Minutes: Board of Governors Meeting

May 20, 2026 / 9 am – 2 pm

Fort St. John Campus, Main Campus Building, Room 1517 / Distance Participation via Teams

Enriching lives, communities and industry in Northern BC and the world through accessible, applied, and academic learning.

Present:	
J. Moore, Board Chair	R. Irwin, Board Member
A. Graff, Vice President Finance & Corporate Services	S. Canning, Board Member
B. Mackinnon, Faculty Board Member	S. Clerk, Associate Vice President Educational Services
C. Brown, Board Member	S. Fraser, Education Council Chair
C. McCullough, Support Board Member	S. Goudie, Board Member
J. Drew, Vice President Comm. Rel. & Institutional Strategy	T. Best, Board Member
M. Troyer, Board Member	T. Hyland-Russell, Vice President Academic & Research
P. Berg, Board Vice Chair	T. Bondaroff, President & CEO
	H. Larden, Executive Assistant to the President & Board (Recorder)
Absent:	**Guest(s):**
M. Waldorf, Board Member	L. Borek, NLC Foundation Executive Director
	K. Bravo, Registrar

1. Call to Order and Territorial Acknowledgement – 9:01 am

2. Appointment of Board Evaluator

C. Brown was appointed.

3. Approval of Agenda

2026/022 Berg/Best

THAT the Northern Lights College Board of Governors approves the May 20, 2026, agenda with the prerogative of the Chair to adjust the agenda as needed. Carried

4. Presentation: Advancement Model Progress Update – L. Borek, Executive Director of NLC Foundation

L. Borek provided an overview of what an Advancement Model for the College would look like. In addition to outlining the reason this model is being considered, an overview of where NLC is in the process of potentially adopting this model was provided.

The College is at a pivotal moment where traditional funding sources are declining and philanthropic expectations are rising. The advancement model provides a modern, strategic framework that strengthens revenue generation, donor engagement, and institutional alignment.

Key Benefits:

- Sustainable, diversified funding
- Clear governance and accountability
- Improved operational efficiency
- Enhanced donor and community engagement
- Long-term institutional sustainability

NLC is currently operating in a hybrid model where advancement functions sit within the Foundation.

Next Step:

- Establish an MOU

NLC is well-positioned to adopt a modern advancement model that enhances clarity, accountability, and long-term sustainability.

5. Consent Agenda

5.1. Minutes from the March 18, 2026, Open Session Meeting

5.2. Sexual Violence and Misconduct Policy Report

5.3. Quarterly Board Expense Report (Q4: January – March 2026)

5.4. Quarterly Review of the President's Expenses (Q4: January – March 2026)
5.5. Borrowing Resolution
5.6. Monitoring Report: B-EL-2 (Treatment of Staff)
5.7. Monitoring Report: B-EL-9 (Access to Education)

2026/023 Troyer/Irwin
THAT the Northern Lights College Board of Governors approves the following items on the consent agenda:

- Minutes from the March 18, 2026, Open Session Meeting;
- Sexual Violence and Misconduct Policy Report;
- Quarterly Board Expense Report;
- Quarterly Review of President's Expenses;
- Borrowing Resolution; and
- The Monitoring Reports for B-EL-2 and B-EL-9 as demonstrating compliance with reasonable interpretations of the policies. Carried

6. Planned Linkage with Owners

6.1. Ownership Linkage Committee Report, B-GP-3 & 4 – J. Moore

The engagement with the community of Fort Nelson has been rescheduled to take place following convocation this June. One open community session will take place the evening of June 17 and one session for students will take the morning of June 18. Board members are invited to attend, if available.

NLC will be presenting at the District of Tumber Ridge Mayor and Council on Monday, May 25. During this presentation, conducting an ownership linkage with the community in October 2026 will be proposed.

A copy of the updated Ownership Linkage Plan is available on D2L.

7. Board Education and Communication

7.1. President's Report to the Board, B-EL-7 – T. Bondaroff

President Bondaroff provided an update on his strategic priorities and initiatives (written report available on D2L) which included:

Strategic Pillar: Student Journey
Goal 1.3 – Work with students to develop a vibrant campus experience
OBJ 1 Increase student access to recreation and wellness activities.

