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# The Groton Independent

Vol. 143 No. 04 ♦ Groton, SD ♦ Wednesday, Oct. 15, 2025 ♦ Established in 1889

## Perfect Weather, Perfect Performances at Lake Region Marching Festival

GROTON — The annual Lake Region Marching Festival took place Saturday in Groton under perfect fall weather, drawing a good crowd and showcasing the talents of 18 bands and 1,020 student musicians from across the region.

The event featured both middle school and high school divisions, along with a combined division. Spectators lined the streets to enjoy the music, color, and synchronized precision from bands representing communities throughout northeastern South Dakota.

### Judges

This year's panel of judges included Terry Beckler and Audrey Miller, both from Northern State University, and John Patzlaff from Aberdeen Central. Their combined experience and musical expertise brought valuable perspective to each band's performance, evaluating elements such as tone quality, marching precision, and overall showmanship.



**The judges were talking into their recorders as each band walked by. They are John Patzlaff, Terry Beckler and Audrey Miller.** (Photo by Paul Kosel)

### Middle School Division

In the Middle School Division, Milbank captured top honors with the Band of Distinction award, earning first place with their performance of "Crunch Time." Holgate-Simmons Middle School followed with Band of Merit, securing the runner-up spot with their performance of "Conquista."

### High School Division

The High School Division saw impressive competition as well. Warner took home Band of Honor for third place with their performance of "Houdini," Northwestern claimed Band of Merit for second place, with their performance of "Superman Overture," and T.F. Riggs from Pierre, the state capital, earned Band of Distinction as the first-place high school band and their performance was "Cheyenne."

### Combined Middle School/High School Division

In the combined category, Hoven received Band of Merit for second place, with their performance of "Estancia," while Aberdeen Roncalli swept first with Band of Distinction honors. Their performance was "Let's Get Loud."

### Special Awards and Grand Champion

Aberdeen Roncalli continued its outstanding showing by capturing several of the day's top individual awards. The Cavaliers earned the Outstanding Winds Award, Best Percussion, and ultimately took home the title of Grand Champion of the Day.

T.F. Riggs was recognized for its leadership and precision with the Outstanding Drum Major Award, rounding out a day filled with strong performances from every level of competition.

Festival organizers and spectators alike praised the event for its smooth coordination, enthusiastic crowd, and perfect weather that allowed every band to shine at its best.

"It's one of those days where everything just comes together — great weather, great music, and great kids showing what they can do," one festival volunteer said. "You couldn't ask for better."

The parade was broadcast live on GDILIVE.COM, sponsored by Avartara Groton, Basekamp Lodge, Bierman Farm Service, BK Custom Ts & More, Blocker Construction, Dacotah Bank, Groton Ag Solutions, Groton Chamber of Commerce, Groton American Legion, Groton Dairy Queen, Harry Implement of Ferney, KR Body Shop of Andover, Lori's Pharmacy, The Meat House of Andover, Spanier Harvesting, Sun and Sea Travel, Weismantel Agency of Columbia.

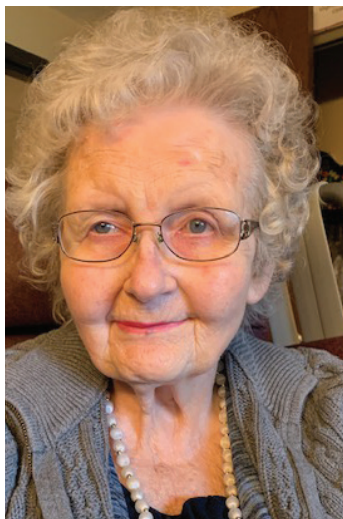
## The Life of former Independent owner Virginia Spencer

Virginia Spencer, 97, of Elk River, MN (formerly of Groton), passed away September 26, 2025 at the Guardian Angels Care Center in Elk River. A memorial service will be held at 2:00 p.m. on October 25, 2025 at Paetznick-Garness Funeral Chapel in Groton. Paul Kosel will officiate. Visitation will be held at the chapel for one hour prior to services.

Virginia Anderson was born on December 20, 1927. She grew up on a farm south of Claremont where she graduated from high school in 1945. She worked at Northwestern Bell Telephone Co. in Aberdeen until she married Morris Spencer on September 25, 1949. Together they owned and operated the Groton Independent until Oct. of 1986. Morris passed away while they were on vacation in Sante Fe, NM in 1996. She was an active member of the Emmanuel Lutheran Church until she moved to Minnetonka, MN in 2008 and then to Elk River in 2018.

Virginia is survived by daughter and son-in-law Kristine and Ken Ferrington, daughter-in-law Joy Spencer, grandchildren Paul (Jenny) Spencer and Katie Spencer, 3 great grandchildren, sister Janet Frey, sisters-in-law Connie Anderson and Elaine Rossow and several nieces and nephews.

Preceding her in death are her husband Morris, son Gary, sister Mavis Nikolas, brother Chuck Anderson, brothers and sisters-in-law George Nikolas, Kenny Frey, Leonard and Alnora Spencer, Ruth and Glenn Suits, Luella and Fred Speer and Curt Rossow.



**Event organizers April Abeln and Topper Tastad pose for a photo at the Groton Pumpkin Festival on Saturday. Volunteers are already being sought to help plan next year's event as Abeln is stepping down after 10 years of helping and leading organization of the event.**

(Photo by Elizabeth Varin)

## 'Legends and Legacies in South Dakota Sports' published in time for football season

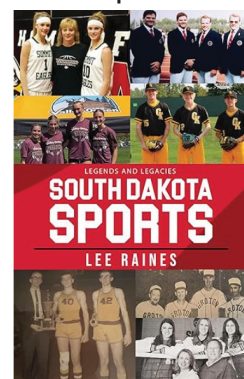
**Groton native Lee Raines' 6th book can be purchased online and soon at The Groton Independent**

Lee Raines' 6th book, "Legends and Legacies in South Dakota Sports," has been published and is now available for purchase in paperback or on Kindle on Amazon. All of Raines' books can be found on [leeraines.com](http://leeraines.com).

Growing up in the South Dakota public school system, Lee Raines knew the bearing of sports on the legacy of the state: Many of the athletes from high school became coaches and teachers who positively affected the lives of thousands of students. After years of research, including multitudes of newspaper clippings of the sporting events themselves, interviews with surviving family members and narratives from various sports accolades, Raines illustrates the influence and contribution to education by these families. In the process, he has identified brothers, sisters, and members of the related family trees that made an impact on South Dakota sports over the past century.

Though he has lived in Texas since the late 1980s, Lee Raines considers his early years in Groton, SD, as formative and influential on his values and success today. He was born in Britton, SD, in 1953, grew up in Groton, graduating from Groton High School in 1971. During his school years, Raines participated in all the high school sports available. While he played alongside family members of the legacies mentioned in the book, he would be the first to claim his greatest talent was as a spectator. For the past 25 years, he has lived in Austin, Texas.

All of Raines' books are available for purchase on [leeraines.com](http://leeraines.com).







**Scott Hanlon drives the kiddie train at the Groton Pumpkin Festival on Saturday.** (Photo by Elizabeth Varin)



**Aspen Cowan shows off the pumpkin she chose at the Steve Herron Memorial Pumpkin Patch during the Groton Pumpkin Festival on Saturday.** (Photo by Elizabeth Varin)



**People sort through pumpkins at the Steve Herron Memorial Pumpkin Patch during the Groton Pumpkin Festival on Saturday.** (Photo by Elizabeth Varin)



**Volunteers kept the event running, serving food, facilitating different activities and driving the hayrides at the Groton Pumpkin Festival on Saturday.** (Photo by Elizabeth Varin)



**Hazel Neu show Louis Berg his painted face at the Groton Pumpkin Festival on Saturday.** (Photo by Elizabeth Varin)



**Scott Hanlon drives the kiddie train at the Groton Pumpkin Festival on Saturday.** (Photo by Elizabeth Varin)



**Topper Tastad announces raffle prizes at the Groton Pumpkin Festival on Saturday.** (Photo by Elizabeth Varin)



**River Wipf lifts a large pumpkin at the Steve Herron Memorial Pumpkin Patch during the Groton Pumpkin Festival on Saturday.** (Photo by Elizabeth Varin)



**A group loads back onto a trailer for a hayride from the Steve Herron Memorial Pumpkin Festival to the City Park during the Groton Pumpkin Festival on Saturday.** (Photo by Elizabeth Varin)



**Denise Koehler and her grandson Crue Falcon, 5, were among the crowd of out-of-towners who headed to Groton for the Pumpkin Festival on Saturday. The two traveled five hours from Iowa to visit family and go to the event.**

(Photo by Elizabeth Varin)

## We the People

The South Dakota Humanities Council is making available a weekly column -- "We the People" -- that focuses on the U.S. Constitution. It is written by David Adler, who is president of The Alturas Institute, a non-profit organization created to promote the Constitution, gender equality, and civic education.



