

South Dakota Science and Technology Authority Board of Directors
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, June 26, 2025
Lead, South Dakota

The Board of Directors of the South Dakota Science and Technology Authority (SDSTA) convened at 8:00 a.m. Mountain Time (MT) on Thursday, June 26, 2025, in the Education and Outreach (E&O) Building Conference Room at the South Dakota Science and Technology Authority, 630 East Summit Street, Lead, South Dakota. A conference number was posted on the agenda, and an invitation for members of the public to participate in the meeting by telephone.

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD IN ATTENDANCE

Vice-Chairperson Dana Dykhouse (in person)
Dr. Chris Fall (by videoconference)
Secretary/Treasurer Patricia Lebrun (by videoconference)
Mr. Roger Musick (by videoconference)
Chairperson Casey Peterson (in person)
Mr. Ron Wheeler (by videoconference)
Mr. Steve Elliott, ex officio (in person)
Dr. Brian Tande, ex officio (in person)

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD ABSENT

Dr. Ani Aprahamian

SDSTA STAFF PRESENT DURING ALL OR PART OF THE MEETING

Ms. Annie Averitt, SURF Foundation Director (by phone)
Mr. Tim Engel, SDSTA General Counsel (in person)
Ms. Kim Flock, Controller (in person)
Mr. Mike Headley, SDSTA Executive Director and SURF Laboratory Director (in person)
Mr. Todd Hubbard, Senior Mechanical Engineer (in person)
Ms. Jayme Hunt, Human Resources Manager (in person)
Ms. Michelle Kane, SURF Foundation Donation Relations Manager (in person)
Mr. Bill Kelly, Contracts & Procurement Manager (by phone)
Ms. Kelly Kirk, SLHVC Director (in person)
Ms. Mandy Knight, Chief of Staff (in person)
Ms. Ann Metli, Communications Director (in person)
Mr. Terry Miller, Chief Financial Officer (in person)
Ms. Ashlyn Pearson, HR Generalist (in person)
Mr. Mike Ray, Media Relations Manager (in person)
Ms. Nicol Reiner, Education & Outreach Director (in person)
Ms. Wendy Straub, Chief Operating Officer (in person)
Ms. Becky Wilcox, Senior Administrative Assistant (in person)

ALSO PRESENT DURING ALL OR PART OF THE MEETING

Mr. Clayton Hollowell, DOE HEP SURF Program Manager (in person)
Mr. Steve O'Rourke, Dakota Gold Corp Co-Chair and Managing Director (in person)
Ms. Wendy Pitlick, Black Hills Pioneer Journalist (in person)
Mr. Tom Regan, retired SDSTA employee (by phone)
Dr. Ben Saylor, BHSU Director of Sanford Science Education Center (by phone)

ITEM 1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Mr. Casey Peterson called the meeting to order at 8:01 a.m. (MT). Roll call was held, and a quorum declared. Vice-Chair Mr. Dana Dykhouse, Chair Peterson, Mr. Steve Elliott, and Dr. Brian Tande were present in person. Dr. Chris Fall, Secretary-Treasurer Ms. Pat Lebrun, Mr. Roger Musick, and Mr. Ron Wheeler joined by phone. Dr. Ani Aprahamian was absent.

Chair Peterson asked guests to introduce themselves. Of note, the following 2025 summer interns/ introduced themselves: Brooke Lammle, from Watertown, SD, is attending BHSU and interning with the Community Relations Office; Grace Jenuine, from Wheatridge, CO, is attending SD Mines and Preston Drew is attending SD Mines—both are interning with the Engineering Department; Ollie Langley-Peterson, from Pierre, SD, is attending Augustana University and interning with the Communications Department; Trinity Harford, from Huron, SD, is attending BHSU and interning with the Education and Outreach Department; and Siri Wing, from Billings, MT, is from Jobcorps and interning with the Operations Department.

Also working with varied experiments at SURF for the summer are the Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU) participants, which is a program funded by the National Science Foundation, and include: Olivia Cantrell attending New Mexico Institute for Mining and Technology and Isabella Lopez, from Georgia, attending Reed University—both are interning with the Science Department; Zachary Spangler is attending BHSU, Nicholas Bearer, from Oregon, is attending Texas A&M; Foster Carroll, from Oregon, is attending Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota; and Dylan Chase, from South Dakota is attending BHSU.

