

Northern Hills Area CASA
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Thursday, September 11, 2025
Spearfish Chamber of Commerce
Time: 12:00 p.m. MT

- I. Call to Order:** President Tiffany Even called the meeting to order at 12:02 p.m.
Present: President Tiffany Even, Vice President Natalie Owens, Treasurer Jessie Dufner, Kris Downs, Garth Evers, Kanda Guthmiller, Nicole McCourt, Erin Fiedler, Julie Benedict, Amy Cermak, Brenda Mosset
Excused: Corey Compton
It was noted a quorum was fulfilled. All motions were passed by unanimous vote, unless otherwise stated.
- II. Introductions:** National Make Your Bed Day and National Friendship Month. Everyone shared their morning routines and fun activities with friends.
- III. Approval of Agenda**
A motion was made by Benedict to approve the September 11, 2025, BOD meeting agenda. Downs seconded. Motion carried.
- IV. August 2025 BOD Meeting Minutes**
A motion was made by Downs to approve the regular meeting minutes from August 14, 2025. Guthmiller seconded. Motion passed.
- V. Executive Director's Report – Refer to the attachment for detailed information.**
- A. NHCASA Upcoming Activities: Drive For Your Community; Learn About CASA; Tie-Dye Party; New CASA Volunteer Training**
- a. Drive For Your Community – The White's Canyon Motors activity will be held on September 13. For every test drive conducted, \$30 will be given to NHCASA, up to \$6,000.
 - b. Learn About CASA is scheduled for September 16 at 6:00 p.m. at the NHCASA office. Volunteer Luke May will be the guest speaker.
 - c. The CASA Social Tie-Dye Party will be held at 5:30 p.m. at NHCASA on September 18.
 - d. New CASA Volunteer Training begins on September 25. The exact location will be determined, based on the number of applicants. Cermak encouraged the BOD to attend any/all of the sessions.
 - e. Promotional flyers for the upcoming events are included in the board packet. Please hang at your place of employment or anywhere you deem appropriate.
- B. BHS6 Wrap-Up**
- a. The Forest Service application has been submitted. August 15, 2026, is the date for next year's race.
 - b. An after-event committee meeting is set for Friday, October 10, at 9:00 a.m. at NHCASA.
 - c. Cermak reviewed the budget and noted the increased participation levels since the event began. 2025 was a record year for revenue.

- C. SD Community Foundation
 - a. Cermak discussed investment options with representatives from the Foundation.
 - b. The Finance Committee will look into endowment options.
- D. NHCASA “Advocate” August Newsletter
 - a. Included in the board packet for members to share with others.
- E. Fence: The fence surrounding the CASA Connection outdoor play area is in desperate need of repair. Mosset will work on getting quotes.

VI. President’s Report (Tiffany Even)

- A. 2026 Board Involvement; The importance of historical knowledge preservation through BOD leadership transitions.
 - a. Even thanked the board for their involvement and dedication to the program. She gave kudos to the BOD for building/expanding connections with community members.
 - b. To help staff and board members understand what each signature fundraising event entails, a How-To document will be created by the NHCASA team.
 - c. Annual roadmaps for the various BOD committees will be devised by the current chairpersons.
 - d. In order to maintain continuity among the BOD, the Past President will serve on the Executive Board the year following their Presidency role. This is allowed, per the NHCASA by-laws.

VII. Treasurer’s Report (Jessie Dufner)

- A. Consider/approve the financial reports for July 2025.
 - a. Dufner addressed the savings account balance and explained options of ways to invest the monetary growth yet still be accessible. The Finance Committee will continue to have discussions regarding this issue and will bring the recommendations to the rest of the BOD for review/approval. Cermak will devise the historical data of VOCA funding, as the committee feels we should have the equivalence of approximately 3 years of cash reserves available in case federal funding is decreased again in the future.
 - b. As of today, the total revenue has increased approximately \$100,000 from the previous year. This is due to the major donations received from local organizations and individuals.

A motion was made by McCourt to approve the July 2025 financials. Evers seconded. Motion carried.

VIII. Committee Reports

- A. Dueling Pianos (Kanda Guthmiller, Chair): *November 15, 2025: Spearfish Holiday Inn*
 - a. Sponsorship letters were mailed on June 2, which included personalized greetings by board members. Updated thank you letters are being mailed, as sponsorships are received. Guthmiller requested board members follow-up with the potential sponsors who we haven’t heard from yet.
 - b. 2025 Sponsors (Most recently received)
 - 1. Crow Peak Cabinetry and an anonymous community member are the piano sponsors.
 - 2. BOD member Kris Downs is a volunteer sponsor.
 - 3. BMS Financial Advisors is this year’s appetizer sponsor.

