

Sisseton Wahpeton College
Board of Trustees
Regular Meeting Minutes
August 19, 2025 5:00 PM (4:30 PM Meal)

Roll Call:

Big Coulee	Jerry Eastman	Present
Buffalo Lake	Heather Larsen	Present
Enemy Swim	Janell Williams	Present
Lake Traverse	Jessica Redthunder	Present
Long Hollow	Vincent Owen	Present
Old Agency	Rhonda Kampeska	Present
Heipa	Marie Renville	Present
Tribal Council Ex. Officio	Francis Crawford	Present

Others Present:

SWC Temporary Interim President: Dr. Julie Buckman, SWC Recorder: Kenyon Budack Jr.

Chairwoman Janell Williams called the meeting to order at 5:05 PM. Roll call was taken and a quorum was established.

Motion #1: Motion made by Trustee Redthunder (LT) to approve the agenda. Second by Trustee Eastman (BC). Question by Chairwoman Williams. MVC 7/0 **Motion Passed.**

Chairwoman Williams opened the floor for public comment.

Bill Laroque wanted to know the discussion that was had between U.S. Rep. Dusty Johnson, SWC Interim President, and Board of Trustees Chairwoman Williams when they met him on Friday August 15, 2025. To which Chairwoman Williams stated that the meeting was very brief and they only discussed what Dr. Julie brought, as there were only a couple of minutes for discussion.

Bill Laroque questioned the Interim President if she had reached out to the Department of Education Secretary with questions concerning these grants and funding? Interim President Buckman replied that she had not reach out to them, because she was not asked or aware of needing to discuss this with the Department of Education Secretary.

Bill Laroque brought forward questions about funding for both the college and students, as both the PELL and BIA can only fund both, so much. In regards to this, Interim President Buckman discussed that they are looking to hire an Alumni for private business, so that the college can make more money. In addition, that position is still being advertised.

Chairwoman Williams then began the reading of the mission statement.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Approval of Academic Calendar:

Chairwoman Williams instructed Interim President Dr. Julie Buckman if she needed anything for discussion or approval. To which Interim President Julie Buckman replied that she needed the Academic Calendar 2026-2027 for Sisseton Wahpeton College to be discussed and approved. Trustee Kampeska asked if there was anything newly added onto the calendar. To which Interim President Buckman responded that the Academic Calendar was almost completely the same with only minor changes to the years and a few dates.

Grant Writer and Sponsored Programs Director Document:

Chairwoman Williams asked what the document given to the board and others present for the meeting entailed and asked to discuss it. To which Interim President Buckman responded that the document was a summary of the Grant Writer and Sponsored Programs Director and was given to them to introduce herself and give an update on pending grants. Lisa Jackson the Grant Writer and Sponsored Program Director, then explained that she just wanted to update everyone and have something introduced to the board for record.

Student Credit Hours:

Trustee Larsen asked in regards to Bill Laroque's earlier discussion about students. Particularly if students still needed to enroll in only 12 credit hours to receive PELL grant funding. To which Interim President Buckman responded that. Yes, they only need to take 12 credit hours.

SWC 2025 Audit:

In regards to the audit that was completed. Tribal Council Ex. Officio Francis Crawford said that he has given the Tribal Chairman a copy of the audit. He explained that the Chairman is researching and studying the document, and would like to discuss it more in depth with Chairwoman Williams at a later date.

TRIO Grant:

Trustee Kampeska asked if the TREIO Grant is still an available option for us to pursue. Interim President Buckman replied that we are working on it, but we are on the bottom of the list. Chairwoman Williams replied that we would rather be on the bottom of the list than not be on it at all.

Staffing Concerns:

Trustee Eastman questioned if the college was adequately staffed, as there were many advertisements in the past few weeks. To which the Interim President responded that, we are staffed with very few positions left to fill, and those are the E-Sports Coach, Bus. Adj. Instructor, Alumni Director, Bus. Office Assistant, and a Lead Safety Officer. Following this, Trustee Eastman specified if the college had all of the instructors it needed to run functionally, to this the Interim President responded that. Yes, we are good to go instructor-wise.

CONSENT AGENDA

(Temporary Interim) President's Report

- SWC's Fun Committee ran events for Mac & Cheese Day, World Chocolate Day, and the upcoming August 20th "Welcome Back Bash"
- SWC's Fun Committee ran events for Mac & Cheese Day/World Chocolate Day and are finished planning the August 20th "Welcome Back Bash." There will be food, vendors, stalls, and other free goodies for both students and the community!
- Hired nursing faculty instructor, science faculty instructor, Plumbing Instructor, Dakota Studies instructor, business adjunct instructor, and a business office specialist (student accounts).
- Will meet with Rep. Dusty Johnson in the Vice-Chair's Office on Friday August 15th for a few minutes.
- Two open positions for a computer adjunct instructor and an esports manager.
- Submitted USDA Grant #31 with MaryLiz
- Aaron Keeble is the new Interim Financial Aid Director.