The 2025 Davis-Bahcall Scholars were unable to introduce themselves as they were traveling as part of the four-week program. Scholars include: Amelia Her Many Horses, from Oelrichs, attending South Dakota Mines; Braiden Blenner, from Rapid City, who is finishing his senior year at Stevens High School; Christopher Budd, from Rapid City, currently a freshman at South Dakota Mines; Clark Eglund, from Sioux Falls, who is attending Augustana University; Katelinn Ohrtman, from Rapid City, who is finishing her senior year at Stevens High School; Katelyn Jarzowski, from Omaha, NE, currently attending Black Hills State University; Nicole Weiss, from Pierre, who is finishing her senior year at T.F. Riggs High School; and Wyatt Schell, from McIntosh, who is a freshman at South Dakota Mines.

Chair Peterson referenced Item 1C—Public Comments—and said if anyone from the audience had any questions or comments for the Board to address, to please complete the public comment form located at the sign-in table, and time will be given at the end of the agenda to discuss. No comment forms were submitted during the meeting.

ITEM 2. APPROVE AGENDA

Chair Peterson asked if there were any modifications to the agenda. There were none.

Motion by Mr. Dykhouse and seconded by Dr. Fall to approve the agenda as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

ITEM 3. APPROVE MINUTES

Chair Peterson asked if there were any comments on the March 20 and May 22, 2025, Minutes.

Chair Peterson requested the full name of the technology company, “Marco Technologies,” be used in place of “Marco” as referenced in the March 20 minutes. He then called for a motion to approve the minutes as modified.

Motion by Mr. Wheeler and seconded by Ms. Lebrun to approve the March 20, 2025, minutes as modified, and the May 22, 2025, minutes as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

ITEM 4. GENERAL CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURE

SDSTA General Counsel Mr. Tim Engel invited members of the Board to disclose anything that might be construed to be a conflict of interest concerning items under consideration at today's meeting.

No conflicts of interest were disclosed.

ITEM 5. DISCLOSURES AND WAIVER UNDER SDCL CH. 3-23

Mr. Engel said he contacted all Board members before the June 26, 2025, board meeting and asked them to make any disclosures required by SDCL CH. 3-23. He said no disclosures were reported.

ITEM 6. ANNUAL APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS

Chair Peterson reported the appointment of Ms. Lebrun, Mr. Musick, and Mr. Dana Dykhous to serve on the audit committee. He asked for a motion to confirm the appointments.

Motion by Dr. Fall and seconded by Mr. Wheeler to approve the appointment of audit committee members, as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

Chair Peterson thanked the Audit Committee members for their service on the committee.

ITEM 7. FINANCIAL REPORT

ITEM 7A. REVIEW FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Mr. Miller referenced the financial analysis and financial summaries for April 30, 2025, included in the board packet. He discussed the following: 1) Cooperative Agreement SURF Services FY2025 (federal fiscal year) SPA Curve as of April 2025. Chair Peterson referenced page 39 and asked if the available resources are duplicated since they appear in accounts receivable. Mr. Miller replied they are included in accounts receivable but are subtracted later to reflect short-term cash only, so there is no duplication. 2) Balance Sheet, and 3) Comprehensive Statement of Income. Chair Peterson asked if abandoned assets can be depreciated. Mr. Miller said yes, but that depreciation is an unallowable. He noted the \$861,000.00 listed as an unallowable expense reflects depreciation of DOE assets which must still be reported for financial statement purposes. 4) Comparative Balance Sheet – April 2025 vs. April 2024. Mr. Dykhous asked about the current value of xenon. Mr. Headley said it is insured for \$10 per liter, totaling approximately \$10 million. Mr. Miller noted SDSTA currently holds just over 1.4 million liters. The current market price is roughly \$15 per cylinder. 5) Comparative Statement of Income – April 2025 vs. April 2024, 6) Available Resources as of April 2025, and 7) Operating Budget Summary for April 2025. SDSTA is under budget by \$4.9 million—primarily due to indirect costs being \$3.3 million under and federal projects \$1.7 million under. Mr. Miller noted SDSTA has been conservative with Indirect spending due to uncertainty around the President's budget. While positive signs suggest full funding at \$38 million, SDSTA is still proceeding cautiously. Staffing gaps have not been filled, and several non-labor projects are delayed or on hold. Mr. Headley added SDSTA is awaiting further clarity on the FY2026 budget. Outcomes will help determine whether funding stays flat at \$35 million or increases to \$38 million to start the rehabilitation of the Yates Hoist.

