

South Dakota Science and Technology Authority Board of Directors
Special Telephonic Meeting Minutes
Thursday, May 22, 2025
Lead, South Dakota

The Board of Directors of the South Dakota Science and Technology Authority (SDSTA) convened at 3:00 p.m. Mountain Time (MT) on Thursday, May 22, 2025, via videoconference and phone. A conference number and login were posted on the agenda with an invitation for members of the public to participate in the meeting electronically.

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD IN ATTENDANCE BY VIDEO CONFERENCE OR PHONE

Dr. Ani Aprahamian (by phone)
Vice-Chairperson Mr. Dana Dykhouse (by phone)
Dr. Chris Fall (by phone)
Secretary/Treasurer Ms. Pat Lebrun (by videoconference)
Mr. Roger Musick (by videoconference)
Chairperson Mr. Casey Peterson (by phone)
Mr. Ron Wheeler (by phone)
Mr. Steve Elliott, ex officio (*joined by phone at 3:03 p.m.*)

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD ABSENT

Dr. Brian Tande, ex officio

SDSTA STAFF IN ATTENDANCE

Mr. Tim Engel, General Counsel (by phone)
Mr. Mike Headley, Executive Director (by phone)
Mr. Bill Kelly, Contracts & Procurement Manager (listening post)
Ms. Mandy Knight, Chief of Staff (listening post)
Mr. Terry Miller, Chief Financial Officer (by phone)
Mr. Mike Ray, Media Relations Manager (by phone)
Ms. Wendy Straub, Chief Operating Officer (listening post)
Ms. Rebecca Wilcox, Sr. Administrative Assistant (listening post)

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE

Ms. Wendy Pitlick, Journalist, Black Hills Pioneer (by phone)

ITEM 1. CALL TO ORDER

ITEM 1A. DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM

Chairperson Casey Peterson called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. (MT). Chairperson Peterson declared a quorum was present, consisting of board members Dr. Ani Aprahamian, Mr. Dana Dykhouse, Dr. Chris Fall, Ms. Pat Lebrun, Mr. Roger Musick, Chairperson Casey Peterson, and Mr. Ron Wheeler. Mr. Steve Elliott, ex officio member, also joined by phone at 3:03 p.m.

Dr. Brian Tande, an ex officio member, was absent.

ITEM 1B. INTRODUCE GUESTS (LISTENING POST IN LEAD, VIDEO, AND PHONE)

SDSTA staff present at the Lead Office listening post included: Mr. Bill Kelly, Ms. Mandy Knight, Ms. Wendy Straub, and Ms. Rebecca Wilcox.

Mr. Tim Engel, Mr. Mike Headley, Mr. Terry Miller, and Mr. Mike Ray joined by videoconference. Ms. Wendy Pitlick also joined by phone.

ITEM 1C. PUBLIC COMMENT FORM

No public comment forms were submitted before the meeting. Chairperson Peterson said if there are any public comments to raise their hand via Zoom or submit a comment via Zoom Chat during the meeting.

ITEM 2. APPROVE AGENDA

Chairperson Peterson asked for a motion to approve the agenda.

Motion by Mr. Musick and seconded by Mr. Wheeler to approve the agenda as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

ITEM 3. GENERAL CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURE

Mr. Engel asked if any member of the board who feels they have anything that might be construed to be a conflict of interest concerning matters under consideration by the board today, to disclose it verbally.

No conflicts of interest were disclosed.

ITEM 4. APPROVE COST-REIMBURSEMENT CONTRACT BETWEEN SDSTA AND FFDG FOR LBNF/DUNE ‘BULL GANG’ SERVICES

Chairperson Peterson said this meeting is being held to discuss and approve a cost-reimbursement contract between SDSTA and Fermilab to provide “Bull Gang” services and asked SDSTA Executive Director Mike Headley to further discuss the services.

Mr. Headley thanked the board for joining the telephonic special meeting and said the contract being discussed today is for logistics services for the Long-Baseline Neutrino Facility/Deep Underground Neutrino Experiment (LBNF/DUNE) project. “Bull Gang” support is a term used to describe people helping move supplies and equipment from the surface to the underground. He said that currently, there have been too many hand-offs between Kiewit Alberici Joint Venture (KAJV) and SDSTA staff, creating inefficiencies. Fermi Forward Discovery Group (FFDG) would like to leverage SDSTA staff support to provide the first- and last-mile logistics services for the Buildings and Site Infrastructure (BSI) construction. These services would include transporting materials and supplies arriving at SURF to the Project’s construction area on the 4850L. Through a cost-reimbursement contract with FFDG, the SDSTA proposes leveraging its resources to reduce the number of hand-offs of supplies and materials in the logistics chain. This will simplify the required interfaces to perform this work safely and efficiently to transport the thousands of loads to and from the 4850L.

He said the work would begin on May 29, 2025, and end on May 31, 2026. The total estimated costs for supplies and services are \$9.4 million—\$6.4 million of the total is labor and \$3 million is non-labor. There would be 27 full-time equivalents (FTEs) on the contract, but SDSTA will only hire a few FTEs immediately due to limited activity initially, ramping up FTEs over time. Meanwhile, SDSTA will leverage existing staff—Chief Operating Officer Wendy Straub will lead the project under Operations. Mr. Headley said on any given shift, there will be three technicians on the surface and three on the 4850L to handle, along with the Ross crew, receipt of supplies and equipment. The contract also requires one mechanic, one quality assurance, and one safety person. Ms. Straub added that some of the equipment needed will be leased to perform the work.

Chairperson Peterson asked if there were any questions, and Ms. Lebrun said this is a monumental project and appreciated the information provided.

Mr. Engel said that he and the SDSTA team negotiated a few terms with FFDG, and one of those terms was liability for damage to property that SDSTA staff will be handling. Under federal law, generally speaking, SDSTA is not responsible for property damage that is owned by the U.S. government unless the property is misplaced. If the property is owned by an entity other than the U.S. government, then FFDG will be required to provide evidence the owner has property damage coverage. Mr. Engel noted this scope of services was also added to the owner's interest policy.

Motion by Ms. Lebrun and seconded by Dr. Fall to approve the agreement between SDSTA and FFDG for LBNF/DUNE Bull Gang and Buildings and Site Infrastructure (BSI) construction support services, to authorize the executive director to negotiate the final terms and conditions in consultation with the chairperson and legal counsel, and to authorize the SDSTA executive director to sign the agreement. Motion passed unanimously.

ITEM 5. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chairperson Peterson asked if there were any questions from the public. There were none.

ITEM 6. BOARD COMMENTS

There were no comments by the board.

ITEM 7. ADJOURN

Motion by Mr. Dykhouse and seconded by Dr. Fall to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 3:13 p.m. (MDT) on May 22, 2025.