

Sisseton Wahpeton College
Board of Trustees Regular Meeting Minutes
11/18/2025 - 5:00 PM (4:30 PM meal)

Meeting called to order at 5:08 PM Roll

Call:

Big Coulee	Mary Jo Keeble	Present
Buffalo Lake	Heather Larsen	Present (Late)
Enemy Swim	Janell Williams	Present
Lake Traverse	Jessica Redthunder	Present (Late)
Long Hollow	Francella Quinn	Present
Old Agency	Rhonda Kampeska	Present
Heipa	Marie Renville	Present
Tribal Council Ex. Officio	Francis Crawford	Absent (Exempt)

Others Present: Interim President Dr. Julie Buckman, SWC Recorder Kenyon Budack Jr., William Laroque, Lorraine Rousseau, Etta Jo Marks, Dr. Samuel Bonsu, Josh Flute, Kelsey Stadtler, Tatiana Topoluk, Melissa Marx, Crystal Renville, Lisa Jackson, Gretta Lavergne, Marsha Renville, Sam Crandall, Ashley German, Heather Flute.

-If you Attended and your name is not documented, your name was not legible on the sign-in sheet.

Chairwoman Williams called the meeting to order at 5:08 PM. Roll call was taken ,and a quorum was established.

Motion #1: Motion to approve the agenda. Made by, seconded by, question by. MVP 5/0/ 1 Not voting.
Motion Passed.

Public Comments:

- Etta Jo Marks asked if the college would start the paralegal program. A: Yes. A fall 2026 launch.
- William Laroque – Asked whether the board officially accepted the audit. Also, if the college president was back.
 - He asked Trustee Redthunder and she could not answer him, because she does not know, and she has not supported bringing back the former president.
 - Asked the Interim President if the previous president was brought back, Chairwoman Williams said that the questions were starting to lean towards personnel or legal, and they would not publicly discuss those matters.

- Lorraine Rousseau – Asked why guest questions cannot be answered, and if they could even ask their questions at a district level, because it feels overly controlled.
 - Chairwoman Williams explained that they need to act in official capacity, especially if confidential.
 - Trustee Redthunder explained that she does try to answer Bill's questions at their district meetings.
 - Trustee Larsen explained that these issues were already brought up at their district, and she could ask about them at a district meeting.
- Trustee Quinn asked if she could let her district know if the previous president was brought back.
 - Trustee Redthunder explained that it is up to the Chairwoman of the board.
 - The Chairwoman explained that they cannot answer that, because of personnel issues.
 - Trustee Quinn asked if she was personnel or not.
 - Chairwoman Williams said that it was a legal or personnel issue.
- Etta Jo Marks – Believes the board is hiding behind confidentiality, because she has worked with confidentiality for thirty years.
 - Trustee Redthunder asked the HR Director if a contracted person would be considered personnel.
 - Hr Director replied that yes, they would be considered personnel.
 - Trustee Quinn said that if it were a contract they would not have to pay the state and they would be contracted and would not be considered an employee.
- William Laroque – Follow-up response, he said that if the board brought the previous president back, it would be unacceptable. The tribal council should know about it, and that the board is not communicating with community members.
 - He asked Trustee Larsen if she knew what they were talking about in regard to what was being discussed.
 - Trustee Larsen explained that she cannot discuss how someone got fired and that they have to protect former employees no matter who they are. Regardless, if they were fired. Just like how they are unable to discuss legal in board meetings.
 - William Laroque – Questioned if they would have to wait to see a hire listed in the minutes.
 - Trustee Redthunder explained that she has made the motion to see who is contracted, and that she has done her due diligence, and that she would see Bill during their district meeting.
- Trustee Quinn asked if there is a list of who was hired for any positions that were advertised.
 - Trustee Redthunder said that was in the HR report.
 - Trustee Renville said that there are no names of who is hired.
- There were no other questions, and the meeting continued.

Reading of the Mission Statement

- Chairwoman Williams read the mission statement.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

Discussion Item #1: Native American Day

- Akisa Redsoldier presented to students, staff, and the public. It went over oral history of the Dakota people.

Discussion Item #2: Halloween Events

- There was a Halloween costume contest, there were three different categories, with the winners getting \$25 gift cards for participating and winning.