There were no further questions.

Motion by Mr. Wheeler and seconded by Mr. Dykhous to accept the financial report as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

ITEM 7B. APPROVAL OF FY2026 BUDGET

Mr. Miller noted a small update to the FY2026 SDSTA budget was sent electronically to board members. He highlighted a \$105,000.00 increase in the Executive Office budget, primarily to cover interest on the short-term loan used to pay for general liability insurance, which SDSTA is repaying over 10 months. Mr. Headley added due to rising insurance costs, financing was needed to cover the upfront premium payment. He explained the SURF Institute and a portion of E&O activities, such as Neutrino Day and Deep Talks, have been reclassified from SDSTA funds to Indirect funding, reducing the SDSTA budget by \$274,000.00 and \$25,000.00, respectively. For the underground expansion, \$65,000.00 remains from FY2025's \$4.7 million budget, which will be used for necessary non-capital work in support of the expansion like mucking in the Oro Hondo area to improve airflow. Finally, SDSTA's FTE count will increase by 38 in FY2026—27 for the new Fermi Forward Discovery Group (FFDG) contract known as the "Bull Gang," by 11 under the Cooperative Agreement, and on account of additional custodial hires.

Mr. Miller said the slightly revised FY2026 SDSTA budget was sent electronically to board members prior to today's meeting. He said the Cooperative Agreement for FY2026, which includes the Infrastructure Improvement Projects (IIP) budget, \$25.6 million total, is based on the federal fiscal year, while SDSTA reports on a state fiscal year. The \$3.7 million increase from FY2025 to FY2026 is made up of a \$2.4 million increase in the operations budget and a \$1.2 million increase in the IIP budget—both direct funding only. Initially, indirect costs were mistakenly included in the IIP budget, but was corrected in the revised version, reflecting a \$300,000 reduction.

Mr. Miller also highlighted the FFDG Long-Baseline Neutrino Facility/Deep Underground Neutrino Experiment (LBNF/DUNE) "Bull Gang" contract is a new item budgeted at \$5.8 million. Indirect budgets increased by \$2.8 million, largely due to this contract, as it allows for more indirect cost recovery. Additionally, the indirect rate for FY2026 is slightly higher than last year's. He concluded by asking if there were any further questions on the budget. Mr. Headley added the work is infrastructure-related, and a new scope of work may be added to the contract next year to support DUNE installation.

Chair Peterson asked if the newly hired custodians replaced an outside service. Mr. Headley confirmed they did.

There were no further questions.

Motion by Mr. Fall and seconded by Mr. Wheeler to adopt the FY2026 budget, as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

ITEM 8. SURF FOUNDATION

ITEM 8A. FOUNDATION UPDATE APPROVING REAPPOINTMENT TO FOUNDATION BOARD

Foundation Director Ms. Annie Averitt joined by phone and humorously noted she was calling in from the side of the road in Idaho, sharing a story about how conversations about SURF even arose during a recent trip down the Middle Fork of the Salmon River. She emphasized how excitement about SURF continues to grow, reaching new audiences even in remote locations.

She then highlighted key updates in education and outreach philanthropy. Ms. Averitt thanked Black Hills Energy, led by Linn Evans, for their continued sponsorship of Neutrino Day, scheduled for July 12 in Lead. She also recognized First Premier Bank and Dana Dykhous for their increased support of the Davis-Bahcall Scholarship Program. Student presentations for this program will be held on July 13 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Joy Center at Black Hills State University.

Additionally, she expressed gratitude to the Bauer and Headley families for their contributions to the SURF Internship Program for summer 2025. Presentations from those interns are scheduled for Tuesday, July 29, at 10 a.m. at SURF. Those interested in attending or learning more were encouraged to reach out to her or other SURF team members. Mr. Headley also thanked Fermi Forward Discovery Group, BHSU, and SD Mines for their support of Neutrino Day.

Ms. Averitt provided an update on fundraising priorities, which include expanding relationships with corporations, foundations, and individuals. She highlighted a recent promising joint presentation to a Fortune 500 company in the Bay Area, which involved teams from E&O, communications, and the SURF Foundation. Discussions are also underway with a potential quantum computing sponsor on the East Coast. Additionally, she noted outreach efforts to major foundations on both coasts, with upcoming in-person or virtual meetings to explore grant opportunities.

