

Sisseton Wahpeton College
Board of Trustees Regular Meeting Minutes
1/20/2026 – 5:00 PM (4:30 PM Meal)

Meeting called to order at 5:05 PM Roll

Call:

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

Others Present:

William Laroque, Samantha Crandall, LaJune Morgan, Etta Jo Marks, Melissa Marx, Lisa Jackson, Lorraine Rousseau, Dr. Samuel Bonsu, Kelsey Stadtler, Aaron Keeble

-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 5:05 PM. Roll call was taken, and a quorum was established.

Opening Prayer

- Given by

Public Comments

- William Laroque – Has concerns on page 39 regarding the audit, especially as a stakeholder. He would like the community questions answered about the comments that were in the booklet, it says that there was further investigation, and he questioned if that was true.
 - Chairwoman Williams responded that the board would do a motion for further investigation, but it will not be done by this board.
 - William Laroque asked if madam chair could explain in further detail, because he doesn't understand that answer.
 - Chairwoman Williams responded that it was because the names and certain issues cannot be answered by the board openly, and it would require further

investigation. But, it cannot be done by this Board of Trustees, and it will be handed over later.

- William Laroque asked if it involved fraud.
 - Chairwoman Williams said that she would like to answer the questions being asked, but they cannot answer that at this time.
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- William Laroque brought another concern dealing with the safety of the athletic program. He asked that SWC hire the correct staff to handle both basketball teams, as there have been many accidents that were not handled correctly, and he would like to have proper people handle those accidents, so the college can avoid lawsuits. SWC needs to have proper people working at sporting events.
 - William Laroque then asked that the board continues to have integrity in fairness and honesty in regard to their stakeholders. As, governance is one of the main requirements for HLC, and that requires them to have the utmost integrity for both their students and community members, and that is what he recommends when the stakeholders come before the board and would like to have their questions answered in fairness, honesty, and integrity. He asks that they do not avoid their questions because it looks as though the Board of Trustees is hiding something, and that is not good for the Board, Staff, Students, or the College. He ended his comment by thanking them for their time.

Reading of Mission Statement

- Read by Chairwoman Williams

Discussion Items

All Staff and Faculty January Meeting

- Interim President Dr. Julie Buckman – We had a welcome back meeting with faculty and staff on January 9, 2026. During this meeting we invited Jim Pearson to talk about safety with our staff, and that included a section where the SWO Police Department talk about security and safety for the campus.

HLC Annual Conference Trip March 21st – March 24th

- Interim President Dr. Buckman – Asked if more board members wished to go to HLC, as SWC needed to start the booking process for the annual HLC Conference trip on March 21-24, 2026.
 - Trustee Quinn – Asked if the president could let Trustee Quinn know what the meeting with the attorney was about.
 - Interim President Dr. Buckman responded that the case we thought of was thrown out was actually on hold, and there was another incident that they had to go over, and that she could not discuss this further, and that she could name say names.

Consent Agenda

President's Report/VPASA Report

- Interim President Dr. Buckman – As of now in January. Spring enrollment is at 211 students. Faculty and Staff returned on January 5, 2026. Spring registration proceeded smoothly with strong enrollment. On Friday, January 9, 2026, we had a Professional Development Session with both Faculty and Staff.
- Interim President Dr. Buckman – At present the college logos appear in various color schemes and departments are going over the design and color pallets, and once we find seven they will go to the students, staff, and community. Further, we would like to cross-train our faculty and staff to strengthen our college, and this includes One Call and Administrative Services and Systems.
- Interim President Dr. Buckman – Through the AIHEC Grant we are able to provide financial care and assistance to several students. Additional funding will be available for those who did not receive it in the fall. We are working on implementing a system to give students transcripts without delay. Element 451, and they offer financial assistance for needs. At this time, we are anticipating the hiring of a few adjunct instructors for our behavioral science program. We hired 2 adjuncts for business and behavioral science in the spring semester. One will become a full-time employee who will begin in the Fall of 2026. Thank you.

