



\$2

The Groton Independent

Vol. 143 No. 16 ♦ Groton, SD ♦ Wednesday, Jan. 01, 2026 ♦ Established in 1889



Several skaters were on the skating rink Monday afternoon playing hockey. However, by Wednesday, the ice started to melt from the sun and temperatures into the 40s.

Groton City Council talks park restroom fixes, recognizes city employee's 46-year career

By Elizabeth Varin

City council members tackled both a look to the future and a nod to the past during their meeting Tuesday night.

The council discussed long-needed improvements to the city park bathrooms while also honoring Public Works Coordinator and Street/Wastewater Superintendent Terry Herron for more than four decades of service to the community.

Herron, who is officially retiring Friday, was recognized for his 46 years and five months of work for the city. Council members thanked him for his dedication and commitment. Councilman Brian Bahr remembered seeing Herron working around town when he was a kid, even cleaning gutters on city buildings.

"Thank you for your service," he said. "It's a lot of years in one place."

Mayor Scott Hanlon shared similar sentiments, saying they really appreciate all he has done for the city.

"It's pretty hard to quit, but it's nice to slow down," he said. "A lot of guys say they're busier after they retire than before."

After an executive session, the employee salary list was amended to combine Terry Herron's and Dwight Zerr's positions into one to accommodate Herron's retirement and Zerr's promotion. Zerr will roll into Herron's role on Monday and Zerr's wage will increase to \$39.85 an hour.

In other business, the council revisited the ongoing discussion surrounding the condition of the city park bathrooms.

While the city is still waiting to hear from the Federal Emergency Management Agency about a possible grant and loan to rebuild the facilities and convert them into combined bathrooms and emergency shelters, the timeline for that project remains uncertain. The idea has been under discussion for years, and in the meantime, some community members have voiced growing frustration over the current state of the restrooms.

Councilman Kevin Nehls suggested making some immediate, smaller-scale improvements.

"Even if we don't get it funded, we're going to need to do something," he said. "We're just not doing the park any justice. Doing nothing is not a fix."

Nehls suggested making some smaller fixes to make the facility appear nicer until a long-term solution is put in place.

"It's not going to make it all better, but make it usable, maybe like new lighting."

The council discussed having the bathrooms as a community cleanup project this spring, though no definitive fixes were identified. Instead, the council indicated they would keep it on their radar as spring approaches.

- The council authorized going out to bid on a project to paint the exterior of City Hall/Wage Memorial Library. Sealed bids will be opened at 7 p.m. February 3.

- Applications are now being accepted for summer recreation positions, including baseball coordinator, softball coordinator, junior legion coach, junior teener coach, girls' softball coaches (U8/U10/U12/U14/U18), day baseball/softball coach, concession manager and swimming pool manager.

Alternative instruction grows in SD as public school enrollment declines, report says

BY: MAKENZIE HUBER SD SearchLight

Alternative instruction enrollment continues to rise in South Dakota, breaking 12,000 students enrolled in 2025, according to data released recently by the state Education Department. The growth comes as private and public school enrollment is declining in the state.

Area Schools with Alternative Instructions: Aberdeen 289, Britton-Hecla 38, Clark 28, Deuel 33, Doland 7, Frederick Area 12, Groton Area 45, Hamlin 82, Ipswich 3, Langford Area 14, Milbank 103, Mobridge-Pollock 51, Northwestern Area 6, Redfield 10, Sisseton 96, Warner 4, Webster Area 32. In the Groton Area School District, three are in kindergarten, one in first grade, three in second grade, two in third grade, five in fourth grade, five in fifth grade, five in sixth grade, three in seventh grade, three in eighth grade, six freshmen, two sophomores, five juniors and two seniors.

Across the state, 12,433 school-aged children are enrolled in alternative instruction, which includes homeschooling and some private schools — such as online, hybrid and microschoools — that are unaccredited, or accredited by an entity other than the state. Students notify the state when they enroll in alternative instruction.

Enrollment in alternative instruction has nearly tripled since 2015 — now making up 7.6% of children receiving an education in the state.

The growth comes as public education enrollment decreases in the state for a second consecutive year. Public education peaked in South Dakota in 2023, with 137,759 students enrolled. This year, 135,577 students are enrolled in public schools.

South Dakota Gov. Larry Rhoden told lawmakers during his budget address earlier this month that his administration expects public school enrollment to continue to decrease next year, due to growing alternative instruction enrollment and lower birth rates.

State-accredited private school enrollment — including religious and tribal schools — decreased slightly to 15,043 this year. Enrollment is still higher than 2023, when it was 14,741.

The Sioux Falls School District reported the largest increase in alternative instruction this year, with 131 more students enrolled. Harrisburg (78), Brandon Valley (67) and Rapid City (64) were also among the highest increases in alternative instruction enrollment in the state.

McLaughlin and Burke school districts reported some of the highest percentage increases of students enrolling in alternative instruction since last year.

In McLaughlin, 18 students enrolled in alternative instruction in 2025, a 157% increase from seven registered the year before. In Burke, 41 students enrolled in alternative instruction in 2025, a 156% increase from 16 in 2024.

Makenzie Huber is a lifelong South Dakotan who regularly reports on the intersection of politics and policy with health, education, social services and Indigenous affairs. Her work with South Dakota Searchlight earned her the title of South Dakota's Outstanding Young Journalist in 2024, and she was a 2024 finalist for the national Livingston Awards.



January Groton Community Calendar of Events

Thursday, Jan. 8, 2026

School Breakfast: Maple French toast.
School Lunch: Chicken patty, sweet potato puffs.
Emmanuel Lutheran: Nigeria Circle, 2 p.m.
Carnival of Silver Skates costume hand-out at Emmanuel Lutheran
Groton Lions Club Meeting at 104 N Main, 6 p.m.
Basketball at Clark: (GJV/BC-4, BJV/GC-5, GV-6:30, BV-7:45)
2nd Grade BBB Practice, 5 p.m.
4th Grade BBB Practice, 6 p.m.

Friday, Jan. 9, 2026

School Breakfast: Breakfast Boats.
School Lunch: Chicken Fajitas, refried beans.
Carnival of Silver Skates costume hand-out at Emmanuel Lutheran
Girls Wrestling at Miller/Highmore-Harrold Tourney, 4 p.m.
Robotics Set-up in the GHS Gym, 6 p.m.

Saturday, Jan. 10, 2026

Mixed Doubles Bowling Tournament at the Jungle, 1 p.m.
Groton Robotics Tourney, 8 a.m.
Boys Wrestling at Jesse James (Garretson) Tournament, 9:30 a.m.
Girls Wrestling at Mid-Dakota Monster (Lynman High School) Tournament, 10 a.m.
Basketball at Lennox: (Gym: BC-1, GC-2:15, Main Gym: JVGBB-1, JVBBB-2:15, VGGBB-3:30, VBBB-5:00)

Sunday, Jan. 11, 2026

St. John's Lutheran: Worship at St. John's, 9 a.m.; and at Zion, 11 a.m.; Sunday School, 9:45 a.m.
Emmanuel Lutheran: Worship with communion, 9 a.m.; Sunday School, 10:15 a.m.; Choir, 6 p.m.
United Methodist: Worship at Conde, 8:15 a.m.; at Groton, 9:30 a.m.; at Britton, 11:15 a.m.; Coffee Hour, 10:30 a.m.; Sunday School, 9:30 a.m.
Catholic: SEAS Confession, 7:45-8:15 a.m.; SEAS Mass, 8:30 a.m.; Turton Confession, 10:30-10:45 a.m.; Turton Mass, 11 a.m.
First Presbyterian Church: Bible Study, 9:30 a.m.; Worship, 11 a.m.
Groton CM&A: Sunday School, 9:15 a.m.; worship, 10:30 a.m.
Groton Soccer Association Clinics, GHS Arena, 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.
4th Grade BBB Practice, 1 p.m.
6th Grade BBB Practice, 6 p.m.
Dance Team Practice, 5 p.m.