- NLC Rodeo Team was at the Canadian College Finals Rodeo from May 1-3, 2026 in Rimbey, Alberta
  - The team was named the 2025-2026 Canadian College Rodeo Association National Varsity Champions
- Committed to building speedskating team

OBJ 2 Advance initiatives identified with the NLC Campus Development Plan

- Progress update on the Fort St. John campus renovation was provided
  - Phase 1 is completed. The contract for phase 2 has been awarded with work commencing soon. Anticipated to take about one year
- Cultural Arbour construction continues, hope to be open in September 2026

Strategic Pillar: Responsive Programming
Goal 2.1 – Leverage provincial and regional priorities to inform NLC programming and portfolio decisions.
OBJ 1 Develop an Allied Health Care Strategy

- Dean of Health Science Human Services and Vice President Academic and Research presented a final update on the Allied Health Cares project to the Peace Region Regional District (PRRD) on April 30, 2026. NLC has not only met but exceeded the goals set out in the funding application to the PRRD
- NLC trades team are building pharmacy dispensary unit in June-Aug and installing in HSB 101 to support the new Pharmacy Technician Diploma at the Dawson Creek campus

Goal 2.2 – Offer accessible and flexible programming.
OBJ 1 Strengthen high school transitions into NLC

- Workforce Training and Continuing Education (WTCE) is hosting thirteen Summer camps at four NLC Campuses for Grade 8 – 12 students: Beyond Beauty (2); Build It Carpentry (4); Culinary Creators (2); Explore Nursing (2); and Trades Exploration (3)

Goal 2.4 – Enhance curriculum review, renewal, and development
OBJ 1 Generate a 3-year Education Plan

- Clearing the Trails: Education Plan 2025-2028 has been published

Strategic Pillar: People and Culture
Goal 4.1 – Evolve NLC's culture into one grounded in accountability, continuous improvement, and collaborative problem solving
OBJ 4 Establish a framework for developing business continuity plans.

- NLC has engaged a consultant to conduct a comprehensive review of the College's Health and Safety Program and Emergency Response Plans. The review will include an assessment of the Health and Safety department, a gap analysis, recommendations for improvement, and implementation of new processes based on the findings of the analysis

Goal 4.3 – Cultivate an organization where everyone feels they belong
OBJ 1 Improve the employee journey.

- Hosted 2026 Annual NLC Service Awards Gala Awards and Recognition event
    - New employee excellence awards were introduced at this year's event

Work continues on getting the Tumbler Ridge Access Centre ready to open in September. It is unknown at this time if NLC will be included in the planned new building. The College will continue to monitor the situation and engage with the community and Ministries involved.

Thanks were extended to Board members who attended the 2026 CICan conference and worked to ensure NLC had attendance at different sessions. NLC hosted two panel discussions at this years' conference (NPSC and the Tourmaline Case Study.)

7.2. Board Chair Report – J. Moore

A copy of the written report is available on D2L. The following items were discussed:

- Chair Moore attended the program wrap-up celebration for the barn build, noting a very proud atmosphere at the event
- BC Colleges Chair Group – J. Moore will be taking on the Chair Role this year
    - Minister Beare will be providing coverage while Minister Sunner is on leave
- Fall Board Retreat – possible topics were discussed
    - Including a Governance presentation, similar to the one offered to the Education Council, but geared towards the role of the Board, is of interest
    - October Board meeting length (increase from a compressed 2-hour meeting)
    - Strategic Planning –a timeline and engagement strategy will need to be built out
        - Community engagement and feedback on pillars are valuable
        - Feedback informs the development of new plan (or a plan refresh)
    - Military training partnerships – understanding needs important (107 jobs in the Military)
        - Integrate in O-Link activities to see how our communities feel about this
        - Value in renaming to nation-building rather than military focused
        - Military has lots of red tape (multiple steps necessary when working with, not fast)
- Governance Committee
    - Looking at scheduling a meeting
    - Proposed change in process for Monitoring Reports
        - Go to Governance Committee first, before they come to the Board

        - Updating terms of reference may be needed for this shift to take place
        - Adds to oversight part, ensuring checks and balances are working well
        - Committee to identify if wording edits in reviewed EL's are needed
- Student Board representation update
- No new mandate letters until after the next election
- Board representation at convocation currently is:
    - Dawson Creek: J, Moore, P. Berg, M. Troyer, M. Waldorf, B. Mackinnon, and S. Fraser
    - Fort St. John: J. Moore, M. Troyer, M. Waldorf, and S. Fraser
    - Fort Nelson (Phoenix Theatre): J. Moore, M. Waldorf, R. Irwin, S. Canning, and S. Fraser
        - O-Link Activities will be taking place in Fort Nelson as well, as noted in Misty's report
    - The start time for all three ceremonies is 2 pm
        - Board members take part in the Processional and Recessional
        - Members are asked to arrive at the check-in desk no later than 1:15 pm

A short break took place. L. Borek exited the meeting.