Discussion Item #3 Ledger Artwork Events

- Karley Heminger a student worker put the event together, they create artwork, storybooks for Native American Month. Working on Ribbon shirts, skirts, and purses on the date of this meeting.
 - Trustee Renville asked where they were making the ribbon shirts, skirts, and pursers.
 - Answer: Student Union Room.

Discussion Item #4: Multimedia Design Program

CONSENT AGENDA:

President's Report:

- Extension held a Wild Game Series Guide on how to cook, a Tea and Honey Event, and a Cork working workshop.
- Jim Pearson contacted Dr. Buckman and David Redthunder. FEMA will pay for the reparations of the Votec Drummers, with new material to withstand heavy wind.
- Meeting about Title 3: Part A. The College will receive approximately \$3 million dollars. Tribal colleges to be allocated funding from the government.
 - Trustee Quinn asked what that would be used for.
 - Answer: Construction work, salaries, and fringe benefits.
- AIHEC gifted the college an award of \$25,000 with \$10,000 being for student emergency aid.
 - Trustee Quinn asked what that would entail.
 - Answer: that it's for the students who come in and ask for help with bills, food, and emergencies of that nature.
- Sisseton Wahpeton College met with Shakopee to see if they would help students with another \$10,000 for emergency aid for the students.
- Sisseton Wahpeton College met with Amped Electric. They are getting cinders for the homes, so that the homes can be moved, and new home construction can continue.
 - Trustee Quinn asked if it was TERO certified.
 - VPAS Lavergne responded that she was not sure.

- Trustee Larsen said that he should be, because they do work for the tribe, but he might not be a tribal member.
- Trustee Quinn asked if three bids were put out.
 - Answer: No, Dave was asked to inquire about how much electrical would cost.
 - Trustee Quinn asked what was meant by no electricity in the homes.
 - Answer: VPAS Lavergne replied that it will be hooked up later, they are just trying to move the homes, so construction can continue for Jason's classes.
 - VPAS Lavergne replied that they will need to be hooked up later, but they are just going to move them for now, so that carpentry can start creating homes again. Electricity will not be put in until a later date.
- Trustee Larsen asked if that is why three bids were not put out, because SWC was just moving the homes.
 - Answer: VPAS Lavergne responded that yes, that is right.

Vice-President of Academic and Student Affairs Report:

- Treated MOU for CDA for Early Childhood credits. Will increase student numbers in the spring semester.
- Met with SWO Board of Regents.
 - Trustee Renville asked what it was in regard to.
 - Answer: Interim President Dr. Buckman said, that it was three weeks ago. It was in regard to approving education credits, and for teacher recertification.
 - Trustee Renville asked who was on the board – Answer: It is full of superintendents from tribal schools, and a few others.
- Trustee Redthunder asked about emergency aid, and if Achieving the Dream was still possible.
 - Answer: The Interim President explained that the federal government did not have funding anymore, and this would be the last time it would be chosen, due to funding.
- The spring schedule is almost done. Summer and Fall are being worked on. Students can register early.
- SWC received tax exemption for the Canopy Construction that was completed.
 - Trustee Quinn asked if Jerry Eastman was Tero or Tax Office.
 - Answer: Tax office.
 - Trustee Quinn asked who did the construction for the canopy.
 - Answer: Comstock.
- The college hired a Financial Aid Director, and the Extension Program Director.
- A motion and approval to unshelve the Multimedia Program
 - The program would have more additions to the program like cybersecurity, 3-D printing, and drones.

- Chairwoman Williams asked how it would be funded going forward if it were to operate again.
 - A: The Interim President answered that it would be through the NACTEP Grant.
- Chairwoman Williams asked if they are trying to get a motion to get it going for HLC.
 - A: They will likely not have to, as long as the changes are not too drastic.
- Trustee Redthunder asked if they would have the faculty or if they would have to hire.
 - A: SWC would likely need to hire a new instructor to replace the previous one.
- Trustee Redthunder asked if a student's needs assessment was done yet?
 - A: CTE Dean Josh Flute – During Recruitment in September and October, there was feedback that we need an MMD program. High interest in computer science, photoshop, and drones. New classes for the program.
- Trustee Redthunder – Said that it could be good for our casinos with surveillance, and for the students.
 - CTE Dean Josh Flute – They had survey data from surveys that were conducted during district days and social media.
 - VPAS Lavergne said that there was a lack of previous interest in the program, but with these new changes, there is, and more possibilities as well.
 - CTE Dean Flute – They would not have to go through HLC, as long as they do some in-house adjustments, but they will check on this.
 - Trustee Quinn asked if they are still teaching Excel and Word.
 - CTE Dean Flute replied that yes, CST 141 and CST/BUS 208 are required for business programs. He was disheartened that the program was shelved previously. The business program depends on it heavily, especially with CST 141. The faculty for the program would be used for a lot of classes needed for generals.
 - Chairwoman Williams stated that the enrollment part was shown to the board, and that three students had it as a major, and that classes were required, and that's why it was not shelved yet.