By David Adler

### Ours is a Nation of Constitutional Law, Not Martial Law

Those words of rebuke from U.S. Federal District Judge Karin Immergut to President Donald Trump, who nominated her to the federal bench, might seem like an unnecessary reminder to most Americans raised in a civics tradition that teaches the supremacy of the Constitution and the president's subordination to it. But adherence to the supreme law of the land cannot be taken for granted when it represents an impediment to Trump's goals.

On October 4, Judge Immergut issued a ruling that blocked Trump's order calling up 200 National Guard troops in Oregon, which was based on his false characterization of Portland as a "war-ravaged" city, a hellscape of violence and arson, "under siege from attack by Antifa, and other domestic terrorists." Trump's misleading description of Portland in October of 2025 is attributable, in part, to the fact that he has been viewing news clips of the sporadic violence that broke out in the City of Roses in May of 2020, in the wake of the murder of George Floyd, who died at the hands of a Minneapolis police officer. Those sporadically violent protests in Portland in 2020, however, are not at all comparable to the current peaceful protesters in Portland, who complain of the treatment of undocumented immigrants.

With few exceptions, according to Portland law enforcement officials and reporters on the ground, current protests are peaceful, faithful to the law, and thus wholly entitled to First Amendment protections of speech and assembly. Trump's false portrayals of protesters' behavior in a small area in southwest Portland, where the Immigration and Custom Enforcement facility is located, Judge Immergut said, "are untethered to the facts" and risk unconstitutional military rule.

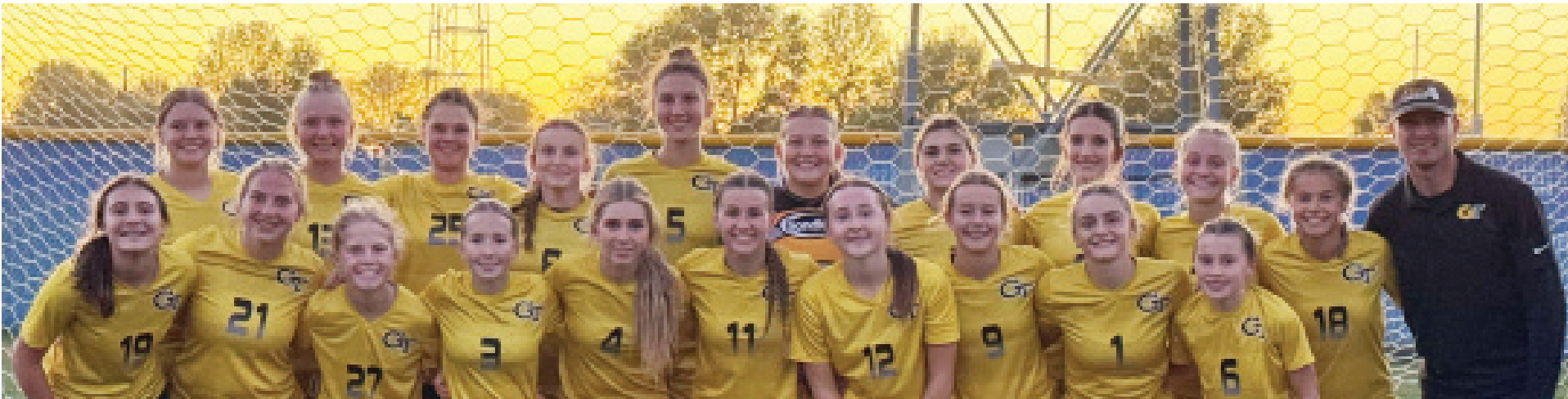
The facts on the ground are critical to the question of the legality of Trump's deployment of the Oregon National Guard, and his subsequent order to send members of the California National Guard to Portland, to circumvent Judge Immergut's prohibition, which she also blocked. For legal justification, Trump has invoked Title 10 of the U.S. Code, which pertains to the military. Trump relied on this statute in June when he called up the California guard and active-duty Marines, but U.S. District Judge Charles Breyer held that he had acted illegally, on the same reasoning employed by Judge Immergut: his false description of violence in Los Angeles was not grounded in the facts. It's likely that a federal judge in Chicago, who will hear on Thursday a legal challenge brought by Governor JB Pritzker and Chicago Mayor Brandon Johnson, to Trump's deployment of the Texas National Guard to Illinois, will reach the same conclusion and render the same ruling.

Title 10, Section 12406, sets forth three statutory conditions that permit a president to federalize a state Guard: when the nation has been "invaded or is in danger of invasion by a foreign nation," when "there is a rebellion or danger of rebellion," or when "the president is unable with regular forces to execute the laws of the United States."

A court reviewing a presidential order must determine whether the president's decision to federalize the Guard "reflects a colorable assessment of the facts and law within a 'range of honest judgment.'" Courts, historically, have been deferential to presidential assessments of national security threats, but within limits, lest judges become rubber stamps for executive orders. Judge Immergut checked the "no" box on each of the conditions. Nobody's fantasy world is vibrant enough to believe an invasion is at hand, nor is it conceivable that the small group of Portland protesters constitutes a rebellion. Similarly, there is no colorable interference with the enforcement of the laws. Pity the poor Trump attorney whose defense collapsed on his argument that, because a shooter fired bullets at an ice facility in Dallas, Portland needed federalized troops.

Judge Immergut was likely astonished that an event 1,500 miles from Portland could be invoked to justify an order to send guardsmen into Portland. She noted that a few of the protesters' acts might have crossed the line, but they occurred three months ago. In any case, they were readily handled by local law enforcement and did not require federal assistance. A "range of honest judgment" should not be understood as a blank check. "Facts," John Adams said, "are stubborn things." Indeed, they should be when a court determines, as it has in Portland, that Trump has acted illegally.





## Dakota Valley stops Groton Area in girls state semifinal game

by Coach Matt Baumgartner

Final : Dakota Valley 3, Groton Area 0  
Dakota Valley got two late first half goals and added a third for insurance in the second to beat us.

Hard to believe our season wrapped up so quick like it did. We endured a lot of good and fun moments throughout the season. For our record finishing at 8-6 I'm proud of it, but know we would have all liked 2-3 of our games to be flip flopped to wins and or at least a tie or two. The number 6 in losses hurts a little as it truly doesn't feels like it was "6" with a couple close games barely squeaking out of our reach and or just a miraculous 1/100 rainbow shot out of our favor, we were far superior than what the paper says of 8-6.

This 2nd season of coaching the girls had more emotional teaching moments and more humble behaviors for what it really takes to succeed in the game of soccer. Having 12 of our girls play in 2 consecutive state finals and coming up one game short from a third is something to be very thankful and proud of. Especially want to give kudos to seniors; Jerica Locke, Jaedyn Penning, Carly Gilbert and Mia Crank; their experience and dedication to our program, our community and youth are going to leave an everlasting mark and will always be part of the tiger soccer family.

It really is a testament to how close knit the group of seniors are and were to the younger classes and how they helped lead by example from day one and set the tone and standards for how our program trains, prepares and performs.

For myself, sadly I now have to relax a week early than I intended to. Overall though I am eager to get into my office and shuffle and sort through my dozens of game film notes, seed point scenario scribblings and relocate the top of my organized but mess of a desk. Having been at the helm of coaching all summer since May and being at the fields or preparing in my office space almost every day, a week or two off is all I really need to recharge. I'm also looking forward to a bit of the down time to watch back all our games in numerical sequence and see the growth and improvement on certain situations and players. It's the best feeling as a coach to sit back at the conclusion of the season and see the scenarios and skills taught in training come out and be on display when there isn't a game plan you're not strategizing up for.

I'm proud of the girls and thankful for all the teaching moments, the laughter they brought out and memories that were made.

None of our successes and happiness goes without the countless support of great parents, great teachers and a great community. It's truly a blessing to coach in the Groton Community and the future is bright!

The game was broadcast live on GDILIVE.COM, sponsored by Avartara Groton, Basekamp Lodge, Bierman Farm Service, BK Custom Ts & More, Blocker Construction, Dacotah Bank, Groton Ag Solutions, Groton Chamber of Commerce, Groton American Legion, Groton Dairy Queen, Harry Implement of Ferney, Ken's Food Fair, KR Body Shop of Andover, Lori's Pharmacy , The Meat House of Andover, Spanier Harvesting, Sun and Sea Travel, Weismantel Agency of Columbia.



