

**WESTERN COMMUNITY COLLEGE AREA  
BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

**REGULAR MEETING  
MINUTES  
October 4, 2023**

The Western Community College Area Board of Governors held a Regular Board meeting at 1:02 p.m. on Wednesday, October 4, 2023 in the Coral E. Richards Boardroom at Western Nebraska Community College, Scottsbluff Campus, located at 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 on Tuesday, September 26, 2023.

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

**AREA BOARD**

Karen S. Anderson, Vice Chairperson.....	Present
Margaret R. Crouse .....	Absent
Misty L. Curtis.....	Present
Linda A. Guzman-Gonzales.....	Present
F. Lynne Klemke, Chairperson .....	Present
Allan D. Kreman.....	Present
William M. Packard.....	Present
Coral E. Richards .....	Present
R. J. Savely, Jr.....	Present
Marjorie A. Schmidt.....	Present

**QUORUM**

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

*Dr. Crouse informed the Board secretary that she would be unable to attend the meeting due to Personal Health issue.*

**COMMUNITY COMMENTS**

Chair Klemke asked for comments from the community. Pursuant to Board Policy BP-101, Chair Klemke reminded community members who wish to make comments that each speaker will be limited to a five-minute presentation. There were no public comments.

**BOARD CHAIRPERSON COMMENTS**

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

Chair Klemke announced that the Board reserves the right to enter into 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) – Crouse
  - c. Minutes
    1. Regular Meeting, September 20, 2023
2. **Claims:** September 2023
  - a. WCCA Unrestricted Fund - \$3,167,420.89
  - b. WCCA Restricted Fund - \$20,858.35
  - c. WCCA Federal Fund - \$614.52
  - d. WCCA Agency Fund - \$2,257.49
  - e. WCCA Loan Fund - 0 -
  - f. WCCA Plant Fund - \$416,965.12
  - g. WCCA Auxiliary Fund - \$292,939.94
3. City Planning Commission Reports
4. **Approval** of Consent Calendar
5. Consideration of Items Extracted from Consent Calendar

Chair Klemke inquired if there were any items on the Consent Calendar which needed to be extracted for separate consideration. There were no items extracted from the Consent Calendar.

Ms. Guzman-Gonzales MOVED to approve the Consent Calendar. SECONDED by Mr. Savely. The vote was, Yes: Anderson, Curtis, Guzman-Gonzales, Kreman, Packard, Richards, Savely, Schmidt, Klemke. No: None. Abstain: None. Absent: Crouse. Motion carried.

### BOARD MEMBER MILEAGE AND/OR EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT

Mr. Savely MOVED to approve the following travel expenses: Ms. Karen Anderson for \$516.14 and Dr. Margaret Crouse for \$259.38. SECONDED by Ms. Guzman-Gonzales. The vote was, Yes: Curtis, Guzman-Gonzales, Kreman, Packard, Richards, Savely, Schmidt, Klemke. No: None. Abstain: Anderson. Absent: Crouse. Motion carried.

### BOARD MEMBER MILEAGE AND/OR EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT

Ms. Richards MOVED to approve the following travel expenses: Ms. Lynne Klemke for \$103.49 and Mr. Allan Kreman for \$26.20. SECONDED by Ms. Anderson. The vote was, Yes: Guzman-Gonzales, Packard, Richards, Savely, Schmidt, Anderson, Curtis. No: None. Abstain: Klemke, Kreman. Absent: Crouse. Motion carried.

### BOARD MEMBER MILEAGE AND/OR EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT

Ms. Anderson MOVED to approve the following travel expense: Mr. R. J. Savely for \$117.90. SECONDED by Mr. Kreman. The vote was, Yes: Kreman, Packard, Richards, Schmidt, Anderson, Curtis, Guzman-Gonzales, Klemke. No: None. Abstain: Savely. Absent: Crouse. Motion carried.

## **PERSONNEL CONSENT CALENDAR**

Review Contents of Personnel Consent Calendar

### **Resignation(s):**

1. Ms. Alexandra Lutz, Admissions Counselor, Effective October 13, 2023.

### **Appointment(s)**

1. There were no appointments.

## **Approval of Personnel Consent Calendar**

### **Consideration of Items Extracted from Personnel Consent Calendar**

Ms. Guzman-Gonzales MOVED to approve the Personnel Consent Calendar. SECONDED by Mr. Savely. The vote was, Yes: Packard, Richards, Savely, Schmidt, Anderson, Curtis, Guzman-Gonzales, Kreman, Klemke. No: None. Abstain: None. Absent: Crouse. Motion carried.