Monday, Jan. 12, 2026

School Breakfast: Eggs.
School Lunch: Buffalo Chicken bake, cooked broccoli.
Emmanuel Lutheran: Bible Study, 6:30 a.m.
Groton Senior Citizens meet at the Groton Community Center, 1 p.m.
1st Grade BBB Practice, 4:30 p.m.
Groton JV Wrestling Jamboree, 5 p.m.
Girls Basketball at Northwestern: (C at 5 p.m.; JV at 6 p.m.; Varsity to follow)
5th/6th Grade Volleyball Practice, 6 p.m.
Kindergarten BBB Practice, 6 p.m.

Tuesday, Jan. 13, 2026

School Breakfast: Scones.
School Lunch: Chicken breast, cooked broccoli.
Emmanuel Lutheran: Council, 6 p.m.
Groton United Methodist: Bible Study, 10 a.m.

MS BBB at Roncalli, 4 p.m.
4th Grade BBB Practice, 5:30 p.m.

Wednesday, Jan. 14, 2026

School Breakfast: Breakfast pizza.
School Lunch: Cheese quesadilla, black beans.
Emmanuel Lutheran: Confirmation, 4 p.m.
United Methodist: Community Coffee Hour, 9:30 a.m.
Groton C&MA: Kid's Club, Youth Group, Adult Bible Study, 7 p.m.
2nd Grade BBB Practice, 5 p.m.
6th Grade BBB Practice, 6 p.m.
3rd/4th Grade Volleyball Practice, 6 p.m.
5th Grade BBB Practice, 6 p.m.

Thursday, Jan. 15, 2026

School Breakfast: Egg wraps.
School Lunch: Lasagna bake, green beans.
Little Leaders Cheer Clinic, 3:30 p.m.
Basketball: Tiospa Zina at Groton: (JVBBB-4, JVGBB-5, VBBB-6:15, VGGBB-7:30)
4th Grade BBB Practice, 6 p.m.
Boys Wrestling Triangular with Webster at Redfield, 6 p.m.

Friday, Jan. 16, 2026

School Breakfast: Cereal.
School Lunch: French bread pizza, corn.
Boys Wrestling at Philip Invitational, 10 a.m.
Girls Wrestling at Harrisburg Invitational, 4 p.m.
JH BBB at Milbank (7th at 4 p.m., 8th at 5 p.m.)

Saturday, Jan. 17, 2026

Boys Wrestling at Battler Invitational (Gettysburg), 10 a.m.
Boys Basketball: Dakota Valley at Groton: (BC-2, JVB-3:15, VB-4:30)

Sunday, Jan. 18, 2026

St. John's Lutheran: Worship with communion at St. John's, 9 a.m.; and at Zion, 11 a.m.; Sunday School, 9:45 a.m.
Emmanuel Lutheran: Worship, 9 a.m.; Sunday School, 10:15 a.m.; Choir, 6 p.m.
United Methodist: Worship at Conde, 8:15 a.m.; at Groton, 9:30 a.m.; at Britton, 11:15 a.m.; Coffee Hour, 10:30 a.m.; Sunday School, 9:30 a.m.
Catholic: SEAS Confession, 7:45-8:15 a.m.; SEAS Mass, 8:30 a.m.; Turton Confession, 10:30-10:45 a.m.; Turton Mass, 11 a.m.
First Presbyterian Church: Bible Study, 9:30 a.m.; Worship, 11 a.m.
Groton CM&A: Sunday School, 9:15 a.m.; worship, 10:30 a.m.
Groton Soccer Association Clinics, GHS Arena, 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.
4th Grade BBB Practice, 1 p.m.
6th Grade BBB Practice, 6 p.m.
Dance Team Practice, 5 p.m.

Monday, Jan. 19, 2026

School Breakfast: Stuffed bagels.
School Lunch: Oriental chicken, egg rolls.
Emmanuel Lutheran: Bible Study, 6:30 a.m.
Senior Citizens meet at the Groton Community Center, 1 p.m.
1st Grade BBB Practice, 4:30 p.m.
5th/6th Grade Volleyball Practice, 6 p.m.
5th Grade BBB Practice, 6 p.m.
Kindergarten BBB Practice, 6 p.m.
MS Boys Wrestling at Redfield Invitational, 5:30 p.m.

Tuesday, Jan. 20, 2026

School Breakfast: Breakfast slider.
School Lunch: Tater hot hot dish, cooked broccoli.
City Council Meeting, 7 p.m.
Emmanuel Lutheran: Confirmation, 4 p.m.; League, 6:30 p.m.

Groton United Methodist: Bible Study, 10 a.m.
MS Boys Wrestling at Simmons Middle School, 4 p.m.
Boys Wrestling Triangular with Clark/Willow Lake at Hamlin, 6 p.m.
JH BBB at Northwestern, 6 p.m.

Wednesday, Jan. 21, 2026

School Breakfast: Omelets.
School Lunch: Pasta primavera.
United Methodist: Community Coffee Hour, 9:30 a.m.; Groton Ad Council, 7 p.m.
Groton C&MA: Kid's Club, Youth Group, Adult Bible Study, 7 p.m.
6th Grade BBB Practice, 6 p.m.
3rd/4th Grade Volleyball Practice, 6 p.m.
5th Grade BBB Practice, 6 p.m.

Thursday, Jan. 22, 2026

School Breakfast: Biscuits.
School Lunch: Sloppy joes, tri taters.
Basketball: Milbank at Groton: (Gym: BC-4, GC-5, Arena: JVGBB-4, JVBBB-5, VGGBB-6:15, VBBB-7:30)
2nd Grade BBB Practice, 5 p.m.
4th Grade BBB Practice, 6 p.m.

Friday, Jan. 23, 2026

School Breakfast: Doughnuts.
School Lunch: Chicken ala king, biscuit.
Girls Wrestling at Pierre Invitational, 4 p.m.
Boys Wrestling vs. Deuel/Deubrook Area at Deuel, 6 p.m.
MS BBB at Redfield, 6 p.m.

Saturday, Jan. 24, 2026

Groton Ford "C" Team Classic at Groton with Warner, Mobridge-Pollock and Sisseton, 10 a.m.
Boys Wrestling at Kingsbury County Invitational (Arlington), 10 a.m.

Sunday, Jan. 25, 2026

St. John's Lutheran: Worship at St. John's, 9 a.m.; and at Zion, 11 a.m.; Sunday School, 9:45 a.m.
Emmanuel Lutheran: Worship at 9 a.m. with congregational meeting to follow; Sunday School, 10:15 a.m.; Choir, 6 p.m.
United Methodist: Worship at Conde, 8:15 a.m.; at Groton, 9:30 a.m.; at Britton, 11:15 a.m.; Coffee Hour, 10:30 a.m.; Sunday School, 9:30 a.m.
Catholic: SEAS Confession, 7:45-8:15 a.m.; SEAS Mass, 8:30 a.m.; Turton Confession, 10:30-10:45 a.m.; Turton Mass, 11 a.m.
First Presbyterian Church: Bible Study, 9:30 a.m.; Worship, 11 a.m.
Groton CM&A: Sunday School, 9:15 a.m.; worship, 10:30 a.m.
Carnival of Silver Skates, 2 p.m. and 6 p.m.
Groton Soccer Association Clinics, GHS Arena, 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.
4th Grade BBB Practice, 2 p.m.
6th Grade BBB Practice, 6 p.m.
Dance Team Practice, 5 p.m.