Taryn Traphagen  
(Photo by Paul Kosel)



Jaedyn Penning  
(Photo by Paul Kosel)



Mia Crank  
(Photo by Paul Kosel)



Ashlyn Warrington adjusts the Captains band on the arm of Jerica Locke. (Photo by Paul Kosel)

## King Crossword

### ACROSS

- 1 Bulgaria's capital
- 6 Tub toys
- 11 Bacon pieces
- 12 Mistakes in print
- 14 Serengeti howlers
- 15 Pre-Easter
- 16 Swiss canton
- 17 Univ. divisions
- 19 Toll rd.
- 20 Lincoln in-law
- 22 "No seats"
- 23 Spring
- 24 Entangle
- 26 Surpassed
- 28 Tic-tac-toe win

- 30 Roofing goo
- 31 Indy 500 skid
- 35 Singer Norah
- 39 Marathoner's stat
- 40 Recipe abbr.
- 42 Humorist Sahl
- 43 Chang's brother
- 44 Unadorned
- 46 Kanga's kid
- 47 Asian peninsula
- 49 Designer Pierre
- 51 Van Gogh's "— Night"
- 52 How chicken may be served
- 53 Juan's farewell
- 54 Puccini opera

### DOWN

- 1 "Sophie's Choice" author
- 2 Frozen fries brand
- 3 Shark feature
- 4 Apple tablet
- 5 Ninnies
- 6 Sing loudly
- 7 Unrefined metals
- 8 Prince Valiant's son
- 9 Body art
- 10 Intervene
- 11 Closes
- 13 Bracelet site
- 18 Expert
- 21 Unmanned plane
- 23 PC drive insert
- 25 Bathroom, to a Brit
- 27 — Mahal
- 29 Expenditures
- 31 Rose parts
- 32 Target at a fiesta
- 33 "That makes me happy!"
- 34 Airport screening org.
- 36 Type of skiing
- 37 Beethoven's Third
- 38 Sculptor's material
- 41 Loop of lace
- 44 Arsonist
- 45 iPod model
- 48 Onassis nickname
- 50 Train lines (Abbr.)

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scoring at 7-0. Minnesota answered with a crisp eight-play, 82-yard drive to even the score. Minnesota averaged 8.4 yards per play, Cleveland averaged 4.9, and it looked like the game might turn into a shootout.

Then came the second quarter, which started with six straight punts. Cleveland did manage to put some points on the board with a field goal at the end of the quarter, however, giving them a three-point lead heading into halftime. Minnesota averaged just 3.5 yards per play in the quarter, while Cleveland was even worse at 3.0.

The Vikings got the ball to begin the second half and immediately drove the length of the field with an eight-play, 71-yard touchdown drive to take a 14-10 lead. That lead didn't last long, though, as Cleveland put together a touchdown drive of their own on the very next possession. A Vikings three-and-out gave the ball right back to the Browns, and we were headed to the fourth quarter, with the Browns leading 17-14.

The fourth quarter started with a Cleveland punt, a Minnesota fumble (Zavier Scott), and another Cleveland punt. The Vikings had a promising drive going on their next possession, but a missed 51-yard field goal kept the score right where it was. A few punts later, the Vikings got the ball with three minutes left on the clock and needed a field goal to tie or a touchdown to take the lead. Carson Wentz methodically led the team down the field, covering 80 yards in 10 plays and culminating in a 12-yard touchdown pass to Jordan Addison that gave them a 21-17 lead with less than 30 seconds left in the game. A few hold-your-breath moments later and the clock hit zeros, locking in the Vikings' win.

Carson Wentz completed 25 of 34 passes for 236 yards and one TD. Jordan Mason led the team on the ground with 13 carries for 52 yards.

# The Groton Independent

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and a TD. Justin Jefferson had seven catches for 123 yards, Jordan Addison had five catches for 41 yards and a TD, and Josh Oliver caught the other TD (which was thrown by Cam Akers on a trick play).

Defensively, the Vikings had two sacks (Ivan Pace Jr. and Tyrion Ingram-Dawkins) and held rookie QB Dillon Gabriel to only 190 passing yards, but they did allow Browns' rookie running back Quinshon Judkins to rush for 110 yards on 23 carries (4.8 yards per carry).

Looking ahead, the Vikings (3-2) return home after spending two weeks in Europe and get a much-needed bye week. With the laundry list of injuries and a matchup with the Philadelphia Eagles looming, the bye couldn't have come at a better time.

## Classifieds and Card of Thanks

The following rates are for Classifieds published in both the Groton Daily Independent and the Groton Independent. Cut rate in half if you just want it in the GDI or just the weekly.

1 Week: \$9 for first 30 words, 20¢/word thereafter

2 Wks: \$17 for first 30 words, 38¢/word thereafter

3 Wks: \$24 for first 30 words, 54¢/word thereafter

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# AGRICULTURE

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

WATFORD CITY ND GUN SHOW: Dakota Territory Gun Collectors. McKenzie County Sportsman's Club, October Friday 24th, 4pm-8pm, Saturday 25th 9am-5pm, Sun 26th 9am-12pm. Gene @605-848-2427.

STATEWIDE ATP PUBLIC MEETINGS: South Dakota Department of Transportation is developing a Statewide Active Transportation Plan (ATP). The Study Areas include all the State of South Dakota Highway Rights of Way. Public Meeting Open House Locations: Aberdeen – 5:30 P.M. CDT, Tuesday Oct. 14, 2025 – Best Western Ramkota Hotel, 1400 8th Ave. NW; Mitchell – 5:30 P.M. CDT, Wednesday, Oct. 15, 2025 – SDDOT Mitchell Region Office, 1300 S Ohlman St.; Sioux Falls – 5:30 P.M. CDT, Thursday, Oct 16, 2025 – Siouxland Libraries Downtown, 200 N Dakota Ave.; Rapid City – 5:30 P.M. MST, Tuesday, Nov. 4, 2025 – SD DOT Rapid City Region Office, 2300 Eglin St.; Pierre – 5:30 P.M. CST, Wednesday, Nov. 5 2025 – SDDOT Central Office, 700 E Broadway Ave. The opportunity to present written comments will be made available at public meetings and can be made on the project webpage and will be accepted through Friday, Nov. 14. Meetings will be in-person. For more information and how to participate virtually, please visit: <https://isginc.mysocialpinpoint.com/sddot-active-transportation-plan>. Individuals needing assistance, pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), should contact the SDDOT ADA Coordinator (605-773-3540) two

business days prior to the meeting in order to ensure accommodations are available. For any in-person meeting, notice is further given to individuals with disabilities that the meeting is being held in a physically accessible location. Cost to publish: \$2,240.00.

## EMPLOYMENT

**HELP WANTED: PUBLIC WORKS.** The City of Onida, SD is hiring a full-time public works employee. Benefits include health, dental, eye, Aflac, SD retirement, and paid time off. Must be able to follow instructions and have heavy equipment experience. Water/wastewater certification a plus. CDL (Class B) required within 6 months. Salary DOE. Applications available at Onida City Office, 117 S Main St, Onida, SD. Resumes: [Onidacityshop@venturecomm.net](mailto:Onidacityshop@venturecomm.net) or [Cityofonida@venturecomm.net](mailto:Cityofonida@venturecomm.net). Call 605-258-2441 or 605-220-0070. Open until filled.

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# Ferney

**4 ♦ Groton Independent ♦ Wed., Oct. 15, 2025**



Tigers Sweep Britton-Hecla Behind  
Balanced Attack

GROTON — The Groton Area Tigers volleyball team put together another strong performance Monday night, sweeping Britton-Hecla 3-0 in front of the home crowd by scores of 25-15, 25-18, and 25-12. The Tigers came out hot in the opening set, jumping to a quick 6-1 lead and never looking back. Tevan Hanson and Chesney Weber each tallied five kills in that first set to help Groton take control early. Britton-Hecla battled in the second set, tying the score three times and grabbing a brief 4-1 advantage before Groton rallied to even the set at 8 and then pulled ahead. Consistent serving and steady defense helped the Tigers close it out 25-18. In the third set, Groton trailed 5-3 before reeling off seven straight points to take a 10-5 lead. From there, the Tigers never looked back, sealing the sweep with a 25-12 win.

Coach Hanson’s Take  
Head Coach Chelsea Hanson credited Britton-Hecla for their defensive effort and noted her team’s consistency in finishing plays. “They’re a solid defensive team,” Hanson said. “You could see that in the first set. It’s always frustrating for us when we don’t put the ball to the floor, but I thought our hitters stayed aggressive. Even when they touched it, it’s still a kill — a kill is a kill. I thought we did a good job keeping them out of system.” Hanson added that when Groton’s offense is clicking, the results tend to follow. “When we’re scoring in that upper-20s to low-30s range in kills, we’re going to win games,” she said. “We just needed to come in and get the job done tonight — and that’s what we did.” Looking ahead, Hanson said the team wants to maintain focus through a busy week. “We need to take care of business and not burn too much energy being sloppy,” she noted. “We’ve got Deuel coming up Thursday and our tournament this weekend, so it’s about playing clean, efficient volleyball.” She also mentioned that while the varsity continues to execute well, blocking remains a top priority in practice. “Our blocking has come a long ways,” she said, “but our footwork and closing out the net are still areas we’re working to improve.”

