

**Lake Superior State University
Board of Trustees
Minutes of Meeting
Kenneth J. Shouldice Library
Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan
October 03, 2025**

The Board of Trustees of Lake Superior State University met in regular session beginning at 8:30 a.m. on Friday, October 03, 2025, in the Kenneth J. Shouldice Library, Lake Superior State University, Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan. The meeting was pursuant to Section 1.01. of the Bylaws of said Board with notice to the Board pursuant to Section 1.04., and public notice pursuant to Section 1.05. of the Bylaws.

The section numbers and headings of these minutes correspond to the agenda. A copy of the proposed agenda was distributed to each Trustee at the public session of October 03, 2025. The proposed agenda had been sent pursuant to Section 1.04. of the Bylaws. Copies of all such material are contained as appendices to these minutes.

At the call to order, there were several members in the audience.

I. Roll Call

Ms. Cynthia Williams, Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. Chair Williams asked Ms. Lauren Pierce, Secretary, to call the roll. The following members responded, "present":

Ms. Patricia Caruso
Dr. Kevin Cooper
Ms. Sheri Davie
Mr. Jon DeRoo
Ms. Whitney Gravelle
Mr. Timothy Lukenda
Ms. Cynthia Williams
Dr. David Travis, President

Seven Trustees were recorded as present, with Trustees Sheri Davie, Whitney Gravelle, and Timothy Lukenda joining via Zoom, and Trustee Richard Barch recorded as absent. Present for the University were Dr. Philip Espinosa, Associate Vice President of Human Resources & Chief Human Resources Officer; Dr. Jason Garvon, Faculty Association Representative; Julie Hober, Chief Information Officer; Tory Lindley, Director of Athletics; Christina Messer; Education Support Professionals Representative; Dr. Kimberly Muller, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs; Scott Smith, Vice President of Advancement, Legislative, & Alumni Affairs; and Morrie Walworth, Vice President for Finance and Operations. There were no representatives from Student Government or Enrollment Management & Student Success.

II. Approval of the Agenda for October 03, 2025

Dr. Cooper moved for Board approval to amend the agenda for October 03, 2025, removing Agenda Item 8. Approval Limit Increased from XI. Finance Report, supported by Ms. Caruso. The motion carried with unanimous voice vote.

III. Approval of the Minutes for July 18, 2025

Ms. Caruso moved for Board approval of the minutes for July 18, 2025, as presented, supported by Dr. Cooper. The motion carried with unanimous voice vote.

IV. Approval of the Special Minutes for September 19, 2025

Ms. Caruso moved for Board approval of the minutes for September 19, 2025, as presented, supported by Dr. Cooper. The motion carried with unanimous voice vote.

V. Addresses to the Board

None

VI. Chair's Remarks

Ms. Williams thanked the students for their spirit and support during the recent campus power outage. Ms. Williams acknowledged the Fire Science students for their continuous around-the-clock fire watch. Ms. Williams also shared appreciation for the generosity of the campus community and for the all-hands-on-deck approach from staff members.

VII. President's Remarks

Dr. Travis provided an update on the recent campus power outage and thanked students for their grave and patience. Dr. Travis thanked Dr. Jamie Zamjahn and the Student Affairs team. Dr. Travis stated that Dr. Zamjahn would not be providing a report for Enrollment Management & Student Success, due to illness.

VIII. Faculty Association Report

Faculty Association (FA) Representative, Dr. Jason Garvon, stated that the FA approved an LOA to not move forward with Sabbaticals in an effort to help the University save money.

IX. Education Support Professionals Report

Education Support Professionals (ESP) representative, Christina Messer, stated that ESP contract negotiations have been slow, but the ESP will remain committed to bargaining in good faith.

X. Student Government Report

No representative attended to provide a report.

XI. Finance Report

Mr. Walworth provided the Board with updates on the FY26 fund balance summary, year-to-date summary, and annual operating dashboards.