Motion #2: Motion by Trustee Redthunder to unshelve the Multimedia Program. 2nd by Trustee Keeble. Question by Long Hollow. 7/0 MVP. **Motion Passed.**

- Academic Letter of Support for Financial Aid. The SWC Financial Aid Director would like to gain board approval with a letter of support for our academic programs and state the current programs for FAFSA purposes. Would like it passed for an upcoming deadline.
 - Trustee Larsen asked how often the college needed to do this.

Motion # 3: Motion by Trustee Redthunder to approve the Letter of Support, and to include Multimedia Design as a part of the listed programs. Seconded by Trustee Renville, Questioned by Trustee Larsen. MVP 6/0/. One not voting. **Motion Passed.**

Vice-President of Administrative Services Report:

- Bamboo software for payroll will be starting in January. The software will be purchased out of our USDA #31 grant.

- Financial Aid Director learned how to do checks manually and will be able to use bamboo going forward to hasten the process of sending out student checks.
- Bills dot com is software that takes care of the requisition process to bring the college close to paperless. They will scan their documents and request their pay online and will go through approval process.
 - Bills.com software will take care of requisitions soon and allow SWC to be close to paperless. Approval will still be needed for VPASA, President, and Business Office. .
- Met with NACTEP program director about the Year 4 carryover and supplement grant, and we put all of that together.
- Had a meeting with Jenzabar personnel to figure out how to get more software added to Jenzabar. Business office staff will be having training for that.
- Finished software integration for E-Civis. There may be upcoming training with the software shortly for the PIs, Directors, or Managers. E-Civis should be able to make reports quickly.
- Met with the athletic department, updated their personnel, went over their budget. Along with a meeting about Q-Track.
 - Q-Track is software that will be utilized by the Record's Specialist. And Student Services, so that they can streamline things for student services, like building trees in Jenzabar.
- \$10,000 Emergency aid for Students and \$15,000 for faculty. Looking for another \$25,000 for students. Hopefully we are able to get this emergency aid money for our students.
- As of right now, that concludes Payroll, HR, and the Single Audit. Harshawal LLP company is a CPA firm out of San Diego. The other one is in Sioux Falls.
- HR we have in here where you have different positions that we filled along with what is vacant right at this moment, and in her reports she talks about different positions that were hired.
- The IT Department are in discussion and meetings about the new software that we are getting and where we are at with that. It talks about Jenzabar and the website. We have to work on getting the website up to date.
- New Security Department supervisor, and he is working on starting up drug testing again. Setting up disaster areas and doing a great job. He is preparing for future incidents on campus.
- The Sponsored Programs department reported that they are making progress towards their goals for the grants.
 - Trustee Quinn asked about the drug test, and if college discussed it with legal.
 - VPAS Lavergne explained that whatever company there signed with will send that off to them and make sure that the policy on what to do when they are tested positive.
- Trustee Quinn asked about the \$25,000 in emergency aid, and who they got it from.
 - Answer: VPAS Lavergne stated that they received the \$25k in funding from AIHEC. \$15,000 for students and \$10,000 for staff. Interim President Dr. Buckman replied that

they are applying for the \$20,000 in emergency aid and are hoping to be awarded an amount, and it may not be the full \$20,000.

