

## Board of Governors Meeting Minutes

Board of Governors-Northeast Community College Area

9/25/2025 9:30 AMCDT

@ Northeast Community College, Lifelong Learning Center, Suite O197, 801 E. Benjamin Ave.,  
Norfolk, NE 68701

### **Attendance**

#### **Present:**

Members: Del Ames, Steve Anderson, Diane Davies, Donovan Ellis, Terry Nelson, Dirk Petersen, Jeffrey Scherer, Carol A. Sibbel, Nicole Sedlacek, Pat Wojcik

#### **Absent:**

Members: Julie Robinson-Excused

Leah Barrett - President, Scott Gray - Vice President, Administrative Services and General Counsel, Charlene Widener - Vice President, Educational Services, Amanda Nipp - Vice President, Student Services, Tracy Kruse - Vice President, Development and External Affairs, David Cone - CIO, Mike Walkowiak - Vice President, Human Resources & Organizational Development, Lindsay Spiegel - Director, Institutional Effectiveness, Jennifer Greve, Jerry Guenther - Director, Public Relations, Diane Reikofski - Executive Assistant and Board Recording Secretary

Guests: Jake Lockee, Security and Network Analyst, Allison Lambert, College Engagement Coordinator, Field May, Senior Director of Network and Infrastructure, Avery Carl, NDN, Tee Bush, Faculty Association president, Kyler Mosel, Student Leadership Association president, Renee Peters, Executive Director of Security and Technology Services

#### 1. CONVENE BUDGET HEARING (Presenters: Scott Gray)

[BUDGET HEARING](#) on the [2025-2026 budgets](#) for the purpose of hearing support, opposition, criticism, suggestions, or observations from taxpayers.

Official Notice of the Budget Hearing and Budget Summary was published in the [Norfolk Daily News](#) on Saturday, September 20, 2025.

 [Northeast Community College Budget Hearing 2025-26 2025.09.18.pdf](#)

 [2025-26 BOG Budget Hearing Presentation.pdf](#)

The Northeast Community College Board of Governors met for its official Budget Hearing regarding the 2025-2026 College budgets on Thursday, September 25, 2025. Notice of the Budget Hearing was published in the *Norfolk Daily News* on Saturday, September 20, 2025. Purpose of the Budget Hearing on the 2025-2026 budgets is for hearing support, opposition, criticism, suggestions, or observations from taxpayers. Chairperson Jeff Scherer declared the budget hearing convened at 9:30 a.m., in Suite O197 of the Lifelong Learning Center, located on the campus of Northeast Community College. Scott Gray, Vice President, Administrative Services, reviewed the General Fund Operating Budget, noting decreases in software licenses, contractual services, and postage, along with notable increases in repair and maintenance, insurance, utilities, and instructional and lab supplies. Review was also provided regarding the Building Improvement Fund Budget, and the Self-Supporting Funds Budget for Fiscal year 2025-2026.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT on Budget Hearing

Individuals commenting on the Budget Hearing are allowed three minutes each. Any member of the public wishing to address the Board of Governors may sign in and comment to the Board at this time.

No constituents were in attendance to address the Board of Governors with a public comment.

3. ADJOURN BUDGET HEARING

Budget Hearing was adjourned at 9:56 a.m.

4. CONVENE PROPERTY TAX REQUEST HEARING (Presenters: Scott Gray)

[PROPERTY TAX REQUEST HEARING](#) for the purpose of hearing support, opposition, criticism, suggestions, or observations of taxpayers relating to setting the final tax request at a different amount than the prior year tax request.

Official Notice of the Special Hearing to Set Final Tax Request Hearing was published in the [Norfolk Daily News](#) on Saturday, September 20, 2025.

 [Northeast Community College Budget Hearing 2025-26 2025.09.18.pdf](#)

The Property Tax Request Hearing was convened at 9:56 a.m. Notice of the Special Hearing to Set Final Tax Request was published in the *Norfolk Daily News* on Saturday, September 20, 2025. Purpose of the Special Hearing to Set Final Tax Request is to hear support, opposition, criticism, suggestions, or observations from taxpayers.