Discussion: Food Preservation Building

- Interim President Dr. Julie Buckman asked if the college needed approval to go ahead with their construction for a Food Preservation Building for the CTE Program. The funding was from the Sovereign Equity Fund Grant that written three years ago. However, the cabinet quote from Woodland was too high and they would like to look elsewhere for quotes but would like approval for their construction and they were unsure if they needed a board motion. The building is going to be used for Extension Events, activities, and for the culinary program to teach out of. It is going to be made from the Carpentry class to reduce costs and will save the college money by doing it that way.
 - This discussion was tabled for further updated quotes Menards and local vendors like Tri-State.

Discussion: Tiny Homes

- Chairwoman Williams – What is the College going to do with the tiny homes?
 - Vice President of Administrative Services Gretta Lavergne – They were going to be used for full-time faculty and utilized. It's hard to get a regular instructor moved in.
 - Chairwoman Williams – Do those have bathrooms, etc.

- VPAS Lavergne – The two over here have bathrooms, living room, and bedroom, the bigger one has two bedrooms.
- Trustee Renville – This house back here. The one that the president used to have is someone living in there.
 - VPAS Lavergne – I think they are cleaning it out. We are having an employee utilize that house for a couple months. Unless we have the new president come, we will ask that employee to leave, and have the new president move in.

Discussion: Water Break

- Chairwoman Williams – Did the water break happen at the college?
 - Interim President Dr. Buckman – The leak was here at the college. It was a link in the sprinkler system, and they had to get a part to fix it.
 - Chairwoman Williams – Can you update the board about the leak?
 - Interim President Dr. Buckman – They were waiting for the part as far as I know. Dave said that they had to shut it off until that part came in and it was over at the dorms. Nothing was ruined as far as I was told.

VPAS REPORT

Discussion: Jenzabar

- Vice President of Administrative Services Gretta Lavergne explained that most of the problems she had to deal with were on pages 25-28. Jenzabar is a yearly subscription, and all of the areas that we purchased were not being fully utilized or even used at all, like the Student Life Module, student billing, financial holds, payroll, budgets, fixed assets, depreciation, generating reports, and these areas are what the college is setting up right now. Along with financial aid and credit card transactions.
 - Trustee Quinn had a question as to what reports were being made from Jenzabar.
 - VPAS Gretta Lavergne explained that it was the reports that were being asked for by the Board. She explained that these reports are pulled from Jenzabar

Discussion: Student Accounts

- VPAS Lavergne – discussed that student accounts were not setup properly, and now the new Student Accounts Employee is working on auditing every single student account. Currently we have gained a total of \$40,000 from those audits and we are working on collecting a further \$70,000 right now. We are in the process of figuring out how to collect old outstanding bills in the amount of \$770,000 from old student accounts post-covid.
 - Chairwoman Williams had questions about the debt as in 2017-2018 there was a motion to pay back old student debt with no dollar amount required, and in 2021

they received \$300k to cover old student debt. She questioned if there needed to be an internal audit on that money.

Discussion: Student Account/Bridge

- The Dean of Education Kelsey Stadtler explained that typically bridge students are being paid out of a grant. However, the dual-credit bridge students will have to pay for it from their high schools.

Discussion: Accounting Basis

- Trustee Quinn wondered why the college operates on accrual instead of a cash basis. To which Chairwoman Williams replied that the college has been reporting as accrual. Jessica West replied that SWC's auditing financials have always been on accrual, but she does not know about how the college does its internal reporting. Trustee Quinn was asking about training and accrued expenses, and if that was only Accounts Payable. To which Jessica West replied that yes, payroll that is paid in July through June, they would have that, and the deferred revenue. Revenue that is actually earned is allowable through the institution that was not drawn down.