**Statistical Leaders — Groton Area**  
Tevan Hanson: 17-of-20 attacks, 7 kills  
Chesney Weber: 19-of-22 attacks, 8 kills; 13-of-13 serving with 1 ace; 26 assists  
Jaedyn Penning: 20-of-23 attacks, 8 kills; 13 digs

Rylee Dunker: 19-of-19 attacks, 7 kills; 1 assisted block  
Taryn Traphagen: 6-of-8 attacks, 4 kills; 2 assisted, 1 solo block  
Makenna Krause: 5 kills  
McKenna Tietz: 1 ace serve, 1 kill  
Sydney Locke: 14-of-15 serving with 2 aces; 7 digs  
Jerica Locke: 9-of-9 serving with 1 ace; 14 digs  
Sydney Sydney: 1 ace serve

As a team, Groton went 90-of-105 in attacks with 39 kills and 34 assists, while Britton-Hecla finished 67-of-84 with 15 kills. The Tigers totaled 49 digs to the Braves’ 46.

**Britton-Hecla Leaders**  
Chelyan Pruitt, Karlie Zulke, Maddie Michael, and Abby Lee: 3 kills each  
Jaylee Group: 9 assists, 9 digs  
Ariana Buer: 3 assists  
Donika Zulke: 13 digs, 1 ace serve  
Sub-Varsity Results  
The Tigers also won both undercard matches.

JV: Groton defeated Britton-Hecla 2-1 (23-25, 25-19, 16-14). The Tigers overcame an early deficit and sealed the win in extra points. Leaders: Kinsley Rowen (4 kills), Tevan Hanson (1), Makenna Krause (1), Abby Fjeldheim (3), Emerlee Jones (2), Elizabeth Cole (7), Liby Althoff (5), and Kella Tracy (8 kills, 1 block). C-Team: Groton completed the sweep with a 25-15, 25-10 victory.

The varsity match was broadcast live on GDILIVE.COM, sponsored by Agtegra, Avantara, Bary Keith at Harr Motors, Bierman Farm Service, Blocker Construction, Dacotah Bank, Full Circle Ag, Groton Ag Partners, Groton Chamber, Groton Ford, Groton Legion, Heartland Energy, John Sieh Agency, Jungle Lanes & Lounge and The MeatHouse in Andover. The junior varsity match was also broadcast live sponsored by Groton Ford.



Jaedyn Penning  
(Photo by Paul Kosel)



Taryn Traphagen  
(Photo by Paul Kosel)



Makenna Krause  
(Photo by Paul Kosel)



Rylee Dunker  
(Photo by Paul Kosel)

**Statewide ATP PUBLIC MEETINGS**  
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**Rapid City** – 5:30 P.M. MST, Tuesday, Nov. 4, 2025 – SDDOT Rapid City Region Office, 2300 Eglin St.  
**Pierre** – 5:30 P.M. CST, Wednesday, Nov. 5 2025 – SDDOT Central Office, 700 E Broadway Ave.  
The opportunity to present written comments will be made available at public meetings and can be made on the project webpage and will be accepted through Friday, Nov. 14. Meetings will be in-person. For more information and how to participate virtually, please visit: <https://isginc.mysocialpinpoint.com/sddot-active-transportation-plan>. Individuals needing assistance, pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), should contact the SDDOT ADA Coordinator (605-773-3540) two business days prior to the meeting in order to ensure accommodations are available. For any in-person meeting, notice is further given to individuals with disabilities that the meeting is being held in a physically accessible location.  
Cost to publish: \$1,600.00

Weekly SUDOKU

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DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦♦

♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging  
♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

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**Groton Chiropractic Clinic**  
Carol McFarland-Kutter, D.C.  
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OCTOBER 7, 2025 – GENERAL MEETING

Meeting called to order by Chairman Sutton at 8:45 A.M. in the Commission Chambers, Courthouse Annex, Brown County, SD. Present were Commissioners Dennert, Dinger, Gage, Sutton and Wiese. Commissioner Dennert led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**AWARD PRESENTATION:** Aaron Walberg, Veteran’s Service Officer and Mike Herman, Employer Support of the Guard & Reserve (ESGR Area Volunteer presented Commissioner Gage and the Brown County Commission the Patriot Award from The Secretary of Defense for their support of the employees that serve in the armed forces.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** Moved by Commissioner Wiese, seconded by Dinger to approve the agenda. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Darin Beckius, Executive Director with Homes Are Possible, Inc. (HAPI) asked to expand their relationship with the County and to have the tipping fees waived at the Landfill. This request is due to the number of homes and/or lots they purchase and need to tear down and clean up to either build or move in an affordable home. Currently they have 5 properties to tear down, there will be 6 soon. Chairman Sutton informed Mr. Beckius that he would need to get on the agenda to discuss this further and they would need to visit with the Mike Scott, Landfill Manager. Auditor Heupel will put him on the October 14th agenda for further discussion.

Scott Bader, Planning & Zoning Director informed that Commission that due to the Government Shutdown he hasn’t been able to get registered for the FEMA Managing Floodplain Development CEU that is to be held on October 20-24, 2025 in Sioux Falls, and travel had been approved, so he is not sure if they will be having it or not.

**CERTIFICATION FORM FOR 5-YEAR HIGHWAY PLAN:** Moved by Commissioner Gage, seconded by Dennert to authorize Chairman Sutton to sign the Certification Form for the 5-Year Highway plan that Dirk Rogers, Highway Superintendent presented at the September 30th Commission meeting. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

**PROPOSED RICHMOND LANE & DRIVE ROAD DISTRICT:** Auditor Heupel presented the petition along with Plat of the proposed Richmond Lane & Drive Road District to the Commission. State’s Attorney Deputy, Ross Aldentaler suggested postponing any action at this time so that Scott Bader, Planning & Zoning Director, Dirk Rogers, Highway Superintendent along with 2 Commissioners could meet and go over the information. Moved by Commissioner Wiese, seconded by Dinger to postpone any action at this time. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

**DISCUSS REDUCTION OF PRECINCTS IN BROWN COUNTY:** Auditor Heupel presented 2 proposals to the Brown County Commission in reducing the number of precincts within the City of Aberdeen due to HB 1130 that passed and goes into effect on January 1, 2026 that municipalities and schools are to combine in the Primary or General Election. Currently, with this change there is a potential to have 294 ballot styles, based on the number of races that could potentially be on the ballots, along Constitutional Amendments, Ballot Measures and Referendums. Auditor Heupel is looking at saving money for the County and reducing the number of ballot styles and making it easier for the Election workers. The two options were going from 11 precincts within the City of Aberdeen to either 6 precincts or 4 precincts. The 4 precincts match with the Aberdeen City Council boundaries. After some discussion, Commissioner Gage moved to reduce the number of precincts to 4 and match the City of Aberdeen to simply it for everyone. Seconded by Commissioner Wiese. The motion passed with a 3-2 vote: Gage-aye; Sutton-aye; Wiese-aye; Dennert-nay; Dinger-nay.

**MINUTES:** Moved by Commissioner Dennert, seconded by Dinger to approve the General

Meeting Minutes of September 30, 2025. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