## **WESTERN COMMUNITY COLLEGE AREA BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

### **Adoption of Resolution Setting the Property Tax Request**

Ms. Koski, Vice President of Administrative Services explained that the resolution presented for approval is based on the conversation during the Board of Governors' Informal meeting.

The general fund tax request is based on the levy in which the budget was built and adopted. The Capital Improvement and Bond Fund tax request is based on a reduction from two cents to 1.8431, in addition to 0.1208 cents for bond debt, for a total property tax request of \$14,691,290.32. If the Board approves this resolution, and because it would be a modification to the adopted budget, it would be necessary to schedule an additional budget hearing at the November Board meeting.

Mr. Savely MOVED for approval of the following resolution:

WHEREAS, Nebraska Revised Statute 77-1632 provides that the Governing Body of Western Nebraska Community College passes by a majority vote a resolution or ordinance setting the tax request; and

WHEREAS, a joint public hearing was held as required by law to hear and consider comments concerning the property tax request;

NOW, THEREFORE, the Governing Body of Western Nebraska Community College resolves that:

1. The 2023-2024 property tax request be set at:

General Fund:	\$11,774,407.59
Capital Improvement and Bond Fund:	\$ 2,916,882.73
Total Property Tax Request	\$14,691,290.32

### **Adoption of Resolution Setting the Property Tax Request (cont.)**

2. The total assessed value of property differs from last year's total assessed value by 7.99 percent.
3. The tax rate which would levy the same amount of property taxes as last year, when multiplied by the new total assessed value of property would be 0.09313 per \$100 of assessed value.
4. Western Nebraska Community College proposes to adopt a property tax request that will cause its tax rate to be 0.098914 per \$100 of assessed value.
5. Based on the proposed property tax request and changes in other revenue, the total operating budget of Western Nebraska Community College will decrease last year's budget by - 25.55 percent.

SECONDED by Dr. Packard. The vote was, Yes: Savely, Schmidt, Anderson, Curtis, Guzman-Gonzales, Kreman, Packard, Klemke. No: Richards Abstain: None. Absent: Crouse. Motion carried.

### **2024-25 Academic Calendar**

Dr. Grant Wilson, Executive Vice President reported that there were no significant differences between the calendar presented today and the previous year's calendar. There may be future changes because the dates may not work as well in 2025-2026.

Mr. Savely MOVED to approve the 2024-2025 Academic Calendar. SECONDED by Dr. Packard. The vote was, Yes: Savely, Schmidt, Anderson, Curtis, Guzman-Gonzales, Kreman, Packard, Richards, Klemke. No: None. Abstain: None. Absent: Crouse. Motion carried.

### **Reports and Recommendations from the Board Finance and Facilities Committee**

#### ***Tuition, Fees, Housing and Meal Plans***

Ms. Koski, Vice President of Administrative Services presented the 2024-2025 Academic Year student charges. Ms. Koski referenced the handout that was distributed at the meeting. Information was presented for the Board's review. Final Board review and approval will be requested at the November Board meeting.

Conversations regarding student charges were routed through the shared governance structure. Two meetings were scheduled with the Administrative Services Council and members were asked to consult their constituents, and students, to provide input related to the information presented.

The handout distributed at the meeting included an overview of the current 2023-2024 rates for the Nebraska community colleges and also reflects proposed rates for 2024-2025. The other community colleges are in the same phase as WNCC or have not started their review of student charges, so at this point, it is uncertain what the rates may be for the next year. The handout compares WNCC to the other colleges.

***Tuition, Fees, Housing and Meal Plans (cont.)***

The chart on the handout displayed the previous and current resident tuition rate. There had been no increase in the resident rate. The border state and non-resident rate increased last year.

The handout also provided a comparison of non-resident tuition and fees. Also included were Border state rates, including the states of Colorado, Wyoming, and South Dakota, and an out-of-state rate for all other non-resident students. A three-dollar tuition rate increase was proposed. Ms. Koski added that the tuition rate has not increased in four years.

A review of total revenues for the fiscal year 2024-2025 has started early, primarily for the benefit of the financial aid office as they look at financial aid for students.

The chart on the handout reflected standard or mandatory fees, which are fees that all students pay. The facility fees, technology fees, student fees, and scholarship fees are not specific to a program, all students pay those fees.

In preparation of the course fees, instructors were contacted to collect information and justification for the fees. Educational Services will be asked to review the worksheet a second time to ensure information is accurate in light of their most recent invoicing received for materials.