Information on setting of the Final Property Tax Request for 2025-2026 was presented by Scott Gray.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT on Property Tax Request Hearing

Individuals commenting on the Property Tax Request Hearing are allowed three minutes each. Any member of the public wishing to address the Board of Governors may sign in and comment to the Board at this time.

No constituents were in attendance to address the Board of Governors with a public comment.

6. ADJOURN PROPERTY TAX REQUEST HEARING

At 9:59 a.m., there being no further discussion, Chairperson Scherer declared the Property Tax Request Hearing adjourned.

7. CONVENE REGULAR MEETING (Presenters: Jeffrey Scherer)

Chairperson Scherer convened the meeting at 10:00 a.m.

8. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE (Presenters: Jeffrey Scherer)

Chairperson Scherer led the assembly in pledging their allegiance to the flag of the United States of America.

9. OPEN MEETINGS ACT (Presenters: Jeffrey Scherer)

Pursuant to Nebraska Statute Section 84-1412, the public is advised that a copy of today's agenda and all reproducible printed material which will be discussed at today's meeting is located in Suite O197 of the Lifelong Learning Center, located on the Northeast Community College website. Also available in Suite O197 is a current copy of the [Nebraska Open Meetings Act](#) which is accessible to members of the public.

Chairperson Scherer advised that a copy of today's agenda and all reproducible printed material is located at the back of the room and is also located on the Northeast Community College website.

10. CONSENT AGENDA (Presenters: Jeffrey Scherer)

**APPROVE** the Consent Agenda including:

- **Adopt** the Agenda of the September 25, 2025 meeting. Official Notice of the meeting is posted on the Northeast Community College website, and published in the [Norfolk Daily News](#) on Saturday, September 20, 2025.
- **APPROVE** Minutes of the [August 21, 2025](#) Board of Governors meeting.

- **SECOND READING** and **APPROVAL** of the **DELETION** of:

1. [BP-7244 Full-time Faculty Load Policy](#)
2. [BP-7246 Adjunct Faculty Load Policy](#)
3. [BP-7226 Instructional Day Policy](#)  
The above three policies have been incorporated into [AP-7244.0 Faculty Load](#)
4. [BP-7015 Workplace Threats & Violence Reporting Policy](#) (Incorporated into [AP-7015.0 Workplace Threats & Violence Reporting](#))
5. [BP-7231 Continuation/Amendment/Termination of Employment-Faculty Policy](#) (Incorporated into [AP-7231.0 Continuation/Amendment/Termination of Employment-Faculty](#))
6. [BP-7540 Workers' Compensation Policy](#) (Incorporated into [AP-7540.0 Workers' Compensation](#))
7. [BP-7810 Reduction in Force-Faculty Policy](#). (Incorporated into [AP-7810.0 Reduction in Force-Faculty](#))

 [Board of Governors Meeting-08.21.2025 Minutes.pdf](#)

 [BP-7244 Full-Time Faculty Load Policy.pdf](#)

 [BP-7246 Adjunct Faculty Load Policy.pdf](#)

 [BP-7226 Instructional Day Policy.pdf](#)

 [AP-7244.0 Faculty Load.pdf](#)

 [BP-7015 Workplace Threats and Violence Reporting Policy.pdf](#)

 [AP-7015.0 Workplace Threats and Violence Reporting.pdf](#)

 [BP-7231 Continuation-Amendment-Termination of Employment-Faculty Policy.pdf](#)

 [AP-7231.0 Continuation-Amendment-Termination of Employment-Faculty.pdf](#)

 [BP-7540 Workers Compensation Policy.pdf](#)

 [AP-7540.0 Workers Compensation.pdf](#)

 [BP-7810 Reduction in Force-Faculty Policy.pdf](#)

 [AP-7810.0 Reduction in Force-Faculty.pdf](#)

 [Consent Agenda - September 25, 2025](#)

#### **Motion:**

**MOTION** to **APPROVE** the consent agenda including:

- **Adopt** the Agenda of the September 25, 2025 meeting. Official Notice of the meeting is posted on the Northeast Community College website, and published in the [Norfolk Daily News](#) on Saturday, September 20, 2025.
- **APPROVE** Minutes of the [August 21, 2025](#) Board of Governors meeting.
- **SECOND READING** and **APPROVAL** of the **DELETION** of:
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3. [BP-7226 Instructional Day Policy](#)