**CLAIMS/PAYROLL:** Moved by Commissioner Gage, seconded by Wiese to approve the following claims/payroll: Claims: Professional Fees: Avera St. Luke’s Hospital \$470.02; Birmingham & Cwach Law Offices, PLLC \$288.00; Carrels & Bain Family Dental Care, LLC \$701.61; Cogley Law Office, Prof LLC \$852.00; Dohrer Law Office, PC \$7,284.00; Foerster Testing Limited \$917.50; Helms & Associates \$12,217.40; Jerald M. McNeary \$840.00; John Noyes – Bantz, Gosch & Cremer \$1,572.00; Kuck Law Office \$714.00; Lenling Law Office, Prof. LLC \$930.00; LexisNexis Risk Data Mgt, LLC \$200.00; Lincoln County Auditor \$289.33; Lucy Lewno \$132.00; Luz del Carmen Bremmon \$514.40; Marco Technologies, LLC \$185.00; Mark Katterhagen \$8.00; Modern Day Health Care Prof LLC \$179.56; Northern Plains Animal Health \$228.00; Sanford Health Occupational Medicine \$290.00; Sanford Health \$2,831.51; SD Dept Of Public Safety \$5,400.00; SD Dept of Transportation \$2,211.68; Taylor Bell \$212.50; TJ Counseling \$2,500.00; Valerie Larson \$8.00; Yankton County Sheriff’s Office \$50.00; Yankton County Treasurer \$278.50; Jury Duty Participants \$1,738.36. Publishing: Friends of SDBP-Underwriting \$4,000.00; Groton Daily Independent \$581.25; McQuillen Creative Group, Inc \$1,360.20. Rentals: Aberdeen Housing Authority \$310.00; Advantage Self Storage \$276.00; Linde Gas & Equipment Inc \$63.18. Repairs & Maintenance: Butler Machinery Company \$671.00; Custom Installation Solutions \$1,610.00; Diamond Mowers LLC \$35.13; Ducks Unlimited, Inc. \$26,400.00; EcoLab Pest Elimination Division \$132.12; Graham Tire Inc \$30,209.77; Jake’s Heating & Cooling \$172.50; K&S Plumbing, Inc \$174.69; Ken’s Alignment \$238.96; Lawson Products, Inc \$187.88; Leidholdt Electric, LLC \$2,925.96; Olson’s Pest Technicians \$455.00; Pierson Ford Lincoln, Inc \$91.33; Precision Kiosk Technologies \$3,000.00; RDO Equipment Co \$8,472.31; Sign Solutions USA, LLC \$1,189.84; Subsurface, Inc \$70,715.00; Transource Truck & Equipment, Inc \$8,555.36. Supplies: Aberdeen Parks, Recreation and Forestry \$235.00; Advance Auto Parts \$228.63; Agtegra Cooperative \$46,787.63; Amazon Capital Services, Inc \$1,577.29; Arts South Dakota \$350.00; Artz Equipment, Inc \$156.77; Auto Value Aberdeen \$407.01; Bimbo Foods USA, Inc \$690.90; Birmingham & Cwach Law Offices, PLLC \$16.78; Bob Barker Company Inc \$401.15; Butler Machinery Company \$974.38; Central Network Retail Group LLC \$412.50; Century Business Products \$624.86; Cole Paper Inc \$2,278.28; Crawford Trucks & Equipment \$1,948.22; Dakota Electronics LLC \$1,610.00; Dakota Fluid Power, Inc \$653.18; Diamond Mowers LLC \$85.14; Dohrer Law Office, PC \$5.55; East Side Jersey Dairy Inc \$1,038.19; Fastenal Company \$614.08; FedEx \$24.24; Graham Tire Inc \$26.40; Jebro Inc \$30,580.37; Jensen Rock & Sand Inc \$156,853.67; John Noyes – Bantz, Gosch & Cremer \$54.49; Kessler’s \$1,198.74; Kuck Law Office \$20.94; Lawson Products, Inc \$2,559.08; Leidholdt Tool Sales, LLC \$106.22; Lien Transportation Company \$744,262.20; Lucy Lewno \$2.25; Menards \$416.27; Midstates Group \$460.00; Midwest Pump & Tank \$ 172.92; Pantorium Cleaners Inc \$92.00; Performance Oil \$137.64; Pierson Ford Lincoln, Inc \$64.83; RDO Equipment Co \$545.12; Runnings \$1,584.87; Russ Bassett Corp \$476.80; Safety Service \$177.00; Share Corporation \$928.80; Sign Solutions USA, LLC \$29,449.60; Transource Truck & Equipment, Inc \$3,788.86; Tri-State Water \$35.00; US Food \$11,425.72. Travel & Conference: Drew Dennert \$727.40; Heather Wilkinson \$478.20; Junia Hofer \$457.20; Kyler Dinger \$427.00; Pat Wolberg \$785.88. Utilities: AT&T Mobility \$140.64; CenturyLink \$350.03; Montana-Dakota Utilities Co \$38.52; Northwestern Energy \$15,073.01; T-Mobile USA Inc \$577.86; Town of Frederick \$77.00; WEB Water Development Association, Inc \$131.05. Other: Lisa or James Kiesz \$50.00; Tony Arampatzis \$50.00. Payroll: Commission \$4,896.51; Elections \$1,930.76; Auditor/Welfare \$11,404.97; Treasurer \$18,764.32; SA \$37,471.50; Public Defender \$9,778.21; Maintenance \$12,863.19; Assessor \$16,581.78; Register of Deeds \$10,905.91; VSO \$4,741.87;

GIS \$2,946.49; IT \$9,855.68; HR \$5,419.28; Sheriff \$59,315.82; Jail \$70,470.05; Coroner (Voucher) \$1,500.00; Court Security \$8,745.92; JDC \$31,586.44; Museum \$13,173.01; Parks/Fairgrounds \$9,551.43; Fair Board \$2,788.58; 4-H \$39.13; Weed \$6,419.63; Planning & Zoning \$9,630.65; Highway \$56,368.63; Dispatch \$40,355.73; Emergency \$5,498.56; 24/7 Sobriety \$2,556.25; Landfill \$18,490.66; Meal Benefits \$84.00; FICA \$28,627.71; Medicare \$6,695.16; HSA \$2,309.40; Health Insurance-Wellmark BCBS \$135,535.42; Dental Insurance-Delta \$9,430.44; Life Insurance-Deardon \$1,140.02; Retirement-SDBS \$61,138.63. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

**HR REPORT:** Chairman Sutton stated this was being moved to after Executive Session, for Personnel.

**CLAIM ASSIGNMENTS:** Moved by Commissioner Wiese, seconded by Dennert to approve and authorize Auditor Heupel to sign the Claim Assignments against individuals to Credit Collections Bureau for the purpose of collecting liens. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

**LANDFILL TONNAGE REPORT:** Moved by Commissioner Wiese, seconded by Dinger to acknowledge the Landfill Tonnage Report for September 2025. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

**TRAVEL REQUESTS:** Moved by Commissioner Wiese, seconded by Gage to approve the following Travel Requests: Alain Perry & Jessica Peunte Castro with Dacotah Prairie Museum to attend MUSE Institute on Oct. 6-10, 2025 in St. Paul, MN; Jon Lemke, Chief Deputy Sheriff & Keith Baker, Jail Administrator to attend Pepperball Armorer/Instructor Recertification on Oct. 8-9, 2025 in Sioux Falls; Brad Borge, Public Defender along with his support staff: Christal Burckhard & Tracy Madsen, to attend Criminal Defense Training Conference on Oct. 22-26, 2025 in Las Vegas, NV. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

**LOCAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE GRANT (LEMPG):** Moved by Commissioner Dennert, seconded by Wiese to approve and authorize Chairman Sutton to sign the 4th Quarter Report for LEMPG Grant. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

**AUDITOR’S REPORT OF ACCOUNTS FOR JULY & AUGUST 2025:** Moved by Commissioner Dinger, seconded by Wiese to approve the Auditor’s Report of Accounts for July 2025: Total Cash and Checks on Hand \$7,700.00; Total Checking Account Balances \$19,677,221.78; Total Savings Account Balances \$1,135,447.42; Total Certificates of Deposit: \$11,279,270.64; Grand Total Cash and Balances: \$32,099,639.84. General Fund Cash & Investment Balances by Funds: General Fund \$15,522,711.39; Road & Bridge Fund \$5,181,870.58; Road & Bridge Fund-Restricted \$231,883.27; 911 Service \$1,012,481.61; Emergency & Disaster \$112,804.05; Domestic Abuse \$1,276.29; Federal/State Grant \$32.11; SA Grants \$115,688.67; Truancy Court \$110.99; 24/7 Sobriety \$106,148.76; ROD M&P \$90,709.81; Rural Access Infrastructure \$559,577.54; TIF Debt Service \$76,292.73; Landfill + Cash Change \$7,461,409.00; Landfill-Restricted \$1,894,495.06; Trust & Agency Funds \$1,858,526.31; Grand Total General Fund Cash & Investments \$32,099,639.84. For August 2025: Total Cash and Checks on Hand \$7,700.00; Total Checking Account Balances \$18,095,339.04; Total Savings Account Balances \$1,135,447.42; Total Certificates of Deposit: \$11,279,270.64; Grand Total Cash and Balances: \$30,517,757.10. General Fund Cash & Investment Balances by Funds: General Fund \$13,761,118.36; Road & Bridge Fund \$4,469,250.84; Road & Bridge Fund-Restricted \$231,883.27; 911 Service \$952,749.89; Emergency & Disaster \$96,863.24; Domestic Abuse \$1,331.29; Federal/State Grant \$32.11; SA Grants \$122,289.76; Truancy Court \$110.99; 24/7 Sobriety \$104,860.71; ROD M&P \$91,843.81; Rural Access Infrastructure \$559,577.54; TIF Debt Service \$76,292.73; Landfill + Cash Change \$7,595,218.62; Landfill-Restricted \$1,894,495.06; Trust & Agency Funds \$2,686,217.21; Grand Total General Fund Cash & Investments \$30,517,757.10. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

**OTHER BUSINESS:** None  
**EXECUTIVE SESSION:** Moved by Commissioner Wiese, sec-

onded by Gage to go into Executive Session for Personnel and Legal per SDCL 1-25-2. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

The Chair declared the executive session closed with No Action taken.

**HR REPORT:** Moved by Commissioner Wiese, seconded by Dennert to approve the amended Human Resource Report submitted by Human Resources Director, Allison Tunheim:

o Return of Wyatt Youngblom as Brown County Jail Detention Officer; FT, starting wage \$21.93/hr. – effective October 15, 2025.

All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Moved by Commissioner Wiese, seconded by Dennert to adjourn the Brown County Commission at 9:59 a.m. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

Lynn Heupel, Brown County Auditor

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Stratford Town Board Meeting Sept 8th, 2025 6:30pm

Prickett called meeting to order with Schley, Engelhardt and Kwak in attendance.

A motion was made by Prickett, seconded by Engelhardt, carried; to approve the Aug 10th meeting minutes as read.

A motion was made by Prickett, seconded by Engelhardt, carried; to approve the financials as presented.

