



Board of Governors Meeting Minutes

Board of Governors-Northeast Community College Area

12/11/2025 9:30 AM CST

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

Attendance

Present:

Members: Del Ames - Member, Board of Governors; Steve Anderson - Member, Board of Governors; Donovan Ellis - Vice-Chairperson, Board of Governors; Dirk Petersen – Member Board of Governors; Julie Robinson - Member, Board of Governors; Nicole Sedlacek - Secretary, Board of Governors; Jeffrey Scherer - Chairperson, Board of Governors; Carol A. Sibbel - Member, Board of Governors; Pat Wojcik - Member, Board of Governors

Absent:

Members: Diane Davies - Member, Board of Governors, Terry Nelson - Member, Board of Governors

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

Guests: Isaiah Saldana, Student Leadership Association, Sam Gibbs, Student Leadership Association, Tee Bush, Chrissy Clark, Allison Lambert, College Engagement Coordinator, Lisa Guenther, Early Childhood Education Instructor, Brandon Keller, Brittney Koenig, NPPD Retail Account Manager, Wendy Swenson

1. CONVENE REGULAR MEETING (Presenters: Jeffrey Scherer)

Chairperson Scherer convened the meeting at 9:43 a.m.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE (Presenters: Jeffrey Scherer)

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

3. 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.

4. CONSENT AGENDA (Presenters: Jeffrey Scherer)

APPROVE the Consent Agenda including:

- **Adopt** the Agenda of the December 11, 2025 meeting. Official Notice of the meeting is posted on the Northeast Community College website, and published in the [Norfolk Daily News](#) on Saturday, December 6, 2025.
- **APPROVE** [Minutes of the November 13, 2025](#) Board of Governors meeting.
- **SECOND READING** and **APPROVAL** of the **DELETION** of [BP-5227, Alcoholic Beverages and Controlled Substances Policy](#). Policy content has been incorporated into the [Student Code of Conduct](#) and is also covered by [AP-3233.0, Alcoholic Beverages and Controlled Substances-Employee](#).

 [Board of Governors Meeting-November 13, 2025 Minutes.pdf](#)

 [BP-5227 Alcoholic Beverages and Controlled Substances Policy.pdf](#)

 [Student Code of Conduct.pdf](#)

 [AP-3233.0 Alcoholic Beverages and Controlled Substances – Employees.pdf](#)

 [Consent Agenda](#)

Motion:

MOTION to APPROVE the Consent Agenda as presented.

Motion moved by Del Ames and motion seconded by Pat Wojcik. Voting yes: Ames, Anderson, Ellis, Petersen, Robinson, Scherer, Sedlacek, Sibbel, and Wojcik. Absent-Excused: Davies and Nelson. MOTION CARRIED

5. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

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

[E-00, Global Ends](#)

[Monitoring Report Summary](#) - to be completed.

 [2025-2026 Monitoring Report Summary.xlsx](#)

 [E-00, Global Ends.pdf](#)

Dr. Leah Barrett presented the monitoring report, E-00, [Global Ends](#), highlighting the following key compliance evidence:

- 59% of graduates are locally employed; 91% are employed in Nebraska.
- Employer satisfaction rate is 98.1%.
- Expenses have not exceeded budget for the past five years.
- All credit students are now enrolled in defined fields of study.
- Graduation rates exceed peer groups by 16% and the national average by 22%.
- Northeast has 39 articulation agreements with other institutions of higher education. Each agreement is different; the agreement with UNL includes class-to-class transfer.
- Dual credit growth is strong and confident that 2026 numbers will be on upward trajectory.
- In eight of the past nine years, more than 50% of the students served are seeking workforce development and we see significant opportunity to grow as we dedicate resources to support adults returning to college and the introduction of Workforce Pell.
- The cost to attend Northeast Community College is less than our four-year partners and is less than the Nebraska Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education (CCPE) peer-group median.
- Students have access to a traditional college experience that includes campus living and a comprehensive program of student activities.

Opportunities for improvement include:

- For 2026, we need to learn more about our transfer students. Approximately 225 of our completers transfer with more than half of those transferring to Wayne State College and the University of Nebraska system campuses of Lincoln, UNMC, Kearney, and Omaha. We want to dig deeper into this data and learn more about those students who transfer but do not complete a credential.
- Continue to grow dual enrollment
- Increase the enrollment of students who are seeking upskilling and reskilling.

The Board of Governors assessed the monitoring report, E-00, Global Ends, and determined that evidence supports compliance with a reasonable interpretation. Dr. Barrett provided a reminder that she will not be reporting on EL-00, General Executive Constraint, as it is only completed every other year.