- Trustee Renville asked if they had all of the funding on hand right now to help.
 - A: Yes, they have the AIHEC one right now. It will be given out \$500 per student soon.
- Trustee Quinn asked if students would have to apply for it.
- VPAS Lavergne stated that they do have to apply for it, so if they have
 - A: Yes, they would have to, and it would be for emergencies, car problems, bills, or utilities.
- Trustee Quinn asked if they are going to apply for it, because it makes it sound like you have it on hand.
 - A: Yes, we do have the AIHEC one, but the Shakopee one will have to wait, because we just found out about it from their personnel in Washington D.C. We will apply later this month.
- Chairwoman Williams asked about the construction letter of support created earlier for a specific grant.
 - A: The letter was for the architects, so they could work on getting their drafts done, and work on getting construction started.
- VPAS Lavergne explained that she was working on getting Title 3: Part A funding back that was going to be used in the 2022 project that didn't get started.
 - The project will add a second floor with a shell to start, and a business incubator on the first floor near the student union area.
 - HKG would like a letter of support, because we're going to try to work on the cost right now.
- Chairman Williams asked when does that money have to be drawn down?
 - VPAS Lavergne explained that they had done drawings for it previously, so it may be possible to draw the rest down, but they want to do their due diligence and create a spending budget for it.
- Trustee Williams asked what the ICDJB grant was for again?
 - A: The grant was for getting a foundation for construction projects. However, the SPO is looking for other funding, because we already had a grant that dealt with that. There is more federal funding that can complete the construction cost.
- Chairwoman Williams asked what the ICDJB Grant was for? And where were the original plans for it?
 - Chairwoman Williams asked what the initial use would have been for?
 - A: SPO Lisa Jackson explained that it would have been used for technical support for A & E, and everything else. However, since the construction was started, there is no need to go for ICDJB grant funding, since we already have allocated federal funding for that foundation.

- Chairwoman Williams asked if it would have been used for the building?
 - Trustee Quinn asked if the A&E part was the \$2 million?
 - SPO Jackson replied that the architect fees will not cost \$ 2 million dollars, but we want to show them that we have started the project, and we need to go forward and revise our original drawings and go according to those changes. In our PLT meeting we discussed the need for a second level for nursing, business incubators, and those would be good for the student union room itself. We just need the architects to change the drawings to reflect that
 - SPO Jackson replied that the architect fees will not cost \$ 2 million, and they would just need to discuss the changes to the original drawings to move forward. The changes are great for the upcoming changes.
 - Trustee Quinn replied that was good, but that did not answer her question.
 - VPAS Lavergne said that the first \$3 million, the government had taken \$1 million, so we only have that \$ 2million to draw down currently.
 - VPAS Lavergne answered that we have the \$ 2million to draw down, because the government took back \$1 million. However, we have been given a Title 3: Part A Supplement Grant, so we will have almost \$ 5 million for construction money set aside now.
 - Trustee Quinn asked when will they know, and what time frame do you have to draw it down?
 - VPAS Lavergne said that she was working with a legislator, and can hopefully draw down soon. She emailed her yesterday, so she can follow up with her soon.
 - Trustee Quinn asked what the deadline was for the first \$3 million.
 - VPAS Lavergne replied that she was unsure. It just depends on our ability to draw down, and we will figure that out. We did draw it down previously, so we should be able to get it back. We should have more information next month.
- Chairwoman Williams said that HKG dig present designs previously. Along with 3D designs. This will be the third time she has seen designs and asked if we would have to pay for additional plans if we paid previously.
 - SPO Jackson said that one main thing from the old construction design drawings was that they were in the covid era, so the construction cost was really high. Ours right now would be way cheaper. However, we are adding more onto the construction cost with another floor, but overall, the cost is lower.
- Chairwoman Williams reiterated her statement and asked again if we were going to pay for those blueprints again?
 - Sponsored Programs Officer Lisa Jackson responded that she assumes there will be some of the edits, but she wouldn't expect it to be much.
 - Trustee Larsen said that she was given what she thought were the edits, and it is from HKG and it has the date 11/12/2025 on the date, so these must have the business incubators on them.

