

The Groton Independent

Vol. 143 No. 13 ♦ Groton, SD ♦ Wednesday, Dec. 17, 2025 ♦ Established in 1889

City fees, election dates approved during Tuesday's council meeting

By Elizabeth Varin

Recreation will cost a little more in Groton next year after the City Council on Tuesday approved updated fees for 2026, raising prices for swimming pool passes, City Park camping and several youth baseball and softball programs while leaving most other fees unchanged.

Among the changes approved were an increase in the cost of a family swimming pool pass from \$130 in 2025 to \$150 in 2026 and a hike in nightly camper fees at City Park from \$25 to \$30.

Several baseball and softball fees will also see changes. An adult season gate pass will increase from \$40 to \$50 and will now include regular-season games only. Gate passes for youth ages 17 and under will remain free.

Player registration fees for Legion, Junior Legion and Junior Teener baseball will remain at \$150 for the 2026 season, but the council approved the addition of a late registration fee. Players who register after the deadline will pay \$175. T-ball registration will increase from \$20 in 2025 to \$25 in 2026.

Girls softball fees will also increase. Registration will change from a \$30 fee plus a \$25 shirt fee in 2025 to a flat \$75 total in 2026. Late registration for girls softball will cost \$100.

The changed fees broken down

- Family pass for swimming pool increasing from \$130 (2025) to \$150 (2026)
- Camping fees for camper spots at the City Park increasing from \$25 (2025) to \$30 (2026)
- Season pass to attend baseball and softball games increasing from \$40 (2025) to \$50 (2026) and will now only include regular season ga
- A late fee will be added if registering baseball or softball players after the deadline.
 - o \$150 for Legion, Junior Legion or Junior Teener players (\$175 if registered after deadline)
 - o \$75 for U8, U10 and U12 boys players (\$100 if registered after deadline)
 - o \$75 for girls softball players, up from \$30 registration and \$25 T-shirt fee in 2025 (\$100 if registered after deadline)
 - o \$25 for T-ball players, up from \$20 in 2025 (\$50 if registered after deadline)

Some council members expressed concerns about registration fees becoming a barrier to kids being able to participate in baseball and softball. Councilman Jason Wambach, who is the city liaison for the baseball/softball foundation, emphasized there are scholarships available for kids whose families may have trouble paying the registration fees.

Councilwoman Karyn Babcock also asked city staff if there was something through the city to help offset some of those costs for kids who may need it.

In other business, the council approved second readings of ordinances setting salaries for city staff and transferring funds to keep the current year's budget balanced. Little discussion about the two ordinance took place at Tuesday's meetings as no changes had been made since the first reading of the ordinances at last week's meeting.

The council also identified which seats will be up for election in 2026 as the city prepares to move its municipal election. House Bill 1130 from the 2025 state legislative session required city and school board elections to



Angel Tree Presents being delivered

Groton's Angel Tree coordinator, Tina Kosel, started delivering Angel Tree gifts throughout the community on Tuesday. As you can tell in the photo below, the garage is full of presents. Thanks to everyone who helped make Christmas a little brighter for many families.



be moved to align with state primary and general election dates.

Council members indicated interest in moving the election to June rather than November as it would be closer to April when elections have been held before in Groton.

Three two-year terms are ending in 2026 — Jon Cutler's seat in Ward 1, Brian Bahr's seat in Ward 2 and Jason Wambach's seat in Ward 3 — and Kevin Nehl's 1-year appointment in Ward 1 will also expire in 2026.

- City offices will be closed Thursday, January 1, 2026 for New Year's Day.

- The holiday lighting contest will be judged Dec. 18. Winners will receive utility bill credits totaling \$100, \$75 and \$50 respectively.

- 2026 dog licenses are due by Dec. 31, 2025. They can be purchased at City Hall.



Rich Bosma has joined the GDILIVE team as a guest commentator for basketball games. Here he is pictured interviewing Girls Basketball Coach Matt Locke after the Sisseton win. You can listen to Rich and Mike Imrie on Friday's varsity games at West Central on GDILIVE.COM.

Happy Holidays! Use Occupations to Balance Seasonal Stress

The holiday season is fast approaching with all its festive occupations like decorating the house, buying and wrapping presents and preparing and serving holiday meals. Between the additional time requirements, costs, travel and interactions with family members, this can be a particularly stressful time of year. Difficulties with getting around the house or community, remembering and managing multiple to-do lists, and feeling comfortable socializing for long periods of time can compound holiday stress. While some people experience a sense of deep engagement and enjoyment with holiday preparations and celebrations, others find the additional demands tiring and overwhelming. Many of us experience a variety of emotions, from deep joy to stress, during this busy time. No matter how you view the season, faculty in the Department of Occupational Therapy at the University of South Dakota have some advice to help reduce stress and enjoy your festive occupations this year.

Take a moment to think about your favorite holiday activities and identify what makes these moments enjoyable for you. This might include visiting friends and family, the smell of peppermint hot chocolate or memories associated with listening to songs from your childhood. Early in the season, map out the preparations that need to occur ahead of various celebrations or events. Using a calendar or planner to proactively schedule activities and tasks reduces the demand on your memory, especially during times of high emotion. This may involve scheduling a time to wrap presents ahead of a gift exchange or planning when to make appetizers ahead of an after-work party. Break larger occupations like decorating the house into smaller tasks that can be spread over time. Try to balance completing stressful tasks and fun activities across a week. If a large holiday gathering is planned for a Friday, consider scheduling quiet activities that you can complete independently the day or two before. Physically demanding occupations like hanging holiday lights or going shopping can be balanced with smaller activities like writing greeting cards.

You can also reduce stress during holiday preparations by avoiding multi-tasking. Evidence from the occupational therapy and cognitive psychology literature suggests that trying to engage in multiple activities at the same time results in worse performance and higher feelings of stress and anxiety. Use this as an opportunity to fully engage your senses and emotions in the event. Put on holiday music or a favorite movie while decorating the house or wrapping presents. For those who enjoy socializing, seek out small groups for wrapping or cookie decorating parties. Don't forget to engage your other senses by enjoying the special tastes and smells of the holidays. Finally, be sure to schedule quiet moments for yourself to relax and recharge. Research has found that scheduling periodic breaks ahead of time provides greater stress reduction than waiting until you feel overwhelmed to take a break. Go for a walk, enjoy a holiday coffee, take a long bath or just take a moment to rest and remind yourself of the joy of the season.

Karen Hebert, Ph.D., OTR/L, is an assistant professor in the Department of Occupational Therapy at the University of South Dakota. She studies how working memory and cognitive processing influence the experience of positive and negative emotions during the completion of daily occupations, particularly among those with neurological and mental health conditions. Her favorite occupations include reading, swimming and traveling with her husband and two girls. Mackenzie Feldhacker, OTD, OTR/L, CLT-LANA, is an associate professor in the Department of Occupational Therapy at the University of South Dakota. Her interests are the scholarship of teaching and learning and the needs of individuals with neurological conditions, particularly Parkinson's disease. Her favorite occupations include baking, spending time outdoors and playing games with her family. Follow The Prairie Doc® at www.prairiedoc.org, Facebook, 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).