Course fees should be closely monitored, especially as the admissions staff is communicating with students. Transparency is important when justifying these costs. Comparison includes not only the regular tuition rate, but also additional costs associated with various programs.

In response to an inquiry, Ms. Koski explained that the course fees are the same for all three campuses. Students would be signing up for the same course, which would include the same fees. For nursing, the fees are related to materials or testing fees.

The dual credit rate in Nebraska has decreased over the last two years. The decrease is a result of ARPA funding provided through the State. With the reduction, the College is receiving some of those funds again, based on the FTE percentage of the total state community college dual credit enrollment. Northeast dropped their dual credit rate to zero and Metro is also at a zero rate. They are banking on increased enrollment and recovery of ARPA funds. WNCC, Mid-Plains, and Central were opposed to going to a zero-rate, anticipating that ARPA funds were only available this year and next year. To avoid a big increase once the ARPA funds go away, WNCC chose the moderate rate. The amount of ARPA funds received did not cover the full reduction that was made.

In response to an inquiry, Ms. Koski stated that at this point, WNCC does not have reciprocity.

**Tuition, Fees, Housing and Meal Plans (cont.)**

Ms. Koski continued the review of the housing and meal plan rates per semester. Some colleges do not separate the meal plan from the room plan, so the total rate amount is displayed on the handout. A proposal was not included because additional conversation through the committee structure is needed, along with more data from peer institutions.

Regarding the meal plan, food prices have gone up approximately 4-5% and the consumer price index is predicting that in the next two years, the cost of food will raise considerably in some areas. Currently, in certain areas, there has been a 15% increase. It will be a balancing act to maintain appropriate rates for the students and cover costs.

Ms. Bornschlegl, Food Services Director, shared that dining services has seen an increase in usage of the College meal plan. The dining hall is serving a hundred more student meals per day. It appears that students are recognizing their meal plan as a lower cost per meal price than if they were eating elsewhere. Final meal rates will be provided at the November Board meeting.

In response to an inquiry, Ms. Koski explained that the College offers ten, fourteen and nineteen meal plans.

Ms. Koski explained that additional data is needed related to the room and board, but currently, no increase in housing is requested for next year. Pioneer Residence Hall will be offline for renovation over the upcoming year. Pioneer Horizon and Conestoga Residence Hall will be open and the current rate will remain in place. Rates will be reviewed once the renovations are complete.

In response to an inquiry about the Pioneer Residence Hall renovation, Ms. Koski explained that that the project will upgrade rooms and eliminate any hazardous materials that may exist. Pioneer Residence Hall contains forty rooms with sixty beds. Some of the rooms are singles.

Ms. Koski reported that before rates are finalized, additional information will be gathered over the next couple of weeks.

**Reports and Recommendations from the Board Policy Committee**

**Second and Final Read: BP-100 Authority to Establish Western Community College Area and Board**

Board Policy BP-100 addresses the authority to establish the Western Community College Area and Board and is marked by state statute, which has not changed. No changes were made to the policy since the first read. The policy was presented for second read and approval by the Board.

Dr. Packard MOVED to approve Board Policy BP-100 Authority to Establish Western Community College Area and Board. SECONDED by Ms. Anderson. The vote was, Yes: Schmidt, Anderson, Curtis, Guzman-Gonzales, Kremann, Packard, Richards, Savely, Klemke. No: None. Abstain: None. Absent: Crouse. Motion carried.

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

### **Second and Final Read: BP-102 Board Membership and Officers**

BP-102 addresses Board membership and officers. The structure of this policy has been updated and consolidates fourteen existing policies into one. The purpose of the process is to eliminate policies by combining information, thus making it easier to find. No changes were made to the policy since the first read. The policy was presented for approval by the Board.

Mr. Savely MOVED to approve Board Policy BP-102 Board Membership and Officers. SECONDED by Ms. Guzman-Gonzales. The vote was, Yes: Anderson, Curtis, Guzman-Gonzales, Kreman, Packard, Richards, Savely, Schmidt, Klemke. No: None. Abstain: None. Absent: Crouse. Motion carried.

## **INSTITUTIONAL REPORTS**

### **Student Report**

There was no student report.

### **Faculty Report**

Mr. King and Ms. Howton shared faculty information.

Mr. King shared information from faculty member Dr. Erandi Gunapala about the STEM CONNECT Career Opportunities in Nebraska. These opportunities include experiential-learning and computational thinking, which is a National Science Foundation (NSF) funded S-Stem (Scholarships in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) scholarship program forming a partnership among the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL), Southeast Community College (SCC), and Western Nebraska Community College (WNCC).

