IOWA BOARD OF REGENTS

AGENDA ITEM 7a
NOVEMBER 11-12, 2026

Contact: Brock Ascher

MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 16-17, 2026 BOARD MEETING

MAUCKER UNION, BALLROOMS A & B
UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA
CEDAR FALLS, IOWA

Board Members	September 16	September 17
Robert Cramer, President	Present	Present
Kurt Tjaden, President Pro Tem	Present	Present
Peter Cownie	Present	Present
Nancy Dunkel	Present	Present
Lucy Gipple	Present	Present
Christine Hensley	Present	Present
Steve Lacy	Present	Present
Greta Rouse	Present	Present

Board Office
Brock Ascher, Mark Braun, Rachel Boon, Aimee Claeys, Kent Farver, Carolann Jensen, Josh Lehman, Jason Pontius, Keith Saunders, Jacob Nicholson, Jillian Carlson, Jason Chapman, Chad Sharp.

SUI	ISU	UNI
Barbara Wilson	David Cook	Mark Nook
Rod Lehnertz	Sean Reeder	Michael Hager
Kevin Kregel	Michael Norton	José Herrera

The corresponding memorandum for each agenda item, an integral component of the minutes, is available on the Board of Regents website: http://www.iowaregents.edu. Copies of these memoranda can also be obtained from the Board Office by calling 515-281-3934. Video of the meeting is also available on the website.

Call to Order for September 16, 2026
President Cramer called the meeting to order at 9 a.m.

Roll Call:

	Cramer	Cownie	Dunkel	Gipple	Hensley	Lacy	Rouse	Tjaden
Present	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Absent								

ACTA Training
President Cramer recognized Nick Down, Director of External Affairs at the American Council of Trustees and Alumni. Down presented professional development training to the Board.

The Governance, Evaluation and HR Committee met at 10:30 a.m.
The Property and Facilities Committee met at 10:35 a.m.
The Free Speech and Student Affairs Committee met at 11:40 a.m.
The Academic Affairs Committee met at 1:15 p.m.
The Investment and Finance Committee met at 2:40 p.m.
The Center for Intellectual Freedom Committee met at 3:10 p.m.
The Audit and Compliance Committee met at 3:20 p.m.
The UI Health Care Committee met at 4 p.m.

Public Comment
Chris Martin, United Faculty president at UNI, spoke to the Board.

Adjourn
President Cramer adjourned the meeting at 4:40 p.m.

Call to Order for September 17, 2026
President Cramer called the meeting to order at 9 a.m.

Roll Call:

	Cramer	Cownie	Dunkel	Gipple	Hensley	Lacy	Rouse	Tjaden
Present	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Absent								

Consent Agenda
Regent Hensley removed Item G – Meeting of September 16, 2026 Center for Intellectual Freedom Committee for a separate vote.

✓ MOVED by HENSLEY, SECONDED by ROUSE to approve the remaining CONSENT AGENDA items:
a) Minutes of July 29, 2026 Meeting
b) Meeting of September 16, 2026 Property and Facilities Committee
c) Meeting of September 16, 2026 Governance, Evaluation and Human Resources Committee
d) Meeting of September 16, 2026 Academic Affairs Committee
e) Meeting of September 16, 2026 Free Speech and Student Affairs Committee
f) Meeting of September 16, 2026 Investment and Finance Committee

	Cramer	Cownie	Dunkel	Gipple	Hensley	Lacy	Rouse	Tjaden
Aye	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Nay								

MOTION APPROVED by ROLL CALL.

✓ MOVED by HENSLEY, SECONDED by LACY to amend Item G – Meeting of September 16, 2026 Center for Intellectual Freedom Committee to include a timeline for hiring a Director of the Center.

	Cramer	Cownie	Dunkel	Gipple	Hensley	Lacy	Rouse	Tjaden
Aye	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Nay								

MOTION APPROVED by ROLL CALL.

✓ MOVED by LACY, SECONDED by ROUSE to approve Item G – Meeting of September 16, 2026 Center for Intellectual Freedom Committee as amended.

	Cramer	Cownie	Dunkel	Gipple	Hensley	Lacy	Rouse	Tjaden
Aye	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Nay								

MOTION APPROVED by ROLL CALL.

Board President Report
President Cramer made a statement:

So, the first thing we want to do is we want to extend our condolences to the University of Iowa with the loss of the student Derek Phillips and what a tragic thing that happened. So, if we could just take a moment of silence and if you want you can join me in prayer as we pray for their family. Lord it's at times like this that we really lean on you and we thank you that despite this fallen world where bad stuff happens, you're still good and you want to walk through these things with us. So, we just pray for this family. Pray for all the Iowa family that knew Derek and loved him. And just pray that this peace that surpasses understanding would be throughout the whole community that people would turn closer to you as they go through this trying time and bring that comfort that everybody needs. So, we thank you Lord in your name. Amen.

And I don't have any other written remarks, but I did want to give some big thank yous. First of all, thank you to the Board. You have been asked to do a lot. More than we used to do. Regent Lacy, you're on some selection committees we just asked you to be on this task force. Regent Hensley has been working your tail off with CIF. Regent Rouse with the general education review. Regent Tjaden has his hands full with REAPS and Regent Cownie with the Grassley Center and some other things. Regent Dunkel on some selection things and CYTown. I try not to give Regent Gipple extra jobs because she's got a full-time student job, but if you ever feel left out, let me know and we'll get you going. But we really appreciate it.

