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North Dakota State Board of Higher Education

Budget and Finance Committee Meeting Minutes

The State Board of Higher Education Budget and Finance Committee met via Teams on May 19, 2026, at 10:30 a.m. CT.

SBHE Budget and Finance Committee members

☒ Mr. Tim Mihalick, Chair
☒ Ms. Michelle Kommer
☒ Mr. Curtis Biller
☒ Mr. Pat Sogard
☒ Mr. Kevin Black

Institution Presidents/Representatives

BSC: President Kalk, Ms. Sonya Koble, **DSU:** President Molander**, LRSC:** President Simone, Ms. Joann Kitchens, **MaSU:** President Van Horn, Ms. Amber Hill, **MiSU:** President Shirley, Ms. Krista Lambrecht**, NDSCS:** Mr. Keith Johnson, **NDSU:** Mr. Thomas Claeys, Ms. Deanna Pederson, Mr. Bruce Bollinger, Mr. Brent DeKrey, Ms. Cynthia Rott, Ms. Teresa Conner, Ms. Lisa Ripplinger, Mr. Travis Aho, Ms. Karin Hegstad, Ms. Patricia Hanson, **UND:** Ms. Odella Fuqua, Mr. Brian Larson, Ms. Karla Mongeon-Stewart, Mr. Namil Choi, Ms. Becky Lucke, **VCSU:** Ms. Erica Buchholz, **WSC:** President Hirning.

System Office/CTS/Guests

NDUS: Commissioner Sanford, Ms. Christina Pieske, Ms. Bethany Kadrmas, Ms. Jamie Wilke, Ms. Maryann Olson, Ms. Mindy Sturn, Mr. Chris Pieske, DC Meredith Larson, Mr. Cory Wigdahl, Ms. Brenda Zastoupil, DC David Krebsbach, Ms. Edynn Glatt, Ms. Jane Grinde, Ms. Sharon Schwartzbauer, DC Lisa Johnson, Dr. Billie Jo Lorius, Dr. Jennifer Weber, Ms. Claire Gunwall, Mr. Eric Jensen, Mr. Dustin Walcker**, Assistant State's Attorney:** Mr. Shaun McNamara.

1. **Agenda**

   Biller moved, Kommer seconded, to approve the agenda, as presented.
   Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Consent Agenda

2. April 21, 2026, Meeting Minutes

   Biller moved, Sogard seconded to approve the April 21, 2026, meeting minutes, as presented.
   Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Committee Business

3. UND
   a. Replace Flight Ops Fiber Optic Cable

Mr. Larson presented the project to replace the fiber optic cable connecting UND's flight operations center to the campus data center, with a budget of $1,350,000. The project includes deeper burial for protection, an $80,000 contingency due to risks near the airport, and quality control checks by MBN Engineering and UND staff. Permitting and easements are already secured, and the project stays within existing easements.
Sogard moved, Biller seconded to approve UND's request to replace flight ops fiber optic cable.
Motion passed, 5-0.

Harrington Hall Renovations
Mr. Larson outlined renovations in Harrington Hall to expand research capabilities, including a new data center and optics lab for national defense research. The project has a $1,800,000 budget and a $70,000 contingency for hazardous material abatement, supported by a completed survey for asbestos and steam pipe insulation.
Biller moved, Sogard seconded to approve UND's request for Harrington Hall Renovations.
Motion passed, 5-0.

c. Law School Renovations
Mr. Larson described the $3,600,000 project to modernize classrooms, offices, and student spaces in the School of Law, addressing deferred maintenance and increased enrollment needs. The project includes a 5% construction contingency and asbestos abatement, with funding sourced from local School of Law funds.
Black moved, Biller seconded to approve UND's request for the Law School Renovations.
Motion passed, 5-0.

d. Reconstruction of Ray Richards Golf Course
Mr. Larson and Ms. Mongeon-Stewart explained the $4,500,000 reconstruction of Ray Richards Golf Course, necessitated by the sale of land to the North Dakota DOT for a new interchange. The project realigns the course to par 34, updates irrigation systems, and includes asbestos pipe abatement. Contingency was reduced based on actual bid values. Ms. Mongeon-Stewart also clarified that public concerns from Andrew Krasanek relate to future developments, not the current project, and ongoing communication with stakeholders is maintained. Biller inquired about the golf course master plan and future development. Mr. Larson confirmed a master plan exists, with parcels on the east and west sides planned for private development and golf entertainment facilities, but financial details are not yet ready for board review. Ms. Mongeon-Stewart emphasized the current project is independent of future developments, which will be brought to the board separately.
Black moved, Kommer seconded to approve UND's request to reconstruct Ray Richards Golf Course.
Motion passed, 5-0.

4. NDSU
    a. MHA Tuition Rate Request

    Dean Conner presented the new NDSU Master of Healthcare Administration program, detailing its tuition rate, industry collaboration, admission criteria, and competitive positioning. Dean Conner explained the program addresses workforce needs in North Dakota, is asynchronous online, and is less expensive than Minnesota State Moorhead, requiring fewer credits for completion. Sogard asked about admission requirements. Dean Conner clarified that candidates with degrees in nursing, pharmacy, rehabilitation sciences, or medicine are eligible, and credits from nursing and pharmacy programs can be stacked or transferred to accelerate entry into the MHA program.

    Biller moved, Sogard seconded to approve NDSU's tuition rate request for the new MHA program.

5. 2027-29 Biennial Budget
    a. Operating

    DC Krebsbach presented the operating capital budgets for the 2027-29 biennium, highlighting need-based and governor's guideline budgets, reductions, and funding formula changes. Kommer asked about the process for system office reductions and optional requests, and DC Krebsbach and Ms. Wilke explained institutional input and consolidation of requests.

    Biller moved, Kommer seconded to approve the operating capital budgets for the 2027-29 biennium, as presented.

    Motion passed, 5-0.
    b. Capital

    After DC Krebsbach presentation of the capital budget, Mihalick proposed prioritizing deferred maintenance over new construction, suggesting a $25 million pool for facility assessment, space utilization, and strategic planning, with the remainder for building removal. Black and Biller supported increasing the deferred maintenance ask. The committee agreed to defer the vote on capital projects until the BFC next meeting for further discussion and data gathering.

    No vote was taken.

Adjourn

Committee Chair Mihalick adjourned the meeting at 11:45 a.m., CT.