Ms. Averitt emphasized continued individual donor engagement, with a goal of 10–15 visits per month. Several visits have already led to meaningful discussions and proposals, with some individuals pledging to advocate and share SURF’s mission with their networks.

Reflecting on her first five months, she noted outreach at both state and national levels, including and upcoming meetings in August. The team is also expanding its presence in the Bay Area and Puget Sound region.

To improve communications, a quarterly highlight email is sent to spotlight donors and scholars, with a preview shared with the board. Website updates are underway, with new interviews to be posted soon. On giving efforts, the Foundation is launching two annual appeals—one around Neutrino Day and another at year-end—coordinated with the communications team to avoid message fatigue.

Looking ahead, the Foundation will continue building its private funding base, grow the Foundation Board with national-level members, and refine internal processes to strengthen donor engagement. Ms. Averitt closed by thanking the board and stakeholders for their support and invited anyone to contact her directly with questions or concerns.

In conclusion, Mr. Headley requested the Board approve the reappointment of Mr. Justin Varland to the Foundation Board, noting his instrumental role in establishing connections with Bay Area tech companies, including those involved in a recent major presentation referenced by Ms. Averitt.

Mr. Engel clarified while the Foundation Board recommends its members, formal approval must come from the SDSTA Board. The Foundation has recommended Mr. Varland for another three-year term. Mr. Engel also mentioned the Foundation may propose a bylaw change to allow more frequent appointments, likely to be brought to the Board in September. Chair Peterson acknowledged the clarification.

In response to a request from Ms. Lebrun for background, Ms. Averitt shared Mr. Varland has had a long and successful career in tech, including roles at Apple and Otter. He recently retired. A native of the northern Black Hills, his nomination was originally brought forward by Foundation Board member Ms. Julie Olson.

Motion by Dr. Fall and seconded by Mr. Dykhouse to approve the re-appointment of Mr. Justin Varland to the SURF Foundation board for a three-year term, effective June 2025. Motion passed unanimously.

ITEM 9. REPORT FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

ITEM 9A. DECLARATIONS OF SURPLUS

Mr. Headley referenced the four declarations of surplus included in the board packet and asked if there were any questions. There were none.

ITEM 9B. SDSTA QUARTERLY UPDATE

Mr. Headley provided a SURF update and began with a quarterly summary. He said:

1) FY2025 DOE funding is \$35 million. The SURF Ops CA includes \$38 million for FY2026. The skinny budget did not include details for LBNF/DUNE or SURF Ops and committee marks will continue to be watched. 2) SDSTA's top priority remains LBNF/DUNE construction support and safe underground access. 3) Ross Shaft crew, under the management of Chief Operating Officer Ms. Wendy Straub, is continuing to support infrastructure construction (Kiewit Alberici Joint Venture) and cryostat install planning. Extensive installation and integration meetings have been held since the last Board meeting. 4) SDSTA has been performing end-to-end logistics support for LBNF/DUNE since May 29, and it is going well. 5) The Yates Shaft crew is performing Top-Down Maintenance below the 4100L; above the 800L is next. 6) The Deep Well pump, 3650L pump rehabilitation, and moving bed biofilm reactor (MBBR) installation projects are completed. 7) SURF Foundation activities are focusing on national-level donors. 8) K-12 Education and Outreach performance remains strong with a record-setting year! Mr. Headley reported strong visitation at the Visitor Center and praised the SDSTA communications team for their excellent outreach efforts. He noted there has never been more media coverage about SDSTA's work and thanked Media Relations Manager Mr. Mike Ray for his leadership in driving that success. 9) Davis-Bahcall scholars and summer interns are on board. Mr. Headley shared the Davis-Bahcall Scholars are currently traveling across the Midwest to visit STEM facilities and will soon head to the UK to tour the Boulby Underground Laboratory. They are expected to return by Neutrino Day to help as volunteers. He also noted the benefit of increased and diversified funding for internships, including REU students, interns supported by outside funding sources, and those funded directly by SDSTA. This expanded support has allowed for more internship opportunities overall. 10) SDSTA has completed a physical security assessment with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). Based on the results, SDSTA developed a \$600,000.00 proposal to address key recommendations and submitted it to Senator Rounds' office. His team is working with DHS contacts to explore potential grant funding. Additionally, SDSTA completed detailed IT security assessments to strengthen its overall security posture. 11) A Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) audit of the radiation safety program was completed.

