 50% female to 50% male, which is a shift from standard enrollment demographics (59% female – 41% male)

2026 Athletics Report

Ryan Burgner, WNCC Athletic Director credited the college's success to the strong support of the community, the institution, and President Dart, noting that the continued investment in Cougar Athletics has made it possible to attract and retain an outstanding coaching staff.

2026 Athletics Report (cont.)

The coaches were recognized not only for their talent and commitment to student success, but also for fostering a positive culture centered on academics, character, and teamwork. Two new coaches joined the department this year and have integrated seamlessly into the college's culture and mission. Coach retention remains among the strongest in the region.

Community engagement continues to be a priority, with coaches and student athletes actively participating in youth camps, school events, travel teams, and partnerships with various organizations. These efforts strengthen community connections while increasing the visibility of Cougar Athletics.

Athletically, the year was not as successful as recent seasons in terms of wins and championships, but many contests were decided by the narrowest of margins. Several men's basketball games, for example, were determined in the final seconds, with outcomes simply not falling in the Cougars' favor. Despite the results, student-athletes and coaches represented the college with professionalism and integrity throughout the year, avoiding many of the challenges experienced by other NJCAA programs.

Academically, Cougar Athletics had an exceptional year. Fifty-one student-athletes earned NJCAA Academic honors with GPAs of at least 3.25, including 30 who achieved GPAs of 3.60 or higher. Softball earned a team GPA of 3.4, while women's basketball posted a 3.1, both qualifying for NJCAA Academic Team recognition. Several other teams narrowly missed the 3.0 benchmark, including men's soccer (2.94), women's soccer and volleyball (2.91), and baseball (2.87). Overall, nearly 87% of student-athletes maintained GPAs above 3.0, reflecting the coaches' emphasis on academic success alongside athletic performance. Student-athletes benefit from comprehensive academic support through faculty and peer tutors, study halls, and regular progress monitoring. Improved technology has also enabled coaches to more efficiently track academic performance and intervene early when needed.

In response to an inquiry regarding drug testing, Mr. Burgner explained that the student athletes are subject to random monthly testing, with additional testing permitted if concerns arise. A first positive test results in suspension and follow-up testing, while a second offense can lead to suspension for the remainder of the season. A third offense results in dismissal from the team, although the athletic department has never had a student-athlete reach that stage. Recent NJCAA policy changes also provide greater flexibility for institutions regarding scholarship consequences following repeated violations. The athletic director noted that positive drug tests have declined in recent years, reflecting a positive trend within the program.

The report concluded on a celebratory note with the announcement that a former Cougar baseball player, who competed at the college from 2022 to 2024 before transferring to Kansas State University, recently signed a professional contract with the Las Vegas Athletics organization, becoming the latest Cougar to advance toward a professional baseball career.

National Association of College and University Attorneys (NACUA) Report

College attorney, Jerry Ostdiek reported that the NACUA conference was highly engaging and offered an innovative perspective on emergency preparedness and crisis management. Several attorneys shared firsthand experiences, including responding to a campus shooting and a campus explosion, and discussed strategies for establishing effective crisis response systems. He described the conference as informative and valuable.

Student Report

There was no student report.

Faculty Report

Faculty member Brian Croft reported that activity has remained relatively quiet throughout the summer, with preparations now underway for the fall semester. Early enrollment reports indicate that online offerings continue to fill almost immediately, while in-person sessions see more gradual registration, with additional participants often enrolling closer to the start dates. Overall, activity has been steady but quiet, providing a smooth transition into the upcoming fall schedule.

WNCC Foundation

The WNCC Foundation Executive Director, Jennifer Reisig highlighted the impact of its Student Emergency Fund, sharing a recent example from Debra Davis, WNCC Workforce Training Coordinator. An 18-year-old at-risk student living in a group home was able to enroll in the CDL program after GAP funding covered tuition, while the Student Emergency Fund provided the approximately \$200 needed for expenses not covered by the grant.