Discussion: Jenzabar

- Trustee Larsen had more questions regarding the Jenzabar issues. She would like to have someone fix it or work on it fast. She has heard the deadline date get pushed repeatedly and would like to have it done. VPAS Lavergne explained that Jessica West and SBO staff will work on that.
 - There was a brief discussion on the subscription price being \$80,000 with another \$30,000 for added software like Student Life and other software the College uses.
 - Ex Officio Crawford would like it to be known that previous administration should have held people accountable for not implementing this software quicker, as it has been used for eight years, with a subscription cost of \$80,000 a year. And now an extra \$30,000 a year.
 - Trustee Quinn was asking why the training for staff and faculty is not included in the base prices of \$80k and \$30k. VPAS Lavergne explained that they only have so many hours for Jenzabar.
 - Trustee Larsen asked if this was why there were so few people trained in Jenzabar.
 - Records Specialist Selena Olvera and Dean of Education Kelsey Stadtler explained that it's because if there's a problem that occurs in Jenzabar they have to be able to find it fast and fix it quickly because of the issues it causes with reporting. If there are too many people there are many mistakes that could happen and that would cause more problems.

Financial Questions

- Trustee Quinn asked why the unrestricted was in parenthesis again. Jessica West explained that was because they were waiting for grants. Unrestricted funds end up becoming the plug for anything that has to come out. So, if we have grant expenses record and we have not been able to do our drawdowns then it makes it go into the negative until the draw downs happen.
 - Trustee Quinn then asked why do they not have budgets with the grant that was awarded. Jessica West explained that is what Gretta is currently working on with the Jenzabar budget software that can get that information quickly.
 - Trustee Quinn asked why the funds were not drawn down. VPAS Lavergne asked why they weren't being drawn down for some grants? To which Trustee Quinn asked why are you spending if you are not drawing it down. VPAS Lavergne explained that most of the grant spending are getting drawn down. Trustee Quinn said that Jessica West just said that they were in unrestricted.
 - Jessica West replied that That's the timeline where it is one to one. You have to reconcile the grants before drawing down on the funds. She asked Gretta if she wanted to comment on how much is drawn down. Jessica West explained that you cannot draw down on singular expenses when it comes to some grants.
 - VPAS Lavergne explained that for some grants like NACTEP they will draw down monthly. Some of them allow us to draw down the whole thing, and then some require us to draw them down at the end of the year, and some even require us to have expenditures first before we can draw them down. Like, BIE, Title 3, or Title 3: Part F. They allow us to draw down once we have everything expensed and we are able to put it into Jenzabar. In another case when they do expenditures with check requests they get put into the proper accounts. NACTEP, E-Core are just some examples where we must spend first and then draw down.
 - Chairwoman Williams asked when they are looking at the unrestricted funds, what are they looking at, because they can see that it is expensed, but they are not seeing if it's drawn down or not.
 - Jessica West Explained that it's confusing because the college has a lot of net and capital assets due to large construction, so it does skew the reporting just a bit, and that's how the college is leveraged off of the significant number of capital assets. So, she recommended to not anchor on the unrestricted number. She said that we currently have an operating loss in 22. But that is mostly from the grant expenses and monthly grant reconciliation for the grant revenue.
 - Trustee Quinn said that SWC spends the grant, but they do not draw down until the end of the month. She asked who is covering that and are we overdrawing?