Monday, Jan. 26, 2026

School Breakfast: Egg bake.
School Lunch: Corn dogs, baked beans.
Emmanuel Lutheran: Bible Study, 6:30 a.m.
Groton Senior Citizens meet with potluck dinner at the Groton Community Center, noon.
1st Grade BBB Practice, 4:30 p.m.
5th/6th Grade Volleyball Practice, 6 p.m.
5th Grade BBB Practice, 6 p.m.
Kindergarten BBB Practice, 6 p.m.
Boys MS Wrestling at Ipswich, 6 p.m.
JH BBB at Britton-Hecla (7th at 4 p.m., 8th at 5 p.m.)

Continues on next page

Tuesday, Jan. 27, 2026

School Breakfast: Muffins.
 School Lunch: Pasta bake, green beans.
 Groton United Methodist: Bible Study, 10 a.m.
 JH BBB: Sisseton at Groton (7th at 4 p.m., 8th at 5 p.m.)
 GBB at Aberdeen Roncalli: (GC-5, JVGBB-6, VGBB-7:30)
 Girls and Boys Wrestling at Garretson, 5 p.m.

Wednesday, Jan. 28, 2026

School Breakfast: Oatmeal.
 School Lunch: Soup and (tbd), sandwich.
 Emmanuel Lutheran: Confirmation, 4 p.m.
 United Methodist: Community Coffee Hour, 9:30 a.m.
 Groton C&MA: Kid's Club, Youth Group, Adult Bible Study, 7 p.m.
 6th Grade BBB Practice, 6 p.m.
 3rd/4th Grade Volleyball Practice, 6 p.m.
 5th Grade BBB Practice, 6 p.m.

Thursday, Jan. 29, 2026

School Breakfast: Maple French toast bake.
 School Lunch: Chicken tacos, refried beans.
 JH BBB at Webster (7th at 4 p.m., 8th at 5 p.m.)
 GBB at Webster (JV at 6 p.m., Varsity to follow)
 2nd Grade BBB Practice, 5 p.m.
 4th Grade BBB Practice, 6 p.m.

Friday, Jan. 30, 2026

School Breakfast: Breakfast boats.
 School Lunch: Garlic Cheese Bread, Cooked carrots.
 Girls Wrestling at Aberdeen Central Invitational, 3:30 p.m.
 Boys Wrestling hosts Britton-Hecla, 6 p.m.

Saturday, Jan. 31, 2026

Groton Invitational Wrestling Tournament, 10 a.m.
 Boys DakXII/NEC Basketball Clash at Madison

Weekly Tiger Hoops Recap

Groton Area basketball teams turned in a productive and revealing week on the court, combining dominant performances, gritty defensive wins, and valuable lessons against quality competition.

Tigers Roll Past Webster, 63-42

The Tiger boys opened the week with one of their most complete efforts of the season, rolling past Webster Area 63-42 on Tuesday night. Groton set the tone early, leading 18-11 after one quarter before exploding in the second period. Back-to-back dunks ignited a 12-point run and helped the Tigers take a commanding 43-18 halftime lead.

"I thought we came out with good intensity," head coach Greg Kjellsen said. "I was really pleased with our defensive effort."

Groton extended the lead to 57-24 after three quarters, triggering the continuous clock. Ryder Johnson led the Tigers with 13 points, while Keegen Tracy and Karson Zak added 10 points each. Gage Sippel chipped in eight points, five rebounds, and two blocks. Kjellsen praised his team's unselfish play.

"The kids really shared the ball—almost to a fault," he said. "I don't think they really care who gets the points as long as it's us."

The Tigers also swept the sub-varsity games, with the C team winning 42-14 and the junior varsity earning a 48-18 victory.

Lady Tigers Rally Past Lemmon, 51-47

On the girls' side Tuesday, Groton battled back from a halftime deficit to defeat Lemmon 51-47 in Aberdeen. After trailing 25-21 at the break, the Lady Tigers outscored Lemmon 18-12 in the third quarter and closed out the four-point win.

Rylee Dunker recorded a double-double with 11 points and 11 rebounds, while Taryn Traphagen led all scorers with a season-high 16 points. Jaedyn Penning added 12 points, and Jerica Locke finished with 10 as Groton leaned on balanced scoring and rebounding to secure the win.

Lady Tigers Lock Down Vermillion, 41-34

Friday night, the Lady Tigers relied on defense and physical play on the boards to grind out a 41-34 win over Vermillion. After falling behind early, Groton responded with an 11-point run and never relinquished control.

"We weren't going to let their best player beat us," head coach Matt Locke said. "It took everybody."

Groton finished with 47 total rebounds, including 19 offensive boards. Traphagen led the way with 12 points, while Dunker added nine points and 13 rebounds. Jerica Locke chipped in 10 points. Groton also swept the JV (41-12) and C (25-15) games.

Tigers Fall to Vermillion, 66-57

The Tiger boys came up short Friday night, falling 66-57 to Vermillion despite one of their best halves of the season. Groton led 34-28 at halftime, shooting efficiently inside, but second-chance points fueled a Vermillion rally in the second half.

"Rebounding is effort and attitude, and we didn't have it in the second half," Kjellsen said.

Ryder Johnson led Groton with 21 points, while Gage Sippel recorded a double-double with 16 points and 10 rebounds. Keegen Tracy added 12 points. The Groton C team earned a 49-41 win, while the JV Tigers dropped a close 42-36 decision.

Lady Tigers Win Fourth Straight at Warner, 54-42

Both teams bounced back Tuesday night with road wins at Warner. The Lady Tigers continued their momentum with a 54-42 victory, pulling away in the second half behind strong perimeter shooting and defense.

Taryn Traphagen led all scorers with 20 points, knocking down five three-pointers. Rylee

Dunker followed with 14 points, while Jerica Locke added 11 points and seven assists.

"She's starting to find her stride," Locke said of Traphagen. "When she's in rhythm, she's really hard to guard."

The JV girls also earned a 34-19 win.

Tigers Surge Past Warner, 66-45

The Tiger boys closed the week with a strong second-half performance, defeating Warner 66-45. After a back-and-forth first half, Groton ripped off a 12-point run early in the third quarter to seize control.

"I thought we relaxed in the second half," Kjellsen said. "Defensively, our kids played hard and stopped giving them easy things."

Ryder Johnson posted a double-double with 18 points and 15 rebounds, while Karson Zak scored a season-high 14 points and Gage Sippel added 13. The Tigers also won the JV game 28-15.

King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Sketch
- 5 Old name for France
- 9 Microwave
- 12 Top-of-the-line
- 13 Golden Rule preposition
- 14 "As I see it," in a text
- 15 Lady of Spain
- 16 Teen fave
- 17 Stannum
- 18 Out of control
- 19 Pool unit
- 20 Faction
- 21 Humorist
- 23 Follower (Suff.)
- 25 Cerebral
- 28 Car safety feature
- 32 Tree bumps
- 33 Unfettered
- 34 Closed tight
- 36 Outlaw
- 37 Summer in Paris
- 38 Flavor enhancer, for short
- 39 Aspic shaper
- 42 Pair
- 44 Now, in a memo
- 48 Rock producer Brian
- 49 TV's Griffin
- 50 Painter
- 51 Thesaurus wd.
- 52 DLI doubled
- 53 Partner
- 54 Chopper
- 55 Diminutive suffix
- 56 Dance move

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
12				13				14			
15				16				17			
18				19			20				
			21	22		23	24				
25	26	27				28			29	30	31
32							33				
34				35		36					
			37			38					
39	40	41		42	43			44	45	46	47
48				49				50			
51				52				53			
54				55				56			

- 8 Texter's guffaw
- 9 Tubular pasta
- 10 During
- 11 Corn concoction
- 20 Coerces
- 22 Map feature
- 24 "The Da Vinci Code" monk
- 25 Small ammo
- 26 Wish undone
- 27 Coach
- 29 Parseghian
- 30 "— was saying ..."
- 31 Retrieve
- 35 Sense
- 36 Low-budget flick
- 39 Small plateau
- 40 Cameo stone
- 41 Single
- 43 Legal document
- 45 Plane reservation
- 46 Pot starter
- 47 Incubator noise
- 49 Bovary's title (Abbr.)

