Minutes of The
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETICS
Council of Presidents Meeting
September 28-29, 2025
KCI Marriott, Kansas City, Missouri

Members in attendance:
David Armstrong, The Sun Conference, St. Thomas University, FL
Richard Bailey, At-large, Southern Oregon University
Kermit Bridges, Sooner Athletic Conference, Nelson University, TX
Gene Crume, Chicagoland Collegiate Athletic Conference, Judson University, IL
Ron Dempsey, River States Conference, Oakland City University, IN
Karl Einolf, Wolverine-Hoosier Athletic Conference. Indiana Institute of Technology, IN
Brent Ellis, Crossroads League, Spring Arbor University, MI
Jon Gering, Kansas Collegiate Athletic Conference, Bethel College, KS
Norman Hall, California Pacific Conference, Simpson University, CA
Mitch Henry, Southern State Athletic Conference, Faulkner University, AL
Erik Hoekstra, Great Plains Athletic Conference Designee, Dordt University, NE
Paul Maurer, Appalachian Athletic Conference, Montreat College, NC
Len Munsil, Golden State Athletic Conference, Arizona Christian University, AZ
Stan Norman, American Midwest Conference, Williams Baptist University, AR
Joe Parisi, Heart of America Athletic Conference, Missouri Valley College, MO
Cynthia Pemberton, At-large, Lewis-Clark State College, ID
Paul Stumb, Mid-South Conference, Cumberland University, TN
Ryan Tipton, Red River Athletic Conference, Mayville State University, ND
Brian Van Horn, Frontier Conference, Mayville State University, ND

Reagan Rossi, Ex-Officio (ADA), The College of Idaho
Dustin Wilke, Ex-Officio (CCA and NAC), The Sun Conference
Lincoln Thomae, Ex-Officio (CSA), Milligan University, TN
Tommy Chasanoff, Ex-Officio (SIDA), University of the Cumberlands, KY

Staff members in attendance:
Jim Carr, NAIA President & CEO
Lynn Parman, NAIA Chief Operating Officer
Kevin Dee, NAIA Senior Vice President of Finance
Chesney Sallee, NAIA Vice President of Membership Services, Value and Governance
Nick Davidson, Vice President of Recruitment & Retention
Leah McCormack, NAIA Vice President of Business Development and Eligibility Services
Austin Bennett, NAIA Vice President of Championships
Jen Saab, NAIA Director of Communications and Recording Secretary

*These minutes reflect action and major areas of discussion. Complete reports are included in the agenda book on file at the NAIA national office. Certain items may have occurred at different times during the meeting but are included in the agenda order for ease of reference.*

DAY ONE:

I. Call to Order. The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m. by the chair, Dr. Karl Einolf.

II. Roll Call. Attendance is noted above.

III. Approval of Agenda. MOTION/SECOND (P. Maurer/S. Norman) MOTION APPROVED.

IV. Approval of Minutes. MOTION/SECOND (C. Pemberton/P. Maurer) MOTION APPROVED.

V. Report of the Chair. Karl Einolf welcomed COP members and shared a list of COP Executive Committee action items that occurred since the April 2024 meeting. He stated that this is an especially important time in collegiate athletics, and the NAIA should take the lead as a student-centered organization.

VI. Governance Review. Jim Carr provided an overview of the NAIA's governance structure, and specifically, what responsibilities fall under the COP's authority.

VII. New Member Applications. There were two applicants for this membership cycle. Dr. Norm Hall, chair of the membership committee, introduced Nick Davidson to review details about the Andrew College membership application. Dr. Mitch Henry shared feedback from his evaluation team's visit to Wesleyan College.

a. New Member Application: Andrew College (Georgia)*
MOTION (Membership Committee) to approve active membership for Andrew College. MOTION APPROVED.
b. New Member Application: Wesleyan College (Georgia)*
MOTION (Membership Committee) to approve active membership for Baptist Bible College. MOTION APPROVED.

VIII. Finance.

a. Report of the Audit and Investments Committee. Dr. Ryan Tipton, AIC chair, provided an update from the AIC meeting earlier in the day. MOTION (AIC) to accept the audited 2024-25 financials. MOTION APPROVED.
b. Investments Status Report. Jim Carr reminded COP members that in conjunction with the approval of the strategic plan in 2024, COP approved using 20% of our retained earnings for strategic plan initiatives. While the NAIA budgeted for a $450,000 deficit in 2024-25, the actual deficit was only $54,729.
Mr. Kevin Dee provided an overview of the current process and plans for the quasi-endowment, which was established in 2022.

IX. Legal. Jim Carr provided an update on the legal landscape of college athletics and its impact on the NCAA and NAIA.

X. Financial Aid Limits for Women's Flag Football. The NAC executive committee recommends establishing the financial aid limit at 12 for women's flag football. MOTION/SECOND (D. Armstrong/P. Stumb) MOTION APPROVED.