The above three policies have been incorporated into [AP-7244.0 Faculty Load](#)

4. [BP-7015 Workplace Threats & Violence Reporting Policy](#) (Incorporated into [AP-7015.0 Workplace Threats & Violence Reporting](#))
5. [BP-7231 Continuation/Amendment/Termination of Employment-Faculty Policy](#) (Incorporated into [AP-7231.0 Continuation/Amendment/Termination of Employment-Faculty](#))
6. [BP-7540 Workers' Compensation Policy](#) (Incorporated into [AP-7540.0 Workers' Compensation](#))
7. [BP-7810 Reduction in Force-Faculty Policy](#). (Incorporated into [AP-7810.0 Reduction in Force-Faculty](#))

Motion moved by Del Ames and motion seconded by Dirk Petersen. Voting yes: Ames, Anderson, Davies, Ellis, Nelson, Petersen, Scherer, Sedlacek, Sibbel, and Wojcik. Voting no: None. Absent: Robinson-Excused. MOTION CARRIED

#### 11. 2025-2026 BUDGET

Consider the [2025-2026 budget](#):

- 2025-2026 [General](#) Operating Budget
- 2025-2026 [Building](#) Improvement Budget
- 2025-2026 Self-Supporting Funds Budget

 [Northeast Community College Budget Hearing 2025-26 2025.09.18.pdf](#)

 [FY26 - General Fund - 5-yr Planning Document - Final.pdf](#)

 [Building Fund FY26 thru FY30 Projections 2025.09.08.pdf](#)

 [Budget approval](#)

#### **Motion:**

Motion to approve the 2025-2026 budgets as follows:

2025-2026 General Operating Budget \$ 60,742,945

2025-2026 Building Improvement Budget \$ 12,905,035

2025-2026 Self-Supporting Funds Budget \$ 35,936,031

Total Budgets \$109,584,011

Motion moved by Diane Davies and motion seconded by Nicole Sedlacek. Voting yes: Ames, Anderson, Davies, Ellis, Nelson, Petersen, Scherer, Sedlacek, Sibbel, and Wojcik. Voting no: None. Absent: Robinson-Excused. MOTION CARRIED

12. PROPERTY TAX REQUEST

Consider the [2025 Property Tax Request](#):

2025 Property Tax Request \$9,781,753.04

2025 Tax Rate 0.020000

 [Northeast Community College Budget Hearing 2025-26 2025.09.18.pdf](#)

 [Property Tax Request](#)

**Motion:**

MOTION to approve the 2025 Property Tax Request as follow:

2025 Property Tax Request \$9,781,753

2025 Tax Rate 0.020000

Motion moved by Del Ames and motion seconded by Diane Davies. Voting yes: Ames, Anderson, Davies, Ellis, Nelson, Petersen, Scherer, Sedlacek, Sibbel, and Wojcik. Voting no: None. Absent: Robinson-Excused. MOTION CARRIED

13. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

13.1. Monitoring Report(s) (Presenters: Leah Barrett)

[EL-08, Communication and Support to the Board](#)

**Complete** [Monitoring Report Summary](#)

 [EL-08 Communication and Support to Board 09.2025.pdf](#)

 [Monitoring Report Summaries.pdf](#)

- Dr. Barrett reported that the data within monitoring report, EL-08, [Communication and Support to the Board](#) was derived from one-on-one discussions that she had with board members.
- Members conveyed that they feel informed and supported.
- Evidence within the monitoring reports is sufficient to monitor the president's performance and is documented in the summary report.
- No instance of statute violations has been noted.
- OnBoard is a significant improvement over Teams as the board management tool.
- No board member indicated that favoritism is shown to any one board member.

Mr. Petersen stated that the president and her staff have done a great job assuring that evidence is available and easy to follow.

The Board assessed monitoring report, EL-08, Communication and Support to the Board, and determined that there is ample evidence of compliance with a reasonable interpretation.