And to our university leaders. You all with your teams and with the faculty and staff at the universities and with us, we all work together. We're transforming education here, higher education here in Iowa. And it's an exciting time. It's a challenging time, but an exciting time to see how this is all going to come together.

Our big goal here is to build trust. And we heard yesterday from our speaker who said that the polling shows that the public across America has been losing confidence in higher ed. We want to change that. But the thing I picked up on was he said there were two main reasons. One was this feeling that higher ed had moved in a political direction Let's just call it elitist or maybe it's out of touch with just common people. The second one was that the value wasn't there anymore. That it was too expensive. Students having too much debt and then trying to get jobs that were just weren't comparable to help pay for that debt and really make it worthwhile.

Well, first of all, we know things are a little different in Iowa and we're starting to tell that story, but we're also making these reforms to help address those things. We're looking at everything; helping the universities look at everything in the courses that you're delivering to efficiency to make it more cost effective. And by building this trust and changing this the narrative, the public is going to start to see that, hey, this is the place to be, our three public universities. Our conservative friends in the legislature are going to start to see that we are making this a really good value and they're going to start investing more.

I'm speaking prophetically. So, this is the turning point that things are going to start to change. And I expect if they start polling in Iowa that confidence in higher ed is going to start to come back over the next few years. So, it's an exciting time to be a part of it.

I think about what is success? Success is on graduation day when we see those thousands of students going into the world and able to change the world. I'm sure President Cook's going to mention NASA being at Iowa State the other day challenging our students to be part of mission moon base. I mean, that's pretty cool. Maybe they'll play a part in that. Maybe some of them will be living on the moon. Maybe a teacher from UNI is going to be teaching kindergarteners and exposing them to education for the very first time and loving them from the moon and to the moon and back. Little pun there for you.

So, that's our success day is when we see those graduates and how they're going to change this next generation. And in addition to all the knowledge we want to give them, we also want to help them to become great citizens. And so, that's where the civics and history part is going to come in and we're going to be the leading state in that area as well. So, thank you for all your work. It is a lot of extra work, but I want to just encourage you that I feel like it's worth it.

Reports from University Presidents
Presidents Mark Nook, David Cook and Barbara Wilson presented updates on their respective campuses.

FY 2028 State Appropriations Requests
President Cramer recognized Board of Regents Chief Business Officer Kent Farver, who presented FY 2028 state appropriations requests that total $631.8 million. The requests included incremental funding for UI's rural physician pipeline and ISU's AI-ready workforce and innovation initiative.

✓ MOVED by HENSLEY, SECONDED by DUNKEL to approve of the identified operating and other appropriations requests for FY 2028 as outlined in the memorandum; and authorize actions by designated Regent staff to seek collaboration and partnerships between Regent institutions and other sectors of state government.

	Cramer	Cownie	Dunkel	Gipple	Hensley	Lacy	Rouse	Tjaden
Aye	x		x	x	x	x	x	x
Absent		x						

MOTION APPROVED by ROLL CALL.

Chuck and Barbara Grassley Center at UNI
President Cramer recognized UNI President Mark Nook, who presented a request to name UNI's civics education center after U.S. Senator Chuck Grassley and his wife Barbara.

Regent Hensley asked President Nook for an update on fundraising efforts in November.

✓ MOVED by ROUSE, SECONDED by GIPPLE to amend the request by the University of Northern Iowa to create the Chuck and Barbara Grassley Center to specify the naming of the center becomes effective at such time as Senator Grassley has retired from public office.

	Cramer	Cownie	Dunkel	Gipple	Hensley	Lacy	Rouse	Tjaden
Aye	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Nay								

AMENDMENT APPROVED by ROLL CALL.

✓ MOVED by HENSLEY, SECONDED by GIPPLE to approve the request by the University of Northern Iowa to create the Chuck and Barbara Grassley Center, the naming of which will become effective upon Senator Grassley's retirement from public office.

	Cramer	Cownie	Dunkel	Gipple	Hensley	Lacy	Rouse	Tjaden
Aye	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Nay								

MOTION APPROVED by ROLL CALL.

Closed Session

✓ MOVED by DUNKEL, SECONDED by TJADEN to enter into closed session in accordance with Iowa Code section 21.5.1.c, to discuss strategy with counsel in matters that are presently in litigation or where litigation is imminent and premature disclosure would likely prejudice or disadvantage the position of the Board; and in accordance with Iowa Code section 21.5.1.a, to review and discuss records in the matter of an employee appeal which are required or authorized to be kept confidential in accordance with Iowa Code section 22.7.11.

	Cramer	Cownie	Dunkel	Gipple	Hensley	Lacy	Rouse	Tjaden
Aye	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Nay								

MOTION APPROVED by ROLL CALL.

The Board convened in closed session at 10:54 a.m.
The Board convened in open session at 11:45 a.m.

Adjourn

President Cramer adjourned the meeting at 11:45 a.m.