Additionally, Dr. Barrett inquired if the Board of Governors has a desire to dig deeper into AACC's '*Resilient by Design: The Future of America's Community Colleges*'; possibly as a future retreat topic. When thinking of everything that is going on in higher education, it might be good to dive into the document to assure that we are in tune with the influences of our educational system.

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

President's [Monthly Update 12.2025](#)

 [President's Report 12.2025.pdf](#)

Dr. Barrett provided praises to employees for the following:

- Submission of the FIPSE grant applications to access additional funds for the iHub. This is a statewide grant led by the Department of Labor.
- Aspen Prize application was led by Lindsay Spiegel and Jen Greve and submitted on Tuesday.
- Pack the Pantry efforts raised 900 pounds of food to support students.
- 9 to 5-The Musical, received rave reviews!
- 9th Grade Career Day will be hosted on Friday. Approximately 500 students will be on campus for this event.
- Ag Research presentations were judged by employees.
- Workforce Liaison positions have been filled. Their work will elevate workforce development throughout our service area. Three zones: zone one covers eight counties; zone two will serve 7.5 counties; and zone 3 will serve five counties.

Unicameral and Federal updates:

2nd session of the 109th legislature will begin in January. Governor's agenda includes:

- Tax shifts to reduce property tax.
- Nameplate bills
- SNAP E&T changes
- Concern about state funding.

Federal landscape includes:

- AHEAD - Workforce Pell. Richie Morrow from Nebraska will serve on this committee.
- Concern with rules around RISE Committee and annual loan limits

- Grants. Landscape is unique and interesting. There are dollars dedicated to rural healthcare. Nebraska Governor did submit approval that has not yet been made public. Hopeful that there are dollars for community colleges around rural healthcare.
- Government is funded only through the end of January 2026.

Recent activities/events that Dr. Barrett has participated in includes:

- Elevate Conference: Apprenticeships are in our future!
- NSWERS Strategic Planning. Meetings conducted across the state to collect data and perspectives. The work is powerful to us as an institution.
- Norfolk Childcare Collaborative advances. Northeast Community has made a commitment to this Collaborative. Space at the Presbyterian Church will be utilized. Currently in the zoning process to change to special use.

President welcomed guests over the past month:

- Leadership Nebraska. Dr. Barrett met with and presented to the group of 45.
- Nebraska LEAD program visited Northeast and their reunion is planned for January.
- Philanthropic foundations visit and explore partnerships. Toured residence halls. Brandon McLean and his staff do an amazing job at maintaining our facilities.
- Senator Ricketts and his staff visited Northeast. New Ag Liaison is from Madison. She was impressed to visit the Northeast campus.

6. BOARD EDUCATION AND INFORMATION

6.1. Educational Services Report

6.1.1. Urban Farm update (Presenters: Dr. Tee Bush, Brandon Keller, Chrissy Clark)

Urban Farm: [Data Collection & Untended Outcomes poster](#)

 [Urban Farm-Data Collection and Unintended Outcomes.pdf](#)

Dr. Tee Bush provided a brief history of the Urban Ag project. and introduced student, Chrissy Clark.

Ms. Clark first spoke about her experience at Northeast, noting that it has been a phenomenal opportunity.

Ms. Clark presented a poster that she provided during the recent National Science Foundation (NSF) Advanced Technological Education (ATE) Conference.

Northeast's Urban Farm is 10 acres and includes nut and fruit trees, shrubs, raised beds, teaching garden, etc. Her experience to have so many varieties in a small space has been enlightening and also provides an opportunity to engage the community.

Shared research results on a small plot of land and explained remediation options to address contaminated soil.

6.1.2. C2A3 presentation

[C2A3 presentation](#)

 [C2A3 presentation.pdf](#)

In the 10th year since the Community College Alliance for Agriculture Advancement (C2A3) began, Dr. Tracy Kruse reviewed the growth timeline from 2015 to today. The C2A3 network now includes 18 colleges in 16 states.

New opportunities in development include:

- Applied AI sensor kits and micro-credentials for five modules (crops, livestock, irrigation, controlled environment systems, ag equipment).
- Credential for Precision Ag Consultants embedded into credit programs and offered to incumbent workforce.
- Micro-credentials in Ag Cybersecurity.

Dr. Barrett reported that Dr. Kruse spoke yesterday during a webinar. The individual moderating the webinar acknowledged Dr. Kruse as the strongest community college development officer in the United States.