13.2. President's monthly update (Presenters: Leah Barrett)

President's [Monthly Update](#) 09.2025

 [Pres Monthly Update 09.2025.pdf](#)

**Federal updates:**

- Both Senate and house are on recess.
- The federal budget year ends September 30, 2025.
- Unclear at this time of what will happen in the next year.
- Some Department of Education (DOE) programs have moved to the Department of Labor (DOL).

**State Government updates:**

- State-wide work-based learning initiative with the Department of Labor working with community colleges.
- State-wide P-20 initiative and two transfer student data projects with NSWERS.
- Nebraska Community College Economic Development Study will be conducted by Tripp Umbach. Data that is received is used in our advocacy efforts.
- Dr. Barrett continues to meet with service-area Senators
- NCCA Awards and Annual Meeting is scheduled to be held November 2-3, 2025, in Lincoln. Congratulations to Northeast award winners:
  - Faculty-Bonnie Johnson-Bartee-English instructor
  - Administrator/Staff-Faye Kilday, Dean, Center for Teaching and Learning.
  - Board of Governors nominee: Jeff Scherer

**Highlights include:**

- Northeast Community College welcomed the largest first-year class in more than a decade.
- Northeast Community College has been chosen as a SNAP E&T provider.

- The Clothes Closet has become Smart Threads. Students are engaged and partnering with the College Store on merchandise.
- Visiting Writer's series this year features Northeast's employees.

**Conference and convenings that Dr. Barrett has participated in include:**

- C2A3 10th annual conference at Northcentral Technical College in Wausau, WI.
- Rural Community College Association at East Central College in Union, MO.
- Nebraska Healthcare Transformation Commission.
- Nebraska National Guard Education Partnership.
- Congressman Flood toured the new Maclay building and convened a meeting with the dairy industry.
- Participated in the Vistage meeting. Outstanding professional development opportunity: the work has been impactful. Expressed her thanks for the Board's support in this investment.
- Rural Guided Pathways - Human Capital Strategy. Northeast is doing really good work in reference to engagement of employees and accountability mindset.
- Maclay Building grand opening will be held on October 15th.

14. COLLEGE REPORTS

Student Leadership Association([SLA](#)) [report](#)

 [SLA-Board of Governors report-September.pdf](#)

Kyler Mosel, SLA president, reported that SLA currently has eight members. Olivia Dekok serves as the vice president, and Jaylyn Spencer serves as secretary.

SLA has participated in or sponsored the following:

- Student Leadership Development Series (SLDS)
- Fresh Check Day - an uplifting mental health event featuring interactive booths.
- Hawk the Vote - voter registration drive and answered questions.
- Pickleball court lines - this project was approved through Student Services support and submitted to the Physical Plant,
- Campus Conversation Boards - project which seeks to promote student conversations on various topics.
- Kyler posed a question to the members of the Board of Governors; 'How big of an effect does social media have on college students?' and received their feedback.



15. LUNCH

Lifelong Learning Center, Suites C & D

Chairperson Scherer declared the meeting recessed for lunch at 11:53 a.m.

As part of the Ownership Linkage activities, Student Ambassadors joined the Board of Governors for lunch.

Chairperson Scherer declared the meeting back in session at 1:00 p.m.

16. BOARD EDUCATION AND INFORMATION

16.1. Technology Services Report

16.1.1. Artificial Intelligence (AI) presentation (Presenters: David Cone, Renee Peters, Field May, Jake Lockee)

Northeast [GLBA Status](#) (Information)

 [Northeast GLBA Status - Board Report.pdf](#)

Renee Peters provided a written annual report of Northeast's GLBA status.

A demonstration was provided by Renee on how artificial intelligence (AI) can be used by malicious actors to gather information on an individual and create a false narrative, impacting personal and organizational security.

Jake Lockee and Field May detailed security that is in place at Northeast to enhance security measures by filtering and blocking potential threats, including:

- Improvements to phishing email detection and increased strictness in blocking potential threats to email security.
- Digital faxing has been implemented to prevent sensitive information exposure, with faxes secured in digital inboxes.
- Improvements to identify management.
- Audited access to sensitive systems has been heightened with multifactor authentication usage.
- Phone system has been upgraded with multifactor authentication to enhance security.
- Recommendations for secure email practices, device updates, password management strategies, and antivirus usage were discussed.