The total awarded fund is \$3,580,869, with WNCC receiving a little over \$320,000. This money supports qualified students with up to \$8000/year. Since 2020, thirty-three WNCC students have been supported through this program.

Launched in Fall 2019, STEM CONNECT awards scholarships to and provides curricular and co-curricular support to academically talented, low-income students with interest in careers that require strong skills in mathematics or computer science. STEM CONNECT is built around a cohort model and includes co-curricular activities such as peer mentoring to provide extensive support to students, particularly students from underrepresented groups in STEM.

In addition to supporting students entering in-demand fields, STEM CONNECT supports WNCC's mission by enhancing collaboration with UNL and other colleges in the state and provides WNCC instructors with opportunities for professional development and assists with outreach in the community. As part of STEM CONNECT outreach and collaboration, Dr. Gunapala has developed relationships with many local stakeholders. Local businesses, institutes, and agencies have provided speakers, tour opportunities, internships, networking opportunities, etc., to both students and faculty. Examples of the partnerships are the University of Nebraska – Panhandle Extension Office, MC Schaff Family of Companies, Nebraska Wind and Solar, Nebraska Public Power District, Baker & Associates, Nebraska State Patrol, Western Sugar, CS Precision, Riverstone Bank, Regional West Medical Center, and 21st Century Equipment.

### **Faculty Report (cont.)**

So far this semester there is a cohort of nine scholars in the program. They have weekly seminars in the evening which includes dinner. Seminars for this semester so far have included:

- Robotics, VR, and the makerspace here at WNCC
- Cyber security by the Director of IT Infrastructure at Regional West
- Tour at 21<sup>st</sup> Century Equipment (met several employees, saw how technology is used in Agriculture, and also looked at their Mobile STEM Lab.
- Growth mindset

Seminars planned for later this fall include:

- Tech in Agriculture by the Associate Director of Panhandle Research, Extension and Education Center
- A trip to NRD (Natural Resource District)
- Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI)

Ms. Howton shared information from theatre instructor, Ms. Violette Briggs.

- Ms. Briggs was a guest artist for Scottsbluff High's acting class and worked with Gering High's one-act on stage combat last week.
- Guest Artist, Denver Casting Director, Sylvia Gregory will be at WNCC November 14-16 to work with the acting class. She will also be visiting the Scottsbluff and Gering High Schools.
- Ms. Briggs will be serving as a Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival Respondent for the first time for UNK's production of *The Tempest*.
- The theater department is partnering with the Midwest Theatre for our Fall Musical – *Night of the Living Dead*. The Midwest Theatre will be airing the original 1968 black and white version of the film on Saturday, October 21 at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday, October 22 at 1:00 p.m. Both show times will include a costume contest.
- The WNCC musical opens on Thursday, October 27. The students will perform at 7:30 p.m. on the 27<sup>th</sup> and the 28<sup>th</sup>, and 2:00 p.m. on the 29<sup>th</sup>.
- All three performances will host a costume contest and there will be winners each night with a grand prize winner from all three contests.
- The production is a bright, up-tempo rock musical and lots of fun, but includes strong language and adult themes, so rated "R".

Ms. Howton shared that faculty member Ms. Robin Hayhurst and Executive Vice President, Dr. Grant Wilson recently traveled to Central Community College in Kearney, Nebraska. They met with counterparts at all of the community colleges (except Metro) and representatives from the three state colleges. One item discussed was creating a smooth pathway for the education students regardless of the state college to which they wish to transfer. The discussion was good, but the state colleges will require additional conversations to make this happen, while the community colleges are mostly on the same page.

Education faculty will meet in January for the Nebraska Transfer Initiative (NTI) meeting to review current statewide syllabi and continue the conversation started in Kearney about adding two more classes to the NTI for Education.

The Faculty Assembly met yesterday. In addition to regular shared governance updates from faculty representatives, LMS demos, RIF policy, Faculty Handbook, Academic Freedom, Faculty Evaluation process and Online Learning were additional topics.



### **Faculty Report (cont.)**

Doug Jones, the current chair, is doing an excellent job of engaging as many faculty members as possible in the assembly including moving the day/time to the first Thursday of the month at 2:30 p.m. Additionally, Ms. Allie Reisig, as the secretary, does an amazing job of keeping the agendas, minutes, and PA's organized and available on SharePoint, which is in the HUB.

### **Nebraska Community College Association**

Ms. Anderson reported that this past Monday, a Zoom meeting was scheduled and levies were discussed. The NCCA Executive Committee has been working on the annual meeting scheduled November 5 and 6, 2023 in North Platte, Nebraska. Please contact the Board secretary, if you plan to attend.

