



**Board of Trustees  
Meeting Minutes  
March 19, 2025**

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A meeting of the Board of Trustees was held on March 19, 2025.

Trustees present: George Soule, Chair; Dawn Erlandson, Vice Chair; Jay Cowles, Jim Grabowska, Tim Huebsch, Jana Johnson, Jacqueline Johnson, Roger Moe, Chris Richter, Kathy Sheran, Cheryl Tefer

Trustees absent: Jerry Janezich, Javier Morillo

Staff present: Scott Olson, Chancellor

The meeting materials and audio recording of the meeting are available on the [Board of Trustees website](#).

Chair Soule called the meeting to order at 12:20 p.m.

**Student Associations and Bargaining Units**

Student associations and bargaining units were invited to submit written remarks and given the opportunity to address the board in person. Minnesota State University Association of Administrative and Service Faculty provided written remarks. In person remarks were provided by:

- LeadMN: Casey Snaza, Campus Organizing Director
- Students United: Sierra Roiger, State Chair (via Zoom)
- International Faculty Organization: Jenna Chernega, President
- Minnesota Association of Professional Employees: Nicole Emerson, Meet and Confer Chair
- Minnesota State University Association of Administrative and Service Faculty: Kristy Modrow, State Chair

**Chancellor's Report, Scott Olson**

Chair Soule, Vice Chair Erlandson, and trustees-

As you are aware, there is a lot of news coming out from Washington and there is no better time for us to be connected to our higher education partners across the country. I, along with Interim Vice Chancellor Watts had this opportunity the other week at the

National Association of Higher Education Systems to hear from leading experts about the potential impacts. I want to reassure our community that we are watching and engaging in conversations where needed. We have created a repository to track federal changes and a system office working group has been established to monitor the federal higher ed landscape, track legal developments, and communicate as needed. Higher education may be facing financial headwinds and other challenges, but we at Minnesota State remain committed to our values, our mission, and staying the course toward our Equity 2030 goals.

On a state level, we know the state budget has worsened, leaving a surplus less than our budget request, and a long-term deficit growing to about \$6 billion. This will obviously make it difficult to receive our legislative request. But that has not changed my commitment to continuing to tell our story and to advocate for our students, faculty and staff. Our team, our presidents and students and faculty and staff continue to tell our story about the work and the impact of our colleges and universities in their communities across the state. In the coming weeks, legislative leaders will announce their joint budget targets and bills will advance out of committee which will determine our next steps.

None of this will produce the outcome that we hoped for from this session. But our presidents and their teams are hard at work and working through budget scenarios. We will have more in depth conversations with Leadership Council over the next several months and as the Chair has asked – engagement with the board will begin next month about the decisions that will need to be made. As you know, colleges and universities rely on two base revenue sources to cover inflationary costs: state appropriation and tuition revenue. Current projections indicate that campuses will have less state appropriation next year than they had this year so tuition revenue will be the only source of new revenue to cover increased costs. We will need to balance budgetary needs with student affordability with ensuring the Board can retain flexibility in setting rates. Just as our campuses are reviewing budgets and planning scenarios, so are we at the system office. Unlike our campuses, the system office has a fixed budget as stated in statute. We have increased inflationary pressures just as our campuses do. Given the internal and external pressures, this is a needed exercise so that we can continue to support our colleges and universities.

In closing, I would like to make a few remarks about former Trustee Bob Hoffman who passed away on March 7th. Bob served on the Board of Trustees for two terms. He was a wonderful person and will be greatly missed.

And with that, Chair, I turn it back to you.

### **Chair's Report**

Thank you, Chancellor. As you discussed, I want to also acknowledge the passing of two former trustees. First, Bob Hoffman passed away on March 7th. He served on the Board of Trustees for two terms: 2000-2006, serving as chair for two years and again from 2014-2020.

Second, Ivan Dusek passed away on Feb 26th. He served on the board from 2000-2006. He was a communication and theater faculty member at Ridgewater College from 1967-1999. His daughter followed his lead and continues to serve as a faculty member at Ridgewater College. She commented on how much he enjoyed his work on the board and respected the people that he worked with while serving as a trustee.

Trustees Erlandson and Richter attended the Association of Community College Trustee's annual National Legislative Summit in DC which included visits with MN's congressional delegation with support from Sarah Berns from our government relations team.

Minnesota State presented the system budget and how the funding the Legislature provides is being used at the House Higher Education Finance and Policy Committee presentation on March 11<sup>th</sup>.

Thank you as always to Metro State for hosting us!

### **Consent Agenda**

Chair Soule asked if anyone wanted to remove an item from the Consent Agenda. Trustee Huebsch motioned and Trustee Sheran seconded. A roll call vote was conducted. The vote was as follows:

|                         |        |
|-------------------------|--------|
| Trustee Cowles          | Yes    |
| Trustee Erlandson       | Yes    |
| Trustee Grabowska       | Yes    |
| Trustee Huebsch         | Yes    |
| Trustee Janezich        | Absent |
| Trustee Jana Johnson    | Yes    |
| Trustee Jacquie Johnson | Yes    |
| Trustee Moe             | Yes    |
| Trustee Morillo         | Absent |
| Trustee Richter         | Yes    |
| Trustee Sheran          | Yes    |
| Trustee Soule           | Yes    |
| Trustee Tefer           | Yes    |

The board voted to approve the consent agenda as follows:

- 1. Minutes of January 29, 2025**
- 2. Audit Plan Update**
- 3. Proposed Amendment to Board Policy 8.3 College and University Related Foundations (Second Reading)**
- 4. Proposed Amendment to Board Policy 8.5 Local Advisory Committees (Second Reading)**
- 5. Contracts Requiring Board Approval**
  - a. Professional Pilot Flight Lab Instruction, Lake Superior College**
  - b. Technical Certification Program Partnership, Lake Superior College**
  - c. Center for Interprofessional Education in Healthcare, Normandale Community College**
  - d. Electrical Infrastructure Construction Contract, Normandale Community College**
- 6. Proposed Amendment to Board Policy 5.10 Reserves and Year-end Fund Balances (Second Reading)**
- 7. Proposed Amendment to Board Policy 6.9 Capital Planning (Second Reading)**
- 8. Proposed Amendment to Board Policy 3.26 Intellectual Property (Second Reading)**
- 9. Proposed College Mission Revisions**
  - a. Minnesota State College Southeast**
  - b. Alexandria Technical and Community College**

#### **Board Standing Committee Reports**

The board received reports from meetings of the following committees:

- Academic and Student Affairs Committee, Cheryl Tefer, Chair
- Audit Committee, Dawn Erlandson, Chair
- Committee of the Whole, George Soule, Chair
- Finance and Facilities Committee, Tim Huebsch, Chair
- Outreach and Engagement Committee, Kathy Sheran, Chair
- Workforce and Organizational Effectiveness Committee, Jay Cowles, Chair

#### **Adjournment**

Chair Soule adjourned the meeting at 1:19 p.m.