Levels of access are in place at Northeast to assure that no one person can do everything within systems. In addition, tools have been added over the past year that allows IT to restore data.

Mr. Ames inquired if the Governance Committee needed to look at and provide parameters related to AI at Northeast. Dr. Barrett reported that the team is working on creating a procedure to address AI. From a curriculum perspective, discussion is being held on whether AI may need to be incorporated into student outcomes.

## 16.2. Administrative Services Report

### 16.2.1. Preliminary review/discussion on 2026/2027 tuition, fees, room, and board rates

[Board Finance Meeting Tuition&Fees 10.09.25](#)

 [Board Finance Meeting Tuition&Fees 10.09.25.pdf](#)

Review was given to peer and regional institutional comparative data regarding tuition, and fees and preliminary discussions were held regarding 2026-2027 tuition and fee rates and emphasizing the need to consider regional funding strategies and legislative influence on funding for specific programs. Brief mention was made of expanding sports to include women's golf and eSports.

Additional discussion will be held, and approval of the 2026-2027 tuition, fees, room, and board rates will be sought during the October board meeting.

### 16.2.2. Monthly Financial Report and Paid Bills Report (Presenters: Scott Gray)

**CONSIDER** the [Monthly Financial Report](#) for August 31, 2025, and the [Paid Bills Report](#) for August 2025. Board members who received reimbursement during the month abstain from voting on those items only:

Ames, Del - \$106.40

Anderson, Steve - \$65.80

Davies, Diane - \$28.00

Ellis, Donovan - \$131.60

Nelson, Terry - \$61.60

Scherer, Jeff - \$100.80

Sedlacek, Nicole - \$110.60

Sibbel, Carol - \$110.60

Wojcik, Pat - \$442.96

 [Monthly Financial Report-August 31, 2025.pdf](#)

 [Paid Bills Report-August 2025.pdf](#)

 [Monthly Financial and Paid Bills Report](#)

Items of note within the Monthly Financial Report included:

- No state aid/future fund payments are received during the months of July and August. Balances for last month are down but is made up throughout the remainder of the year.
- Explained the changes in property tax handling.
- Explained the capital improvements and restricted plant amounts for accruing expenses that remain to be paid for the Maclay Building and the iHub.
- Financial aid revenue was processed in August, impacting the financial aid revenue report.
- Statement of Changes in the grants, contracts, and gifts line - drew down in August for financial aid and is reflected in revenue for August. This is part of the all-funds budget that was reviewed in the budget hearing that was held earlier this morning.

As part of the paid bills report, payment to made for equipment and office furniture for the new Maclay Building. Additional payments that were highlighted include payment to Cengage Learning for online access to books, Huff Construction for work on the Cox Activities Center, and to the Board of Junior College Dist. 514 which is related to the C2A3 conference.

Inquiry was made regarding the payment to Ascend Learning Holdings. Mr. Gray advised that this was for the Health and Public Services division, but would need to research what the payment was for and report back. Inquiry made regarding construction projects. Scott reported that things are going well and no issues have risen to board level. Brandon McLean and Scott continue engage with contractors, which is normal for construction projects.

**Task:** ([view in OnBoard](#))

Ascend Learning Holdings. Due 10/9/2025 9:30 AMCDT. Assigned to: Scott Gray

Inquire what August payment to Ascend was for.

**Motion:**

MOTION to APPROVE the Monthly Financial Report and Paid Bills Report August 31, 2025.

Motion moved by Terry Nelson and motion seconded by Carol A. Sibbel.

Voting yes: Ames, Anderson, Davies, Ellis, Nelson, Petersen, Scherer, Sedlacek, Sibbel, and Wojcik. Voting no: None. Absent: Robinson-Excused.

MOTION CARRIED

The Board of Governors acknowledged receipt of an anonymous letter but noted that, as it was unsigned, it does not carry merit. The Board discussed the importance of maintaining transparency in its meetings and encouraged public participation. Members emphasized their thoughtful decisions regarding course offerings and to focus on institutional strengths that support regional development.