Mr. Headley showed several slides of work underway on the surface and underground at SURF. He reminded the board of Neutrino Day on July 12 and encouraged board members to volunteer. He said it is a great opportunity for people to experience SDSTA's flagship public outreach program.

In addition, Mr. Headley provided a brief update on SDSTA's goals. He said long-term, three-year, and annual goals are tracked along with the long-term vision and current-year progress.

He said top long-term priorities include completing construction and operations for LBNF/DUNE, securing funding to modernize the Ross Shaft hoist, and expanding scientific capabilities, such as developing a cryogenic user facility and pursuing extended operations for LUX-ZEPLIN. SDSTA is also seeking support for a dilution refrigerator and additional underground lab space to host next-generation experiments. Commercial partnerships, like SDSTA's work with Caterpillar, remain strong, and the Institute for Underground Science continues to grow, with efforts focused on programming and staffing.

In regard to goals for this fiscal year, the SDSTA team has completed maintenance at the 4850L, transitioned to facility support for LBNF, and improved site infrastructure. The Ross Campus is reactivating with the CASPAR accelerator restart and the relocation of low-background counters. The new notification and dispatch center is fully operational, design work for the Yates Hoist is underway, and the electrical upgrade and fundraising plans are advancing. Facility improvements, including restrooms at Ross, are also in progress. Mr. Headley asked if there were any questions.

Chair Peterson asked Mr. Headley to provide a quick overview of how SDSTA monitors and updates its goals. Mr. Headley explained the executive leadership team meets quarterly with facilitator Mr. Mike Roth, who is based in St. Cloud, MN. The SDSTA team has worked with Mr. Roth since 2020, using the Entrepreneurial Operating System (EOS)/Ninety as a structured approach to planning and tracking. This system drives all strategic planning and meeting formats. Instead of traditional updates, staff meetings focus on identifying issues and collaboratively solving problems. Mr. Headley noted, even during the disruptions of COVID, EOS helped the team stay more organized and focused than ever before—a discipline that continues today. The team is preparing for an upcoming two-day annual planning session as part of this ongoing process.

ITEM 9C. EDUCATION & OUTREACH (E&O) UPDATE

Mr. Headley introduced Education & Outreach (E&O) Director Ms. Nicol Reiner, who reported that this has been a “banner year” for the Education & Outreach team. From local engagement to national and international partnerships, E&O has significantly expanded its impact.

The team reached students from 34 of South Dakota’s 66 counties and nine U.S. states, through both in-person and virtual programs. Teacher engagement also grew, with over 4,000 professional development hours delivered—double the previous year’s total.

E&O continues to host successful educator workshops, such as the annual professional development session now underway at BHSU, and has presented at major conferences, including the National Science Teachers Association meeting in Philadelphia. Tools like virtual reality headsets and hands-on demonstrations have effectively communicated SURF’s science to educators and researchers nationwide. Ms. Reiner said a standout example is the growing collaboration between teachers and scientists. One exercise using Matchbox cars and rice helped both audiences conceptualize particle detection—bridging science communication in an engaging, relatable way.

The Davis-Bahcall Scholars program is also thriving, taking students on a research journey across multiple states, including visits to national labs and universities.

In addition to onboarding and supporting summer interns and Research Experience for Undergraduates (REU), E&O launched its first Teacher Fellowship program, funded by SD and WY Space Grants. Planning is underway for future fellows, including a new partnership with the South Dakota Army National Guard.

E&O has also built valuable external partnerships with Jackson State University, Cultivating Indigenous Research Communities for Leadership in Education and STEM (CIRCLES) Alliance, and various international outreach programs, including those at CERN, SNOLAB, and Zurich. These collaborations aim to align global best practices in science communication and engagement.

Internally, E&O continues to partner with teams across SURF—from operations to communications—to amplify the lab’s impact and ensure alignment across all outreach efforts.

In conclusion, Ms. Reiner said this year's total student engagement exceeded 22,000, underscoring the growing demand for E&O programs and the unique value SURF brings to science education across South Dakota and beyond.

ITEM 9D. WATER PROJECT UPDATE

Ms. Straub provided an update on critical upgrades to SURF's underground pumping system, which manages natural groundwater inflows starting from a deep pool pump located nearly 6,400 feet underground. She noted SDSTA Engineer Mr. Andrew Brosnahan was originally scheduled to present but was currently working underground on the 3650L (level) as part of the project. She showed several photos and said the system pumps water through several levels to the surface for treatment and safe discharge, handling over 600 million gallons of water annually with a spotless environmental compliance record.