Mr. Walworth presented to the Board a new FY26 GF budget for approval that would improve the performance to a deficit of \$36,517. Revenue is at 35.8% of budget while expenditures are at 25.5%, about 25% of the way through the fiscal year. The Board approved a provisional FY26 Housing budget that would have resulted in a surplus of \$640,000. LSSU is presenting a new FY26 Housing budget for approval that would result in a surplus \$339,336. Housing is showing an annual fund balance of \$1,504,794. The Board approved a provisional FY26 Cisler Operations budget that would have resulted in a deficit of \$319,089. LSSU is presenting a new FY26 Cisler Operations budget for approval that would result in a deficit of \$420,535. Cisler Operations is showing an annual fund balance of \$786,270. The Board approved a provisional FY26 Athletics budget that would have resulted in a deficit of \$1.3M. LSSU is presenting a new FY26 Athletics budget for approval that would result in a deficit \$1,241,131. Athletics is showing an annual fund deficit of \$148,023. Institutional cash is sitting at \$14.8M and has increased by about \$2M since year-end. This is typical for this time of the year. The balance is about \$2.2M less than last year at this time, and the lowest in the last ten years. The Bulk of the operational fund balance resides in the Reserve Fund. The amount without liabilities is \$4.4M.

A detailed FY25 report was provided at the July Board meeting. Final numbers have not shifted much since that report. The General Fund ended FY25 \$300,000 better than budgeted, at a deficit of \$388,057. Housing ended FY25 much better than budgeted: at a surplus of \$168,456. Cisler Operations ended FY25 near budget: at a deficit of \$412,384. Athletics ended FY25 near budget: at a deficit of \$1,272,597. Overall, Auxiliaries ended FY25 with a deficit of \$1,790,026. The combined GF and Auxiliary losses were just over \$2M.

Total FY26 revenues are projected to be about \$39.05M. Expenditures are estimated to be about \$39.08M. The result is a FY26 GF budget showing an expected deficit of \$36,516. To achieve the near-zero balance, the following were entered as revenue:

- a) Continued FY25 base funding from the State,
- b) 2% increase in base funding from the State,
- c) \$2.5M Endowment draw for scholarships,
- d) Charter School Operations support, and
- e) Investment Policy Changes

An additional \$600,000 in expenditures was moved to be covered under a future loan for infrastructure improvements, and \$155,000 was estimated to be saved through the restructuring of employee benefits.

Housing and Athletic Activities have submitted surplus budgets, consistent with prior year actual performance. Student Government has submitted a deficit budget request for FY26, as it plans to spend down some of its \$150,000 fund

balance. Club Sports always receives funding from the General Fund, such that the net budget is near \$0.

Cisler Operations, Athletics, and the Health Care Center are requesting deficit budgets for FY26. The current combined fund balance deficit of these areas is \$5.2M. These budgets would increase that deficit to about \$6.87M. The Other Auxiliary areas have sufficient fund balances to cover the requested deficit of \$91,687. Overall, the current fund balance of the Auxiliary Units is a deficit of \$3.2M. Approval of the FY26 requests would increase the deficit to about \$4.5M.

Dr. Cooper moved for Board approval of the FY26 General Fund budget as presented, supported by Ms. Caruso. The results of the roll call vote were:

Ms. Patricia Caruso	"Yes"
Dr. Kevin Cooper	"Yes"
Ms. Sheri Davie	Abstain
Mr. Jon DeRoo	"Yes"
Ms. Whitney Gravelle	"Yes"
Mr. Timothy Lukenda	"Yes"
Ms. Cynthia Williams	"Yes"

The motion carried with six affirmative votes. Trustee Davie was experiencing audio issues on Zoom. Therefore, her vote was recorded as an abstention.

Dr. Cooper moved for Board approval of the FY26 Auxiliary Fund budget as presented, supported by Ms. Caruso. The results of the roll call vote were:

Ms. Patricia Caruso	"Yes"
Dr. Kevin Cooper	"Yes"
Ms. Sheri Davie	Abstain
Mr. Jon DeRoo	"Yes"
Ms. Whitney Gravelle	"Yes"
Mr. Timothy Lukenda	"Yes"
Ms. Cynthia Williams	"Yes"

The motion carried with six affirmative votes. Trustee Davie was experiencing audio issues on Zoom. Therefore, her vote was recorded as an abstention.

