# Brookings Health System Board of Trustees

Minutes of Meeting
Monday, October 27, 2025

The Brookings Health System Board of Trustees held a meeting at the Brookings Hospital in the Board Room with the following members present: Lynn Darnall, David Meyer, Mary Anne Krogh, Sheila Anderson, Jenn Barlund, Shelby Eischens, Tracy Greene, Don Greiner, and David Jones.
Ex-officio: Lisa Hager and Brianna Doran

Management Present: Jason Merkley, CEO; Tammy Hillestad, CNO; Melissa Wagner, CFO and Sheri Wiig, recorder

President Darnall called the meeting to order at 5:20 p.m.

**COMMUINITY BENEFIT & ECONOMIC IMPACT REPORT**
Invited guest, Julia Yoder, Marketing and PR Director, presented an overview of the recently updated Brookings Health System Community Benefit/Economic Impact report. The report serves several important purposes, especially for nonprofit hospitals and health systems in documenting how a healthcare organization contributes to the well-being of its community beyond providing medical care. In the year 2024, Brookings Health System's total community investment totaled $7.4 million which includes over $1 million in financial assistance (charity care). Measured impacts shared by Yoder:

- Since 2019, Brookings Health System has seen up to a 45% increase in service volumes including hospital stays, surgeries, home health visits, births, ambulance runs, imaging, lab tests and emergency department visits.
- Between 2020 and 2024, the organization employed 480–550 individuals annually, accounting for 38.5% of Brookings County's healthcare workforce and supporting approximately 1,000 local jobs—representing 5% of total county employment.
- In 2024, Brookings Health generated $56 million to the regional economy in relation to wealth and job creation, with a five-year total impact of approximately $245 million. Labor expenses consistently represented 5.1% of the county's total labor costs.

Yoder was thanked for her impactful presentation and departed the meeting at 5:34 p.m.

**AGENDA**
A motion was made by Anderson, seconded by Jones, to approve the agenda. All present voted in favor; motion carried.

**CONSENT AGENDA**
A motion was made by Meyer, seconded by Anderson to approve the following consent agenda items. The motion carried unanimously.

A. September 29, 2025, Board of Trustees meeting minutes
B. October 15, 2025, Medical Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
C. September 2025 financials (total payables in September were $4,042,065.46)

**REPORTS**
**Executive Reports**
CEO Report
Merkley reported, initial results are positive on the Foundation's annual employee giving campaign which was launched in October. Open enrollment is in process with no changes to health, dental, or vision

premiums. Hardware upgrades for inpatient rooms are scheduled within the next 3–4 months, based on the Epic End User Device Analysis.

CFO Report
Wagner provided an overview of the FY26 operating budget process which focuses on revenue, salaries, benefits, supplies and other expenses. She also reported progress on the Revenue Cycle performance improvement project, which focuses on reducing insurance denials by strengthening internal authorization verification processes.

CNO Report
Hillestad reported all clinical departments are actively preparing their FY26 operating budgets, focusing on growth opportunities and anticipated expenses. For the third consecutive year, Brookings Health is partnering with the South Dakota Board of Nursing to offer a 10-week paid clinical enrichment internship program for nursing students. Two (2) nursing students will be selected and paired with a nurse preceptor in their area of interest. Lastly, flu vaccination clinics are underway for staff and their immediate families.

**Board Committee Reports**
Administrative Committee Meeting
President Darnall provided a report; the Administrative Committee met on October 23rd. Topics of discussion included Workday/Epic, City/County Application Timeline/Submission/Follow-up, OBBB/SD Rural Health Transformation Plan, FY26 Capital Budget, 2026 Board Calendar, 2026 Committee Structure, CEO and Board Annual Evaluations, CEO Compensation, Succession Planning-Board Positions, Investment Authority/Community Benefit Report and SDAHO Legislative Forum.

Finance Committee
Committee Chair Greiner provided a report; the Finance Committee met on October 23rd. The committee reviewed and approved the September 2025 payables, financials, and adjustments. Total salaries and wages in September were $2,344,291. Other topics of discussion included a Cash Flow Update and FY26 Capital Budget. Members reviewed the proposed FY26 Capital Budget; total capital requests are set at $2.4M and contingency items identified for equipment that may need to be replaced total $119k.

A motion was brought forward from the Finance Committee recommending approval of the FY26 Capital Budget as presented. The motion was seconded by Krogh. All present voted in favor; motion carried.

Quality Committee
Committee Chair Krogh provided a report; the Quality Committee met on October 23rd. Invited guest, Nicole Winseman, Imaging and Respiratory Services Director, presented information on two performance improvement projects including sleep study turnaround times and stroke protocol turnaround times. Other topics of discussion included Age Friendly Structural Measure and the Value Based Purchasing Program.

**NEW BUSINESS**
Medical Staff Credentialing
A motion was made by Barlund seconded by Greiner to approve all credentialing as recommended by the Medical Executive Committee. All present voted in favor; motion carried.

Proposed 2026 Board Calendar

Proposed board and committee meeting dates for 2026 were reviewed. As in the past, the proposed calendar reflects meetings will not be held in the months of May, July, and November. Further discussion will take place in December on potential changes to the 2026 calendar.

CEO/Board Annual Evaluations

Darnall informed members information will be emailed soon regarding the annual Board and CEO evaluations. The evaluations are based on core values and are an important aspect for the Board. Timely return of forms will be necessary to compile information for the December 9th Administrative committee meeting and report out at the December 15th board meeting.

2026 AHA Rural Health Care Leadership Conference

Merkley informed members the American Hospital Association (AHA) Rural Health Care Leadership Conference will be held February 8-11, 2026, in San Antonio. Members were encouraged to reach out to Wiig soon if planning to attend.

Day of Giving

Darnall encouraged members to support the South Dakota Day of Giving on Tuesday, December 2, by contributing to the Brookings Health System Foundation's ambulance fundraising campaign. The goal is to engage 500 donors at a minimum of $20 each.

Upon motion by Anderson, second by Jones, the meeting adjourned at 6:10 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

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*Mary Anne Krogh, Secretary*