Recent work included a full replacement of the deep pool pump motor and a comprehensive rebuild of the 3650L pump room, both part of a larger initiative to replace aging legacy equipment originally installed by Homestake. These upgrades address significant sediment buildup and wear, improving reliability and reducing costly repairs. The project also involved electrical system upgrades, installation of structural supports inside the shaft, and improved pipe organization to enhance operational safety and maintenance efficiency.

Mr. Todd Hubbard presented next on the upgrades to the SURF surface wastewater treatment plant (WWTP). Aging rotating biological contactors (RBCs) were replaced due to mechanical failures and discontinued manufacturer support. Following an engineering evaluation, a MBBR system was selected for its efficiency and modern reliability. Construction began in January, 2024, and included a new treatment basin, blower building, and piping improvements. The biological treatment phase—key for ammonia removal—is now operational, with bacteria ("bugs") currently being cultivated within the media.

Mr. Hubbard also noted the WWTP's long-term performance remains stable, with reduced iron levels compared to early dewatering operations. He confirmed the bacteria used today are descendants of those Homestake originally cultivated, now evolved to process ammonia rather than cyanide.

In response to a water level question from Mr. Dykhouse, Mr. Hubbard reported when the deep pool pump is offline, water levels rise, including approximately 400 feet in the last 10 months. Ms. Straub added the team aims to maintain levels near the 5,900 level to allow for operational flexibility during pump upgrades and seasonal variations in inflow.

Chair Peterson thanked Ms. Straub and Mr. Hubbard for providing the update.

In conclusion of the executive director's report, Mr. Headley announced Ms. Jayme Hunt has been officially appointed as HR Manager after serving in the role on an interim basis for three months. He noted she accepted the position the previous week and is doing an excellent job.

Motion by Mr. Wheeler and seconded by Dr. Fall to accept the Executive Director's Report. Motion passed unanimously.

ITEM 10. SDSTA POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

ITEM 10A. ANNUAL STATEMENTS AFFIRMING COMPLIANCE WITH FINANCIAL CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

Mr. Engel reminded board members to acknowledge the Conflict of Interest Statement included in the board packet. Due to formatting issues, a corrected version was distributed and confirmed by Ms. Mandy Knight, who noted receipt of all signed statements.

ITEM 10B. DISCUSS PROPOSAL TO CHANGE SDSTA MANUAL

Items 10B and 10C were combined in the discussion.

Mr. Headley presented a proposal to overhaul SDSTA's existing 269-page policy and procedure manual, which had become an inconsistent mix of governance materials, employee policies, and procedural documentation. Over the past several months, Chief of Staff Ms. Mandy Knight worked with former HR Manager Ms. Chris Burger to begin reorganizing the content in the four policy sections, which include Board Governance, Employee Handbook, Business/Finance, and Facilities.

The proposed restructuring would: 1) Archive the current consolidated manual for historical reference. 2) Establish a standalone Board Governance Manual, with oversight and policy changes subject to General Counsel review. 3) Create a dedicated Employee Handbook, with policy change authority delegated to Mr. Headley (in consultation with legal counsel), and quarterly updates provided to the board. 4) Integrate remaining policies from the remaining sections into SDSTA's ISO-aligned system of work instructions. Benefits of the restructuring include greater clarity, better alignment of responsibilities, increased efficiency, and improved legal compliance.

Mr. Headley requested two board actions: 1) Approval to retire the existing consolidated manual, and 2) Approval of the new Governance Manual, individual redline policy changes, and delegation of employee handbook update authority to the Executive Director.

Motion by Mr. Dykhouse and seconded by Mr. Musick to retire the existing consolidated SDSTA Policy Manual. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion by Dr. Fall and seconded by Mr. Lebrun to approve the new governance manual, individual redline policy changes, and delegation of employee handbook update authority to the Executive Director. Motion passed unanimously.

ITEM 10C. REVIEW AND APPROVE UPDATED POLICIES

Reference discussion and motion above.

ITEM 11. APPROVAL OF FY2026 OFFICE OF RISK MANAGEMENT INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT

Mr. Headley reported, as part of SDSTA's annual review process, discussions were held with the Office of Risk Management (ORM) regarding the Intergovernmental Agreement that governs health and safety oversight. This year, only one notable change was made—ORM will no longer participate in the selection and placement of insurance coverage for the excess layers required by the Property Donation Agreement.