The NCCA Bylaws Committee will be meeting to review policies and procedures. Almost thirty years have passed since information was reviewed, so this will be quite a task.

The NCCA members have begun to strategize regarding the next Legislative session. One priority is to review the statute that was formed from the passing of LB243. The upcoming Legislative session is sixty days.

### **Western Nebraska Community College Foundation**

In the absence of Foundation Executive Director, Ms. Jennifer Reisig, Ms. Anderson reported that the recent Monument Marathon was great. The event brought in over 500 runners and around 300 volunteers. Several WNCC students also assisted and were extremely helpful. Two runners set new records and the weather was beautiful. The event involves a tremendous amount of planning and is always well organized. The Foundation, College staff, students, and community members are very supportive of the event, so congratulations to the College on another successful Marathon.

### **Board Member Comments**

Chair Klemke commented that the Board appreciates how quickly President Dart has acquired knowledge of the legislative and budgetary workings. His insight has been helpful.

### **President Comments**

President Dart thanked Board member Karen Anderson for helping him connect with people in the community. Ms. Anderson recently retired from the Scottsbluff/Gering United Chamber of Commerce, so she is familiar with the area businesses.

President Dart reported that this was his first Marathon at WNCC and he was impressed by all the people who came together to help the students. It is impressive that over the last eleven years, over \$510,000 has been generated for student scholarships.

Governor Pillen was on campus the past Monday and was introduced to some of the programming at the College, especially career and technical education. Information was shared about short-term training such as CDL as well as some of the pathway work. The Governor had an opportunity to meet students and faculty and tour the welding, diesel, and automotive areas. Members of the choir also performed for the Governor. Overall, it was a great visit.

President Dart referenced the health sciences project at the Harms Center and mentioned that a resolution for a construction management at risk contract delivery system was adopted

by the Board of Governors at the September Board meeting. The Coordinating Commission for Post-Secondary Education recently approved moving forward with the ARPA project for health sciences, which is on the Scottsbluff Campus. Additional funding has also been allocated for the Alliance and Sidney campuses. The ten million dollars appropriated must be committed by 2024 and the project completed before 2026. A plan is in place for the appropriated funds and Ms. Koski and her team were thanked for their work with the process.

President Dart explained that the health sciences space in the Harms Center will have multiple uses and WNCC is working in conjunction with the University of Nebraska Medical Center regarding options for sharing space, which will be an exciting collaboration for the students and healthcare. A preliminary design will be shared in the coming months.

As part of the Construction Trades program, the first carpentry class has been scheduled to start October 20, 2023, at the Sidney campus. A week-end and evening plumbing class has been ongoing at the Scottsbluff campus. The plan is to offer trades classes at all three campuses as well as additional locations around the area.

President Dart shared that he has been visiting area school districts. The goal, by the end of November, is to have visited every school district superintendent, high school principal and counselor in the twelve and a half county service area.

The fall assembly, which is professional development for faculty and staff, is scheduled next week. A presenter has been commissioned to speak at the assembly and several health-related sessions are scheduled that afternoon.

A potential change to the shared governance structure has been discussed. Because there is not a specific staff person included in that structure, a survey has been sent out to staff to inquire about their interest in a staff senate, which would give staff a more formalized voice. So far, the feedback has been positive.

### **Upcoming Meetings and Events**

1. Welcome Reception for President Dart  
October 4, 2023, 3:30 – 5:30 p.m.  
Scottsbluff Campus Welcome Center Foyer
  
2. Instrumental Music  
*Fall Ball*  
October 21, 2023, 6:30 p.m.  
Scottsbluff Campus
  
3. Theatre Arts  
*Night of the Living Dead Musical*  
October 27, 2023, 7:30 p.m.  
October 29, 2023, 2:00 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.  
Scottsbluff Campus

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

4. Vocal Music Showcase  
November 3, 2023, 7:30 p.m.  
Scottsbluff Campus
  
5. All Performing Arts Programs  
*Very Valley Christmas*  
December 9-10, 2023, 2:00 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.  
Scottsbluff Campus
  
6. NCCA Fourth Quarter Meeting and Annual Conference  
Sunday, November 5 and Monday, November 6, 2023  
North Platte, NE

**Next Regular Meeting:** Wednesday, November 15, 2023, 1:00 p.m., Coral E. Richards Boardroom, Scottsbluff Campus, 1601 East 27<sup>th</sup> Street, Scottsbluff, NE

**Adjournment**

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

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F. Lynne Klemke, Chairperson

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Susan L. Verbeck, Secretary