- VPAS Lavergne responded that no we are not overdrawing.
 - Jessica West replied that we using grants as a reimbursement; we have to meet the grant requirements before we can use those grants.
 - Trustee Quinn asked why the accrued payroll was at \$1,668,000?
 - Jessica West said that it was a different thing in accrued payroll. That crosses year end, so we have vacation accrual. Full-time employees receive vacation and sick leave and would have to pay that out to them, and that is why it's recorded as a liability. Although they can use their vacation throughout the year for their time off.
 - Trustee Quinn said that if they are only able to hold so many hours, then why is it so high?
 - Jessica West explained that it's two portions. Two payrolls have been processed through the time period and taken to the bank as well as those amounts. She asked if Gretta had the dates for rollover accruals.
 - VPAS Lavergne replied that it usually happens in December and it gets taken out in January. We just recently did the buybacks for people's hours.
 - Trustee Quinn – Said that the buybacks should not be accrual and that they should be an expense.
 - Chairwoman Williams asked if she would like something a little more detailed.
 - Trustee Quinn said that she does, since accrued payroll, there should be only so many days that they come in and work. Before they come in and get paid for it in January. It would be a lot easier if you did just cash.
 - Jessica West – We are just matching accrual basis, we can report on cash for the board. I would have to talk with Gretta to get cash basis to work.
 - Ex. Officio Crawford would like to have the breakdown as well. Since if you look at the line item for depreciation on capital assets for buildings and what no. And he asked why the college is not doing the 105 L Program on Depreciation. If the college has that much in depreciation the BIA should be able to pay it back.
 - Ex Officio Crawford explained that the 105 L Program is a lease that is a year by year basis. He said tribal colleges can apply for it and still get reimbursed from the BIA. He said that Enemy Swim day school did it. It has money allocated for it.
- Trustee Quinn asked Gretta if she has the budgets done that they asked for.
 - Interim President Dr. Buckman replied that we need to have more time to get that put together.
 - Chairwoman Williams responded that they would like to have that for February's work study.
- Trustee Larsen asked about the consultant list.

- Interim President Dr. Buckman asked that hopefully before the next meeting we can email it to the board.
- Chairwoman Williams asked that anything that required a contract or consultation should be listed, since they would like to see how much the college is paying for consultants and contracts.
- Chairwoman Williams asked for a vendor list that could include students. Or pretty much anything that is part of accounts payable for the college.
- Trustee Redthunder said that she agrees, since she doesn't know who this Jessica West lady is and if we paying for her services, how long, and how much it is costing the college. She asked if there's a contract? For how long? And if it is an MOU or Contract?

Discussion: Tiny Homes and Student Union Building

- Trustee Larsen asked if Gretta checked with the housing authority.
- Chairwoman Williams said the Board was wondering why the payments stopped, and if the college is able to ask for that again.
 - VPAS Lavergne replied that she didn't have time to get to that.
- Trustee Quinn asked about the nursing program grants and if they could talk to us about that.
 - Sponsored Programs Officer Lisa Jackson replied if that was for the new student union building? And nursing? She said we were allocated \$1.7 million with the TCU. BIE Construction Grant. We had \$2.6 million sitting in there and we had this project back around covid time. We have not heard if we are going to be awarded that money back, and I have not heard back from the Vice-Chairman's Office if they would be willing to help us with our project. We are still exploring funding options and identifying funds.
 - Trustee Quinn asked if we applied for it?
 - SPO Jackson replied that she listened to Francis and applied with SEDs for planning, and that was a requirement for that grant.
 - Trustee Quinn asked if she was relying on planning and that as completely rearranged.
 - SPO Jackson said she reached out with council and they have seen it, but they did not approve it.
- SPO Jackson – Asked if Francis had any updates with the carryover funds from the Covid funds.
 - Ex Officio Crawford explained that he inquired on that project where Tribal Council would put \$4 million toward the student union. He said that they are unable to allocate any funding, because they are unable to carry it over, as it had

to be expended by December of 2025. He said that it would require a budget and a resolution from Council as well. And those processes are already closed.

- Trustee Quinn asked if there are any grants that SPO Jackson has applied for?
 - SPO Jackson replied that she is looking and waiting for more answers in other areas.