There was reflection on the Board's historical actions, with members noting that no academic programs have been eliminated. It was observed that fiscal responsibility is a consistent topic of discussion at nearly every meeting. Board members expressed confidence in Dr. Barrett and her leadership team.

While acknowledging that change can be difficult for some, the Board affirmed that Northeast Community College must continue to evolve. With shifts in community college funding sources, the institution must adapt its educational strategies to meet the needs of the region, local businesses, and industry.

17. Student Services Report

17.1. Tenth day enrollment report (Presenters: Amanda Nipp)

[Fall 2025-Fall 10-day Enrollment Report](#)

 [Fall 2025-Fall 10-day Enrollment Report.pdf](#)

- Enrollment numbers are up at Northeast Community College and we have the highest headcount that we have had in a decade.
- First-time freshman 10th day enrollment is up 10% in headcount and 10% in credit hours.
- Early College 10th day enrollment for Fall 2025 is up 13% compared to Fall 2024.

- Continuing students' 10th day enrollment for Fall 2025 is down 10% and 11% in credit hours from Fall 2024.

#### 18. PUBLIC COMMENT on Monitoring Report or Board Education and Information

Individuals commenting on Monitoring Report or Board Education and Information are allowed three minutes each. Any member of the public wishing to address the Board of Governors may sign in and comment to the Board at this time.

No constituents were in attendance to address the Board of Governors with a public comment.

#### 19. COMMITTEE REPORTS

##### 19.1. Governance Committee (Presenters: Dirk Petersen)

[Governance Committee Notes](#)-September 11, 2025

[Monitoring Report Summary](#)

 [Board Governance Committee Meeting - September 11, 2025 Minutes.pdf](#)

The Governance Committee met via Zoom on September 11, 2025.

- Content review was conducted on EL-04, Planning, with no suggestions for revision.
- Seven policies were recommended for second reading and deletion; all which were acted upon earlier in today's meeting.
- The Board Self-Evaluation action was reviewed and will be updated to reflect the addition of an item to the April agenda where the Board officially assigns an ad hoc committee for the purpose of reviewing the President's contract. The Board Planning Cycle will be updated to reflect the same.
- Governance Committee reviewed the Monitoring Report Summary document and requested that an item be placed on the Board of Governors agenda to allow discussion of the monitoring report after the President provides her report. Discussion will include acceptance or deficiency of the report, areas of deficiency or improvement, planned actions, and recommendations for policy changes.

##### 19.2. Ownership Linkage Committee (Presenters: Del Ames)

[Ownership Linkage Committee Notes](#)-August 28, 2025

 [Ownership Linkage Committee Meeting Notes-August 28, 2025.pdf](#)

The Ownership Linkage Committee met via Zoom on August 28, 2025.

- The Committee met and discussed plans for the Strategic Planning Meeting that was held this morning at 8:00 a.m.
- The next meeting will be held via Zoom at 8:00 a.m. on October 1st to prepare for the West Point strategic planning session on November 13th.

It was good to see such a good turnout at today's session. Dr. Barrett reported that more than 700 people have participated in the strategic planning sessions. Once information is compiled it will be shared with the Board of Governors. Suggestion was made to also disseminate the information back to our constituents.

20. PUBLIC COMMENT on Committee Reports:

Individuals commenting on Committee Reports are allowed three minutes each. Any member of the public wishing to address the Board of Governors may sign in and comment to the Board at this time.

No constituents were in attendance to address the Board of Governors with a public comment.

21. OTHER

In other business, Chairperson Scherer extended birthday wishes to Lisa Guenther. Chairperson Scherer expressed his gratitude to participants at today's meeting as well as everyone involved with supporting the Board of Governors in their work.

22. Meeting Self-Evaluation (Presenters: Jeffrey Scherer)

Board Meeting [Self-Evaluation-September 25, 2025](#)

 [Board Meeting Self-Evaluation-September 25, 2025.pdf](#)

23. ADJOURNMENT

At 3:18 p.m., there being no further business to discuss, it was UNANIMOUSLY PASSED by VOICE VOTE to ADJOURN the meeting.