© 2026 King Features Synd., Inc.

Marty Weismantel
 605/396-7341
 weisag@nvc.net

AGENCY: AUTO, HOME, FARM, COMMERCIAL, CROP

PROGRESSIVE, SOUTH DAKOTA PUBLIC ASSURANCE ALLIANCE, GREAT AMERICAN, North Star, Northwest of, SFM

ACCESS TO MANY MORE COMPANIES!

Weekly SUDOKU

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

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!

© 2026 King Features Synd., Inc.



I would imagine that when the NFL schedule makers paired the Vikings and Packers in a week 18 matchup, they envisioned two playoff teams battling it out for the NFC North and a better postseason position. Instead, the Vikings have been eliminated for weeks, and the Packers were locked into the 7th seed whether they win or lose, which led to a lackluster game with zero stakes. The Packers sat most of their starters, treating this game almost like a preseason game. The Vikings, meanwhile, were playing for pride and to build momentum with their young QB that'll hopefully carry over into next season. The ending was never in doubt, with the Vikings taking the 16-3 win to finish the 2025 season with a 9-8 record.

The Vikings got the ball first and were moving down the field with ease – three of their first four plays resulted in a first down – but a taunting penalty on J.J. McCarthy set them back 15 yards and stalled the drive, forcing a field goal attempt to take a 3-0 lead. As bad as the penalty was, I can't blame the kid – he had a

great stiff arm on a Packers' defender before lowering his shoulder and bowling over another defender on his way out of bounds.

After the solid opening drive, the game slowed down considerably, with both teams combining for seven straight punts.

Halfway through the second quarter, the Vikings put together a 14-play, 86-yard drive, but three straight incompletions from the seven-yard line led to another Will Reichard field goal. A Packers three-and-out on their next drive gave the ball back to Minnesota with almost two minutes left in the half, and nine plays later, C.J. Ham plunged into the endzone for the first touchdown of the game, making the score 13-0 heading into halftime. There are rumors that this will be Ham's last game in the NFL, so it was nice to see him get one more touchdown to cap off his impressive career.

After halftime, you could tell both teams just wanted to get out of this game with no injuries, resulting in a lot of handoffs and clock management. Unfortunately for Minnesota, quarterback J.J. McCarthy left early in the second half after reinjuring his hand. It's unclear if it was a serious injury or if they held him out the remainder of the game as a precaution, but what IS clear is that the Vikings need to bring in a veteran backup because the likelihood of McCarthy playing a full season is slim to none.

The fourth quarter was a continuation of the third, with both teams running out the clock. The Vikings managed to add another field goal to extend their lead to 16-0, and Green Bay got the ball back with four minutes left on the clock. The Packers could have let the clock run out,

but this is a divisional matchup, so with one second left on the clock, they called a timeout and marched their field goal unit on the field to add three points as time expired to avoid a shutout.

J.J. McCarthy completed 14 of 23 passes for 182 yards. He didn't have a touchdown, but he also didn't throw an interception or take a sack, which is certainly an improvement. Brosmer took over after halftime and completed 7 of 8 passes for 57 yards.

Jordan Mason got the majority of the carries with Aaron Jones injured and finished with 94 yards on 14 carries. Ty Chandler got 10 carries in the game but could only manage 23 yards. Justin Jefferson had 8 catches for 101 yards, and is only the third player in NFL history to have over 1,000 yards in their first six seasons. Jalen Nailor had 3 catches for 49 yards.

Defensively, the Vikings had four sacks, eight tackles for a loss, three pass deflections, and five QB hits.

The player of the game was Dallas Turner. The 2024 first-round pick has certainly started to come into his own, and he had two sacks, two tackles for a loss, and two QB hits on Sunday. His progression this season was one of the few bright spots, and he's poised to take a leap in year three.

Looking ahead, the Vikings are out of the playoffs, so we'll be breaking down the other matchups next weekend as 14 teams try to bring home a Super Bowl victory.

The Groton Independent

21 N Main, Groton 605/397-NEWS (6397)
Paul Irvin Kosel, Publisher paperpaul@grotonsd.net ~ 605-397-7460

Tina Kosel, Office Manager office@grotonsd.net ~ 605-397-7285

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

© 2026 The Groton Independent

The Groton Independent Printed & Mailed Weekly Edition Subscription Form

All prices listed include 6.2% Sales Tax

- Black & White \$52.00/year
- Colored \$80.00/year
- Colored \$49.00/6 months
- E-Weekly* \$35.00/year

* The E-Weekly is a PDF file emailed to you each week. It does not grant you access to the GDI/Video Archives.

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City _____

State, Zip Code _____

E-mail _____

Phone Number _____

Groton Daily Independent www.397news.com Subscription Form

This option will grant you access to the GDI/Video Archives.

- 1 Month \$16.00
- 3 Months \$28.00
- 6 Months \$38.00
- 9 Months \$52.00
- 12 Months \$60.00

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City _____

State, Zip Code _____

Phone Number _____

Mail Completed Form to:

Groton Independent

P.O. Box 34

Groton, SD 57445-0034

or scan and email to paperpaul@grotonsd.net

"Beyond Memory Loss: The Human Side of Dementia"

First, you notice the small changes. It may be challenging to find the right word or remember the name of someone you just met. You may forget where you placed your keys when you came home from the grocery store. Overall, you feel healthy, and these instances are easily brushed off as a normal part of aging or the result of poor sleep the night before. However, over time, these instances become more frequent, and you start to miss appointments or struggle to organize your shopping list. If this sounds like you or someone you know, it is time to seek medical help to get screened for dementia.

Dementia is an umbrella term for diseases, such as Alzheimer's, that cause abnormal brain changes. Over six million adults in the U.S. are living with dementia. There is no clearly identified cause for dementia, but risk factors include age, genetics, family history and lifestyle choices. The cognitive decline associated with dementia may impact a person's memory, thinking, mood, behavior and functioning. As the disease progresses, the person will need greater assistance with everyday tasks, such as balancing their checkbook, driving, preparing meals and grocery shopping, and eventually with personal care, such as dressing, bathing and toileting. Though new research has identified promising medications to treat the symptoms and slow the disease progression, there is no cure for dementia.

As the disease progresses, its effects reach beyond the individual who has received the diagnosis. The person living with dementia will require increasing levels of support, which is frequently provided by unpaid family members or friends, referred to as care partners or caregivers. These care partners dedicate significant time and financial resources to assist the person with dementia as their needs intensify. Often, they assume responsibilities around the clock and may feel isolated.

If you or someone you love is in this situation, the first step is to seek a diagnosis. Schedule an appointment with your primary care doctor to discuss your concerns. They might refer you to a specialist for further evaluation. Once diagnosed, reach out to the support services available in your community and online. Resources are available through organizations such as the Alzheimer's Association and the Veterans Affairs, as well as state agencies such as the Department of Human Services. No one needs to face this journey alone. These organizations provide education, respite care, meal preparation, light housekeeping, personal care and support groups. Check with your state to see what resources may be available to you.