Mackenzie Feldhacker, OTD
Karen Hebert, Ph.D.



when McCarthy threw a 20-yard pass to Jalen Nailor.

The Cowboys responded quickly in the second quarter, taking the lead back with a touchdown. Usually by this point, the Vikings would've started falling apart, but apparently being eliminated from the playoffs lit a fire under the team, because they responded with a TD drive of their own. I've lost count of how many times the Vikings and their opponent traded punts this season, so it was refreshing to see them trading haymakers instead. Things cooled off a little in the second half of the second quarter, but both teams still added a field goal apiece to make the score 17-17 heading into halftime.

The Cowboys got the ball to begin the second half, and despite moving the ball well, they had to settle for a field goal. The Vikings' first possession of the second half was a three-and-out (their only three-and-out of the game), and then Dallas added another field goal to take a six-point lead. However, on Minnesota's next possession, fullback C.J. Ham rumbled in from one yard out to reclaim the lead.

Dallas had the ball to start the fourth quarter, but their normally reliable kicker missed another field goal, giving Minnesota the ball near midfield. Five plays later, McCarthy found Nailor in the end zone again to extend the Vikings' lead to eight points. A failed fourth-down attempt on Dallas' next possession gave the ball to the Vikings, who ran over four minutes off the clock and kicked a field goal with about a minute left, making it a two-score game. A quick field goal by Dallas made it an eight-point game again, but the Vikings recovered the onside kick to seal the game.

J.J. McCarthy completed 15 of 24 passes for 250 yards, two touchdowns, and one interception. It was his best game yet in terms of passing yards, and only the second time in his young career that he eclipsed 200.

Aaron Jones Sr. and Jordan Mason combined for only 63 yards on 22 carries against a tough Cowboys run defense. Jordan Addison and T.J. Hockenson both had 66 receiving yards, while Nailor had 47 yards and two touchdowns. Justin Jefferson had another down game, only catching two passes for 22 yards despite leading the team in targets (8).

Blake Cashman led the team in tackles (11), Jonathan Greenard had one sack and three QB hits, Andrew Van Ginkel had a half-sack and four QB hits, and Harrison Smith and Byron Murphy Jr. each had two pass deflections.

The player of the game is a tie between J.J. McCarthy and Jalen Nailor. McCarthy's stats weren't eye-popping, but it was still the best game of his young career. Nailor set a career high with two touchdowns, and has really picked up the slack while Jefferson and McCarthy figure out how to get on the same page.

Despite coming into this game knowing they were officially eliminated from playoff contention, the Minnesota Vikings played one of their best games of the season and left Dallas with a 34-26 victory. At 6-8 and with three games left in the season, it's still possible the team finishes with a winning record, but every game they win takes them further down the draft order.

The game got off to a disastrous start for the Vikings. Minnesota got the ball first, and on the second play of the drive, J.J. McCarthy threw an interception, which led to a Dallas touchdown. After both teams traded punts, the Vikings finally found the end zone with a quick two-play drive, tying the game

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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
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Looking ahead, the Vikings will travel to New York in a matchup against the Giants. Kickoff is this Sunday at noon. It will be interesting to see how Kevin O'Connell manages the roster now that the team is officially eliminated from the playoffs. Does he rest his starters to prevent an injury? Or does he let everyone play to build some momentum for next season?

Basketball Recap

Groton Area basketball teams opened the season with a demanding week of Northeast Conference action, showing resilience, defensive growth and steady improvement across both programs as the Tigers faced Hamlin and Sisseton on the hardwood.

Girls: Hamlin 46, Groton Area 21

Groton Area's girls opened the season Friday night with a home loss to Hamlin, as the Chargers pulled away in the second half behind defensive pressure and timely scoring. After settling in from an early deficit and trailing just 22-15 at halftime, the Tigers struggled to find offensive rhythm after the break and were held to six points in the final two quarters.

Head coach Matt Locke said the performance did not reflect the team he had seen in practice leading into the season, citing missed shots, long offensive droughts and defensive lapses as key issues. Despite the outcome, Locke stressed the importance of responding quickly and returning to work.

JV: Hamlin edged Groton Area 31-30 in a tightly contested junior varsity game decided in the final seconds. After multiple lead changes, Hamlin's Paige Stormo made one of two free throws with 16.7 seconds remaining to secure the win.

Girls: Groton Area 40, Sisseton 36

Groton Area bounced back Tuesday night with a hard-earned road win at Sisseton, earning its first victory of the season in a defensive battle that remained close throughout. The Tigers seized control early in the fourth quarter with a decisive run, then relied on pressure defense and late free throws to close out the win.

Locke praised his guards for setting the tone defensively and credited the team's physical play for putting Sisseton in foul trouble. While acknowledging missed layups and free throws, he noted the Tigers made the plays that mattered most late.

JV: Groton Area earned a convincing 41-19 victory, highlighted by a triple-double from Kella Tracy. The Tigers used defense and depth to control the game from start to finish.

Boys: Groton Area 55, Hamlin 50

Friday night's boys matchup delivered a gritty comeback victory for Groton Area, as the Tigers rallied in the fourth quarter to defeat Hamlin. After trailing most of the night, Groton's defensive pressure wore down the Chargers, fueling a decisive late run to take control.

Head coach Greg Kjellsen said effort was never in question and credited the team's defensive foundation, emphasizing how experience and composure played a key role down the stretch. He also pointed to balanced scoring and interior efficiency as keys to the win.

JV: Groton Area rolled to a 40-20 victory.

C Game: Groton completed the sweep with a 44-24 win.

Boys: Groton Area 66, Sisseton 33

Groton Area delivered a dominant road performance Tuesday night, overwhelming Sisseton with a relentless press and efficient offense. The Tigers jumped out to a commanding first-quarter lead and never looked back, shooting at a high percentage inside while forcing turnovers that translated into transition points.

Kjellsen praised the team's defensive intensity and unselfish ball movement, noting the value of having multiple scoring options and strong inside-out play. While pleased with the result, he also pointed to rebounding and execution as areas to continue refining.

JV: Sisseton defeated Groton Area 40-25 after pulling away in the second half.

C Game: Groton Area earned a 49-19 win.

By the end of the week, the Groton Area boys improved to 2-0 on the season, while the girls responded from an opening loss with a confidence-building conference win. Both teams now turn their attention to a challenging road test Friday at West Central as Northeast Conference play continues.

The games were broadcast live on GDILIVE.COM. Rich Bosma provided the play-by-play of the varsity games at Sisseton and Shane Clark provided the play-by-play of the Hamlin varsity games, 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, Heartland Energy, John Sieh Agency, Jungle Cafe and Lanes and The MeatHouse. Jerry and Becca Johnson, Grandparents and Beauty Brew Boutique sponsored the junior varsity games, called by Paul Kosel.

Complete results and more pictures can be found in the Groton Daily Independent.