6.2. Administrative Services Report

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

CONSIDER the [Monthly Financial Report](#) for November 30, 2025, and the [Paid Bills Report](#) for November 2025. Board members who received

reimbursement during the month abstain from voting on those items only:

Ames, Del - \$161.00
Anderson, Steve - \$1,039.99
Davies, Diane - \$33.60
Ellis, Donovan - \$318.70
Robinson, Julie - \$64.40
Scherer, Jeff - \$182.00
Sedlacek, Nicole - \$438.20
Wojcik, Pat - \$1,895.03

 [Monthly Financial Report-November 30, 2025.pdf](#)

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

 [Monthly Financial and Paid Bills Report](#)

Items of note within the Monthly Financial Report included receipt of payment of student tuition for the Spring semester and reflected in the Revenue Fund. Government appropriations reflect an increase and attributed to a combination of state aid and Future Fund payments.

The capital improvement column reflects a slight increase as property taxes continue to trickle in. The second installment will be received in May. Capital improvement expenses reflect payments made on the Maclay building for the completion of punch list items.

Items of significance with the Paid Bills Report include payment to Applied Connective Technologies for providing internet in the dormitories, Blackbaud for alumni development software, Strata Decision Technology is an annual cost of licensing fee for budget software, Retail Services for student book buy back, and the Nebraska School Activities Association for an advertising package during high school championship events.

Motion:

MOTION to APPROVE the Monthly Financial Report and Paid Bills Report for November 30, 2025. Board members who received reimbursement during the month abstain from voting on those items only.

Motion moved by Donovan Ellis and motion seconded by Nicole Sedlacek. Voting yes: Ames, Anderson, Ellis, Petersen, Robinson, Scherer, Sedlacek, Sibbel, and Wojcik. Absent-Excused: Davies and Nelson. MOTION CARRIED

6.2.2. Audited Financial Report

Approve the Northeast Community College Area [Financial Statements-June 30, 2025 and 2024](#) as presented by Kerry Gustafsson, Dana F. Cole & Co. on November 13, 2025.

 [Northeast Community College Area Financial Statements-June 30, 2025 and 2024.pdf](#)

 [Northeast Community College Area Financial Statement](#)

During the November board meeting Kerri Gustafsson, Dana F. Cole & Co. representative presented the Northeast Community College Audit of Financial Statements for June 30, 2025 and 2024, reporting a clean audit. A vote to accept the audit was inadvertently omitted and approval is requested at this time.

Motion:

MOTION to ACCEPT the Audit of Financial Statements of Northeast Community College for June 30, 2025 and 2024.

Motion moved by Julie Robinson and motion seconded by Donovan Ellis. Voting yes: Ames, Anderson, Ellis, Petersen, Robinson, Scherer, Sedlacek, Sibbel, and Wojcik. Absent-Excused: Davies and Nelson. MOTION CARRIED

7. COLLEGE REPORTS

7.1. Student Leadership Association (SLA) report

[SLA-BOG December 2025](#)

 [SLA-BOG December 2025.pdf](#)

Isaiah Saldana and Sam Gibbs presented for the Student Leadership Association (SLA).

Highlighted their work over the past month:

- Met with Dr. Leah Barrett and Amanda Nipp. This provided a great opportunity for the students to connect with College leaders..
- Hosted Spooktacular at the Chuck Pohlman Ag Complex. Student Clubs set up booths in the and children to through for tickets and candy. Funds raised support various clubs. 18 clubs participated, raising \$5,978.50 from their efforts.

- Santa's Workshop - hosted by Student Activity Council. 217 attendees; combination of students, staff, and faculty.
- Christmas social. Participated in an escape room and had dinner at Chipotle. Provided a great bonding experience.

Spring 2026 projects include:

- Work with the Northeast Physical Plant to complete the feasibility study for installing ice machines. Also waiting for quotes on labor and materials for outside basketball courts for placing pickleball lines.
- Collaborate with PTK to support students' independent projects in the program.
- Host another Lego social event on campus.
- Travel as a group to a location for educational and leadership training opportunities.

8. LUNCH-Lifelong Learning Center, Suites H & I

Chairperson Scherer declared the meeting recessed for lunch at 11:56 a.m.

Chairperson Scherer declared the meeting back in session at 1:08 p.m.

9. COLLEGE REPORTS

9.1. Nebraska Open Golf Tournament

Presentation of the Nebraska Open Golf Tournament scholarship check

Brittney Koenig, Nebraska Public Power District (NPPD) Retail Account Manager, presented a check in the amount of \$15,000 to Northeast Community College. Funds used for scholarships awarded to students enrolled in the state's community college system were part of the funds raised during the annual Wells Fargo Open golf tournament, coordinated by NPPD, and held at the Elks County Club in Columbus in September.