In addition to seeking support, it is important to remember that maintaining a sense of purpose and connection can make a meaningful difference for both the person living with dementia and their care partners. Engaging in familiar routines, enjoying favorite activities, and nurturing relationships with family and friends provide comfort and help preserve quality of life. Simple adaptations—like labeling cabinets, organizing daily schedules or using reminder notes—can promote independence and reduce frustration in the early stages. Open communication among loved ones, health professionals and support networks is key to adapting to changing needs. While the journey with dementia brings many challenges, focusing on strengths, celebrating small victories and accessing available resources can help foster resilience and hope for everyone involved.





City of Columbia Council Meeting – November 5, 2025
CALL MEETING TO ORDER – 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL – Dana Mohr, Cara Dennert, Scott Meints, Sam Hoppock, Jeremy Dosch

Community: Lisa Mohr, Pam Blair, Michelle Johnson, Julie Voeller, Angela Grieb

Mayor Dana Mohr called the meeting to order. Dana called for a motion to approve the agenda. Scott Meints made a motion to approve the agenda. Sam Hoppock seconded the motion. All in favor – motion carried.

Warrant Vouchers Web Water – fire prevention – 54.56; Double D Lot Service – park lawn care – 8400.00; Northwestern Energy – electricity – 1252.66; JVT – fire prevention – 213.97; Jeremy Dosch – October wages – 795.25; Cara Dennert – October wages – 1317.60; GDI – publications – 335.33; Johnson Rock & Gravel – street supplies – 1846.70; SDML – Renewal Billing/ Workmen's Comp. Fund – 445.00; Brown County Treasurer – mosquito control – 1152.62

Scott Meints made a motion to approve the vouchers. Sam Hoppock seconded the motion. All in favor - motion carried.

COMMUNITY COMMENTS /CORRESPONDENCE: - Julie wanted to thank the city for the tree removal. Angela asked about the cost of electricity in the city. There was also a question regarding opening a store. The council recommends they contact the Brown County Zoning Committee & the State Department of Revenue.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS- The new lagoon area will be staked soon, and soil boring will also take place.

Nuisances – Scott and Sam have been looking over/working on some revisions of the Brown County dog ordinances. They still want to talk with the Brown County Sheriff to iron out some of the additions. Hopefully we can have a 1st reading at next month's meeting.

Streets –The roads need to be bladed one more time before winter. Jeremy is also lining up a load of gravel to stockpile for spring work.

Parks – There is some winterizing happening to the new park.

Lagoon/Sewer-There was a lot purchased in town that does not currently hook into the city sewer system. Jeremy will talk to a contractor to get some bids.

Rubble Site – no report

NEW BUSINESS A resident asked about our population signs in town. They state 137. He thought we were at 185. The last Census reported 147. This is a county sign issue. Scott will ask the highway department about it. Cara mentioned that she was interested in attending the SDATAT Annual Meeting. They are having some round table discussions for towns of less than 1500. The board gave their approval for her to attend. Scott Meints made a motion to go into executive session to discuss city attorney. Sam Hoppock seconded the motion. Executive Session started at 7:34pm. Council came out of executive session at 8:47 pm. Sam Hoppock made a motion to approve appointing Vaughn Beck as our new city lawyer. Scott Meints seconded the motion. All were in favor – motion carried. Cara will be in contact with all possible candidates.

FINANCIAL REPORT – Cara presented bank balances. Jeremy Dosch made a motion to accept the financial reports as given. Scott Meints seconded the motion. All were in favor – motion carried.

October 31, 2025, balances: SF - \$ 96,642.31; SF Money Market –\$ 153,122.13;

GF - \$ 173,754.43; GF Money Market - \$ 51,378.57; CD Money Market - \$ 41,724.55

FIT - \$16,083.56; Cash on hand - \$0

Mayor Mohr adjourned the meeting.

Next City Council Meeting – Wednesday, December 3rd , 2025 – 7:00 p.m

Submitted by Cara Dennert, Finance Officer

Published January 7, 2026 at the total approximate cost of \$38.74 and may be viewed free of charge at www.sdpublicnotices.com. 26419



City of Columbia Council Meeting – December 3, 2025

CALL MEETING TO ORDER – 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL –Dana Mohr, Cara Dennert, Scott Meints, Sam Hoppock, Trevor Meints

Community: Vaugh Beck, Isaac Abeln, Josh Larson, Collin Eichler, Cole Kampa, Lorie Gilchrist, Cyndy Larson, Michelle Johnson, Patti Daly, Lisa Mohr

Mayor Dana Mohr called the meeting to order. Dana called for a motion to approve the agenda. Scott Meints made a motion to approve the agenda. Sam Hoppock seconded the motion. All in favor – motion carried. Dana called for any conflict of interest on agenda items. There were no conflicts. Minutes were handed out from the November 5th meeting. Trevor Meints made a motion to approve the minutes. Sam Hoppock seconded the motion. All were in favor – motion carried.

Warrant Vouchers Web Water – fire prevention – 56.86; Double D Lot Service – park lawn care– 3357.50; Northwestern Energy – electricity – 1180.31; JVT – fire prevention – 213.22; Jeremy Dosch– November wages –1279.22; Cara Dennert – November wages– 1317.60; Scott Meints – November wages – 18.48; Runnings – Shop Supplies – 48.41; Public Health Lab – water analysis – 26.00; Johnson Rock & Gravel – street supplies – 1254.93; DANR – environmental yearly dues – 150.00;Pomp Tire Service – tire repair – 48.54

Scott Meints made a motion to approve the vouchers. Sam Hoppock seconded the motion. All in favor - motion carried.

COMMUNITY COMMENTS /CORRESPONDENCE: -

UNFINISHED BUSINESS- waste water project – Boring and studies have been completed. Results are not back yet. NECOG will get results first. We are up to date with paperwork for project.

Nuisances – Scott reviewed the revised ordinance for approval. The council gave it a first reading. The second reading will happen at the January meeting.

Streets – They are looking good.

Parks – Patti Daly provided an update on the enclosed park structure. She will find funding for the building. She is just looking to the city to cover mainly the costs of electricity & insurance. She also stated that she wouldn't mind doing some fundraising to help offset those costs. As far as the design of the building, she will keep with the aesthetics of other buildings in the park. Jeremy is going to send some soil samples to the University of Minnesota to see what the well water has done to the soil over the past three years. Dana talked to someone at Beadles and it was estimated that the cost of fertilizing should be a third of what it is currently.

Lagoon/Sewer- Stockwell gave a rough estimate of what it will cost to run sewer to the property that is planning to put a house near Lake Blvd. Currently that property does not have access to city sewer lines. The estimated cost will be \$60 - \$80,000. The council (and our lawyer) will need to look at our city's sewer ordinances to see how this will be addressed and possibly update those ordinances.

Rubble Site – no report

NEW BUSINESS – The Columbia Baseball Committee was present to discuss their portion of the sign that was put in the baseball field. They had no idea how much the installation would be. Josh showed the breakdown of the costs. Cyndy discussed how the State Community Foundation works and that if the city would apply for a grant for this installation cost, if we are awarded the money, we can then give that back to the baseball committee. Our lawyer, Vaughn Beck said that it is

common practice for that kind of situation to occur. Scott Meints made a motion to apply for the grant. Trevor Meints seconded the motion. All were in favor – motion carried. Mayor Mohr also mentioned that we need to have a signed contract with the Columbia Baseball Committee before the 2026 season starts. Vaughn Beck introduced himself to the council. His main office is in Ipswich. His daughter Emily is in practice with him. He stated we can call or bring him in on a zoom meeting anytime we have questions.

FINANCIAL REPORT – Cara presented bank balances. Sam Hoppock made a motion to accept the financial reports as given. Trevor Meints seconded the motion. All were in favor – motion carried.

