

South Dakota Association of County Commissioners
Strategic Planning Session
Wednesday, June 24th, 2026
SUMMARY

The SDACC Board of Directors met on Wednesday, June 24, 2026 at the SD Counties Building. Those present: Dan Klimisch - President, Eric Jennings - 1st Vice President, Tiffani Landeen - 2nd Vice President, Chad Preszler-Treasurer, Gary Drewes – Past President, Bill Floyd, Jim Schmidt, Jerry Doyle, and Charles Verhulst. Guest: Susan Lamb - SDACO Representative. Staff present: Kris Jacobsen-Executive Director, Holli Hennies - Deputy Director, Kade Haley – Research Director, Eric Erickson - SDACC Lobbyist. SDACC Board Members Absent: Dean Karsky, Duane Sutton, John Claggett, Ron Rossknecht and Joyce Kartak.

Motion to approve the agenda made by Floyd, seconded by Doyle. Vote: Unanimous.

The Strategic Planning Session began promptly at 8:30 am CDT with President Klimisch making introductory remarks and introducing the SDACC Strategic Planning facilitator – Mark O’Connell, Wisconsin Counties Association President and CEO.

Mark opened with a review of the 2024 session and the successes achieved in the time since, specifically addressing the credibility of the Association. In his view, the invitations to speak to the Board extended to both Gubernatorial candidates and having both accept speaks volumes when the Association does not endorse nor provides campaign funding. This shows the Association is valued simply for their credibility and partnerships. The Green Book has also been a significant achievement and success. And new chairs!

The 2026 Strategic Planning Session will be broken into the following four areas: 1) Confirm strategic priorities; 2) Examine future trends; 3) Make strategic choices and 4) Define desired outcomes.

Confirm strategic priorities:

The Board discussed the priorities identified in 2024 and all agreed the internal and external priorities identified remain and a healthy balance exists between the two areas.

Internal:

- Staffing
- Member Participation
- Training
- Strategic Planning
- Program Development

External:

- Legislative Relationships
- Media Relationships
- Public Recognition
- Partnerships

Strategic themes emerging from the First Session – 4 Themes

The Board determined the following were the areas of highest importance moving forward:

Theme 1: Trusted Voice

- *Credibility & Legislative Influence*

Theme 2: Member Value

- *Training & Assistance for Counties*

Theme 3: Engagement & Leadership

- *Recruiting “Doers”*

Theme 4: Partnerships & Influence

- Legislature

Further discussion was held regarding the following areas:

Question 1: Future Environment Discussion

How will the environment Counties encounter over the next 5-10 years affect our organization and our goals? Areas of discussion were: State/County relationship, demographic trends, workforce shortages, fiscal pressures, state funding issues, technology and AI, political polarization, public trust in government and infrastructure needs.

Question 2: Strategic Choices

What will the Association deliberately choose NOT to do? Areas of discussion were: Advocacy, member services, etc. The Board's main focus is to remain on legislative influence and providing support to Counties through training and other assistance.

Question 3: Success Measures

Many priorities are difficult to measure: credible, premier organization, unified voice, better attendance. The Board discussed specific areas of measure such as convention/workshop registration numbers, webinar attendance numbers. The Board felt the Association is successful because they are the authorities contacted by Legislators and other stakeholders/organizations to speak on various issues affecting Counties.

Board Thoughts/Desired Outcomes:

Final thoughts/directives from the Board:

- 1) Focus on the long-term game plan and how to better serve the members.
- 2) Consider asking/moving other associations to join under the umbrella of the SDACC to achieve a more unified voice.
 - a. Executive Board will start with a conversation with the Assessors Association first
 - b. Possibly consider different structures to Board of Directors if other associations join
- 3) Board gave direction to staff to start recording the monthly webinars with the final discretion being up to them based on the speaker and the nature of the topic. The webinars are to be available to membership for viewing after the live event using a platform to be determined.
- 4) Talk to SDPAA about providing trainings for Commissioners on limiting liability coupled with reductions in insurance rates.
- 5) Create a video library of trainings aimed towards Commissioners to help in educating in their roles and responsibilities (Specific: Open Meetings Laws Annual Review)

At 2:00 PM Mr. Toby Doeden was scheduled to speak to the group. He was caught in another meeting and will set another date and time to meet with the Board.

At 2:45 PM Lt. Governor Tony Venhuisen spoke to the Board on behalf of Governor Rhoden. They are currently in a historic runoff against Mr. Toby Doeden. Governor Rhoden's approach to doing the job – having an open collaboration attitude, being visible around the state, focused on bringing people together and solving problems. A request was made for quarterly meetings with SD Counties, and the response was an easy absolute yes! The Governor recognizes the importance of a positive relationship with the Association and wants to continue to be good partners as a lot of issues affect counties.

New Business

Holli Hennies reviewed the new website that is projected to go live this coming weekend if the remaining programming changes have been completed.

Annual dues were briefly discussed – a proposed CPI based increased will be discussed at the August Board meeting.

The Strategic Planning Session adjourned at 3:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Holli Hennies, Deputy Director