Enrich Groton SoDak – 2025 Year in Review

Enrich Groton SoDak Inc. had a meaningful and busy year in 2025, made possible by the incredible support of our volunteers, donors, and community partners. Here are a few highlights:

Supporting Seniors: Volunteers partnered with Feeding SD to help seniors sign up for Senior Nutrition Boxes, then received the boxes and distributed them throughout the community.

Student Learning: GHS FACS classes visited Common Cents to practice real-world resource management.

Community Giving: We participated in local events, donated to the FEZtival of Trees, and decorated a Giving Tree at City Hall/Wage Memorial Library to collect gifts for families.

Holiday Help: Volunteers organized food deliveries for Easter, Thanksgiving, and Christmas.

Empowering Youth & New Residents: We awarded a scholarship, shared Kindness Kash and Back-to-School Cash, and welcomed new residents with Welcome Cash to use at Common Cents.

Advocacy & Fundraising: We recognized Hunger Action Day/Month and sold reusable bags to support our mission.

Essential Supplies: School supply and winter gear drives helped ensure families had what they needed.

Looking ahead to 2026, we're excited to continue expanding our efforts, building partnerships, and enriching the Groton SD Community. With your ongoing support, we'll keep making a positive difference!

Groton Legion
Wings Nite

Groton American Legion
Soon to be a Classic monthly "Legion Wings Nite"
Friday and Saturday
Dec. 19 & 20
6-10pm



Gage Sippel and Boden Stevenson battle for the opening tip with both players getting their hand on the ball, but Sippel controlled the tip. (Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)



Jerica Locke dribbles the ball around Hamlin's Paxton Neuendorf. (Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)

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Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦♦

♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging
♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

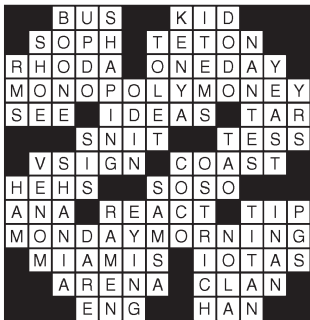
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Answer

Answers

Solution time: 24 mins.

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MS/HS Christmas Concert



The Middle School Choir sang, "The First Noel," and "All I Want for Christmas is You." (Photo lifted from GDILIVE.COM video)



The Middle School Girls Choir sang, "Where are You Christmas?" (Photo lifted from GDILIVE.COM video)



The High School Choir sang, "Carol of the Bells," "In the Bleak Midwinter," "Requiem" and "Brightest and Best." (Photo lifted from GDILIVE.COM video)



The Chamber Choir sang "Underneath the Tree." (Photo lifted from GDILIVE.COM video)



The Middle School Band performed, "Too Much Percussion for Christmas!" (Photo lifted from GDILIVE.COM video)



The High School Band performed, "Mary Did You Know," "Selections from the Polar Express," and "Holiday Sing a-long." (Photo lifted from GDILIVE.COM video)

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 Notices: legals@grotonsd.net
 News Items: news@grotonsd.net
 Deadline to submit items: Noon Monday
 Yearly Subscription Rates are listed below.
 The Groton Independent (USPS# 230-440) is published weekly with its periodicals postage paid at Groton, SD.
Postmaster: Send address changes to Groton Independent, PO Box 34, Groton, SD 57445
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Conde National League

Dec. 15, 2025 Team Standings: Cubs 8, Pirates 5, Stooges 4, Giants 3, Mets 2, Braves 2
Men's High Games: Austin Schuelke 213, Butch Farmen 195, Skip Kettering 193.
Men's High Series: Austin Schuelke 520, Butch Farmen 519, Skip Kettering 497.
Women's High Games: Sam Bahr 166, Deb Schuelke 161, Amanda Moorhouse 159
Women's High Series: Sam Bahr 477, Joyce Walter 429, Suzie Easthouse 425

Telkamp graduates from NSU

Life is marked by the milestones we reach, achieving one's degree from college is one of the major markers. Tara Telkamp Kupcho reached that milestone recently with the Winter Commencement at Northern State uni-



versity on Saturday, December 13, 2025. She was one of 101 graduates earning degrees. Her degrees include Bachelors' Degree of Arts and Science in Biology, with pre-Vet emphasis, Minors in Chemistry, Fine Art and Studio Art. Certificates in Allied Health and Quantitative Analytics of science.

Future plans are undecided as she considers Vet School or entering the work force. Telkamp is 2012 Graduate of Groton Area and the daughter of Charlene and Bruce Telkamp and the Granddaughter of Charles and Betty Strom.

Aberdeen's Newest Attraction

ROSEMARIE & DEAN L. BUNTROCK GALLERY

GRAND Opening

DEC 20, 2025
11:00AM - 3:00PM

NATURAL HISTORY

Explore & experience the incredible natural biodiversity in the new Rosemarie & Dean L. Buntrock Gallery, featuring animals from around the world sponsored by the Dean L. & Rosemarie Buntrock Foundation.

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DECEMBER 9, 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 Dinger, Gage, Sutton and Wiese. Commissioner Dennert was absent. Commissioner Dinger led the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

PUBLIC COMMENT: None
BROWN COUNTY BRIDGE INSPECTION REPORT: Chelsey Sheridan and Michael Gutenkauf with IMEG shared with the Commissioners their findings on the Bridge Inspections they did in Brown County. They inspected 59 Bridges in 2025 out of the 134 in Brown County. Brown County's Average Sufficiency rating for 2025 is 83.9, which is higher than the State's average. Average Replacement Cost is \$1,935,333.00; under the BIG Program the County would be responsible for 20% of the Average Replacement Cost which comes to \$387,067.00. Chelsey explained the changes that are being made to the Coding System, which represents the structure better and cost in slide is based on all structures.

PRESERVATION GRANT FOR BRIDGE 182: Dirk Rogers, Highway Superintendent, presented an application for the Bridge Improvement Grant (BIG) Funds Preservation to be used on Bridge 182. Work would include repairing bridge deck delamination, place low slump bridge deck overlay, repair abutment undermining. The County would be responsible for 20% match, would be estimated at \$78,436.00 – total project is estimated at \$392,182.00. Moved by Commissioner Wiese, seconded by Gage to approve applying for the BIG Preservation Grant and authorize Chairman Sutton to sign the application. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

Chairman Sutton asked Dirk if there has been any more thought or discussion about creating a South ByPass. Dirk shared that there are differences in the goals of the County versus the State plus the cost of doing this. Dirk added that we generally don't qualify for the grants for these types of projects. Some discussion was held on the original route that had been talked, which was coming up by Jobee Acres originally; Commissioner Gage mentioned looking at going up Brown County 19 because you have the traffic lights and better for those going to the Soybean Plant. Dirk said he would inquire to see

AMENDMENTS TO RESOLUTION #2025-50 – RICHMOND LANE & DRIVE ROAD DISTRICT: Moved by Commissioner Wiese, seconded by Dinger to amend Resolution #2025-50 – Richmond Lane & Drive Road District by adding the following parcel: Lot 1 Bellikka First Richmond Lake Subdivision. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

FAIR CONTRACTS – CONFIDENTIAL: Moved by Commissioner Wiese, seconded by Dinger to approve and authorize Chairman Sutton to sign the Fair Contract that is Confidential until released. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