November 30, 2025, balances: SF - \$ 99,217.48; SF Money Market –\$ 153,235.40;

GF - \$ 188,428.49; GF Money Market - \$ 51,416.58; CD Money Market - \$ 41,755.41

FIT - \$16,131.48; Cash on hand - \$0

Mayor Mohr adjourned the meeting.

Next City Council Meeting – Wednesday, January 7th, 2026 – 7:00 p.m

Submitted by Cara Dennert, Finance Officer

Published January 7, 2026 at the total approximate cost of \$45.24 and may be viewed free of charge at www.sdpublicnotices.com. 26420



NOTICE OF HEARING

Application has been made to the Brown County Planning/Zoning Commission for a CONDITIONAL USE PETITION (CUP). A hearing will be held in the Basement Community Room, Brown County Courthouse Annex, on January 20, 2026, at 7:00 P.M.

Petitioner / Owner: Comstock Construction / DSC Properties
Legal description of property: Lot 1, "Browning First Addition" in the NW1/4 of Section 22-T123N-R64Wof the 5th P.M., Brown County, South Dakota (717 S 385th Avenue; Aberdeen Twp.).

Reason: A Conditional Use Petition (CUP) to remodel the interior of the existing business in a Heavy Industrial District (H-I).

The public may attend the hearing and present comments and testimony regarding the proposed Conditional Use Petition (CUP) request.

Dated this 7th day of January 2026.

Planning/Zoning Commission and

Scott Bader – P&Z Director
25 Market Street
Aberdeen, SD 57401

Office: (605) 626-7144

Published January 7, 2026 at the total approximate cost of \$12.57 and may be viewed free of charge at www.sdpublicnotices.com. 26421



DECEMBER 30, 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 Gage led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Chairman Sutton shared they were postponing Second Reading/Possible Adoption on Ordinance #302 – Wind Energy Systems so that would be removed from the agenda. Moved by Commissioner Wiese, seconded by Dennert to approve the amended agenda. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

BID OPENING FOR BROWN COUNTY HIGHWAY 14 PROJECT: Time and place, as advertised, to open, read and consider sealed bids for Brown County Hwy 14 Improvements, which includes 7" Nonreinforced PCC Pavement and additional items set forth in the Contract Documents. Bids were received from the following: BX Civil & Construction for

\$412,541.70; Huff Construction for \$359,937.15; Wright & Sudlow, Inc for \$349,922.24; Reede Construction, Inc. for \$289,361.75 and Timmons Construction, Inc. for \$605,537.04. Moved by Commissioner Wiese, seconded by Gage to defer for review. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

DISCUSS BRIDGE 346/HECLA AREA: Dirk Rogers, Highway Superintendent, shared that the County has gone down from 164 Bridges to 130 over the years. He shared some background information on BR346 – stating that the bridge was actually moved in from another location back in 1968, which replaced the original bridge built in 1940. There has been some work on it over the years, but it was due to the Bridge Inspection done by IMEG that it needed to be closed. To replace it would cost \$2.4 million, which is not feasible. Mike Elsen from Liberty Township asked if the bridge is historic and voiced concerns about if there would be a fire in the area they would need to cross on that bridge. He stated that a lot of people use it for access to Sand Lake/scenic for Eagles, Geese, etc. Dirk stated they may be able to get it added to the Historic Bridge Register. Hal Treeby from Hecla Township asked why Dirk feels that a low-water crossing wouldn't work. Dirk shared that they haven't had luck with others they have installed; water comes up too high to maintain it in that area it would probably wash out, amount of pipe they would need to offset the rise isn't feasible. The overall problem is the bridge itself. Chelsey Sheridan with IMEG shared that it would cost \$300,000 just for the foundation of the bridge to be replaced. Matt Heupel, Highway Roads & Bridges Operations Supervisor, shared the bridge is the highest part of the road, the rest of road floods every year. After further discussion, Dirk will look for options on what can be done to open the road; check for any grants and/or funding from Sand Lake possibly as well.

AWARD BID FOR BROWN COUNTY HIGHWAY 14 PROJECT: Mike Gutenkauf, IMEG returned and stated the bid from Reede Construction checked out. Dirk Rogers, Highway Superintendent, recommended accepting the bid from Reede Construction, Inc. Moved by Commissioner Dinger, seconded by Wiese to award the Brown County Highway 14 Project Bid to Reede Construction, Inc. at the cost of \$289,361.75. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

PUBLIC HEARING – TEMPORARY SPECIAL EVENT ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE LICENSE: Time and place, as advertised for Public Hearing for a Temporary Special Event Alcohol License for Malt Beverage and Wine to be used by Aberdeen Area Chamber of Commerce was held. Moved by Commissioner Dinger, seconded by Wiese to approve the following Temporary Special Event Alcohol License for Aberdeen Area Chamber of Commerce, Aberdeen, SD for Business After Hours to be held at AgTegra Innovation Center, Lt 2 SDWG Bath – Grebner Terminal ADD (39278 133rd St., Bath, SD) Brown County, SD; effective January 8, 2026. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

UNCOLLECTIBLE MOBILE HOMES TAXES: Patty VanMeter, Treasurer, asked to declare four mobile homes uncollectible for taxes per SDCL 10-22-30, no additional effort needs to be made on collection of taxes for mobile homes that have had a distress warrant returned by the Sheriff as uncollectible. Patty shared that generally collect the taxes when the mobile home is moved out of a park and condemned, but she wouldn't need to make any further effort on them. Motioned by Dennert, seconded by Wiese to approve Treasurer, Patty VanMeter can claim the four Mobile Homes as uncollectible. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

JOINT COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT WITH NE COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENT (NECOG): Moved by Commissioner Wiese, seconded by Gage to approve and authorize Chairman Sutton to sign the Joint Cooperative Agreement with NECOG for 2026. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

2026 ROBERTS COUNTY JAIL PER DIEM CONTRACT: Moved by Commissioner Wiese, seconded by Dinger to approve and authorize Chairman Sutton to sign the 2026 Roberts County Jail per diem contract for \$120.00 per prisoner-day for adult prisoners

and \$415.00 per prisoner-day for juvenile prisoners housed by Roberts County. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

SURPLUS PROPERTY: Jean Hutson, Circuit Court Administrator requested to surplus of the Northwestern Reporter books; volumes date from 1879 to 2017. Moved by Commissioner Wiese, seconded by Gage to declare the Northwestern Reporter books surplus and be removed from second floor and disposed of at the Landfill. Roll call: Dennert-nay; Dinger-aye; Gage-aye; Sutton-aye; Wiese-aye. The motion passed with majority vote.

TOWING SERVICE CONTRACTS: Moved by Commissioner Wiese, seconded by Gage to approve and authorize Chairman Sutton to sign the Towing Service Contracts with Eddie's Northside, Kirk's Auto, Knights Towing and Towing Plus for 3 years. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

DISCRETIONARY RESOLUTION: Commissioner Wiese offered the following Resolution: RESOLUTION #2025-58

WHEREAS, the County of Brown, State of South Dakota has deemed it in the best interest of the County to adopt a Resolution implementing a Discretionary Formula for the reduced taxation of new structures and additions and partially constructed structures pursuant to SDCL § 10-6-137.

WHEREAS, to accomplish implementation of a Discretionary Formula the Board of Commissioners adopted Resolutions #19-24; #20-24; and #21-24.

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners wish to modify Resolution #21-24 to incorporate Resolutions #19-24 and #20-24 with modifications to the discretionary formulas contained therein to provide for equal application across specifically classified properties.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the following properties shall be, and hereby are, specifically classified for the purpose of taxation pursuant to SDCL § 10-6-137:

Any new industrial or commercial structure, or any addition, renovation, or reconstruction to an existing structure, located within a designated urban renewal area as defined in SDCL § 11-8-4, if the new structure, addition, renovation, or reconstruction has a full and true value of thirty thousand dollars or more (SDCL § 10-6-137(1));

Resolution #18-24 is hereby rescinded as applied to completed new construction and completed new improvement/additions effective following the 2026 assessment year. The terms of this resolution shall be effective as to completed new construction and completed new improvement/additions within designated urban renewal areas for the 2027 assessment year.