Discussion: NACTEP Grant

- Chairwoman Williams asked for an update on the NACTEP Grant. She knows that they are coming up on the carryover and she noticed that in an HR report that they were looking for an assistant, and if that is the case, why are they being hired if their payroll is being paid off of carryover how will they fund the position?
 - Director of Nursing Melissa Marx explained that their supplemental carryover will last until September 30th, and that they need a support person to help with all of the purchasing. She did a rough estimate and knows that they have around \$50,000 short of spending their full carryover funds, so there are some expenditures that need to be recorded in journal entries, so they do not lose that money. She said that they have to have expenditures done except payroll by December 31st.
 - In addition, she said that she emailed Julie a request for Tribal Council to have someone from tribal council sit on a meeting in February in regards to support future NACTEP opportunities. It has been going on for 5 years, and it 100% covered Nursing, Building Trades, Plumbing, Culinary, Multimedia, and 25% of CDL. A lot of salaries were relying on this grant, and we were also able to increase the nursing department.
 - Chairwoman Williams asked if we would have to start over the application.
 - Director of Nursing Marx replied that Patty is hoping a tribal manager will be there in on this meeting on February 10th. Patty is recommending that the chair on tribal council or someone that can hit home with education in our community is what it amounts to, and hopefully they will have another competition for the grant.
 - Chairwoman Williams replied that she and Francis were part of the email and she will forward that request.
 - Trustee Quinn asked if she had that \$50k targeted to be spent on already.
 - Director of Nursing Marx replied that it was going to be put toward building supplies and we cannot get it by December. She does not have any of the salary information, so the only time she can see is that when they do drawdowns and don't have those figures it might be towards \$30k.

- SPO Jackson had a question for Francis about the training for the grant for the state. She asked if he had any information on that.
 - Ex Officio Crawford replied that he does not recall the grants.
 - SPO Jackson replied that she thought it was the governor one. Coming down from the states.
 - Ex Officio Crawford replied that it might be the Rural States Grant, which is an overall on how each state would expend it. He said that it has different guidelines on how to spend, and he asked the secretary when he went out to consultation from Eagle Butte if we could use it for our nursing programs. He didn't say yes, but he said we could look at USD, Lake Area Tech, and I said no. I wanted to see if we could use our tribal college. And I explained to him and he said that they would look into it. He sounded like he wanted to keep it with the state institutions. How much more rural are you going to get than Sisseton, SD. It's something we should ask about, and we should apply for it. I think the process is supposed to come out at the end of February.

- Trustee Larsen and Nursing Director Melissa Marx discussed if the new person that was hired for the NACTEP support technician role knew if they were temporary or not. The person did understand that it was a temporary position. Trustee Larsen then asked why she could not do draw downs for her own grant if she was the PI. To which the Director explained that she could not do to needing a different person doing the draw downs, and it had to be a certified official from the college which is why Gretta is doing it. She explained that she would like to have the budgets to know what is left for spending, and how much she can spend, since it's hard to figure that out if she needs to use it by December. Trustee Quinn asked why she doesn't just keep track with a cuff account. To which Director Marx replied that is the only way how she keeps track of what she has spent.

Action Items:

Motion #1 To approve the agenda. Motion made by Trustee Quinn, 2nd by Trustee Keeble, Question by Trustee Renville. 4/0 MVP Motion Passed.

Motion #2: To Approve the Consent Agenda Motion made by Trustee Kampeska, 2nd by Trustee Redthunder, Question by Trustee Larsen. 7/0. MVP **Motion Passed.**

Motion #3 To approve Regular meeting Minutes on December 16th, 2025, with corrections, made by Trustee Larsen, 2nd by Trustee Kampeska, Question by Trustee Redthunder. MVP. 7/0. **Motion Passed.**

Motion #4 To go into Closed Executive Session by Trustee Redthunder, 2nd by Trustee Renville, Question by Trustee Quinn. MVP. 7/0. **Motion Passed.**

District Concerns

Big Coulee District

- Trustee Keeble – Nothing.

Buffalo Lake District

- Trustee Larsen – Mine will be in executive.

Enemy Swim District

- Chairwoman Williams –No meeting since October. Regular on Saturday.

Heipa District

- Trustee Renville – Meeting on Sunday.

Lake Traverse District

- Trustee Redthunder – Meeting on Saturday. No December. Will have stuff next month.

Long Hollow District

- Trustee Quinn – Will be in executive session.

Old Agency District

- Trustee Kampeska – Meeting is Monday.

Tribal Council Ex Officio:

- Ex. Officio Crawford

Meeting went into closed executive session at 6:44 PM.

Respectfully submitted, SWC Recorder: Kenyon Budack Jr.

Board of Trustees Approved on February 17, 2026 Regular Meeting: Motion # 4