A motion was made by Prickett, seconded by Engelhardt, carried; to approve the following claims for payment: -General Fund- NWE Bills: (st lts) \$365.55, (ball pk) \$13.10, (tennis) \$21.32, (st lts2) \$193.98, (hall) \$172.93, (sign) \$15.11; James Valley (auto): \$44.54; Groton Ind: \$23.19; Quickbooks (auto): \$40.36; PDF-Filler (auto): \$20.90; Walmart: \$30.03 (paper); 111.34 (ink); BC Weed & Pest: \$995.62.-Water Sewer Fund- NWE Bills: (2nd st) \$117.38, (st lts2) \$12.00; Web Water (auto): \$1,565.06; USDA RD Loan Payment (auto): \$478.00; NESD Loan Payment (auto): \$383.71; Dakota Pump & Control: \$960.21; Public Health Labs: \$40.

**OLD BUSINESS:** Cistern outside Prorate needs to remain per fire department; Estimate to be presented for repairs to discuss with fire dept. A motion was made by Prickett, seconded by Schley, carried; to hire Helms to survey the boundaries of the City Reservoir.

**NEW BUSINESS:** Open meeting laws read and reviewed in full. Prickett moves that the Schley request for variance to keep chickens in town be approved with the condition that fowl be prohibited from running at large as detailed in proposed update to animal ordinance; seconded by Engelhardt, motion carried. Schley abstained from vote.

Prickett moves that the Jark request for variance to keep chickens in town be approved with the condition that fowl be prohibited from running at large as detailed in proposed update to animal ordinance; seconded by Engelhardt, carried.

Mowing contract was reviewed to explain definition of “mowing season.”

Discussion about meter removal policy; will work with attorney to update.

First reading of Annual Appropriation Ordinance #131: Annual Appropriation Ordinance #131 for The Town of Stratford, SD, for the Year of 2026. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Prickett, seconded by Engelhardt, carried; to adopt Resolution 2025-01: A RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR DEFINITION OF TERM “EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE.” UNDER SECTION 5 OF ORDINANCE 117 AMENDMENT 5. Resolution 2025-01 TOWN OF STRATFORD A RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR DEFINITION OF TERM “EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE.” UNDER SECTION 5 OF ORDINANCE 117 AMENDMENT 5. For property classification and fees, “plumbing work” is defined as property needing to have a water main connection fitted with curb stop and service line.

A motion was made by Prick-

ett, seconded by Engelhardt, carried; to adopt Resolution 2025-02: A RESOLUTION PROVIDING DEFINITION OF THE PHRASE “ALL NEW PRINCIPAL STRUCTURES MUST BE CONNECTED TO MUNICIPAL SANITARY SEWER AND WATER”: UNDER SECTION 3 OF ORDINANCE 117 AMENDMENT 5. Resolution 2025-02 TOWN OF STRATFORD A RESOLUTION PROVIDING DEFINITION OF THE PHRASE “ALL NEW PRINCIPAL STRUCTURES MUST BE CONNECTED TO MUNICIPAL SANITARY SEWER AND WATER”: UNDER SECTION 3 OF ORDINANCE 117 AMENDMENT 5. Sanitary sewer connection is defined as including all plumbing necessary to move waste water from structure to sewer main. Municipal water connection is defined as a water main connection fitted with curb stop, service line to property, and current water meter.

**CLOSING:** Next meeting is scheduled for Oct 14th, 2025 at 6:30pm.

A motion was made by Prickett, seconded by Schley, carried; to adjourn the meeting.

-Anna Kwak; Finance Officer  
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October 7, 2025

The Groton City Council met on the above date at 7:00pm at 120 N Main Street for their first monthly meeting with the following members present: Bahr, Nehls, Shilhanek, Wambach, and Mayor Hanlon presiding. Also present were Attorney Chad Locken, Douglas Heinrich, Doug Daly, Todd Gay, Terry Herron, Dwight Zerr, and Elizabeth Varin.

Moved by Bahr and seconded by Nehls to approve the agenda with no additions or changes. All members present voted aye.

Public comments were welcomed pursuant to SDCL 1-25-1, but none were received.

Moved by Shilhanek to appoint Doug Daly as Planning and Zoning representative for a 5-year term. All members present voted aye.

Daly exited the meeting.

Department reports were reviewed and discussed.

Gay, Herron, and Zerr exited the meeting.

Moved by Bahr and seconded by Wambach to authorize the purchase of the SnowWolf QP114 plow for the skid-steer. All members present voted aye.

Moved by Nehls and seconded by Shilhanek to accept the geotechnical proposal from Soil Technologies, Inc. for the wastewater project. All members present voted aye.

Discussion took place regarding assistance from the city with demolition of properties owned by Groton Development Corporation.

One sealed bid was received for the 3-year lease of the Groton Municipal Airport land from Shawn Gengerke Farms in the amount of \$256.10 per acre. Moved by Wambach and seconded by Bahr to award the 3-year land lease to Shawn Gengerke Farms at \$256.10 per acre. All members present voted aye.

Moved by Shilhanek and seconded by Wambach to authorize the placement of 25mph speed limit signs on East 5th Street. All members present voted aye.

The second reading of Ordinance No. 791 – Certifying 2026 City of Groton Property Tax Levy to Brown County was approved on a motion by Nehls and seconded by Bahr. All members present voted aye.

The 2026 liquor and wine license renewals were tabled on a motion by Bahr and seconded by Nehls. All members present voted aye.

Moved by Nehls and seconded by Wambach to authorize the signing of the Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law for the Abeln Planning and Zoning appeal on September 16, 2025. All members present voted aye.

The authorization to recommend a grant for the Groton Development Corporation from The Groton Community Fund was tabled on a motion by Nehls and seconded by Bahr. All members present voted aye.

Discussion took place regarding the 2026 budget.

The minutes from the previous meeting were approved on a mo-

tion by Shilhanek and seconded by Wambach. All members present voted aye.

Moved by Nehls and seconded by Bahr to authorize the following bills for payment. All members present voted aye.

Executive, \$559.27, ; Administrative, \$5,053.51, ; Public Safety, \$10,094.22, ; Public Works, \$15,128.46, ; Culture & Recreation, \$1,817.91, ; Dwight Zerr, \$380.85, Med flex - Final for 2025; NW Energy, \$13.43, Natural gas services - Water Tower; Galls, LLC, \$297.55, Uniform purchases - Police Dept.; Verizon Wireless, \$40.01, Wireless router - Rubble Site; Dacotah Bank, \$7,151.21, Withholding/SS/Medicare; Dakotaland FCU, \$600.00, Employee savings; Dacotah Bank, \$810.41, HSA contributions; NW Energy, \$806.12, Natural gas services - Swimming Pool; Dacotah Bank, \$4,098.98, Withholding/SS/Medicare; Dacotah Bank, \$100.00, HSA contributions; Aflac, \$435.76, Employee insurance; Colonial Life, \$69.40, Employee insurance; Allied Benefit Systems, \$14,403.02, Employee insurance; Reliance Standard Life Insurance, \$88.10, Employee insurance; Joe & Jami Thody, \$25.00, Camping refund - 1 night; Vestis, \$67.26, Rug rent - City Hall; Runnings, \$311.96, Bolt cutter, spray gun, fuses, hacksaw, flint replacements, charger, Sawzall blades, WD-40, cable ties, hammer - City Shop & Electric Dept.; SD Department of Health, \$194.00, Water/sewer testing; IMEG Corp., \$23,550.00, Engineering services - Wastewater Project - 1st invoice; Sperry Tree Service, \$600.00, Boulevard stump removal; KACS, LLC., \$6,217.50, Level 3 cultural resource survey - Wastewater Project; Farmers Union Co-op Assoc., \$2,196.38, Fuel purchases - Multiple Depts.; Advance Auto Parts, \$232.48, Brake calipers and pads; Pressure Washer Central, \$53.00, Car wash kits - City Shop; Metering & Technology Solutions, \$2,199.00, Water meter supplies; SD Supplemental Retirement, \$540.00, Supplemental retirement; D&J Equipment Sales Service, LLC, \$467.50, Hoist inspection - City Shop; Railroad Management Co, LLC., \$1,642.71, 2.4KV electric supply line crossing fee and power line encroachment fee; Irby, Inc., \$2,460.00, Stand off plugs, feed thru, insulated caps, knives, & red marking paint - Electric Dept.; Core & Main, \$108.67, Curb box repair lid - Water Dept.; Matheson Tri-Gas, Inc., \$72.71, Cutting tip and gloves - City Shop; NW Energy, \$13.91, Natural gas service - PD generator; S&S Lumber Co., \$151.06, PVC cement, elbow, male adapter, PVC pipe, expanding plugs, basketball hoop nets, snap fasteners, scrapers, blades, grass shears - Multiple Depts.; Glenn Bitz, \$150.00, Window cleaning - City Hall; Municipal Pipe Tool, \$42,133.90, CIPP lining project - Wastewater Dept.; Full Circle Ag, \$187.50, Herbicide; Dennis “Mike” Olson, \$986.98, Code enforcement services; Darrels LLC, \$1,139.66, New battery and tires - Electric & Street Dept.; Dakota Pump & Control, \$307.43, LIT repair at Olson Lift Station - Wastewater Dept.; A&B Business Solutions, \$240.83, Printer/copier lease - City Hall; WEB Water, \$25,562.89, Water services - August 2025; The Groton Independent, \$100.67, Publishing costs; Geffdog Designs, \$50.00, No smoking sign for diesel tank at west warehouse; Interstate Power Systems, \$1,080.30, Annual generator maintenance at water tower; Ken’s Food Fair, \$462.57, Coffee, paper towels, fuel purchases - Multiple Depts.; AutoZone, \$648.96, Engine oil, idler pulley, def, oil filters - Multiple Depts.; Menards, \$39.99, Ratchet straps - Electric Dept.;

Announcement: Pumpkin Fest on October 11th from 10am to 3pm.

