Sisseton Wahpeton College
Board of Trustees Regular Meeting Minutes
9/15/2026 - 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
Enemy Swim	Janell Williams	Present
Lake Traverse	Jessica Redthunder	Present
Long Hollow	Fran Quinn	Present
Old Agency	Travis Renville	Present
Heipa	Marie Renville	Present
Tribal Council Ex. Officio	Francis Crawford	Present

Others Present: SWC President Anna Sheppard, Accounts Payable Lona Miller, Dean of Business Dr. Samuel Bonsu, Dean of Education Kelsey Stadtler, Records Specialist Samantha Crandall, Dean of Indigenous Health Heather Flute, Nursing Director Melissa Marx, Sponsored Programs Officer Lisa Jackson, Athletics Director Devero Yellow Earring, President's Office Manager Kenyon Budack Jr. (SWC Recorder).

-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.

Public Comments / Introduction of President Anna Sheppard

There were no public comments. President Anna Sheppard introduced herself to the Board on her first official day at SWC and shared some of her professional, educational, and personal background. She discussed her previous nonprofit, grant-writing, and higher education experience and shared that she is currently working toward her doctorate. President Sheppard thanked the Board and College community for welcoming her and expressed appreciation to the students who helped her family while moving into the house on campus.

Discussion Items

Policies

The Board of Trustees reviewed several policies from Student Accounts and Human Resources and discussed whether they had completed the College's internal review process before being brought forward. Trustee Renville raised concerns with Student Accounts Policy 500-01,

specifically how delinquent accounts and collections would be handled. He requested a clearer process explaining what happens before an account is sent to collections and how older or bad debt is handled. The Board of Trustees also discussed the Student Accounts SOP Manual referenced in the policy and requested that the procedures be provided so the Board could better understand how the policy would be carried out.

The Board of Trustees also reviewed the Meal Plan Policy, including how meals are provided to dorm students during the week and on weekends, how charges are tracked, and the availability of the food pantry. Nursing Director Melissa Marx and Trustee Larsen suggested getting student input on policies that directly affect students and looking at how other tribal colleges handle similar programs. Chairwoman Williams stated that the policies should go back to President Sheppard for further review and return to the Board with the appropriate procedures and supporting information. The Board also discussed creating a clearer internal process for reviewing policies before they come to the Board. Trustee Quinn raised an additional concern regarding employee handbook language dealing with leave payouts for employees terminated for gross misconduct and requested that the language be reviewed by legal counsel.

Course and Program Modifications

Dean of Education Kelsey Stadtler presented several curriculum changes that had gone through the Curriculum Committee, including a proposed Culinary Applied Science Certificate and two-year degree, an LPN-related program change, a new Dakota Studies course, and a Business program course requirement change. Dr. Alessandro Jaker explained that the new Advanced Dakota Literacy and Grammar course would focus more on written Dakota, grammar, sentence structure, and other areas identified through assessment. Trustee Larsen requested that future course and program changes be brought to a Board working meeting when possible, so that the Board of Trustees could have more time to review the information.

Dakota Studies Report

Dakota Studies Director Dr. Alex Jaker reported continued growth in the Dakota language program, including the addition of a superior level and the new Advanced Dakota Literacy and Grammar course. The department continues developing Dakota language materials for the community, including approximately 400 copies of materials for free distribution, a Dakota verb book, and a conversational phrase book. Staffing continues to be a concern, and one course had to be canceled because there were not enough instructors available. Akisa Red Soldier also discussed the additional workload being carried by staff and challenges with retaining employees because of wages.

Dr. Jaker also discussed concerns with the department's NSF grant, which originally included funding for two senior positions while only one is currently filled. He expressed concern about how the vacancy could affect grant requirements or future funding and planned to discuss the issue with the grant program director. Trustee Renville suggested looking into other funding opportunities that could connect Dakota language, healing, and public health. The Board also discussed whether grant requirements could potentially be adjusted to better address the program's staffing needs.

Consent Agenda

The Consent Agenda was presented to the Board. During discussion, Trustee Renville asked about staffing changes within the bookstore and library area, including who had taken over the Bookstore/Library Manager position. Dean of Education Kelsey Stadtler identified Lavergne Whitebear as the new manager and provided clarification on other staff changes within that area.

Trustee Larsen also asked Dakota Studies Director Dr. Alex Jaker about the three new Dakota language learners. Dr. Jaker identified them as Caske Bluehorse, Lauren Sanderson, and Cante Manning-Peters. The discussion gave the Board additional information on the new language learners and current staffing and program updates included with the Consent Agenda.

Chairwoman Williams asked the executive office to reach out to Dr. Lindquist and follow through and pursue the American Indian College Fund "TCU Futures Project" for funding upon completion of professional development training for the Board of Trustees and President. The SWC Recorder acknowledged that they were going to reach out to Dr. Lindquist from AICF.