Although the fund represents a relatively small portion of the Foundation's annual giving, its impact is significant. While the Foundation awards \$300,000 to \$400,000 in donor-funded scholarships each year, it budgets \$25,000 annually for emergency assistance.

During Fiscal Year 2026, the fund assisted 36 students with an average award of \$462, helping them overcome unexpected financial barriers and remain on track toward completing their education.

Data from the last academic year shows that 74% of recipients were from Nebraska's Panhandle, with the remaining 26% coming from other states or countries. Students receiving assistance represented a wide range of academic programs, including 42% in Health Sciences, 42% in Humanities and Social Sciences, and the remainder across other disciplines.

Emergency funding addressed a variety of needs. Essential living expenses accounted for 42% of assistance, followed by tuition (32%), books (12%), housing (11%), and other expenses (3%). In FY2026, the Foundation distributed \$16,663 in direct student assistance. The remaining balance from the board designated \$25,000 will support related student needs. The Foundation will allocate \$5,000 to replenish the campus food pantry and \$3,336 to launch a new meal assistance program through campus dining services. Students will access the program through the Foundation's streamlined emergency fund application process, with a review committee determining eligibility for free meals.

Each August, the Foundation asks donors to contribute to its Greatest Need Fund, which supports the Student Emergency Fund. Ms. Reisig emphasized that while the awards are modest, they often make the critical difference that allows students to stay enrolled and complete their educational goals.

It was also noted that emergency awards are administered in close coordination with WNCC Financial Aid to ensure compliance with all applicable financial aid and reporting regulations.

Nebraska Community College Association (NCCA)

Courtney Wittstruck, representing the Nebraska Community College Association (NCCA), opened by expressing her appreciation for returning to western Nebraska. As a Nebraska native, she always values the opportunity to visit the state's western region and enjoy its scenery.

Nebraska Community College Association (NCCA) (cont.)

Ms. Wittstruck encouraged an informal discussion rather than a formal presentation, inviting questions throughout the session.

Reviewing the 2025 legislative session, Ms. Wittstruck noted that although second-year sessions typically see fewer bills, legislators introduced 562 bills along with countless amendments. Because even a single-word amendment can significantly alter a bill's impact, she closely monitored every proposal. Working with the NCCA Board, she helped identify 68 priority bills that required daily tracking. She maintains a comprehensive bill-tracking system, including a daily "hot list" and a master spreadsheet, while providing member colleges with a streamlined version focused on the most relevant legislation.

Community colleges took formal positions on eleven bills during the session through testimony or written comments. Ms. Wittstruck emphasized the importance of careful preparation before every committee hearing, including anticipating difficult or unexpected questions from legislators. While she often testifies, she also prepares college leaders who appear before committees. She noted that legislators particularly value hearing directly from local presidents and students, whose perspectives often carry greater weight than those of association representatives.

She also highlighted the association's annual Day of Advocacy, which drew approximately thirty participants this year. Student participation continues to grow and has been especially well received by legislators, providing valuable opportunities for students to meet with their elected representatives.

Turning to the state budget, Ms. Wittstruck explained that the Legislature began the session facing a \$471 million budget deficit, with projections showing an additional \$690 million shortfall for the next biennium. This meant lawmakers first had to eliminate the deficit before considering any new spending. Compounding the challenge, the Nebraska Economic Forecasting Advisory Board revised revenue estimates in late February, increasing the projected deficit to \$626 million after the session was already underway. By adjournment, lawmakers had balanced the budget and ended the session with a modest \$6 million surplus.

One of the association's highest priorities was protecting community colleges' property tax levy authority, which serves as a financial safety net if state funding is reduced. Ms. Wittstruck reported that six bills sought to eliminate or significantly restrict that authority through levy caps or valuation limits. Anticipating that one or more measures might advance, she worked with senators to prepare amendments exempting community colleges if necessary. Ultimately, none of the bills passed, preserving the colleges' financial flexibility.