Any new industrial structure, including a power generation facility, or an addition to an existing structure, if the new structure or addition has a full and true value of thirty thousand dollars or more (SDCL § 10-6-137(2));

Resolution #19-24 is hereby rescinded as applied to completed new construction and completed new improvement/additions following the 2026 assessment year. The terms of this resolution shall be effective as to new industrial structures for the 2027 assessment year.

Any new nonresidential agricultural structure, or any addition to an existing structure, if the new structure or addition has a full and true value of ten thousand dollars or more (SDCL § 10-6-137(3)).

Any new commercial structure, or any addition to an existing structure, except a commercial residential structure as described in SDCL § 10-6-137(5), if the new structure or addition has a full and true value of thirty thousand dollars or more (SDCL § 10-6-137(4)).

Any commercial, industrial, or non-residential agricultural property which increases more than ten thousand dollars in full and true value as a result of reconstruction or renovation of the structure (SDCL § 10-6-137(8));

and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that any structure classified pursuant to this Resolution shall, following construction, initially be valued for taxation purposes in the usual manner, and that value shall be referred to in this Resolution as the "Pre-Adjustment Value"; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the assessed value to be used for tax purposes of any structure classified pursuant to this Resolution

shall, following construction, be calculated as follows:

a. For the first tax year following construction, 20% of the Pre-Adjustment Value;

b. For the second tax year following construction, 40% of the Pre-Adjustment Value;

c. For the third tax year following construction, 60% of the Pre-Adjustment Value;

d. For the fourth tax year following construction, 80% of the Pre-Adjustment Value;

e. For the fifth tax year following construction, 100% of the Pre-Adjustment Value;

and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of County Commissioners may, if requested by the owner of any of the above-described property, not apply the above formula, in which case the full assessment shall be made without application of the formula.

In waiving this formula for the structure of one owner, the Board of County Commissioners is not prohibited from applying the formula for subsequent new structures by that owner; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that for purpose of this Resolution, the assessed valuation during any of the five years may not be less than the assessed valuation of the property year preceding the first year of the tax years following construction; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that any structure that is partially constructed on the assessment date may be valued for tax purposes pursuant to this Resolution and the valuation may not be less than the assessed valuation of the property in the year preceding the beginning of construction; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that following the five-year period under this section, the property shall be assessed at the same percentage as is all other property for tax purposes.

Nothing in the resolution is intended to allow any refund or abatement of taxes levied prior of its passage.

Dated this 30th day of December 2025.

Seconded by Commissioner Dennert.

Roll call vote: Dennert-aye; Dinger-aye; Gage-aye; Sutton-aye and Wiese-aye. Resolution adopted.

AUTO BUDGET SUPPLEMENTS: Moved by Commissioner Gage, seconded by Wiese to increase spending authority and estimated revenue in the following funds for reimbursement of expenditures as follows: Fund #101.4.33900 @ \$9,941.17; #101.5.120.41100 @ \$6,334.85; #101.5.120.42200 @ \$763.50; #101.5.120.42300 @ \$330.27; #101.5.120.42600 @ \$2,314.71; #101.5.120.42700 @ \$91.72; #101.5.120.42800 @ 106.12. Fund #101.4.33400 @ \$88,963.78; #101.5.161.42500 @ \$29,380.94; #101.5.161.42600 @ \$59,582.84. Fund #101.4.33122 @ 79035.00; #101.5.212.42500 @ \$29,035.00; #101.5.444.42900 @ \$50,000.00. Fund #101.4.33900 @ \$10,000.00; #101.5.512.42300 @ \$10,000.00. Fund #101.4.33103 @ \$6,000.00; #101.5.712.42201 @ \$6,000.00. Fund #295.3.27415 @ \$194,028.94; #201.5.311.42200 @ \$14,047.16; #201.5.311.42500 @ \$63,911.84 and #201.5.311.42631 @ \$116,069.94. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

CONTINGENCY TRANSFERS: Moved by Commissioner Wiese, seconded by Dennert to increase spending authority (no cash): Fund #101.5.XXX.422.99: 130 Judicial @ \$2,867.97; 154 A&N @ \$30,143.58; 221 Fire Chief Assn @ \$13.15; 442 – Dev. Disabled @ \$420.00; 445 – MI Board @ \$12,990.50; 512 – DPM @ \$2,824.17; 522 – Parks @ \$14,031.49; 523 – Fairgrounds @ \$28,227.26; 615 – W&P @ \$2,994.53 and 711 – P&Z @ \$7,565.73. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

ASSIGN BUDGET AUTHORITY: Moved by Commissioner Wiese, seconded by Gage to assign \$100,000.00 to 111 – Commission for Legal Fees; \$61,000.00 to 120 – Elections for Ballot on Demand and Poll Pads; \$350,000 to 201-311 for Road Improvements at the Fairgrounds. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

Fair/Fairgrounds/Parks Manager, Rachel Kippely has asked the Commission to put \$1,057,451.00 into the Fairgrounds Improvement Fund (FIF). Commissioner Wiese

shall, following construction, be calculated as follows:

a. For the first tax year following construction, 20% of the Pre-Adjustment Value;

b. For the second tax year following construction, 40% of the Pre-Adjustment Value;

c. For the third tax year following construction, 60% of the Pre-Adjustment Value;

d. For the fourth tax year following construction, 80% of the Pre-Adjustment Value;

e. For the fifth tax year following construction, 100% of the Pre-Adjustment Value;

and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of County Commissioners may, if requested by the owner of any of the above-described property, not apply the above formula, in which case the full assessment shall be made without application of the formula.

In waiving this formula for the structure of one owner, the Board of County Commissioners is not prohibited from applying the formula for subsequent new structures by that owner; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that for purpose of this Resolution, the assessed valuation during any of the five years may not be less than the assessed valuation of the property year preceding the first year of the tax years following construction; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that any structure that is partially constructed on the assessment date may be valued for tax purposes pursuant to this Resolution

Continued from previous page

moved to assign \$450,000.00 into the FIF but motion died due to lack of second. Moved by Commissioner Dinger to assign \$436,347.94 into the FIF, seconded by Wiese. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

Moved by Commissioner Wiese, seconded by Gage to close out 239-Truancy Court and 766-Law Library. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

Auditor Heupel informed the Commission that the Department of Legislative Audits has set up a new fund for Opioid Funds: 294, so the balance will be transferred from the 101-General Fund to 294-Opioid Fund.

QUOTES FOR BALLOT ON DEMAND AND UPGRADED POLL PADS FOR ELECTIONS: Moved by Commissioner Dinger, seconded by Wiese to approve the quotes from KnowInk for five (5) Ballot on Demand set-ups at the cost of \$47,120.00 and 28 updated Poll Pads at the cost of \$33,355.84 for 3-year lease agreement. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

MINUTES: Moved by Commissioner Dennert, seconded by Wiese to approve the Canvass of Richmond Road & Drive District Minutes from December 9, 2025. All members voting aye. Motion carried.