Financial Oversight / $5,000 Approval Process

The Board of Trustees discussed the temporary requirement that expenditures over $5,000 receive Board approval. Trustee Renville explained that his main concern was contracts and consultants rather than normal operating purchases and questioned whether routine expenses still needed Board approval now that President Sheppard had started. Chairwoman Williams explained that the requirement had been put in place during the Interim President period because of previous financial concerns and the Board's fiduciary responsibility. She also noted that the Board had not yet received the FY2027 budget and that contracts still require Board approval under the bylaws.

The Board of Trustees discussed the importance of eventually returning routine day-to-day financial authority to the President while keeping the Board focused on governance and financial oversight. It was also discussed that HLC expects the Board to focus on larger governance responsibilities rather than becoming involved in normal daily operations. Trustee Renville supported returning routine spending authority to the President, with expenditures then reported to the Board. A motion regarding purchases under $5,000 was discussed but later retracted.

Construction Bids

Plumbing Instructor John Kampeska presented updated bids for the tiny houses, small house, domes, and Food Preservation Building. He explained that some projects had been advertised more than once but only received one bid. Trustee Quinn and President Sheppard discussed the importance of documenting when projects were properly advertised but received only one response. Trustee Renville also emphasized following TERO, tax, and procurement requirements and getting multiple bids whenever possible. Facilities Manager John confirmed that documentation showing the projects had been advertised twice was available.

The Board of Trustees also reviewed the remaining work for the Food Preservation Building, including concrete, water and sewer, and electrical work. After comparing the bids and

discussing tribal requirements, recommendations were made for the contractors to complete the remaining work. The related contractor approvals are listed under Action Items.

Meeting Minutes / Financial Staffing

While reviewing the previous meeting minutes, Trustee Quinn asked whether SWC was advertising for a CFO on the website. Chairwoman Williams added that there was no advertisement for a job posting on the website, and they discussed about having them listed. President Sheppard said she had learned about the situation that day and planned to speak with Human Resources to get it going. The Board discussed previous plans involving a remote comptroller and the Vice President of Administrative Services position. Chairwoman Williams stated that the Board had not received a clear update on where that process ended.

Trustee Larsen questioned why a financial position had previously been considered part-time and remote and noted that HR had previously been directed to advertise a position, including through the Tribal College Journal. The discussion reflected the Board's continued concern about having appropriate financial staffing and receiving clearer updates on the status of those positions.

President Sheppard – Bank Authorization

The Board discussed adding President Anna Sheppard as an authorized signer on SWC's financial accounts following her appointment as President. The authorizations included accounts maintained at Minnwest Bank, Dacotah Bank, and the Sisseton Wahpeton Federal Credit Union. The individual approvals are listed under Action Items.

USDA TCU Grant

The Board discussed an opportunity for SWC to pursue **USDA TCU Grant #32**. The College had advertised an opportunity for community comment at the September 15, 2026, Board meeting. The Board's approval to pursue the grant is included under Action Items.

Action Items

Motion #1: Motion to approve the agenda by Trustee Redthunder, seconded by Trustee Quinn, questioned by Trustee Travis Renville. 6/0/0 MVC. **Motion Passed.**

Motion #2: Motion to table all policies that were presented. By Trustee Redthunder, seconded by Old Agency, questioned by Heipa, 6/0/0. MVC. **Motion Passed.**

Motion #3: Motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Motion by Trustee Travis Renville, seconded by Trustee Quinn, questioned by Trustee Redthunder. 7/0/0. MVC. **Motion Passed.**

Motion #4: Motion to pay the bills as was presented tonight. Motion by Trustee Redthunder, seconded by Trustee Travis Renville, questioned by Trustee Quinn. 7/0/0. MVC. **Motion Passed.**

- (Only bills above $5,000 as required by a previous motion).

Motion #5: Motion to accept the bids on HVAC "Kirk's Heating & Air" on tiny houses #1 and #2, along with the Small house with the advertisements being attached to it. Motion by Trustee Quinn, seconded by Trustee Travis Renville, questioned by Trustee Redthunder. 4/0/3(NV). MVC. **Motion Passed.**

Motion #6: Motion to accept the bids for Nelson's HVAC on the two domes. By Trustee Quinn, seconded by Trustee Redthunder, questioned by Trustee Larsen. 6/0/1(NV). MVC. **Motion Passed.**

Motion #7: Motion to go with Nelson Electric, Lapp Concrete, and Bob's Water & Sewer for the Food Preservation Building. Motion by Trustee Quinn, seconded by Trustee Travis Renville, questioned by Trustee Redthunder. 6/0/0. MVC. **Motion Passed.**

Motion #8: Motion to approve the program additions and modifications. By Trustee Redthunder Seconded by Trustee Travis Renville, questioned by Trustee Quinn. 7/0/0. MVC. **Motion Passed**.

