

**South Dakota Corn Utilization Council (SDCUC)**  
**Board of Directors Meeting**  
**MINUTES**  
**Wednesday, February 26, 2025**  
**SD Corn Office**  
**4712 S Technopolis Dr., Sioux Falls, SD**

**I. Pledge of Allegiance**

SDCUC President Jim Ketelhut led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**II. Call to Order**

President Ketelhut called the meeting to order at 9:08 AM on Wednesday, February 26, 2025

**III. Members Present:**

Nicholas Fickbohm, Justin Minnaert, Doug Noem, Chris Nickeson, Jay Esser, Reno Brueggeman, Chad Blindauer, Jim Ketelhut

**Members Absent:**

**Others Present:**

DaNita Murray, Patrick Mahoney, Amanda Bechen, Alison Klinkhammer, Gerry Heuer, Michael Schelling (Dakota CPA)

**IV. Agenda Approval**

After a motion by Chad Blindauer, second by Jay Esser, the meeting agenda was approved unanimously.

**V. Approval of Minutes**

After a motion by Nick Fickbohm, second by Reno Brueggeman, the minutes of the December 5, 2024, board meeting were approved.

**VI. Financial Reports**

Michael Schelling, CPA, Dakota CPA, presented the following reports for the six-month period ending 12/31/2024:

- Balance Sheet
- Statements of Revenue, Expenditures and Changes in Fund Balances
- Forecasted Statement of Revenue, Expenditures and changes in Fund Balances for the Year Ending June 30, 2025

After a motion by Chad Blindauer, second by Chris Nickeson, the financial reports were approved unanimously.

**VII. Staff Updates**

**DaNita Murray**

- The Conflict-of-Interest Form, included with materials, needs to be completed by any director whose situation has changed since last form completion and returned to DaNita.
- A sponsorship request from CTIC (Conservation Technology Information Center) has been received. After further discussion, it was moved by Chad Blindauer, seconded by Justin Minnaert, and approved unanimously to approve a \$5,000 sponsorship.
- John Locke from USDA is asking for feedback on crop insurance issues for corn. Please provide your feedback to DaNita.

**Patrick Mahoney**

- Elevator reports for the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter ending 12/31/24 included in binder.

**Amanda Bechen**

- 2025 Corn Conference raised \$30,000; 2026 conference is January 17<sup>th</sup>.
- Corn Cob Open golf tournament is planned for August 4, 2025, with location TBD.
- There will be a new SD Corn television ad on SDPB for the basketball tournaments.

**VIII. US Meat Export Federation**

ASK for SDCUC FY 26: \$155,000

John Hinners, USMEF, gave a presentation on the FY26 funding request, noting this was the same amount requested as last year.

**IX. US Grains Council**

ASK for SDCUC FY26: \$228,013 (+4% from previous year) + \$150,000 ethanol export programming (0% increase) TOTAL: \$378,013

Ellen Zimmerman gave a presentation on the funding request noting that the Council's goal is to build new demand where it doesn't yet exist and grow demand in existing markets.

**X. National Corn Growers Association**

ASK for SDCUC FY 26: \$616,000 + Action Teams Funding – Discretionary; SDCUC provided \$111,000 in funding for Action Teams in FY 25.

Kelly Nieuwenhuis, NCGA Board Member, and farmer from Iowa gave a presentation on the FY 26 funding request.

**XI. Growth Energy**

ASK for SDCUC **FY 25**: \$75,000

Presentation on the updated to the Get Biofuels Campaign to consumers. After further discussion, it was moved by Reno Brueggeman, seconded by Justin Minnaert, and approved unanimously to provide the same level of support as FY 24 in FY 25 - \$75,000.

**XII. Dakota Lakes Research Farm Corporation**

ASK for SDCUC FY 2026, FY 2027, FY 2028:

- Fossil Fuel Neutral project - \$85,000/yr. x 3 years = \$255,000.
- Livestock Integration project - \$25,000/yr. x 3 years = \$75,000
- Transition management - \$40,000/yr. x 3 years = \$120,000

Dwayne Beck, Manager, Cody Zilverburg & Charlie Edinger updated the Board on calendar year 2024 activities and progress.

**XIII. Industrial Biotechnology in South Dakota**

ASK for FY 26: \$27,800

Paul Bertels and Nathan Danielson gave a presentation on a consulting project to increase the corn grind in South Dakota. Timeframe: 3-4 months with maximum anticipated time of 5.5 months.

**XIV. Flynn Wright Biofuels Campaign Update (for FY25)**

Laura Arnett and Mel Peterson gave an update on the ethanol campaign, and plans to market ethanol with partner, Quick Star.

**XV. SDSU**

ASK for SDCUC FY 2026: \$500,000 for funding the Dr. Rick Wahlstrom Endowed Chair in Swine Production.

**XVI. Heat Map**

Dr. Matthew Elliott from SDSU, via zoom, reported on the Heat Map showing locations of corn and soy purchasers in South Dakota and surrounding areas.

**XVII. Financial Disclosures**

Chris L. Peterson & Michael Schelling led a discussion on financial disclosures. All financial information, both past and current, is available on the State of South Dakota website (Boards & Commissions).

**XVIII. Officer Elections**

**President** – A motion was made by Jay Esser, seconded by Nick Fickbohm, to nominate Jim Ketelhut for President. A motion that all nominations cease, and a unanimous ballot be cast was made by Reno Brueggeman, seconded by Doug Noem and carried unanimously.

**Vice President** - A motion was made by Justin Minnaert, seconded by Chris Nickeson, to nominate Jay Esser for Vice President. A motion that all nominations cease, and a unanimous ballot be cast was made by Doug Noem, seconded by Reno Brueggeman and carried unanimously.

**Secretary/Treasurer** - A motion was made by Jay Esser, seconded by Nick Fickbohm, to nominate Chris Nickeson for Secretary/Treasurer. A motion that all nominations cease, and a unanimous ballot be cast was made by Reno Brueggeman, seconded by Doug Noem and carried unanimously.

**XIX. Other Business**

President Jim Ketelhut recognized and thanked Justin Minnaert for his years of service on the SDCUC board.

**XX. Executive Session –**

The Board went into Executive Session at 12:45 PM on a motion by Chad Blindauer, second by Chris Nickeson. Motion passed unanimously.

The Board exited Executive Session at 1:08 PM on a motion by Chad Blindauer and second by Reno Brueggeman. Motion carried unanimously.

**XXI. Adjournment**

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Reno Brueggemann, seconded by Justin Minnaert and carried unanimously.

Submitted by:

Gerald R. Heuer, Recording Secretary

Chris Nickeson, Secretary/Treasurer