VPASA's Report

- Finished up the Grant for Title III Part F
- We had Suicide Prevention Training on Monday August 18th.
- Continued contact with Alumni for Fall events and write-ups on their successes.
- Working on the report of the TCU Faculty for Professional Development Grant Program for the American Indian College Fund.
- Dakota Studies has submitted a grant proposal for \$250,000 to the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community. If awarded it will help keep the program going to at least 2027.
- Education Specialist coordinated with Dean of Education to host a STEM teaching retreat in collaboration with Black Hills State University on July 15th-17th. Hoping for the hire of a new Peer Tutor or Learning Lab Student Worker when Fall semester starts.
- Registrar & Director of Student Support Services has an updated graduation count of 39 total. Working to improve and expand certificates and degree offerings. Sisseton Days Recruitment. Working on student retention. Updating policies, registration checklist,

admissions applications, and currently working on transcript requests. Concerned with Student Navigator workload due to turnover and would like to discuss later.

- Interim Financial Aid Director is helping students with 2025-2026 FAFSA applications. Applications are open for SWO HEGP for Fall 2025 semester. Most of the communication is with off-reservation tribal members. Federal Work Study Worker and Jamison Pratt have been a great help in the department.
- Grant Writer and Sponsored Programs Officer is going to provide monthly reports as soon as possible, but is giving an update that she will use her experience in grant writing to help further the College's mission and support the students' ongoing success. Title III Part F is on track and pending review. BIE TCCU is on track and pending review.

VPAS Report

- Attended meetings with USDA Grant with MaryLiz
- Met with Forensic Auditors in a meeting on Zoom.
- Had Title III Part F Meeting
- Had Call with HLC in regards to their visit.
- FY 25 TCI Grant
- Working on TITLE Part F Renewal
- Working on TCI Grant
- Working on USDA Grant #31
- Payroll had to be partially done manually, and we are looking into having software that will alleviate problematic issues.
- Single audit is still in process. Submitted requested documents to the Auditors. We are providing samples for the audit.
- Café Manager is working on new menu ideas to make the Café more competitive with surrounding places. Researching into diabetic friendly breakfast items.
- HR Director is working to have all contracts and faculty positions filled and staffed before the Fall 2025 semester starts. Finished interviews with Nursing Director, Nursing Instructor FT, Nursing Instructor PT, Grants Writer, Office Manager for the President's Office, and Student Success Navigator. Total employees are 83, with 59 being tribal members, and 26 non-tribal members.
- IT Director has the team ready and available for service for students and staff that are finishing the summer semester. Completed the eCivis Grant Management software implementation with Jenzabar, upgrading the eLearning system, fixing site maintenance and applying requested updates.

ACTION ITEMS

Motion 1: Motion made by Trustee Redthunder to approve the agenda. Second by Trustee Eastman, Question by Chairwoman Williams. MVC 7/0 **Motion Passed.**

Action Item: Approval of Agenda.

Motion #2: Motion made by Trustee Redthunder to approve the August 5, 2025 Special Meeting Minutes. Second by Trustee Larsen, Question Trustee Owen. MVC 7/0 **Motion Passed.**

- **Motion 2 Discussion:** Tribal Council Ex. Officio would like it stated that he was present for this meeting. It was not recorded by the SWC recorder, because it went into closed session. The board agreed to have it reflected in the minutes after this meeting.

Action Item: Approval of 8/5/25 Special Meeting Minutes.

Motion #3: Motion made by Trustee Eastman to approve the consent agenda. Second by Trustee Redthunder, Question by Trustee Larsen. MVC 7/0 **Motion Passed.**

Action Item: Approval of Consent Agenda.

Motion #4: Motion made by Trustee Larsen to approve the Sisseton Wahpeton College Academic Calendar for 2026-2027. Second by Trustee Eastman, Question by Trustee Owen. MVC 7/0 **Motion Passed.**

Action Item: Approval of SWC Academic Calendar 26-27

Motion #5: Motion made by Trustee Owen to allow employees of SWC who were already in the Education Assistance Program to be “grandfathered” in, so that they can finish their degrees. Second by Trustee Redthunder, Question by Trustee Eastman. 4/3 MVC **Motion Passed.**

- **Motion 5 Discussion:** Trustee Eastman asked if this was amending the language to grandfather in the current ones receiving money from the EAP. – A: Only the ones prior to the policy change are going to receive the pre-cap amount. The reason why there was a cap was because of funding concerns and problems. – The policy will remain the same for all employees applying after the policy change and going forward. \$5000 cap.

DISTRICT CONCERNS

Big Coulee District:

- ➔ No. We have not met yet.

Buffalo Lake District:

- ➔ No. We have not met yet.

Enemy Swim District:

➔ Only the vehicle use problem that was already discussed. Otherwise, no.

Old Agency District:

➔ None, they did not have their meeting yet.

Lake Traverse District:

➔ The only thing that Lake Traverse wanted was to investigate the president's actions. But, she is no longer employed at SWC.

Long Hollow District:

➔ The \$5000 Cap for SWC employee's in the Education Assistance Program. It's a concern among Long Hollow's Members.

Heipa District:

➔ No, we have not met yet.

Motion #6: Motion made by Trustee Owen to have the Regular Board of Trustees Meeting Adjourn. Second by Trustee Redthunder. MVC 7/0 **Motion Passed.**

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting Adjourned at 5:40 PM.

*Respectfully Submitted,
Kenyon Budack Jr.*