- Course Idea: DKT 268: Advanced Dakota Literacy and Grammar| Start Term: FA27
- Program Proposal: Associate of Applied Science: Culinary | Start Term: SPR27
- Program Modification: Swap required course: BUS/CST208 with BADM301: Principles of Management. Start Term: SPR27
- Program Modification: Addition of two classes. To offer an Associate of Applied Science (A.A.S.) in Licensed Practical Nursing Program. Start Term: FA27.

Motion #9: Motion to approve the Board of Trustees Regular August Meeting Minutes on 8/18/2026 with corrections. Motion by Trustee Redthunder, seconded by Trustee Travis Renville, questioned by Trustee Quinn. 7/0/0. MVC. **Motion Passed.**

Motion #10: Motion to approve the Board of Trustees Special Meeting Minutes on 8/26/2026 with corrections. By Trustee Redthunder, seconded by Trustee Travis Renville, questioned by Trustee Quinn. 7/0/0. MVC. **Motion Passed.**

Motion #11: Motion to approve the Board of Trustees Special Meeting Minutes on 9/9/2026. By Trustee Redthunder, seconded by Trustee Quinn, questioned by Trustee Larsen. 6/0/1(NV). MVC. **Motion Passed.**

Motion #12: Motion to have the Board of Trustee approve President Anna Sheppard as an authorized check signer for Sisseton Wahpeton College, effective on 9/15/2026, on all accounts maintained by the organization at Minnwest Bank, and this includes the CD at Minnwest Bank. This authorization shall remain in effect until amended or revoked by action of the Board of Trustees. By Trustee Larsen, seconded by Trustee Redthunder, Questioned by Trustee Quinn. 6/0/1 (NV), Old Agency abstained from voting. **Motion Passed.**

Motion #13: Motion to have the Board of Trustees approve President Anna Sheppard as an authorized check signer for Sisseton Wahpeton College, effective on 9/15/2026, on all accounts maintained by the organization at Dacotah Bank. This authorization shall remain in effect until

amended or revoked by action of the Board of Trustees. Motion by Trustee Redthunder, seconded by Trustee Larsen, questioned by Trustee Quinn. 6/0/1(NV). MVC. Old Agency abstained from voting. **Motion Passed.**

Motion #14: Motion to have the Board of Trustees approve President Anna Sheppard as an authorized check signer for Sisseton Wahpeton College, effective on 9/15/2026, on all accounts maintained by the organization at Sisseton-Wahpeton Federal Credit Union. This authorization shall remain in effect until amended or revoked by action of the Board of Trustees. Motion by Trustee Redthunder, seconded by Trustee Larsen, questioned by Trustee Quinn. 6/0/1(NV), MVC. Old Agency abstained from voting. **Motion Passed.**

Motion #15: Motion for Sisseton Wahpeton College to pursue the USDA TCU Grant #32, and to acknowledge the opportunity for community comment at the September 15, 2026, Board of Trustees Regular Meeting as advertised. By Trustee Larsen, seconded by Trustee Travis Renville, questioned by Trustee Quinn. 7/0/0. **Motion Passed.**

Motion #16: Motion to go into closed executive session. By Trustee Redthunder, seconded by Trustee Quinn, questioned by Trustee Marie Renville. 7/0/0. **Motion Passed.**

District Concerns

Big Coulee

Trustee Keeble discussed the need for an on-site counselor to provide additional support for students. She also informed the Board that she does not plan to run again when her current term ends.

Buffalo Lake

Trustee Larsen reported no district concerns for the month.

Enemy Swim

Chairwoman Williams reported no questions or concerns from Enemy Swim.

Heipa

Trustee Renville reported that nothing new had come up for the district this month.

Lake Traverse

Trustee Redthunder suggested creating a policy committee that could include staff, faculty, and other College representatives to review policies before they are brought to the Board of Trustees. President Sheppard agreed that the internal policy process could be improved and discussed possibly having College Leadership, Student Senate, and a College Senate to give different groups an opportunity to review and provide input on policies. She brought up that she and Recorder Kenyon Budack Jr. had already been discussing possible changes to this process internally.

Long Hollow

Trustee Quinn raised concerns about employee wages and employees who may not have received increases over time. She specifically discussed an example involving a math instructor and requested that SWC look into employee raises and cost-of-living adjustments, noting that better wages could also help employee morale. President Sheppard explained that cost-of-living increases are generally tied to the budget. The Board of Trustees also briefly discussed previous increases and bonuses and acknowledged that some employees continue working at SWC despite lower wages because of their commitment to the College, and that hopefully this could be looked at in the future.

Old Agency

Trustee Renville raised concern that there was no financial update included on the agenda. He also discussed the importance of getting the outstanding audits completed, noting that the most recent information he found through the clearinghouse was from 2023. He stated that completing the 2024 and 2025 audits should be a priority.

Closed Executive Session

The Board of Trustees then went into Closed Executive Session.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned following the brief closed executive session.