Ms. Wittstruck also discussed LB1247, which would have required participation in the state's Nebraska Education Profile (NSWERS) longitudinal data system that tracks student outcomes from early education through employment. While community colleges strongly support the value of the data system itself, the association opposed the bill because it mandated participation through state statute. Ms. Wittstruck explained that the concern was not with the program, but with preserving the governance authority of locally elected community college boards and avoiding legislative precedent that could lead to additional state mandates in the future.

The primary legislative objective was to protect the community college funding formula, preserving the colleges' ability to levy taxes, if necessary while securing full funding for both state aid and the Community College Future Fund (CCFF). Although the \$8 million annual dual enrollment appropriation was maintained, state aid was reduced by \$5 million after intense budget negotiations.

Nebraska Community College Association (NCCA) (cont.)

Lawmakers faced significant revenue shortfalls and relied primarily on spending cuts rather than new revenue. Having received a new \$5 million dual enrollment appropriation the previous year, community colleges ultimately absorbed a reduction in state aid while retaining dual enrollment funding and full Community College Future Funding.

Throughout the session, a deliberate strategy was employed to avoid opening statutes that could expose critical funding provisions to amendment. Even proposals with potential benefits were deferred if they required reopening statutes containing protections such as the two-cent capital levy, recognizing that doing so could invite broader changes detrimental to community colleges. Despite the state aid reduction, several key priorities were achieved. The Community College Future Fund remained fully funded, largely due to strong support from the governor, who has highlighted Nebraska's community college funding model as a signature accomplishment. The \$5 million annual dual enrollment appropriation was also preserved, resulting in \$10 million in new funding over the biennium.

Additional legislative successes included passage of funding alignment legislation allowing community colleges to receive federal matching funds for SNAP Employment and Training services, creating new opportunities to support workforce development programs.

The session also focused on laying the groundwork for future policy initiatives. An interim study was introduced to examine the feasibility of reduced-credit bachelor's degrees offered by community colleges. The proposal is intended to address workforce shortages and expand access to bachelor's-level education in underserved regions without competing with universities. Rather than broadly expanding degree offerings, the concept would target specific workforce needs identified by local industries and geographic gaps in bachelor's degree access.

While the \$5 million reduction in state aid remains a significant concern, the most consequential victory was preventing substantial changes to the funding formula. A late-stage amendment would have significantly weakened the community colleges' safety net by limiting their ability to levy taxes in response to future funding reductions. Through direct engagement with key legislators before the committee vote, the amendment was removed, avoiding what would have been a far more damaging outcome than the budget reduction itself.

Looking ahead, Nebraska's fiscal outlook remains challenging. Although the state briefly projected a modest budget surplus following the session, updated revenue forecasts quickly returned the state to a significant deficit. The projected shortfall has since grown to approximately \$224 million, with an additional projected deficit exceeding \$600 million in the following biennium. In response, state agencies and entities receiving appropriations have been asked to prepare budget reduction scenarios, including potential 5% to 8% funding reductions. While it remains unclear whether these reductions will affect the current or next biennium, the expectation is that continued budget pressures will make additional funding cuts likely as lawmakers work to balance future budgets.

The discussion centered on Nebraska's structural budget deficit, emphasizing that the state is relying on one-time funds and reserve dollars to cover an ongoing imbalance between revenues and expenditures. Speakers compared the approach to borrowing from savings to fill a hole that continues to grow, noting that depleted rainy-day funds cannot permanently solve a recurring fiscal problem. The state's cash reserve has declined to approximately \$507 million—about 5% of the budget, which was previously established as the minimum reserve level. Although additional withdrawals remain possible, concerns were raised about the long-term sustainability of this strategy.

Nebraska Community College Association (NCCA) (cont.)

Participants noted that previous income tax reductions included phased decreases with built-in fiscal "circuit breakers" tied to revenue growth. However, subsequent legislative changes removed many of those safeguards, allowing tax cuts to continue despite weakening state finances. The projected budget deficit was cited at approximately \$224 million, underscoring the difficult fiscal environment facing lawmakers.