CLOSING CONFERENCE FOR 2024 AUDIT: Kasie Ingraham with Department of Legislative Audits (DLA) met with the Commission for closing conference for audit of 2024 Fiscal Year. Moved by Commissioner Wiese, seconded by Dinger to acknowledge the closing comments for the 2024 Fiscal Year Auditor. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

MINUTES: Moved by Commissioner Dinger, seconded by Wiese to approve the General Meeting Minutes for December 2, 2025. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

CLAIMS/PAYROLL: Moved by Commissioner Wiese, seconded by Gage to approve the following Claims: Professional Fees: Avera St. Luke's Hospital \$479.66; CenturyLink-Lumen \$151.49; Certified Languages International LLC \$1,011.45;

CommTech Inc \$4,002.81; Day County \$2,470.00; Dohrer Law Office, PC \$3,252.00; Helms & Associates \$4,720.00; John Noyes – Bantz, Gosch & Cremer \$372.00; Kristi Brandt \$302.35; Kuck Law Office \$4,118.40; Lenling Law Office, Prof. LLC \$1,200.00; LexisNexis Risk Data Mgt, LLC \$200.00; Matthew Bender & Co., Inc \$118.67; Microfilm Imaging Systems, Inc. \$11,825.00; NECOG \$6,000.00; Network Center, Inc \$3,057.77; North Star Solutions, LLC \$1,512.00; Northeastern Mental Health Center \$875.00; Pharm-Chem, Inc \$1,437.75; Sanford Health Occupational Medicine \$212.00; SD Dept of Transportation \$8,542.77; Sewer Duck, Inc \$100.00; Taliaferro Law Firm, PC \$2,100.00; Taylor Bell \$433.20; Thomson Reuters – West Payment Center \$237.96. Publishing: Groton Daily Independent \$62.77; McQuillen Creative Group, Inc \$566.68. Rentals: Dakota Electronics LLC \$240.00; Linde Gas & Equipment Inc \$63.18. Repairs & Maintenance: Butler Machinery Company \$1,135.00; Custom Installation Solutions \$830.00; Diesel Machinery, Inc \$11,000.00; Fulcrum Biometrics \$600.00; K&S Plumbing, Inc \$905.18; Midwest Pump & Tank \$115.00; Olson's Pest Technicians \$455.00; Pantorium Cleaners Inc \$55.00; Precision Kiosk Technologies \$3,000.00; RDO Equipment Co \$8,125.88; Safety Service \$241.95; Transource Truck & Equipment, Inc \$4,108.80. Supplies: Ategra Cooperative \$40,058.52; Amazon Capital Services, Inc \$444.21; Auto Value Aberdeen \$285.33; Bob Barker Company Inc \$4,113.39; Butler Machinery Company \$3,036.69; Central Network Retail Group LLC \$1,429.26; Century Business Products \$516.17; Christina M. Flack \$800.00; Crawford Trucks & Equipment \$519.52; Dakota Fluid Power, Inc \$2,024.68; East Side Jersey Dairy Inc \$963.50; Geffdog Designs \$90.60; Gov-Connection, Inc \$710.80; John Noyes – Bantz, Gosch & Cremer \$12.02; Kuck Law Office \$140.26; Lien Transportation Company \$80,775.90; Linde Gas & Equipment Inc \$861.99; Menards \$293.19; Midstates Group \$445.00; Midwest Pump & Tank \$99.92; Mcyah Trolen \$50.93; Pantorium Cleaners Inc \$264.28; Performance Oil \$204.57; PharmChem, Inc \$1,151.34; Pierson Ford Lincoln, Inc \$46.22; Pitney Bowes Global Financial Services LLC \$1,046.10; ProLine, Inc. – Watertown \$3,795.00; RDO Equipment Co \$1,234.71; Runnings \$726.45; Safety Service \$495.95; Share Corporation \$1,528.00; Sprocket Ventures, LLC \$74.00; Taliaferro Law Firm, PC \$52.34; Thomson Reuters – West Payment Center \$237.96; Transource Truck & Equipment, Inc \$1,955.20; Tri-State Water \$35.00; US Foods \$10,525.67; Veterans Information Service \$70.00. Travel & Conference: Austin Ball \$14.00; Kent Karlen \$14.00; Lenling Law Office, Prof. LLC \$40.00; Michael W. Varilek \$79.99; Neil Bittner \$14.00; Rachel Kippley \$1,038.63. Utilities: CenturyLink \$345.87; Economy Propane, LLC \$328.02; Northwestern Energy \$10,442.95; Town of Frederick \$77.00; WEB Water Development Association, Inc \$116.76. Other: SD Assoc of County Officials \$746.00; SD Dept of Agriculture & Natural Resources \$4,704.49; Etix, Inc. \$665.72. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

HR REPORT: Moved by Commissioner Dinger, seconded by Gage to approve the following Human Resource Report submitted by Allison Tunheim, Human Resources Director:

- o Employment ending for Holly Chavez-Pinela as Brown County Jail Detention Officer, FT – effective December 2, 2025. Request to fill.
- o Resignation of Junia Hofer as Brown County 911 Communications Officer, FT – effective December 27, 2025. Request to fill.
- o Hiring of Sonja Day as Brown County Deputy Treasurer, FT; starting wage \$20.87/hr. – effective December 15, 2025.

All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

AUTHORIZE ADVERTISING FOR BUDGET SUPPLEMENT HEARING: Moved by Commissioner Wiese, seconded by Gage to authorize advertising for the Budget Supplement Hearing to be held on Tuesday, December 30th. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

LANDFILL TONNAGE REPORT: Moved by Commissioner Gage,

seconded by Wiese to acknowledge the Landfill Tonnage Report for November 2025. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

CLAIM ASSIGNMENTS: Moved by Commissioner Dinger, seconded by Wiese 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.

TRAVEL REQUESTS: Moved by Commissioner Gage, seconded by Wiese to approve the following Travel Request: Karly Winter and Tucker Anderson, State's Attorney Office to attend National District Attorney's Association Prosecuting Homicides Conference on January 12-16, 2026 in New Orleans, LA. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

OTHER BUSINESS: None
EXECUTIVE SESSION: Moved by Commissioner Wiese, seconded by Dinger to go into Executive Session per SDCL 1-25-2 for Legal and Contracts. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

Chairman Sutton declared the Executive Session closed with No Action taken.

ADJOURNMENT: Moved by Commissioner Wiese, seconded by Dinger to adjourn the Brown County Commission at 10:43a.m. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

Lynn Heupel, Brown County Auditor
Published December 17, 2025 at the total approximate cost of \$88.79 and may be viewed free of charge at www.sdpublicnotices.com. 26313



NOTICE OF HEARING 2025 BROWN COUNTY BUDGET SUPPLEMENTS

A public hearing will be held by the Brown County Commission on the 30th day of December 2025 in the Brown County Commission Chambers, Courthouse Annex, Aberdeen, SD to consider supplementing the 2025 Fiscal Year Budget.

The public is invited to attend the hearing and to present comments and testimony regarding the supplements.