10. COMMITTEE REPORTS

10.1. NCCA Report (Presenters: Nicole Sedlacek, Pat Wojcik)

CONSIDER payment the [2026 NCCA Annual Dues](#)

 [Northeast Dues Invoice.pdf](#)

Next NCCA Board of Directors is scheduled for January and will focus on legislative discussions.

NCCA Legislative Day is scheduled for February 25, 2026. Board members are encouraged to attend.

Motion:

MOTION to APPROVE payment of the Nebraska Community College Association (NCCA) Annual membership Dues in the amount of \$77,041.44.

Motion moved by Julie Robinson and motion seconded by Nicole Sedlacek.

Voting yes: Ames, Anderson, Ellis, Petersen, Robinson, Scherer, Sedlacek, Sibbel, and Wojcik. Absent-Excused: Davies and Nelson. MOTION CARRIED

10.2. Governance Committee (Presenters: Dirk Petersen)

[Governance Committee Notes](#)-November 25, 2025

 [Board Governance Committee Meeting - November 25, 2025 Minutes.pdf](#)

Governance Committee was held via Zoom on November 25, 2025.

Content review was conducted on the following:

- [EL-06](#), [Asset Protection](#). No suggestions for revisions.
- [GP-10](#), [Board Code of Conduct](#). No suggestions for revisions.

The Board self-evaluation of BP-10, Board Code of Conduct was completed and there were no concerns or items needing attention.

10.2.1. FIRST READING

FIRST READING of REVISIONS to:

- [EL-02](#), [Access to Education](#). Removal of the outdated reference to 'property tax levy', replacing it with 'taxpayer funds' per recommendation made in the President's monitoring report in October 2025. (As presented and discussed during the November 13, 2025 board meeting)
- [GP-16](#), [Handling Alleged Policy Violations](#). Wording in Section 1.1 was revised to improve clarity. Item 3 was also revised, adding that the President will work with the Board member who was contacted with the complaint. (As presented and discussed during the November 13, 2025 board meeting)

 [EL-02 Access to Education.pdf](#)

 [GP-16 Handling Alleged Policy Violations-redline.pdf](#)

10.2.2. Election of Board of Governors officers for 2026

Chairperson: Donovan Ellis

Vice-Chairperson: Nicole Sedlacek

Secretary: Del Ames

[GP-14](#), Special Rules of Order

 [GP-14-Special Rules of Order.pdf](#)

 [Board of Governors Officers](#)

Motion:

MOTION to ELECT the following Board of Governors officers for 2026:

Donovan Ellis, Chairperson

Nicole Sedlacek, Vice-Chairperson

Del Ames, Secretary

Motion moved by Julie Robinson and motion seconded by Carol Sibbel.

Voting yes: Ames, Anderson, Ellis, Petersen, Robinson, Scherer, Sedlacek, Sibbel, and Wojcik. Absent-Excused: Davies and Nelson. MOTION

CARRIED

10.2.3. APPOINT Treasurer and Recording Secretary for 2026

Treasurer: Vice President of Administrative Services

Recording Secretary: Executive Assistant to the President

[GP-14](#), Special Rules of Order

 [GP-14-Special Rules of Order.pdf](#)

 [Appoint Treasurer and Recording Secretary](#)

Motion:

MOTION to APPOINT the Vice President of Administrative Services as the 2026 Board Treasurer and the President's Executive Assistant as the Board Recording Secretary for 2026.

Motion moved by Dirk Petersen and motion seconded by Nicole Sedlacek.

Voting yes: Ames, Anderson, Ellis, Petersen, Robinson, Scherer, Sedlacek, Sibbel, and Wojcik. Absent-Excused: Davies and Nelson. MOTION

CARRIED

11. PUBLIC COMMENT on Monitoring Report, Board Education and Information, or Committee Reports:

Individuals commenting on the Monitoring Report, Board Education and Information, or 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.

12. OTHER

Other announcements and birthdays for the month.

In other business, Dr. Barrett recognized Chairperson Scherer for his service over the past two years and presented him with a plaque.

Chairperson Scherer acknowledged administration and staff for their dedication and service to the College and the Board of Governors.

In other business, Donovan indicated he is open to communication and looks forward to serving as chairperson in 2026.

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

Board Meeting [Self-Evaluation-December 11, 2025](#)

 [Board Meeting Self-Evaluation-December 11, 2025.pdf](#)

14. ADJOURNMENT .

At 2:03 p.m., there being no further business to discuss, it was UNANIMOUSLY PASSED by VOICE VOTE to ADJOURN the meeting.