Discussion shifted to potential budget solutions, with participants acknowledging that the Revenue Committee has limited options to generate significant new revenue. Proposals to eliminate sales tax exemptions often face organized opposition from affected industries and produce relatively modest fiscal gains. As a result, the Appropriations Committee is expected to shoulder most of the responsibility through spending reductions. Participants also observed that recent cuts to economic development incentives have reduced the state's ability to attract businesses and workers.

The meeting then focused on the Nebraska Community College Association's (NCCA) strategic planning process. Member boards were encouraged to provide input ahead of the August strategic planning workshop by identifying relationships with legislative candidates through "power maps" and by recommending both short-term and long-term legislative priorities. Short-term priorities should reflect the state's current fiscal constraints and focus on realistic, less controversial initiatives, while long-term priorities should identify larger policy goals requiring sustained advocacy over multiple years.

Among the priorities already under consideration is reform of Nebraska's community college state aid formula to address perceived inequities in funding distribution. Association leadership stressed the importance of developing consensus among community colleges before seeking legislative action, arguing that a unified proposal would produce a better outcome than asking lawmakers to design a solution independently. Additional opportunities to maximize federal funding were also discussed.

Throughout the discussion, participants emphasized the importance of educating policymakers and the public about the value of Nebraska's community colleges. They argued that while community colleges provide a strong return on investment for workforce development and rural communities, budget decisions are not always driven by fiscal logic alone. Long-term advocacy efforts—including proposals such as reduced-credit bachelor's degrees—were described as essential for addressing workforce needs, strengthening rural communities, and building legislative support over time through sustained education and relationship-building.

President Comments

President Dart highlighted several upcoming campus and community events. The final weekend of *Tuck Everlasting*, presented through the College's partnership with Theater West, is scheduled for this weekend, followed by the organization's youth theater camp. Community members were encouraged to attend and recognized the partnership's value to the campus.

Looking ahead, student-athletes participating in soccer and volleyball will begin arriving on August 1st, marking the start of preparations for the fall semester.

In response to ongoing drought conditions, the College has implemented a voluntary water conservation plan developed by the maintenance and facilities team.

While portions of the campus may appear brown as irrigation is reduced, the plan is designed to conserve water responsibly while protecting the long-term health of campus landscaping. The President thanked Chris Ewerdt and his team for their efforts in developing the plan.

The President announced his appointment to the statewide NSWERS Management Committee, where he will help guide the organization's future direction.

He concluded by recognizing the success of the College's first Centennial celebration event, held in Alliance during Heritage Days. WNCC sponsored a community barbecue and carnival that drew hundreds of attendees. Special appreciation was extended to Alliance Campus Director, Misty Curtis and her team for organizing the event.

The official Centennial kickoff is scheduled for August 6th and will feature the premiere of the College's Centennial video, highlighting the people, communities, and partnerships that have shaped WNCC over the past 100 years. The President noted that the event will launch a yearlong celebration of the College's centennial.

Board Member Comments

Ms. Wittstruck was thanked for traveling to WNCC to attend today's Board meeting and share legislative updates with the Board.

Upcoming Meetings and Events

1. **2026 ACCT Governance Leadership Institute for New Trustees**
August 5-7, 2026
Anaheim, California
2. **2026 NCCA Board of Directors Third Quarter Meeting**
Monday, August 10, 2026
Central Community College, Kearney, NE
3. **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
4. **2026 ACCT Leadership Congress**
October 21-24, 2026
Hyatt Regency, Chicago, Illinois
5. **2027 ACCT Community College National Legislative Summit**
February 7-10, 2027
Marriott Marquis, Washington DC
6. **2027 ACCT Leadership Congress**
October 13-16, 2027
Marriott Philadelphia Downtown
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

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

[WNCC Athletics](#)

[WNCC Performing Arts](#)

[WNCC Athletic and Academic Calendar](#)

Next Regular Meeting: Wednesday, August 19, 2026, 1:00 p.m., Chadron State College, Chadron, NE.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent at 2:42 p.m.

John P. Stinner, Chair

Susan L. Verbeck, Secretary