7.3. Finance, Risk and Audit Committee Report – P. Berg

The Committee report (available on D2L) was reviewed. The auditor attended the last meeting, where the 2025/2026 audit report and financial statements were examined and the controls and processes currently in place to mitigate risk were discussed. Growth in the auditor's scope of work is anticipated for next year.

The committee also reviewed the updated risk register, which was included in the May Board meeting package for the full Board's information and consideration. No questions were raised regarding the register.

The final document reviewed by the Committee was the 2026/2027 – 2030/3031 Capital Plan.

The committee accepted the financial statements and capital plan, and recommend their acceptance by the Board.

2026/024 Best/Brown
THAT the Northern Lights College Board of Governors approves the 2025/2026 Audited Financial Statements. Carried

2026/025 Troyer/McCullough
THAT the Northern Lights College Board of Governors approves the 2026/2027 – 2030/2031 Capital Plan. Carried

7.4. Governance Committee Report: Highlights from the CICan Conference – S . Canning

Scheduling of a Governance Committee meeting is underway, where one item of discussion will be a meeting schedule.

S. Canning and M. Waldorf attended the CICan conference that took place in April 2026 and provided a report (available on D2L) of their key takeaways and observations, some of which are included below.

The 2026 CICan Conference highlighted several national trends shaping the future of colleges and institutes, with strong relevance for Northern Lights College (NLC). Sessions emphasized the growing importance of regional collaboration, industry-responsive programming, Indigenous-led education, and flexible learning models. Presentations such as, "The Northern Post-Secondary Collaborative of BC" demonstrated how northern institutions are shifting from competition to shared problem-solving, noting that collaboration can "reduce duplication, improve service delivery… and better respond collectively to industry and workforce needs." Workforce development emerged as a dominant theme, with discussions on labour shortages, the economic ROI of post-secondary education, and the rising value of work-integrated learning. Presenters also underscored the accelerating impact of artificial intelligence on teaching, assessment, and labour markets, reinforcing the need for coordinated institutional strategies.

Keynotes by General Jennie Carignan and Natan Obed broadened the conversation to national security, northern leadership, and Indigenous-led education. Carignan highlighted the Armed Forces' evolving workforce needs and the importance of adaptable, modular training pathways, noting the growing demand for skills such as empathy, collaboration, and versatility. Obed emphasized the urgency of culturally grounded, northern-driven education systems and the development of Inuit Nunangat University by 2030. These perspectives reinforced that colleges—particularly those in northern and rural regions—will play an increasingly central role in Canada's long-term workforce resilience, innovation capacity, and community development.

Attendance at the conference provided significant value for NLC by strengthening awareness of national priorities, showcasing the institution's leadership, and expanding strategic networks. Many of NLC's current strengths—industry partnerships, applied learning, Indigenous engagement, and regional collaboration—are now viewed nationally as leading practices rather than exceptions. Participation also enabled Board members and staff to support NLC-led presentations, engage in meaningful dialogue with sector leaders, and identify new opportunities in areas such as simulation-based learning, AI integration, defense-related workforce development, and northern training partnerships. The insights gained will help inform future governance discussions and support continued institutional innovation.

7.5. Education Council Chair Report – S. Fraser

Highlights of Education Council activities, as outlined in the report available on D2L, was provided with included the following:

In March, the Council approved revised Terms of Reference for the Educational Policy Committee. Informational updates included changes to the BC Adult Graduation Diploma (Adult Dogwood), clarifying requirements such as age (18+), completion of at least three diploma courses as an adult, and alignment with provincial ABE Upgrading Guide standards. The proposed Mental Health and Substance Use Certificate program, including plans for a partnership with Selkirk College, was discussed. In addition, the draft 2025–2028 Education Plan was presented for feedback from Council members.