Mr. Walworth presented to the Board for approval to pursue a loan or line of credit for infrastructure, recruitment, and retention. Efforts to reduce budget deficits over the last several years have resulted in less than desired infrastructural maintenance and repair. Although deferred maintenance is common at most universities, it is exacerbated at LSSU due to the number of older buildings on campus and the infrastructure that supports them. Numerous infrastructure-related projects have been identified by Cabinet, and during a retreat, several structures were visited to demonstrate the breadth and depth of the various issues. Cost estimates for several projects were also reviewed. Many projects have been deemed necessary. LSSU would seek funding in the form of a loan or line-of-credit not to exceed \$3.25M. LSSU is seeking approval to potentially collateralize the funding for a better interest rate. If necessary,

collateralization would be accomplished using property in Arizona, which was recently appraised at a value of \$3.25M.

Trustee Gravelle asked how much the loan/line-of-credit would cost the University each year and expressed concern for taking on additional debt while operating with a deficit.

Mr. Walworth stated that funds have already been designated in the budget for infrastructure improvements, which would be used towards the loan payment.

Trustee DeRoo asked for a two-year Campus Maintenance Plan, and for Board approval for specific projects that would be covered under the loan/line-of-credit and asked for clarity on how the funds would be spent. Mr. DeRoo expressed concern about the administration making purchases with these funds, without complete Board approval for each project.

Dr. Cooper moved for Board approval to pursue and execute a loan and/or line of credit not to exceed \$3.25M; authorization be given to the President and/or CFO related to the execution of any documents necessary for the issuance of the loan or line of credit; authorization be given to the President and/or CFO to collateralize the loan or line of credit if deemed to be in the best interest of Lake Superior State University; authorization be given to the President and/or CFO related to the execution of the projects presented, with Board approval necessary for anything exceeding the President's spending approval limits; supported by Ms. Caruso.

Mr. DeRoo stated that more information for how the funds will be spent is needed before any support could be given.

The Chair asked for a roll call vote.

The results of the roll call vote were:

Ms. Patricia Caruso	"Yes"
Dr. Kevin Cooper	"Yes"
Ms. Sheri Davie	"Yes"
Mr. Jon DeRoo	"No"
Ms. Whitney Gravelle	"No"
Mr. Timothy Lukenda	"Yes"
Ms. Cynthia Williams	"Yes"

The motion carried with five affirmative votes.

Mr. Walworth presented to the Board for approval to rename the Administration Building. The administration building is one of the many historic buildings on campus, but unlike the many other historic structures, it lacks a defining name. Other structures are named after individuals tied to the historic nature of the campus, the Great Lakes, or reflect the Native American heritage of the region. As LSSU studied the campus and examined potential names, a defining feature emerged. LSSU is located on the Principal Meridian of Michigan. A principal

meridian is a north-south line of reference used in the United States Public Land Survey System to establish and describe land parcels. It serves as a foundational axis that intersects with a corresponding east-west "base line" to create a grid of "townships" and "sections," ensuring standardized legal descriptions of land. LSSU sits right on the principal meridian for the entire State of Michigan. In fact, Meridian Street runs right in front of the Norris Center and terminates at the main entrance to the campus. Hence, the name Meridian Hall was formulated. Section 5.08.1 of the Board's Bylaws states: "The Board retains authority to exercise oversight powers in the naming of facilities and memorials".

Ms. Caruso moved for Board approval to rename the Administration Building to Meridian Hall, supported by Dr. Cooper. The motion carried with unanimous voice vote.

XII. Academic Affairs Report

Dr. Muller presented to the Board for approval to submit a Capital Outlay request to the State of Michigan for the renovation and expansion of the Center of Applied Science and Engineering and Technology building.

Dr. Cooper moved for Board approval to submit a Capital Outlay request to the State of Michigan, as presented; supported by Ms. Caruso. The results of the roll call vote were:

Ms. Patricia Caruso	"Yes"
Dr. Kevin Cooper	"Yes"
Ms. Sheri Davie	"Yes"
Mr. Jon DeRoo	"Yes"
Ms. Whitney Gravelle	"Yes"
Mr. Timothy Lukenda	"Yes"
Ms. Cynthia Williams	"Yes"

The motion carried with seven affirmative votes.

Dr. Cooper moved for Board approval to confer the appropriate degrees upon the list of candidates as presented, supported by Ms. Caruso. The motion carried with unanimous voice vote.