ATTEST: Lynn Heupel, Brown County Auditor

Published December 17 and 24, 2025 at the total approximate cost of \$12.44 and may be viewed free of charge at www.sdpublicnotices.com. 26314



ADVERTISEMENT Brown County Hwy 14 Improvements Brown County, South Dakota

Sealed Bids will be received by the Brown County Auditor, 25 Market Street, Aberdeen, South Dakota, 57401, (605) 626-7110, until 8:45 AM local time on Tuesday, the 30th day of December, 2025, for the above-referenced project. Bids shall be prepared and submitted in accordance with the Bidding Documents. Brown County reserves the right to accept or reject any and/or all Bids as set forth in the Bidding Documents.

Bids will be publicly opened and read aloud at or shortly after the time named above. Bids will be reviewed by the Brown County Commission at a subsequent meeting of the Brown County Commissioners.

The Project includes the following Work:

- 7" Nonreinforced PCC Pavement
- Additional items as set forth in the Contract Documents.

Each bid shall be accompanied by a Bid Security as described in the Bidding Documents. The Successful Bidder will be required to provide Payment and Performance Bonds as described in the Bidding Documents.

Bidding documents may be viewed and obtained at www.questcdn.com by entering QuestCDN project number 9970284. If you need assistance with the website, please contact

QuestCDN Customer Support at 952-233-1632 or info@questcdn.com. Also, at the Brown County Website: <https://www.brown.sd.us/brown-county-bids>.

A pre-bid conference will not be held.

ATTEST: Lynn Heupel, Brown County Auditor

Published December 10 and 17, 2025 at the total approximate cost of \$32.80 and may be viewed free of charge at www.sdpublicnotices.com. 26300



NOTICE OF AUDIT OF THE FISCAL AFFAIRS OF THE GROTON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 6-6

Notice is hereby given that the Groton Area School District No. 6-6, Groton, South Dakota, has been audited by Cahill Bauer & Associates, LLC for the year ended June 30, 2025. A detailed report thereon is available for public inspection, during normal business hours, at the business office of the School District, and also available at the Department of Legislative Audit in Pierre, South Dakota or on the Department of Legislative Audit website at http://www.state.sd.us/legislativeaudit/Reports/reports_all.htm.

The following findings and recommendations provide a brief description of material weaknesses in internal control that are described in more detail in the audit report.

Finding: A lack of segregation of duties over revenues and expenditures exists, which could result in errors not being found in a timely manner.

Recommendation: We recommend a high level of awareness be maintained by management to assist in preventing, detecting, or correcting matters that may arise due to this internal control weakness. Compensating controls should be implemented as necessary.

Finding: We proposed material audit adjustments that would not have been identified as a result of the School District's existing internal controls, and therefore could have resulted in a material misstatement of the School District's financial statements.

Recommendation: It is the responsibility of management and those charged with governance to make the decision whether to accept the degree of risk associated with this condition because of cost and other considerations.

Finding: The School District does not have an internal control system designed to provide for the preparation of the annual financial statements being audited, including required footnotes and disclosures, in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles. As auditors, we were requested to draft the financial statements.

Recommendation: It is the responsibility of management and those charged with governance to make the decision whether to accept the degree of risk associated with this condition because of cost or other considerations.

CAHILL BAUER & ASSOCIATES, LLC

Published December 17 and 24, 2025 at the total approximate cost of \$46.37 and may be viewed free of charge at www.sdpublicnotices.com. 26315



December 9, 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: Babcock, Bahr, Cutler, Shilhanek, Wambach, and Mayor Hanlon presiding. Also present were Douglas Heinrich, Darrell Hillestad, Aaron Grant, Dwight Zerr, Terry Herron, and Elizabeth Varin.

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

Public comments were welcomed pursuant to SDCL 1-25-1. Aaron Grant expressed concerns regarding snow removal and the warnings to move vehicles for plowing.

Grant exited the meeting.

Department reports were reviewed and discussed.

Zerr, Herron, and Hillestad exited the meeting.

Two sealed bids were received for the hoist. The first was Troy and Darin Zoellner for \$1,500. The second was Hayden Pigors for \$1,200. Moved by Cutler and seconded by Bahr to accept the \$1,500 bid from Troy and Darin Zoellner. All members present voted aye.

The bids for the city roof repair project were reviewed. Moved by Shilhanek and seconded by Wambach to award the project to The Roofers in the amount of \$109,482.24. All members present voted aye.

Moved by Shilhanek and seconded by Cutler to approve the Kolker Second Subdivision plat. All members present voted aye.

The first reading of Ordinance No. 794 – Supplemental Appropriations was approved on a motion by Babcock and seconded by Wambach. All members present voted aye.

The Northeast Council of Governments (NECOG) joint cooperative agreement for 2026 was approved on a motion by Babcock and seconded by Shilhanek. All members present voted aye.

The minutes from the previous meeting were approved on a motion by Cutler and seconded by Wambach. All members present voted aye.

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

Payroll, \$52,088.25, Employee salaries; Executive, \$559.27; Administrative, \$10,307.02; Public Safety, \$9,517.95; Public Works, \$31,704.01; Dacotah Bank, \$3,917.38, 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; Dacotah Bank, \$6,631.42, Withholding/SS/Medicare; Dacotah Bank, \$810.41, HSA contributions; US Bank, \$172,637.50, 2015 refinance bond payment; SD Retirement System, \$11,694.16, Employee retirement; SD Supplemental Retirement, \$540.00, Supplemental retirement; Verizon Wireless, \$40.01, Wireless router - Rubble Site; Crawford Trucks & Equip., Inc., \$5.54, Gasket for plowtruck; Advance Auto Parts, \$38.44, Gear oil and chain lube - City Shop; NW Energy, \$13.54, Natural gas service - PD; S&S Lumber Co., \$108.61, 9v batteries, light bulb, spray paint, penetrating oil, silicone spray, conduit, staples, screws, sealant - Multiple Depts.; Payment Service Network, Inc., \$205.75, PSN gateway and eBill fees; USPS, \$326.41, Utility billing postage; City of Groton, \$250.00, Utility deposit applied to outstanding bill; Paul Kosel, \$599.92, Med flex - final for 2025; SD State Treasurer, \$8,790.88, Sales and excise tax for November 2025; WAPA, \$25,485.90, Power services - November 2025; Irby, Inc., \$219.75, Couplers - Electric Dept.; Bobcat of Aberdeen, \$110.26, Coupler - City Shop; Share Corporation, \$346.25, Snowplow coating; SD Department of Transportation, \$35.20, Windsock - Airport; SD Department of Health, \$462.00, Water/sewer testing; Leidholdt Tool Sales, LLC., \$221.55, 3pc step drill set - Electric Dept.; Groton BB/SB Foundation, \$9,310.58, 2025 split gate; Dennis "Mike" Olson, \$812.26, Code enforcement services; The Groton Independent, \$324.78, Publishing costs; Harry Implement, Inc., \$84.18, Fuel filter - Street Dept.; Banyon Data Systems, \$595.00, Annual POS support for 2026 - City Hall; SD Assoc. of Rural Water Systems, \$615.00, Class B annual dues; SD Municipal League, \$1,703.00, Annual membership dues; Groton Chamber of Commerce, \$1,400.00, Employee Christmas Chamber Bucks; Dollar General, \$36.00, Bottled water, tape, fan - Multiple Depts.; Cole Papers, Inc., \$132.41, Paper towels - Police Dept.; Heartland Waste Management, \$12,389.65, Garbage hauling; Truck World, Inc., \$4,327.32, Exhaust repairs - Electric Dept.; WEB Water, \$19,918.87, Water services - November 2025; Avera Occupational Medicine - SF, \$37.70, Drug/alcohol screening costs; A&B Business Solutions, \$240.83, Printer/copier lease - City Hall; Darrels LLC, \$23.95, Tire repair - Parks; Northern Electric Cooperative, \$5,118.38, Service install at airport; Farmers Union Co-op Association, \$999.97, Diesel fuel - Street Dept.; RDO Equipment Co., \$703.98, Blades and bolts - Street Dept.; Ken's Food Fair, \$251.59, Fuel purchases -