Announcement: Enrich’s Winter Gear Distribution on October 9th from 3:30pm to 6:30pm at Groton Community Center.

Varin exited the meeting.

Moved by Wambach and seconded by Shilhanek to adjourn into executive session for personnel and legal matters 1-25-2 (1) & (3) at 8:38pm. All members present voted aye. Council reconvened into regular session at 9:30pm.

Moved by Bahr and seconded by Nehls to adjourn the meeting at 9:30pm. All members present voted aye.

Scott Hanlon, Mayor  
Douglas Heinrich, Finance Officer

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TOWN OF WARNER  
MINUTES FOR THURSDAY,  
OCTOBER 8th, 2025

MEMBERS PRESENT: Terry Evans, Gaylon Townsend, Stewart Nelson and Nichol Townsend. Dave Fair was absent.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: A motion was made by Townsend and seconded by Evans to approve the minutes from the September 10th, 2025 meeting. Motion carried.

FINANCIAL REPORTS: MSC: Evans/Townsend. Checking: Town \$284,116.85; Water \$77,531.48; Sewer \$201,021.16. CDs: Town \$32,978.33; Water \$50,140.44; Sewer \$28,375.31.

BILLS APPROVED FOR PAYMENT: MSC: Townsend/Evans.

AGTEGRA (chemical & fuel) \$325.18, Amazon (supplies) \$16.98, Office Depot (supplies) \$154.99, Tax990 (form filing) \$159.80, US Bank (loan) \$9631.84, USDA (loan) \$2083, US Treasury (SLRF repayment) \$345.90, WEB Water \$6100, Winn-Dixie \$120.46, Badger Meter (reads) \$12.88, Banyon Data Systems (annual fees) \$2990, Dave Fair (travel expenses) \$253.19, Dependable Sanitation (garbage) \$5310, Groton Independent (advertising) \$82.57, Hanlon Brothers (supplies) \$437, Hase Heating & Air Conditioning (repair & maintenance) \$30.62, Hofer's Repair (parts) \$152.68, Jensen Rock & Sand (streets) \$64,000, Lighthouse Electric (maintenance) \$757, Lynn Aman (CC cleaning) \$75, Midcontinent (internet) \$297.40, Northwestern Energy (electricity) \$2154.73, Runnings (supplies) \$43.59, Sewer Duck (repair & maintenance) \$473.50, SD Dept of Rev/Sales Tax \$204.54, SD Public Health Lab (water test) \$20, SD One Call \$17.85, Town Water/Sewer \$185.07, USA Blue Book \$79.48, PAYROLL: Stewart Nelson \$3587.28, Terry Evans \$247.49, Dave Fair \$249.34, Gaylon Townsend \$55.41, Nichol Townsend \$847.81, SD Retirement Fund \$539.76, Payroll Taxes \$1243.61.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

An ordinance regarding city park camp spots was discussed. No action taken.

NEW BUSINESS:

Planning and Zoning Changes were discussed. The city is in the process of a complete planning and zoning ordinance update with NECOG.

Ball field lights were discussed. The school has offered the used football field lights to replace the old ball field lights. An electrician will be contacted to discuss expenses and details before deciding.

Discussed a special assessment to be applied to property located at 116 NW 1st Street for unpaid utility bills. To be submitted to the county auditor.

Delinquencies: Six were noted. One is already shut off. Notices will be posted on doors for the others.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Wednesday, November 12th, 2025 at 7 PM in the Warner Community Center.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:30 PM.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Dave Fair, Chairman; Nichol Townsend, Finance Officer

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Town of Westport General Meeting

The Town of Westport met on October 6, 2025 at 7:00 p.m., with Mitch Wilson, Shane Storm, Troy Tschappat, Wyatt Wilson, and Deb Schlosser present.

Public comments: Wyatt Wilson voiced complaints about a Semi parked in his neighborhood. Other residents have also voiced concerns such as engine running early hours of the morning and being parked on the boulevard which hampers emergency vehicles.

The following bills were presented:

City General: NW Energy-utilities (\$318.62), Groton Independent-September minutes (\$16.97), Brown County Treasurer-mosquito spraying (\$1080.00), Menards-town hall supplies (\$13.98), Dakota Supply Group-town hall supplies (\$398.66), US Treasury-3rd quarter taxes (\$1169.32), SD Unemployment Insurance-3rd quarter (\$21.20), Eddies-gas for mower (\$244.21), Runnings-antifreeze (\$29.88)

Sewer: NW Energy-Lift Station utilities (\$47.32), Dakota Pump & Control-lift station service call (\$463.27), Elan Financial Services-lagoon sign (\$51.15)

Sewer Surcharge: DANR-Lift station payment (\$9310.10)

Water: WEB-water (\$2005.97), Public Health Laboratory-water testing (\$40.00)

Shane Storm motioned, second by Mitch Wilson to pay all bills.

The following deposits were presented:

City General: State of SD (\$1973.98), Brown County Collections (\$436.92), Interest (\$87.64)

Sewer: Resident Payments (\$3236.16)

Water: Resident Payments (\$4854.23)

Old Business: Motion by Shane Storm, second by Troy Tschappat to put lift station fence bid back on agenda. More contractors will be contacted about installing the fence. Motion by Shane Storm, seconded by Troy Tschappat to table the fence bid until next spring. The storm drain at the LaBay corner has been fixed. A section of pipe that was closed due to tree roots has been replaced.

New Business: The Town has been notified that B & B Contracting will no longer provide snow removal for the Town. Other businesses will be contacted. A new kitchen stove will be purchased for the Hall.

Meeting dismissed at 7:44 p.m.

Deb Schlosser, Finance Officer

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# Groton School Board Considers Long-Term Facilities Plan, Approves New Cooperative and Coaches

By Elizabeth Varin

With an eye on the district’s long-term needs, the Groton Area School Board spent Tuesday morning reviewing proposals for a facilities master plan that will shape the future of its buildings and programs.

Three architectural firms—JLG Architects, Co-Op Architects, and Architecture Incorporated—presented their qualifications, each emphasizing K–12 planning experience.

After more than an hour of presentations and discussion, board members agreed that all three firms were capable of creating a workable plan.

“I think they’d all do a good job,” said board member Heather Lerseth-Fliehs. “The architecture part is not what would set each one apart.”

Each firm brought a distinct advantage: JLG previously worked with the district and understands its history; Co-Op and Architecture Inc. both employ former administrators who can help connect educational goals with facility design.

Ultimately, the board voted to hire Co-Op Architects, whose team includes former teacher, principal, superintendent, and state education secretary Tom Oster.

Having a former administrator on staff is a major benefit, said Vice President Nick Strom. Board President Grant Rix added that community outreach will be vital as the district explores funding options, and he believes Co-Op will help build that support.

The decision was not unanimous. Marty Weismantel voted no, wanting more time to ask questions and gather feedback from other districts that have worked with the firms.

Superintendent Joe Schwan said a timely decision was essential. The project must be finished by March to guide planning for the next few school years.

Board member Samantha Weber noted that some residents might hesitate to support another project from JLG Architects, which designed the previously rejected elementary school proposal. Schwan acknowledged that concern. “Fair or unfair, the perception is there,” he said.

## New Cooperative and Coaches Approved

In other business, the board approved a resolution to formalize a wrestling cooperative with the Doland School District. Doland wrestlers have practiced with Groton under an informal agreement for the past few years.

The new cooperative will look familiar, Schwan said, but Doland athletes—currently one high school girl and one middle school boy—will now officially compete under the Groton name.

The board also approved coaching hires for the district’s new girls’ softball program, set to launch in the 2025–26 school year.

“It’s important to start the program off on the right foot,” Schwan said. “A bad start to the program could mean a bad finish.”

The board hired Amanda Bisbee as head coach and Sue Fjeldheim as assistant coach. Bisbee is a paraprofessional at the elementary school, and Fjeldheim teaches fourth grade.

## Enrollment Drop Raises Concerns

Fall enrollment reports submitted to the state show 563 K–12 students—266 in elementary, 139 in middle school, and 158 in high school—the district’s lowest total since 2003.

Over the past 20 years, enrollment has ranged from 567 students in 2017 to 632 in 2007.