Dr. Muller provided the Board with highlights and major initiatives from the area of Academic Affairs: a) Mathematics faculty and support services staff were awarded a \$10,000 Michigan College Access Network (MCAN) grant to redesign mathematics courses and support students as they work toward the completion of their general education mathematics requirement. b) Preparation for the 10-year Comprehensive Evaluation by the Higher Learning Commission is underway. A summary of the self-study and Assurance Argument Process will be provided. c) LSSU hosted its annual Professional Development Day on Thursday, August 21st, with keynote address by Dr. Laurie Schreiner on *The Thriving Campus: Creating an Environment in Which All Students Can Flourish*. Further examples of professional development opportunities will be provided. d) Library and Academic Services staff have worked to build a new continuing

education line-up this fall with offerings on a variety of topics in art, wellness, and home repair.

Mr. Chris Oshelski, Executive Director of Charter Schools Office, presented to the Board for approval of the appointments of reappointments of Board of Directors and two action items for the Board to approve two contract amendments.

Dr. Cooper moved for Board approval of the appointments or reappointments of the presented nominees to their respective Board of Directors for the terms listed, supported by Ms. Caruso.

Concord Academy Petoskey:

Kayla Coston nominated for an appointment with a term expiring on June 30, 2027.

Grand Traverse Academy:

Jonathan Ardan nominated for an appointment with a term expiring on June 30, 2028.

iCademy:

David Tebo nominated for an appointment with a term expiring on June 30, 2028.

The motion carried with unanimous voice vote.

Ms. Caruso moved for Board approval to amend Article VI Section 6.8 and Schedule 7-h of the Concord Academy Petoskey charter contract to authorize the Academy to offer grades Pre-K through 12; supported by Dr. Cooper. The motion carried with unanimous voice vote.

Dr. Cooper moved for Board approval to amend Article VI Section 6.8 and Schedule 7-h of the Regent Park Charter Academy charter contract to authorize the Academy to offer grades Pre-K through 8; supported by Ms. Caruso. The motion carried with unanimous voice vote.

XIII. Enrollment Management & Student Success Report

No report given for EMSS.

XIV. Human Resources Report

Dr. Espinosa provided the Board with key updates for Title IX compliance, campus safety and risk management, and human resources operations.

The Title IX report fulfills a State of Michigan requirement and documents three new reports of alleged prohibited conduct from April 23 through September 22, 2025. One case was closed with no formal complaint, and three remain under

review or investigation. One involves an LSSU employee as a respondent. Details include comparative reporting data from FY25 and FY26.

The (Clery Report) was shared with campus on October 1, 2025.

Progress continues with annual insurance renewals and a recently started audit of all issued building keys.

Benefit plan updates for 2026 are underway. A significant change to provided medical will include offering multiple plans, including high deductible plan options with an HSA. ESP contract negotiations continue. Numerous employee focused initiatives were shared at the fall kickoff meeting and are provided in the report as an FYI.

XV. Information Technology

Ms. Hober provided the Board with key strategic initiatives and accomplishments from LSSU's Information Technology division.

The department advanced several campus wide technology improvements this quarter:

- Wireless Network Modernization: Completed the final phase of wireless access point replacements, retiring the legacy Ruckus system and unifying the campus on a single, modern network. This upgrade supports STEM initiatives, including a new water monitoring station with Michigan Tech, without added hardware costs.
- Expanded Student Access: Opened a second teaching computer lab in Considine Hall and realigned resources to better match student demand.
- Onboarding Enhancements: Streamlined new student technology access by updating scripts so all students automatically receive Microsoft and Zoom licenses.

Cybersecurity remains a top priority. Major efforts include:

- Tabletop Exercise: Hosted a multi-day cyber incident simulation with the Michigan State Police Cyber Command, engaging regional partners including the Sault Tribe, Cloverland Electric, and the ISD. The exercise provided valuable insight into how an attack might unfold and what steps would be required to respond effectively.
- SOC Integration: Following Board approval, LSSU began onboarding with Merit's SOC, on track for go-live at the end of October. This will provide 24/7 monitoring and incident response, significantly enhancing LSSU's security posture.
- Threat Defense: Over the past 90 days, IT blocked more than 2 million attempted foreign connections, prevented 6,000+ critical intrusions, stopped 10,000 malicious websites, and intercepted 1,600 phishing attempts.