Multiple Depts.;

Reminder: Holiday Lighting Contest on December 18th, 2025. \$100, \$75, \$50 utility bill credits to be given away.

Reminder: 2026 dog licenses are due by December 31st, 2025.

Announcement: City offices will be closed on December 24th, 25th, and 26th, 2025, for Christmas.

Varin exited the meeting.

Moved by Wambach and seconded by Babcock to adjourn into executive session for personnel and legal matters 1-25-2 (1) & (3) at 7:38pm. All members present voted aye. Council reconvened into regular session at 8:42pm.

Varin reentered the meeting.

The first reading of Ordinance No. 793 – 2026 Salaries was approved on a motion by Shilhanek and seconded by Wambach. All members present voted aye.

Moved by Babcock and seconded by Cutler to hire Leah Jones as skating rink manager at a wage of \$13.10/hour plus \$250 per month. Abby Feldheim, Jamie Mitchek, Claire Schuelke, Sydney Locke, Addison Hoffman, Jordan Schwan, Tenley Frost, and Sophia Flihs were hired as skating rink attendants at a wage of \$11.85/hour. All members present voted aye.

Moved by Bahr and seconded by Babcock to adjourn the meeting at 8:45pm. All members present voted aye.

Scott Hanlon, Mayor
Douglas Heinrich, Finance Officer

Published December 17, 2025 at the total approximate cost of \$61.64 and may be viewed free of charge at www.sdpublicnotices.com. 26316



NOTICE OF VACANCY ON SCHOOL BOARD GROTON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 06-6

The following school board positions will become vacant on July 1, 2026, due to the expiration of the present terms of office of the following school board members:

Heather Lerseth-Flihs, 3-year term

Grant Rix, 3-year term
Circulation of nominating petitions may begin on February 2, 2026, and petitions may be filed in the office of the business manager located at Groton Area High School between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., central standard time not later than March 24, 2026, at 5:00 p.m., or mailed by registered mail and received no later than March 24, 2026, at 5:00 p.m.

Becky Hubsch, Business Official, Groton Area School District
Published December 17 and 24, 2025 at the total approximate cost of \$17.53 and may be viewed free of charge at www.sdpublicnotices.com. 26318



Board Motion - Adopt Supplemental Budget #FY26-1

RESOLUTION TO ADOPT SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET #FY26-1

Let it be resolved that the school board of the Groton Area School District, in accordance with SDCL 13-11-3.12, and after duly considering the proposed supplemental budget, hereby approves and adopts the following supplemental budget in total:

APPROPRIATIONS:
General Fund:
10-1250-000-319 Translator Services: \$400.00
10-1273-000-230-604 Title I Insurance: \$1,353.00

Capital Outlay:
21-2542-000-479 Facilities Non-Consumables: \$15,000.00
Total Appropriations: General Fund: \$1,753, Capital Outlay: \$15,000.

Means of Finance:
General Fund:
10-4158-604 Title I Carry-Over: #1,353.00
Cash on hand: \$400.00
Capital Outlay:
Cash on Hand: \$15,000.00
TOTAL MEANS OF FINANCE:
General Fund: \$1,753.00, Capital Outlay: \$15,000.00

Presiding Officer
Business Manager
Published December 17, 2025 at the total approximate cost of \$12.88 and may be viewed free of charge at www.sdpublicnotices.com. 26319



UNOFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION GROTON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 06-6 REGULAR MEETING DECEMBER 8, 2025 President Rix called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m. at the Hot Spot in Bristol, SD. Other members present: Fliehs, Harder, Lerseth-Fliehs, Strom, Weber, and Weismantel. Absent: None. Others present were Supt. J. Schwan, Principal Edwards, Principal Schwan, and Business Manager Hubsch.

Thank you to the Hot Spot of Bristol, SD, for hosting the board for their December meeting!

Moved by Strom, seconded by Weismantel, to approve the proposed agenda. Motion carried.

Pursuant to SDCL 23-3, no potential conflict of interest disclosure was reported.

Moved by Harder, seconded by Lerseth-Fliehs to approve consent agenda items: November 11, 2025, board minutes, and November 2025 financial reports, custodial accounts, investments, bills, lunch report, transportation, authorize business manager to pay district bills up to \$75,000 in advance, using the custodial advance payment account to be approved by the board for reimbursement at the following regular board meeting, approve open enrollments #26-12, #26-13, #26-14 due to special circumstances, and approve open enrollments #26-15, #26-16, and #26-17. Motion carried.

GENERAL FUND: Net Salary 325,729.23, Net Benefits 87,317.01; Amazon - awards, 1,108.00; ACT - student tests, 1,544.95; Advance Auto Parts - parts, 100.65; Amazon - supplies, 315.58; Automatic Building Controls - alarm monitoring, 600.00; Cedar Shore Resort - lodging, 602.39; Churchill, Manolis, Freeman, Kludt - legal fees, 87.55; Clubhouse - lodging, 206.35; Cole Papers - janitor supply, 1,640.10; College Board - PSAT testing, 370.08; Custodial Fund - advanced payments, 22,684.22; Dependable Sanitation - garbage, 1,404.00; Dollar General - supplies, 112.25; EMC Insurance Company - insurance, 15,115.39; Farmer's Union - oil, 87.84; Good Shred - shredding service, 51.50; Harlow's Bus Sales - parts, 440.11; Hilliard - janitor supplies, 197.12; House of Glass - bolt, 69.83; Interstate Battery - battery, 69.60; James Valley Telephone - telephone, 868.95; Jostens - Diplomas, 226.95; Matheson Tri-Gas - supplies, 122.13; Mid-American Research Chemical - janitor supply, 2,297.06; MJ's Sinclair - gas/diesel, 7,961.27; Municipal Management - law care prepay, 2,484.00; Northeast Technical Institute - NEAP membership, 60.00; NSU Career Services - career fair, 120.00; Ryan Olson - coaching fees, 150.00; Petty Cash - Bus title, 28.70; Productivity Plus - parts, 42.91; Prorate Services - D&A Renewal, 100.00; S&S Lumber - ia supplies, 1,494.70; Sanford Health - athletic training services, 140.00; SD Dept of Public Safety - fire marshal services, 80.00; Taylor Music - instrument repairs, 63.80; TreviPay - FACS Supplies, 280.29. Total General Fund - \$476,374.51.