- Interim President Dr. Buckman said that they did have to change them again to move an elevator across a hall, and there would be another edit coming soon.
- Trustee Quinn asked why the elevator needed to be moved.
- SPO Jackson explained that it had to be moved to give the nursing lab more space for their lab that they were requesting. It works out for the better, because it gives the business incubators more room to expand as well.
- Chairwoman Williams asked if they would be able to see the 3-D again, like they did previously with the 3-D blueprints.
- Trustee Larsen asked about the Title 3: Part A funding.
 - VPAS Lavergne replied that yes, not the whole \$ 2 million would be used, but a large chunk of it would be used for construction. Some of it had to be allocated to salaries, because that's how it was originally written.
- Trustee Larsen asked why the project fell through when employees left, was there no one else who could have worked on the grant? She does not care about right now, but what had happened previously.
 - SPO Jackson answered that she was new to the position and knew about that grant from Josh and Herald. However, she did not go after that grant, because it would be an infrastructure grant, because of the construction dollars were being used from a similar grant, they could not go for that grant. So, it would have been redundant to go for that grant.
- **Discussion:**
 - Trustee Renville asked if these were the letters for those individuals.
 - Chairwoman Williams replied that she did not get to that yet.
 - Trustee Keeble asked if Jim Pearson was going to fix those drummers.
 - A: Yes, to our current knowledge yes, they will fix the drummers.
 - Trustee Keeble also asked if Mrs. Motah's business was fixed.
 - Interim President Dr. Buckman replied that yes she believes it did get resolved.

ACTION ITEMS:

- **Motion #1:** Motion to approve the agenda. Made by Trustee Redthunder, seconded by Trustee Kampeska, question by Trustee Larsen. MVP 7/0. **Motion Passed.**
- **Motion #2:** Motion by Trustee Redthunder to unshelve the Multimedia Program. 2nd by Trustee Keeble. Question by Long Hollow. 7/0 MVP. **Motion Passed.**

- **Motion #3:** Motion by Trustee Redthunder to approve the Letter of Support, and to include Multimedia Design as a part of the listed programs. Seconded by Trustee Renville, Questioned by Trustee Larsen. MVP 6/0/. One not voting. **Motion Passed.**
- **Motion #4** To approve July 15, 2025, regular meeting. Motion by BL, Second by Trustee Kampeska, Question by Trustee Redthunder. MVP 7/0 **Motion Passed.**
 - Question by Trustee Quinn, as to why on pg. 36 that we were making a motion on July 15ths minutes.
 - Chairwoman Williams said that it has the agenda and the minutes, and those didn't make it into the August monthly meeting.
- **Motion #5** to Approve October Minutes Motion by BL to approve October 21st, 2025, Regular meeting, Motion by Trustee Larsen 2nd by Trustee Kampeska, Question by Trustee Redthunder. 6/0. 1 Not Voting. **MVP Motion Passed.**
- **Motion #6** To Adjourn the meeting. By Trustee Redthunder, Second by Trustee Kampeska. 7/0 **MVP. Motion Passed.**

DISTRICT CONCERNS:

Big Coulee:

- Trustee Keeble said that they have not given her anything for now.

Buffalo Lake:

- Trustee Larsen – A list of consulting contracts came up for my district. The other on has pretty much been addressed. Just the consultant one.

Enemy Swim:

- Chairwoman Williams - Nothing from my district.

Long Hollow:

- Trustee Quinn – Motion #3: To give the Board of Trustees their check register file. Where is that?
 - The check register was given to Trustee Quinn to look at; there was only one copy.

Lake Traverse

- Trustee Redthunder – When will the board have another retreat to go over the grievance and personnel policy. I know we talked about that. We have done them before and during the winter. I was hoping that we could look more into those policies. I know it was spending money, but we could have a Saturday retreat work session to look over policy at the college.
- Trustee Redthunder – In regard to the AIHEC Award. The \$25,000 emergency fund. That is only for students, right?
 - Interim President Dr. Buckman – It's \$15,000 for students and \$10,000 for faculty.
 - Trustee Redthunder – Can I get a copy of that?
 - Interim President Dr. Julie Buckman responded that yes she can get a copy.

Old Agency:

- Trustee Kampeska reported that her district did not have any concerns.

Heipa:

- Trustee Renville reported that she did not have anything to report for this meeting.
- Trustee Renville – Replied that she did have a motion from her district to abolish the college board, and to have the audit turned over to the feds.
 - It was voted on, but I voted against it, but it was passed. That's all I have.

Meeting adjourned at 6:37 PM

Respectfully Submitted,
SWC Recorder: *Kenyon Budack Jr.*