Planned next steps include faculty/staff cybersecurity awareness training and development of an internal incident response plan to complement Merit SOC.

Website enhancements this quarter continue to focus on recruitment, accessibility, and user experience:

Major Updates:

- Launched a “Fast Facts” homepage section and implemented Google’s Programmable Search, a major improvement that delivers significantly more accurate, relevant, and reliable results.
- Ongoing Improvements: Updated over 35 departmental pages in the past three weeks, simplifying navigation and ensuring timely, student-centered content.
- Looking Ahead: Upcoming features include a redesigned site header, light/dark mode for accessibility, a Community Resource Page, and a “Why LSSU” recruitment page. These changes support digital engagement, student recruitment, and institutional visibility.

These improvements reinforce the website’s role as a dynamic, secure, and student-focused engagement tool.

XVI. Athletics Report

Mr. Lindley provided the Board with achievements, activities, and key highlights within the athletics department.

Laker Athletics has achieved several noteworthy performances. Volleyball highlighted its season with a successful *Matches on the Mack* event on Mackinac Island, playing before a sellout crowd. In Cross Country, multiple athletes set top-10 program marks at the Jeff Drenth Memorial Invitational, with first-year Alex Tyndall establishing a new all-time LSSU 5K record (15:50.2). Both Garcia and Tyndall earned LSSU Student-Athlete of the Week honors in September.

Athletics generated nearly 2 million total social media impressions, a 256% year-over-year increase. Men’s Ice Hockey led with nearly 978K impressions (+157%), while GLIAC team accounts grew most significantly (+474%) with over 800K impressions. Main Athletics accounts also surged by 455%. These gains demonstrate strengthened engagement, elevated visibility, and expanding reach for LSSU Athletics.

LSSU hosted a broad range of summer sports camps, serving 783 total participants and generating \$161,436 in revenue. While slightly down from 2024 totals, camps remain a critical source of community engagement, visibility, and early exposure to campus life. Hockey camps accounted for the largest share of participation (165 athletes, \$71,540 revenue).

Between June 1 and August 31, the Norris Center averaged 730 weekly check-ins, including students, community members, tribal partners, and Coast Guard personnel. The Aquatics Center reopened in August with an average of 110 weekly members. Membership sales generated \$14,571—up 39% year-over-year—and total summer revenues reached \$26,629.70. Usage included a wide range of camps, practices, and community events, underscoring the Norris Center’s role as a campus and regional hub.

Thanks to the Laker Legacy Hockey Advancement Fund, several key staff members have been added, strengthening both Division I Men's Hockey and broader departmental support. New hires include Roschard Watkins (Academic Services & Leadership Development), Eric Morford (Creative Content), Liam Cound (Sports Performance), Ryan Shelley (Hockey GM), and Anders Lempia (Hockey AGM & Video). These roles have already enhanced academic outcomes, expanded social media reach, and improved player development, operational efficiency, and training capacity across programs.

XVII. Advancement Report

Mr. Smith presented, to the Board, a dashboard on year-to-date fundraising compared to the last five years.

FY24-25 marked our best fundraising year to date at \$3,630,820. FY25-26 begins with our best Q1 to date of \$2,266,415.

Major gifts include gifts of cash, IRA distributions, stock, and memorial gifts. Major gifts also include documented pledges and estate gifts.

Two anonymous planned gifts of \$1M each, as well as an anonymous \$25,000 cash gift in support of 906 Day, inspired by President Travis and Lynsey Schwabrow's generosity in creating the LSSU Campus and Community Fund, were received.

The Lake State Classic was on August 1 at Bay Mills Wild Bluff Golf Course, and was sold out for the third consecutive year. The Classic Social was added this year to further engage and thank loyal supporters. GLSW is October 24 and 25. LSSU continues to expand this into a week-long celebration and alumni homecoming with events focused on students and the local community throughout the preceding week.

The state budget is still being negotiated. President Travis continues to communicate with our State elected officials regarding the budget.

XVIII. Other Business

None

XIX. Adjournment

Dr. Cooper moved for adjournment at 10:37 a.m.; supported by Ms. Caruso. The motion carried with unanimous voice vote.

Cynthia Williams
Chair

David Travis
President