CAPITAL OUTLAY: Amazon - equipment, 2,778.13; CO Architecture - master plan pmt, 4,900.00; Colliers -Admin fee, 300.00; Custodial Fund - advanced payments, 523.95; Dakota Supply Group - parts/materials, 892.44; Daktronics - scoreboard parts, 710.00; Follett Content Solutions - elem library books, 214.94; House of Glass - parts, 760.07. Total Capital Outlay - \$11,079.53.

SPECIAL EDUCATION: Net Salary 49,923.50 Net Benefits 14,400.23 Avera - PT/OT, 20,846.88; Custodial Fund - advanced payments, 944.13; TreviPay - Supplies, 37.10. Total Special Education - \$86,151.84.

ENTERPRISE FOOD SERVICE: Net Salary 10,924.80, Net Benefits 3,134.55 Food Service: Amazon - supplies, 100.14; Custodial Fund - advanced payments, 350.30; East Side Jersey Dairy - milk, 1,181.25; Performance Foodservice - food, 2,503.52; SD DOE - food, 773.92; US Foods - food, 3,888.79; Parent - refund, 40.25. Total Food Service - \$22,897.52.

ENTERPRISE OST: Net Salary 2,953.53, Net Benefits 341.32,

GROTON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT 06-6 FINANCIAL REPORTS							
	General Fund	Capital Outlay	Special Ed.	Food Service	OST	Driver's Ed	Custodial
November 1 2025	\$1,681,198.53	\$641,690.30	\$237,020.68	\$108,466.80	\$40,157.33	\$20,937.01	\$250,590.75
RECEIPTS							
Local Sources	\$1,259,334.22	\$663,990.20	\$315,725.11	\$14,311.04	\$13,591.52		\$79,657.33
County Sources	\$4,722.25						
State Sources							
State Aid	\$46,778.00						
Wind Farm							
Mentor Teacher Program							
State Apportionment							
State Reimbursements							
Bank Franchise							
Federal Sources					\$8,588.42		
Sale of Assets							
Due from Govt/Others							
Transfer In/Out							
TOTAL MONTHLY RECEIPTS	\$1,310,834.47	\$663,990.20	\$315,725.11	\$22,899.46	\$13,591.52	\$0.00	\$79,657.33
FUNDS AVAILABLE	\$2,992,033.00	\$1,305,680.50	\$552,745.79	\$131,366.26	\$53,748.85	\$20,937.01	\$330,248.08
MONTHLY DISBURSEMENTS	(\$510,348.40)	(\$486,324.09)	(\$85,159.15)	(\$26,821.90)	(\$4,304.27)		(\$60,165.62)
JOURNAL ENTRIES	\$1,224.80			\$254.36			
November 30. 2025	\$2,482,909.40	\$819,356.41	\$467,841.00	\$104,544.36	\$49,444.58	\$20,937.01	\$270,082.46
GENERAL FUND							
SPECIAL EDUCATION							
FOOD SERVICE							
Payroll							
Instruction	\$325,729.23	Instruction	\$49,923.50	Instruction	\$10,924.80	Instruction	\$2,953.53
Employee Benefits	\$87,317.01	Employee Benefits	\$14,400.23	Employee Benefits	\$3,134.55	Employee Benefits	\$341.32
Total	\$413,046.24	Total	\$64,323.73	Total	\$14,059.35	Total	\$3,294.85
Driver's Education							
Payroll							
Instruction	\$0.00						
Employee Benefits	\$0.00						
Total	\$0.00						

Custodial Fund - advanced payments, 5,755.05. Total OST: \$9,049.90.

ENTERPRISE DRIVERS ED: 0.00.

CUSTODIAL: 60,165.62

Members of the public are allowed five minutes to address the board on any topic of their choice. With no members wishing to speak, the board continued with the agenda.

The Board held a discussion regarding school district elections and voting precincts, with the change of legislation taking place. In the past, school elections took place in April at four different precincts. The state does not require cities, school districts, and counties to hold a combined election, which makes it difficult when the district spans five counties, with some counties willing to combine while others are not. The board assessed the viability of using multiple precinct sites for a school election, the financial impact, and the challenges of finding enough election workers for multiple precincts when competing with other schools, counties, and cities for election workers. The board also indicated that having a single centralized place to vote, such as the Groton Area High School, would eliminate confusion about where to vote on school-related issues, and that absentee voting is available for an extended period before the election, allowing people to vote in person at the school, or have the option to request an absentee ballot to be mailed to their home, and return it by mail.

Moved by Fliehs, and seconded by Weber, to set the date and time for the school board election to June 2, 2026, from 7:00 am-7:00 pm, and authorize the Business Manager to designate officials at the designated voting precinct located at the Groton Area High School. Motion carried. The three-year terms expiring are Grant Rix and Heather Lerseth-Fliehs.

The Board conducted its second reading of the recommended policy changes: DLA Payday Schedules, DJG Vendor Relations, and DJ Purchasing. DJBA Incidental Accounts and DJF Purchasing Procedures are to be reviewed for removal as policies. Motion carried.

Payday Schedules, DJG Vendor Relations, and DJ Purchasing. DJBA Incidental Accounts and DJF Purchasing Procedures are to be reviewed for removal as policies. Motion carried.

The following items were discussed in administrative reports: J. Schwan: Attended the statewide superintendent meeting in Chamberlain, where a discussion was held on the upcoming legislative session. The governor has proposed no increase in state aid to K-12 public schools. Other discussion topics of the group were preserving school board control over local school districts, holding school districts harmless in property tax legislation, opposition to public funding for private education, and student mental health/behavioral needs. Special Education Child Count on December 1st. The District's preliminary numbers show 118 students, from early childhood through 12th grade. Facilities Master Planning has begun with Co-Op Architects, as the group met on November 12, and the architects and engineers have conducted on-campus assessments of the high school facility's existing building condition. The public survey is now open and will be open until the first week of January. 311 Survey responses have been collected so far. The next step will be user group workshops for the steering committee, faculty, staff, and students, scheduled for the first two weeks of January.

B. Schwan reported elementary numbers at 266, OST will be open during the holiday break, and notices will be going out to parents about dates and how to register. The holiday concert will be on December 19 at 1 pm in the high school's old gymnasium. MAPS and Data meetings are currently taking place in the elementary. B. Schwan reviewed with the board how teacher evaluation documentation is conducted and provided information on the district's participation in the South Dakota DOE/BOR Literacy Pilot program, which is supporting the development of a comprehensive literacy plan for all grade levels. As part of the pilot program, the district will receive \$9,000 to support compensation, travel, and, if needed, instructional materials.