In April, the Council approved several academic updates, including revised course outlines for PSYC 201 and PSYC 250, a new DATA 201 course, and multiple updates to Program Completion and Information Guides across post-degree diplomas and environmental programs, with implementation dates ranging from May to September 2026. Governance updates included the election of a new Support Representative. B. Mackinnon was elected as Chair, and S. Fraser as Vice-Chair for the 2026/27 academic year.

7.6. NLC Foundation Representative Report(s) – S. Canning

An overview of upcoming Foundation activities was provided, which included:

- NLC Convocation ceremonies in May and June
- Bannister Charity Golf Tournament in July
- Dawson Creek Fall Fair and Rodeo (50-50) and Race Against Hunger in August
- AGM in September
- Giving Day in December

7.7. Promotion of the College: Board Member Connections, Discussions, and Activities – J. Moore / All

Board members shared information on connections and conversations they've had regarding post-secondary education and the College.

8. Decision Items

8.1. 2025-2026 Executive Compensation Salary Disclosure Statement – J. Drew

An overview of NLC's Executive compensation disclosure was provided. The Ministry mandates annual reporting which demonstrates how public funds are used to compensate senior leaders, ensuring decisions are made objectively, responsibly, and in alignment with approved compensation frameworks and PSEC guidelines. The disclosure also verifies that compensation practices reflect organizational performance, market conditions, and internal equity, while reinforcing public trust by confirming that all compensation paid is accurate, complete, and appropriately reported.

2026/026 Brown/Troyer
THAT the Northern Lights College Board of Governors approves that the Board Chair signs the Executive Compensation Disclosure Statement for 2025-2026. Carried

8.2. New Student Recreation Fee – J. Drew

The proposed Northern Lights College Recreation Fee is a $100 per student, per term charge intended to fund consistent, high-quality recreation, wellness, and extracurricular programming across campuses, addressing longstanding gaps in funding and responding to student demand for improved activities, facilities, and inclusive programming options such as fitness initiatives, intramural sports, and access to community recreation facilities.

Consultation with students took place throughout 2025 and included focus groups, surveys, in-person and virtual sessions, and engagement with Student Council and Indigenous student mentors; feedback from these processes showed strong overall support for enhanced recreational opportunities, with students indicating the fee was reasonable and emphasizing the importance of accessible, diverse, and campus-wide programming, as well as partnerships with local facilities and flexible scheduling.

2026/027 Berg/Irwin
THAT the Northern Lights College Board of Governors approves the $100/semester recreation fee for all students enrolled in trades, academic, and vocational programs offered at NLC campuses, with the exception of those students enrolled in online programs, and in programs based on our Atlin and Dease Lake Learning Centres, effective September 2027. Any student with a home location in Dawson Creek, Fort St. John, Fort Nelson, Chetwynd, or Tumbler Ridge who is enrolled in a mix of online and face to face courses is charged $100 per semester. Those with a home location “online” or “off-site” will be excluded. Carried

8.3. Community Development Worker Diploma – T. Hyland-Russell

The Community Development Worker Diploma is a proposed two-year, interdisciplinary program designed to prepare students for entry-level roles in community development across non-profit organizations, Indigenous and community-based organizations, local government, and social and economic development sectors. The program focuses on building practical, workplace-ready skills such as communication, community engagement, project support, proposal development, and digital literacy, while emphasizing ethical, inclusive, and culturally responsive practices. It is specifically tailored to meet the needs of northern, rural, and Indigenous communities, helping learners develop the ability to assess community needs, analyze social and economic factors, and contribute to initiatives that improve community well-being. In addition, the diploma offers pathways for further education through transfer and laddering opportunities into related degree programs.

Approval in principle is important because it authorizes the college to move forward with detailed program development, including curriculum design and final program structure. This step signals institutional support while acknowledging that additional work is required before final approval, such as consultation, curriculum completion, and submission through governance processes. It enables investment in development and ensures the program can be refined in alignment with stakeholder input and labour market needs. Without this initial endorsement, the program cannot progress to the stage where it is fully developed and ready for implementation.