As in previous years, the accompanying Appendix A, which lists the applicable codes and standards SDSTA agrees to follow, was updated in collaboration between SDSTA's ESH team and ORM.

Mr. Wheeler asked who is now managing ORM? Mr. Engel replied Ms. Jessica Filler is the new Director of ORM. She is an attorney with prior experience in state government and recently worked for the Associated School Boards. Mr. Craig Ambach remains with ORM in a part-time advisory capacity.

Motion by Mr. Wheeler and seconded by Mr. Dykhouse to approve the FY2026 Intergovernmental Agreement between the Bureau of Administration, Office of Risk Management of the State of SD and SDSTA and authorize the SDSTA executive director to sign the agreement. Motion passed unanimously.

ITEM 12. REPORT FROM NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Mr. Dykhouse said he met with Mr. Musick via email as the Nominating Committee and indicated the report from the meeting was included in the board packet. The nominations are the same as last year and include Mr. Peterson as Chairperson, Mr. Dykhouse as Vice-Chairperson, and Ms. Lebrun as Secretary/Treasurer. Chair Peterson asked for additional nominations from the floor per the adopted election procedures policy, and none were made.

ITEM 13. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Motion by Mr. Musick and seconded by Mr. Wheeler to accept the nominating committee slate and elect Casey Peterson as Chairperson, Dana Dykhouse as Vice-Chairperson, and Patricia Lebrun as Secretary/Treasurer. Motion passed unanimously.

Chair Peterson expressed gratitude to Mr. Dykhouse and Mr. Musick for their time and service on the nominating committee, and for their confidence in recommending that the current slate of officers continue to serve.

ITEM 14. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion by Dr. Fall and seconded by Ms. Lebrun to enter into executive session to discuss personnel matters and to consult with legal counsel concerning legal and contractual matters as permitted by SDCL 1-25-2(1), (3) and (4) and 19-19-502. Motion passed unanimously.

The Board recessed at 9:46 a.m. for a ten-minute break, followed by executive session.

Mr. Musick left the meeting before executive session.

The Board reconvened in open session at 10:00 a.m. and a quorum was confirmed.

ITEM 15. REPORT FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION

Chair Peterson reported that the Board discussed personnel matters and consulted with legal counsel concerning legal and contractual matters. No action was taken.

Motion by Mr. Wheeler and seconded by Dr. Fall to approve the executive session report. Motion passed unanimously.

ITEM 16. CONFIRM DATE, TIME, AND LOCATION OF NEXT MEETING

Chair Peterson reminded the board of the next meeting, scheduled for 8:00 a.m. on Thursday, September 18, 2025, at SURF in the Education & Outreach large conference room.

ITEM 17. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chair Peterson said he did not receive any public comment request forms during the meeting, and there was no one present in the room asking to provide public comment.

ITEM 18. BOARD COMMENTS

Mr. Dykhouse complimented Mr. Headley and his staff on the outstanding quality of materials and expressed his appreciation.

Dr. Fall said it was a nice touch to have the interns introduce themselves and looks forward to meeting a few of them in person when he is onsite for the Foundation meeting in July.

Ms. Lebrun said it was another strong meeting, commending staff for their hard work and exemplary progress in an uncertain environment.

Mr. Wheeler asked Mr. Headley to thank the staff for the increasingly informative and improved presentations to the board.

Mr. Elliott expressed gratitude for the ongoing partnership with SURF and praised the communication and collaboration with BHSU faculty and students.

Dr. Tande thanked Mr. Headley and Ms. Knight for hosting him and SD Mines staff last week at SURF, noting that his first underground visit helped clarify SURF's work and the institution's connection to it.

Mr. Engel offered no comments.

Mr. Headley recognized Ms. Knight and Ms. Straub's promotions to Chief of Staff and Chief Operating Officer as strong advancements, saying the management team is stronger than ever. He thanked the board for their unwavering backing and continued support. Also, he noted that he has a potential opportunity to meet the U.S. Secretary of Energy at Fermilab in mid-July.

Chair Peterson echoed all board comments, acknowledging the team's dedication during uncertain times and expressing appreciation for everyone's excellent efforts.

ITEM 19. ADJOURN

Chair Peterson called for a motion to adjourn.

Motion by Mr. Dykhouse and seconded by Ms. Lebrun to adjourn. Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 10:38 a.m.