S. Edwards reported middle/high school enrollment at 298.

She is finishing up teaching evaluations for the first semester, and the MAPS testing window is open until the end of February. There will be a staff holiday party on December 10, with the venue being free, and food and door prizes provided by the Elementary and High School PAC programs. The middle school/high school band and vocal concert will be held on December 11, and Edwards participated in the NCSEC meeting focused on integrating AI into Special Education.

B. Hubsch provided quick facts about the following programs so far for the 2025-2026 school year. \$2,883.63 has been distributed to help offset student meal accounts for students in need this year, and so far \$2,344 has been donated by individuals and establishments. The Crow's Nest project expenses were \$75,623.31, and the football lighting and sound system upgrade was \$66,121. Donations collected were \$63,850, and \$14,533 in-kind, for these projects. The Bags program, which provides weekend meals to students, currently has 49 students enrolled, and 21 families also receive monthly hygiene kits. The Helping Hands account was established with the help of the former local Kiwanis Club. Boots, hats, snowpants, backpacks, and other student needs are purchased through this account. The weight room has had \$81,839.73 improvements made and \$70,695 in donations collected. Hubsch also highlighted the school board members in action this past month, with Heather Lerseth-Fliehs being a guest presenter in the Career Exploration class,

where she shared insights on being a Veterinarian and taught students how to suture using a banana and a suture kit. Samm Weber led the Agriculture IV: Horticulture class in a hands-on learning session on assembling outdoor floral arrangements that now beautify the high school's front and gymnasium entrances.

Moved by Harder, seconded by Weismantel, to approve the supplemental Budget #26-1. Motion carried.

Moved by Strom, seconded by Lerseth-Fliehs, to authorize the business manager to create a custodial account for Girls Softball. Motion carried. The Board discussed the need for an after-school weight room supervisor and will start advertising for the position.

The Board discussed virtual educational programming options. No action was taken.

The Board reviewed the preliminary 2026-2027 School Calendar.

The Board conducted its first reading of the recommended job description for the Technology Coordinator.

Moved by Harder, seconded by Weber, to approve hiring Kyle Gerlach as JH Boys Basketball Coach at \$2,340.00. Motion carried.

Motion by Fliehs, seconded by Harder, to approve Teagan Block as a Volunteer Wrestling Coach. Motion carried.

Moved by Fliehs, seconded by Weber, to approve the resignation of Aubray Harry as a cheer coach at the end of the 2025-2026 school year. Motion carried.

Moved by Fliehs, seconded by Harder, to approve the resignation of Maddie Bjerke as a cheer coach, at the end of the 2025-2026 school year. Motion carried.

Moved by Lerseth-Fliehs, seconded by Fliehs, to adjourn at 8:02 pm. Motion carried.

Becky Hubsch, Business Manager Grant Rix, President

The addition of signatures to this page verifies these minutes as official.

Published December 17, 2025 at the total approximate cost of \$189.33 and may be viewed free of charge at www.sdpublicnotices.com. 26320

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Groton Independent ♦ Wed., Dec. 17, 2025 ♦ 7

AI Data Centers Erasing Energy Efficiency Gains

by Enhan Yuan

Dear EarthTalk: What's being done to make data centers more energy efficient today, given in-

creased demand from the growth in Artificial Intelligence (AI)?

—Paul B., Reston, VA

The modern world hums with data, over 2.5 quintillion bytes generated every day, driving a growing network of data centers that consume one to two percent of global electricity. These centers operate around the clock, using tens of thousands of gigawatt-hours of power monthly. As AI expands, the energy demands of the digital economy will push tech companies to seek cleaner and more efficient solutions.

One advance comes from the University of Waterloo, where researchers developed ultra-efficient "code kernels" to speed internet traffic while cutting power. Data centers rely on the Linux operating system to route information. Computer scientist Martin Karsten and Fastly engineer Joe Damato created roughly 30 lines of code that could cut energy use by as much as 30 percent. Karsten estimates that widespread adoption could save considerable electricity worldwide—affecting nearly every online service request.

Companies are also rethinking how data centers are powered. Wind and solar offer clean energy, but their intermittency complicates matters. Google and Microsoft are investing in nuclear energy as a steady, carbon-free power source. Despite high upfront costs and public concern, nuclear's reliability and low emissions make it an increasingly attractive option. Hardware efficiency is also improving. Nvidia's new "superchips" can train AI models more quickly using less electricity per task. But with over 400 billion transistors packed onto a single chip, these processors generate enormous heat—creating another environmental burden: Heat is a major byproduct of data centers, and removing it takes huge amounts of water. In 2022 alone, Google and Microsoft consumed a total of 32 billion liters, largely for cooling. To reduce water dependence, some companies are testing liquid cooling systems that circulate oil-based fluids directly over hot components, conserving water and use much less energy than air cooling.

AI amplifies all of pressures. A single chatbot query can require up to 10 times the power of a standard web search, and some estimates suggest models like GPT-3 can consume a liter of water for every 40–100 responses. Large AI models are especially energy-intensive. Shifting to smaller, more efficient models, companies can reduce both costs and environmental impacts.

So, what can people do? For one, use less data. Efficiency alone often boosts consumption rather than reducing it. Cutting screen time, limiting unnecessary AI queries, and prioritizing real-world interactions can all help slow demand. Instead of endless scrolling, the most powerful response may be stepping outside—before the energy sustaining our virtual habits overwhelms the landscapes we seek to protect.

While this was Goodall's most well-known work, it was not her last. After receiving her Ph.D., Goodall continued to advocate for wildlife protection and conservation of endangered habitats. As a researcher, Goodall left her legacy on challenging the idea of human uniqueness. Her youth empowerment, reforestation and activism also inspired multiple generations to come together for conservation.



If we don't make data centers for artificial intelligence more efficient soon, the environmental consequences could be dire... Credit: Pexels.com.



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SHELL EXPRESS C-STORE Will close 6 pm December 24th

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FOOD FAIR & SHELL EXPRESS GROTON & IPSWICH Will be open 6am-6pm December 25th

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B.A.C.A is a national organization of parents that was formed to empower victims of child abuse and remove their fear. To find out more please join us Friday Dec. 19th 2 pm - 7 pm in front of the store.

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King Crossword

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ACROSS

1 Train alternative

4 Tease

7 Former frosh

8 Wyoming's — Range

10 Valerie Harper sitcom

11 Eventually

13 Play dough?

16 Observe

17 Concepts

18 Sailor

19 Peevish fit

20 Hardy lass

21 Winner's gesture

23 Seaboard

25 Sneaky laughs

26 Mediocre

27 Actress

28 Flinch, say

30 Gratuity

33 Work week start, for many

36 Some Algonquians

37 Smidgens

38 Where the action is

39 Family

40 Chang's brother

9 City on the Loire

10 Apt. divisions

12 Breadmaking need

14 Norse god

15 Decade parts (Abbr.)

19 Serena, to Venus

20 Eastern "way"

21 Snake poison one

22 "The Woman in Me" singer

23 Couturier Chanel

24 African bird

25 Scene stealer

26 "The Metamorphosis" protagonist

28 Asian noodles

29 Gawking at

30 Giant

31 — uproar

32 Film ratings

34 Challenge

35 The Big Easy acronym

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