2026/028 Canning/Irwin
THAT the Northern Lights College Board of Governors approves in principle the Community Development Worker Diploma. Carried

8.4. 2028-2029 Student Tuition Rates and Fees – A. Graff

The proposed increase rate for domestic and international tuition and mandatory fees for 2028-2029 were reviewed. The recommended increases are as follows:

Domestic (All Programs)	**2028-2029 Increase**
Tuition and Mandatory Fees	2%

International: Program Fee Type (Tuition and Mandatory Fees)	**2028-2029 Increase**
Academic	3%
Career & College Prep	3%
Trades / Apprenticeship (General)	5%
Vocational / Career Technical	3%
Practical Nursing Diploma	5%
Heath Care Assistant Certificate	20%
Aircraft Maintenance Technician Diploma	10%
English as a Second Language	No Increase

An overview of the process for updating fees was provided. This included details on the Ministry's limit of a 2% increase on domestic tuition and mandatory fees; background on international tuition and fee levels, including the requirement for an international education program to at least break even; and student consultations that took place in March 2026.

2026/029 Troyer/Best
THAT the Northern Lights College Board of Governors approves the proposed domestic and international tuition and mandatory fees for the 2028-2029 school year as presented. Carried

A short lunch break took place.

9. Board Activities

9.1. Review of the Board Calendar, B-GP-11 – J. Moore

- Convocation Ceremonies
  - May 28 in Dawson Creek
  - June 4 in Fort St. John
  - June 17 in Fort Nelson
- Traditional Teepee renewal and Cultural Gatherings (info sheet on D2L)
  - May 21 in Fort St. John at 1 pm
  - May 25 in Dawson Creek at 1 pm
- Grand Opening of Aurora Learning Commons (info sheet on D2L)
  - June 5 at NLC's Mile Zero Farm
  - Open House style event runs from 3 – 5 pm
- Annual FSJ Golf Tournament (info on D2L)
  - June 19 (Tee times start at 4 pm)
  - RSVP deadline is 3 pm on June 8
  - Please let H. Larden know if you wish to participate
- The next Board meeting is scheduled for August 12 in Dawson Creek
  - Due to the full agenda, Board members are asked to be available for the full day. The calendar invitation will be from 9 am – 4 pm
  - You are asked to RSVP by July 27, and to indicate how you will be participating (in person / Teams)

K. Bravo joined the meeting.

9.2. Board Elections (Chair and Vice-Chair) – K. Bravo

K. Bravo conducted the Board elections as outlined in the College and Institute Act. Eligibility requirements for the Chair and Vice Chair were reviewed and voting procedures were explained. Terms for the Chair and Vice-Chair will run August 1, 2026 – July 31, 2027.

K. Bravo opened the nominations for Board Chair, calling for nominations three (3) times. J. Moore was nominated and agreed to let her name stand. J. Moore was declared Chair by acclamation.

K. Bravo opened the nominations for Board Vice-Chair, calling for nominations three (3) times. S. Canning was nominated and agreed to let her name stand. S. Canning was declared Vice-Chair by acclamation. Congratulations were extended to both.

K. Bravo exited the meeting.

9.3. Institutional Accountability Plan and Report Update – S. Clerk

The Institutional Accountability Plan and Report (IAPR) is an annual, Ministry-mandated report outlining the College's activities, priorities, and performance for the previous fiscal year, including enrollment and student satisfaction data. Once approved, it will be posted on both the NLC and Ministry websites. This year's IAPR will follow last year's format, as established by the Ministry, but will incorporate updated data. Completion is expected next month, with an email vote to approve the report anticipated in late June 2026.

10. Roundtable and Information Items

- **Clearing the Trail: Education Plan 2025 – 2028**
  - T. Hyland-Russell provided an overview of the purpose and process of developing the College's Education Plan. Hard copies of the plan were made available to Board members. In addition, a digital copy is available on D2L.
- **Healing the Land Conference 2026 (Registration Link: www.healingthelandconference.ca/registration)**
  - The upcoming conference was discussed (information sheet available on D2L)
  - Attending the conference may be of interest to Board members as a learning opportunity
  - Those interested in attending are asked to let J. Moore know by June 25

11. Board Self-Evaluation Report of Meeting

C. Brown reported on her observations at today's meeting, noting outward vision, collective decision making, and proactivity rather than reactivity. She also noted a balanced between past, present and future vision. (C. Brown also recommended having the Governance Committee review the wording of the sixth question on the Board Meeting Evaluation form.)

12. In-Camera Session (12:52 pm)

2026/030 Best / Canning

TO move the meeting in-camera. Carried

13. Adjournment – 1:49 pm

S. Goudie and K. Ghostkeeper were thanked for their contributions during their service on the Northern Lights College Board of Governors.

2026/033 Troyer

TO adjourn the meeting. Carried