XI. 2024-25 Goal & Scorecard Results. Lynn Parman provided an update regarding the NAIA's goals and achievements.

XII. 2024-27 Strategic Plan.

a. Membership Recruitment & Retention
    i. Nick Davidson shared the efforts of the recruitment and retention efforts, including the growth of engagement with prospective institutions, the increased prospect list, and the messaging that is resonating with DII and DIII institutions.

ii. The Task Force on Accreditation Status recommends that the NAIA not expand the recognition of accrediting agencies currently. Additionally, the NAIA should not evaluate accrediting agencies directly. This will require a bylaw change.
iii. The Committee on the Treatment of Mergers and Branch Campuses. The committee clarified two models: distinct departments, each with its own AD, and a single department across multiple campuses.

b. Membership Value
   i. ROA. Lynn Parman shared that ROA is migrating to a new platform and outlined the resulting benefits to membership.
   ii. Champions of Character. Chesney Sallee discussed recent Champions of Character efforts, including Bushnell University being awarded the 2025 School of Character Award.
   iii. Partnerships/Non-dues Revenue. Leah McCormack provided an update on the non-dues revenue target, and that the NAIA should surpass this year's goal. She also shared that the healthcare consortium is now called NAIA Thrive and will launch in 2026.
   iv. Conference Strength. Jim Carr asked the COP to form a working group to present an initial plan recommendation at the 2026 National Convention. The COP unanimously agreed.

c. Brand Advocacy
   Lynn Parman and Ethan Whitehall (president of Crux marketing firm) discussed the rollout of The Right Way to Play campaign since last spring and the social media growth due to this effort. Upcoming advocacy efforts include the launch of the new NAIA website next summer, a new podcast launching on September 30, and a new hype video is being created.

   COP provided feedback about the membership campaign, including what other assets would be valuable to campuses.

d. Student-Athlete Experience
   i. Mental Health
      Chesney Sallee shared an update on the NAIA's efforts in the mental health arena. Last year, the COP supported a mental health training requirement for our members. The NAIA is in the process of creating the training with several partners, which will be free to members.

   ii. National Championships
      Austin Bennett highlighted the increased satisfaction rate with the championship experience over the past five years. The championships team is focusing on providing the "Disney Model" and increasing the touchpoints with the student-athletes to elevate the experience. It has been one year since the NAIA introduced free broadcasting for all national championships. Austin shared that viewership has increased to 84,000 per day across all championships.

   iii. Welcome Center
      Lynn Parman shared that the welcome center initiative aims to make the transactional steps of initial eligibility more meaningful and celebratory. The team completed a customer experience journey map and identified areas of focus for the first year – communications improvements, a digital welcome kit, and an onboarding email series.

XIII. Information Technology Update. Due to time limitations, Jim Carr encouraged COP members to refer to the written report for updates.

XIV. 2025-26 Organizational Goals and Scorecard. Due to time limitations, Jim Carr encouraged COP members to refer to the written report for updates.

XV. NAIA MEAP Update. Ryan Rink and Kyle Harris, both with Two West, provided an update regarding the Multiple Employer Aggregation Program.

XVI. Election for Chair-elect*. The COP Executive Committee nominated Dr. Cynthia Pemberton as chair-elect of the COP and asked for additional nominations. With no additional nominations, Karl Einolf motioned on behalf of the executive committee that Dr. Pemberton be named chair-elect of the COP. MOTION APPROVED.

XVII. Path Forward Task Force. Paul Maurer shared the preamble created by the task force and asked for feedback on the positioning statements. The Council confirmed the direction of the task force.

Three options were presented regarding seasons of competition. Jim Carr stated that it is likely that NCAA DII will vote in late January on whether to add a year of eligibility. Due to the NAIA's proposed legislation deadline of January 14, 2026, the COP would need to have proposed legislation submitted before DII's decision is made. Proposed legislation can be withdrawn at any time.

1. Status Quo (stay at four seasons of competition)
2. Five SOC (change current policy to five seasons of competition)
3. Earned 5 SOC (a student may participate in the fifth season of competition if they meet certain criteria)

The COP supports submitting option 2 as proposed legislation, with the caveat that a progress requirement be added. The COP also supports allowing the COP Executive Committee to work with the national office staff to develop the proposed bylaw change. MOTION/SECOND (D. Armstrong/C. Pemberton) MOTION APPROVED.

Once DII's vote is completed, the COP may be asked to provide further input about proceeding with proposed legislation.

XVIII. Adjournment. MOTION/SECOND (R. Bailey, P. Maurer) to adjourn the meeting. MOTION APPROVED. The meeting was adjourned at 12:03 p.m.