- c. Utilizing free “Zeffy” payment program for sponsorships and ticket sales.
- d. Publicity: Black Hills Pioneer, KOTA Territory, social media, promotional flyers. Please hang the updated flyer wherever you deem fit.
 - 1. Downs made the initial contact with KOTA Territory regarding a gift in-kind sponsorship. Cermak is working with them on a commercial advertisement.
 - 2. Development Coordinator Vanessa Reid is continuously updating social media and the NHCASA website with event and sponsor information.
- e. Silent Auction Items: Baskets can consist of items acquired from local businesses. Evers is the coordinator for the silent auction. He distributed ideas and directions to the BOD. Items should be dropped off at NHCASA.
- f. As a board-hosted fundraiser, directors are required to sell 16 tickets or 2 tables.
- g. Updates from the committee meeting held on September 4, 2025. Two CASA volunteers were added to the committee. The Heads and Tails game was discussed with options on how to implement.
- h. The next committee meeting will be held on Thursday, October 9, 2025, at 1:00 p.m. at the Spearfish Chamber of Commerce.

B. Finance/Human Resources (Jessie Dufner & Julie Benedict, Co-Chairs)

- a. Jon Pochop from Ameriprise Financial Services was the guest speaker at the committee meeting on September 8. The committee reviewed the current assets in comparison to our Investment Policy Statement. Pros and cons of endowments were discussed. Pochop noted our funds are all currently liquid. Dufner and Benedict shared the growth fund numbers. The committee will be looking at ways to make the money grow to the fullest capacity possible. The entire portfolio maximum could be up to 40%. We are currently at 26%.
- b. IRA options were discussed, including Roth and Traditional options. A Roth IRA is tax-free and generally not taxed at distribution; whereas, a Traditional IRA is integrated as a pre-tax line item in which employees pay the taxes at the time of withdrawal. NHCASA currently offers a Traditional IRA to employees, with up to a 3% match from NHCASA. No additional fees are incurred to the program for the IRA benefit.
 - 1. **Action Item:** Consider/approve the option to offer a Roth plan, in addition to the current Traditional IRA for NHCASA staff.
A motion was made by McCourt to approve a Roth plan option. Guthmiller seconded. Motion carried.
 - 2. Discussion was held regarding the BOD’s authorization for a pre-tax, elective IRA contribution gift, up to \$5,000, without a matched contribution from employees. This could be utilized as a potential bonus for employees and could be changed annually. Due to timing guidelines, this option must be approved by October 1. However, this does not equate to a required implementation. It simply means it will be an option to consider.

Action Item: Consider/approve the possibility of implementing a non-discretionary contribution Simple IRA account.

A motion was made by Downs to approve the option for a non-discretionary contribution Simple IRA account. Fiedler seconded. Motion carried.

3. The next committee meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 7, at noon. Topics of discussion will include wages/benefits planning and the 2026 budget.

C. Board Development (Natalie Owens, Chair)

- a. 2026 BOD membership: Executive Board to include Past President—This will assist with efforts in historical knowledge and provide the opportunity to have another authorized signer on payables. The officer slate is set to be presented in October, with voting to occur in November. Discussion occurred regarding the HR-Finance combined Committee alignments, with co-chairs representing HR and Finance. Owens detailed the possibility of having a specific Fundraising committee for 2026, with a potential emphasis on a Giving Campaign—It could also be integrated by having a BOD liaison work in collaboration with the NHCASA staff, specifically on the campaign.
- b. Updates were provided from the August 28, 2025, Board Development committee meeting. Recruitment ideas are needed for individuals from Belle Fourche, Lead, Deadwood, Sturgis, and Whitewood. We have received one application from Spearfish. The updated BOD application, job description, committees, and Executive Board roles are included in the board packet. Ideas were provided regarding the BOD interview process. The committee is focusing on BOD retention, along with board recruitment.
 1. The committee discussed the targeted recruitment of 2-3 new board members from neighboring communities by July 2026. Any personal recommendations from board members are encouraged to submit those names to the committee by September 29. All applications are due by October 13 for the current round of board recruitment.
 2. One of the committee's goals is to involve past board members in events/activities. They could be on the Dueling Pianos committee. It was noted Even can remain active on the board one more year, after her term expires, if she is in an Executive Board leadership role, as stated in the by-laws.
 3. The idea was proposed regarding an interview of one applicant at a time, with all of the questions posed during general BOD meetings.

D. Signature Fundraising Events (Nicole McCourt & Garth Evers, Board Liaisons)

1. Black Hills Super 6 Mountain Bike Race/Trail Run: Event updates; Cermak noted the Strider Kids Course was a huge hit, thanks to the efforts of McCourt and the Rotary Club volunteers; A post-event committee meeting will be held on Friday, October 10, at 9:00 a.m. at NHCASA; Suggestions are being noted for next year's event; The application for the 2026 event was submitted to USFS.
2. 40th Annual Spearfish Canyon Half Marathon/5K (July 11, 2026): Received approval from the SD Department of Transportation; Awaiting the approval of the City of Spearfish permit application--Mosset will follow up.

IX. Adjournment

A motion was made by Benedict to adjourn the meeting. McCourt seconded. Motion passed.
The September 2025 BOD meeting was adjourned at 1:07 p.m.

The next BOD meeting will be held on Thursday, October 9, 2025, at noon, at the Spearfish Chamber of Commerce.

Submitted by: Amy Cermak, NHCASA Executive Director

_____ Date _____

Approved by: Tiffany Even, 2025 NHCASA BOD President

_____ Date _____