Schwan said more students are opting for online-only coursework, directly reducing enrollment and state aid. “This is something we’ll have to discuss moving forward,” he said.

Business Manager Becky Hubsch reported the district is more than \$64,000 below budget due to the decline, affecting both general fund and capital outlay revenues.

She added that lower national birth rates also play a role. “The district will have to contend with how to move forward with this,” she said.

## Special Education and Federal Program Outlook

Schwan provided updates on special education services and possible changes in federal funding.

The district currently serves 112 students from birth through age 21 with special education and related services. Federal IDEA funding partially supports the North Central Special Education Cooperative (NCSEC), which offers psychology, speech therapy, and early childhood services to Groton and eight other districts.

Local teachers and contracted providers—such as occupational and physical therapists—are funded with local tax dollars. The state does not provide special education funding.

“The professionals we work with for technical assistance are based in Pierre,” Schwan said. “We very rarely have direct contact with anyone at the U.S. Department of Education.”

He said it is too early to know how potential federal changes could affect local programs. A reduction in IDEA funding would likely force the district to pay a larger share of NCSEC costs.

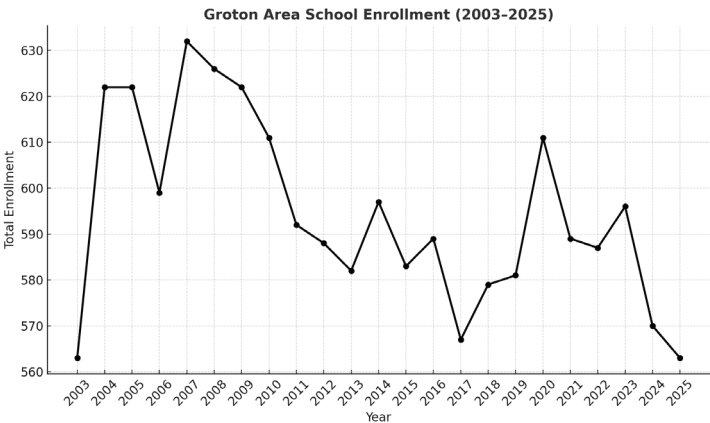
“From what we’ve heard from the South Dakota Department of Education, they haven’t been given much guidance on how federal changes might flow down,” Schwan said. “My personal opinion is that we’re more likely to see changes in Title programs—like Title I or Title III (ELL)—than in special education.”

## Student Achievements and Programs

Middle/High School Principal Shelby Edwards highlighted the success of Groton Area HOSA students during a recent visit to Avera St. Luke’s Hospital in Aberdeen. Students explored healthcare departments, met professionals, and received strong feedback.

“Our students are representing us very, very well,” Edwards said. “There are a lot of kids out doing good things.”

Edwards also reported that five staff members attended a literacy workshop at Northern State University to begin developing a districtwide blueprint for improving literacy instruction.



# Ownership Statement

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Weekly SUDOKU

King Crossword

Answer

4	9	8	6	1	2	3	5	7
7	3	1	9	5	4	2	8	6
5	2	6	3	7	8	9	4	1
6	1	5	4	2	3	7	9	8
9	8	2	5	6	7	4	1	3
3	4	7	8	9	1	6	2	5
1	6	9	7	4	5	8	3	2
2	7	3	1	8	9	5	6	4
8	5	4	2	3	6	1	7	9

Solution time: 21 mins.

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S	T	R	I	P	S	E	R	R	A	T	A
H	Y	E	N	A	S	L	E	N	T	E	N
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S	P	I	N	O	U	T	J	O	N	E	S
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M	A	L	A	Y	A	C	A	R	D	I	N
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## Pesticide-Resistant Varroa Mites Behind Honeybee Die-Off by Choyoung Kim

Dear EarthTalk: Have scientists figured out what's causing honeybees to die off across the country and is there anything we can do about it?

-- Millie Swan, Sumpter, SC

The beekeeping industry is in crisis as honeybee deaths have reached record levels in the U.S. While honeybee colonies have begun declining at a noticeable frequency over the past decade, the U.S. experienced the worst die-off yet, with 62 percent of commercial honeybee colonies collapsing between June 2024 and January 2025. This rapid decline in population may be “the biggest loss of honeybee colonies in U.S. history,” explained Scott McArt, a Cornell University associate professor of entomology.

Honeybees are among the most efficient pollinators; as they play a crucial role in the ecosystem and food production. In fact, they pollinate around 75 percent of the plants grown in the U.S., contributing to approximately \$18 billion worth of crops. Blake Shook, a Texas beekeeper and founder of The Bee Supply, told CBS News that if present trends continue, the food industry could collapse as “we cannot pollinate at the scale that we need to produce food in the United States.”

What is behind this massive die-off? Scientists have identified the Varroa mite as the main cause; infection by these parasitic mites weakens honeybees by spreading viruses, suppressing their immune systems, and hindering their ability to break down pesticides. Alarming, more than 98 percent of the dead colonies in the U.S. have tested positive for viruses spread by Varroa infestations. Recent research found that all Varroa mites have developed resistance



**The Varroa mite might be the main cause of honeybee dieoffs recently but other human-caused environmental factors are also at play.**

Credit: Pexels.com.

to Amitraz, the only remaining pesticide that gets rid of these mites. The extensive use of Amitraz not only contributed to the decline in bee populations but also posed environmental risks, with potential effects on ecosystems and non-target organisms.

However, the mites alone weren't responsible for the record die-offs last year. The causes behind the massive decline in bees are complex, as biodiversity loss, climate change and shifting weather patterns have also contributed. A major contributor is the spread of monoculture agriculture and urbanization, which have drastically reduced the diversity of flowers and plants, limiting the food sources bees rely on. Moreover, global warming has brought unusually warm winters, causing plants to shift their blooming schedules earlier and thus leaving bees with fewer supplies of flowers after they emerge from hibernation.

This population decline isn't just a problem for the bee industry but a threat to national food security. To help honeybee populations stabilize and grow, individuals can purchase local honey directly from beekeepers to support the local industry and plant native wildflowers or bee-friendly flowers like sunflowers, poppies and lavender. Finally, urging corporations and bee farms to reduce the sale and usage of harmful pesticides is also effective in protecting bee populations.

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## "The What If's"

Let's call her Sarah, although that wasn't her name. I'd had the privilege of delivering her, and the fun of watching her grow into a precocious toddler, with an impish smile and a joyous laugh. Then I had the responsibility of explaining her autopsy report to her devastated parents.

She'd died from an infection that her young, previously healthy body just couldn't fight. It hadn't taken long; she'd started running a fever the night before, and her parents brought her to the clinic the next afternoon. The flight crew hadn't even gotten to our ER before she lost the battle.

Of course we all had “what ifs” to torment ourselves with. What if mom had breast fed for longer? What if dad hadn’t taken her to that play date, with the little friend who had a runny nose? What if the doctor (me) been more detailed in the “how to tell when she’s really sick” discussion? What if her parents had brought her to the ER that morning, instead of to the clinic that afternoon?

The “what if” that has tormented me the most, though, is what if she’d been born just a year or two later?

The infection that killed my little patient was caused by streptococcus pneumoniae. The original version of the Prevnar vaccine, which taught a child's immune system to fight 7 strains of that bacteria, was introduced in 2000. Shortly after, the rates of serious infections from these bacteria dropped precipitously, and not just in the children who got the shots. Adults also benefited, to varying degrees.

One modernized version of the Hippocratic oath contains the phrase "I will prevent disease when-ever I can, for prevention is preferable to cure." I don't remember if my classmates and I said those particular words on graduation day, but it's a philosophy I wholeheartedly endorse, and one I try to live by. I nag my patients to eat more fruits and vegetables, and to get their calcium. I nag them to exercise more. I nag them to quit smoking. I urge them to get to the eye doctor, and to the den-tist. I remind them that seatbelts save lives, that helmets save lives, that smoke detectors save lives. That vaccines save lives.

I don't know that the Prevnar vaccine would have saved little Sarah. No vaccine is perfectly protec-tive. She might still have gotten seriously ill. She might still have died.

But I do know it would have shifted the odds in her favor.

*Dr. Debra Johnston is a Family Medicine Physician at Avera Medical Group Brookings in Brookings, SD. She serves as one of the Prairie Doc Volunteer Hosts during its 24th Season providing Health Education Based on Science, Built on Trust. Follow The Prairie Doc® at [www.prairiedoc.org](http://www.prairiedoc.org), Face-book, Instagram, YouTube, and Tik Tok. Prairie Doc Programming includes On Call with the Prairie Doc®, a medical Q&A show (most Thursdays at 7pm on SDPB, YouTube and streaming on Facebook), 2 podcasts, and a Radio program (on SDPB, Sundays at 6am and 1pm).*



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A composite image featuring a portrait of Dr. Debra Johnston on the left and the 'The Prairie Doc' logo on the right. Dr. Johnston is a woman with glasses and a stethoscope, wearing a green vest. The logo is a dark blue circle containing the text 'The Prairie Doc.' in white, with stylized orange and yellow lines at the bottom.