Moved by Commissioner Dennert, seconded by Wiese to approve General Meeting Minutes for December 16, 2025. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

Moved by Commissioner Dennert, seconded by Gage to approve the Special Meeting Minutes for December 23, 2025. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

CLAIMS/PAYROLL: Moved by Commissioner Dinger, seconded by Wiese to approve the following Claims/Payroll:

Claims: Professional Fees: Avera St. Luke's Hospital \$274.72; Credit Collections Bureau \$292.24; Dependable Sanitation, Inc \$46,884.00; Faulkton Area Medical Center \$10,546.87; Fox Law Firm, PLLC \$204.00; Gellhaus & Gellhaus, P.C. \$80.00; IMEG Corp \$780.00; Lewis & Clark BHS \$225.00; Lincoln County Auditor \$2,196.84; Mark Katterhagen \$24.00; Medical Waste Transport, Inc \$189.30; Minnehaha County Auditor \$692.67; Northeastern Mental Health Center \$31,067.17; Sanford Health \$216.00; SD Dept of Health \$1,265.00; Thomson Reuters - West Payment Center \$595.49; Valerie Larson \$24.00; Yankton County Treasurer \$302.50; Jury Duty Participants \$1,411.20; US Bank \$195.00. Publishing: McQuillen Creative Group, Inc \$171.99; Midstates Group \$570.00; YourMembership.com Inc \$1,499.00; US Bank \$330.54. Rentals: Amazon Capital Services, Inc \$300.00. Repairs & Maintenance: Amazon Capital Services, Inc \$66.63; Applied Concepts, Inc. \$137.00; Dakota Fluid Power, Inc \$1,624.92; Marathon Engineering Corporation \$29,035.00; Meister Mowing LLC \$1,354.05; Steven Lust Automotive \$229.47; US Bank \$952.27. Supplies: Amazon Capital Services, Inc \$4,020.54; Avera LTC Pharmacy Aberdeen \$2,549.67; Century Business Products \$84.55; FedEx \$32.81; Fox Law Firm, PLLC \$3.57; Marco Technologies, LLC \$106.98; Menards \$624.93; Mike Janes \$27.41; Nat'l 4-H Council - Supply Service \$78.95; Rixstine Recognition \$1,071.50; Runnings \$6.99; Steven Lust Automotive \$89.90; US Bank \$18,503.32. Travel & Conference: Brad Borge \$2,120.96; Carrie Weisenberger \$51.24; Christal Burckhard \$234.00; Dale Kurth \$167.58; David North \$157.08; Dennis Feickert \$62.92; James Meyers \$31.50; Landen Ellingson \$24.50; Makendra Ochsner \$14.00; Neil Bittner \$14.00; Paul Johnson \$138.18; Scott Kolb \$14.00; Stan Beckler \$9.10; Tracy Madsen \$234.00; Troy Knecht \$104.12; US Bank \$1,310.44. Utilities: CenturyLink \$496.08; Northwestern Energy \$3,184.83; T-Mobile USA Inc \$1,233.62; US Bank \$3,299.27. Machinery & Equipment: US Bank \$5,160.19.

Payroll: Commission \$4,896.51; Elections \$1,936.80; Auditor/Welfare \$11,416.03; Treasurer \$16,259.94; SA \$37,099.72; Public Defender \$9,778.21; Maintenance \$12,805.51; Assessor \$16,604.85; Register of Deeds \$10,905.92; VSO \$4,741.87; GIS \$2,946.49; IT \$9,855.68; HR \$5,419.28; Sheriff \$57,714.12; Jail \$69,006.34; Coroner (Voucher) \$750.00; Court Security \$7,638.02; JDC \$33,399.69; Mu-

seum \$13,629.27; Parks/Fairgrounds \$7,535.17; Fair Board \$4,601.45; 4-H \$834.80; Weed \$1,429.67; Planning & Zoning \$9,316.95; Highway \$53,609.87; Dispatch \$37,826.73; Emergency \$5,498.56; 24/7 Sobriety \$2,612.00; Landfill \$15,825.56; Mileage Benefits \$2,360.00; Meal Benefits \$56.00; SDRS Pay-out \$5,207.29; FICA \$27,482.54; Medicare \$6,427.41; HSA \$4,885.02; Health Insurance-Wellmark BCBS \$156,436.80; Dental Insurance-Delta \$14,805.18; Life Insurance- Dearborn \$2,827.66; Retirement-SDRS \$125,765.16. Payroll PTO Cashouts: Elections \$484.25; Treasurer \$1,456.40; SA \$2,829.00; Assessor \$4,034.40; IT \$7,823.77; Sheriff \$4,990.40; Jail \$9,598.58; JDC \$2,785.20; Museum \$3,833.85; Fair Board \$2,416.00; Highway \$6,210.80; Dispatch \$1,982.40; 24/7 Sobriety \$1,402.24; Landfill \$3,229.60; FICA \$3,290.74; Medicare \$769.58. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

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

- o Resignation of Kayleene Holzer as Brown County 911 Communications Officer, FT - effective January 8, 2026. Request to fill.

- o Employment ending for Jacob Carrillo as Brown County JDC Detention Officer, FT - effective December 18, 2025. Request to fill.

- o Hiring Presley Girdeen as Brown County Jail Detention Officer, FT; starting wage \$22.59/hr. - effective December 30, 2025.

- o Hiring Jason Hasty as Brown County Chief Deputy Public Defender, FT; starting wage \$4,183.62/pay period - effective January 5, 2026.

- o Approve personal miles driven for October 2025 at .70 per mile as follows: Joshua Matthews 240 miles at \$168.00; Matt Heupel 110 miles at \$77.00; John Florey 120 miles at \$84.00; Mike Scott 80 miles at \$56.00.

- o Approve personal miles driven for November 2025 at .70 per mile as follows: Joshua Matthews 216 miles at \$151.20; Matt Heupel 70 miles at \$49.00; John Florey 102 miles at \$71.40; Mike Scott 50 miles at \$35.00.

- o Approve personal miles driven for December 2025 at .70 per mile as follows: Joshua Matthews 168 miles at \$117.60; Matt Heupel 60 miles at \$42.00; John Florey 84 miles at \$58.80.

All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

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

AUDITOR'S REPORT OF ACCOUNTS FOR NOVEMBER 2025: Moved by Commissioner Wiese, seconded by Dennert to approve the Auditor's Report of Accounts for November 2025: Total Cash and Check on Hand \$7,700.00; Total Checking Account Balances \$22,736,033.08; Total Savings Account Balances \$1,130,447.42; Total Certificates of Deposit \$11,302,725.57; Grand Total Cash & Balances: \$35,176,906.07. General Fund Cash & Investment Balances by Funds: General Fund \$19,042,612.99; Road & Bridge Fund \$3,255,862.27; Road & Bridge Fund Restricted \$231,883.27; 911 Service \$737,949.80; Emergency & Disaster \$22,204.41; Domestic Abuse \$717.89; Federal/State Grant \$32.11; SA Grants \$121,503.80; Truancy Court \$110.99; 24/7 Sobriety \$87,341.65; ROD M&P \$97,653.10; Rural Access Infrastructure \$559,577.54; TIF Debt Service \$535,601.63; Landfill + Cash Change \$7,213,069.15; Landfill-Restricted \$1,894,495.06; Trust and Agency Funds \$3,502,668.74; Grand Total General Fund Cash & Investments \$35,176,906.07. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

ZONING ORDINANCES - SET HEARING DATE/AUTHORIZE ADVERTISING: Moved by Commissioner Wiese, seconded by Gage to set hearing date and authorize publication for the first reading of the following ordinances to be held on January 20, 2026 in the Commission Chambers, Courthouse Annex, Brown County, South Dakota. Proposed Ordinance #318, applicant Marilyn Thum for the purpose of rezoning the following property from

Agriculture Preservation District (AG-P) to Mini-Agriculture District (M-AG) to bring this parcel into compliance for its future use. Description of property: Proposed Lot 1, "Hitchcock First Addition" in the NW1/4 NE1/4 and the NE1/4 NW1/4 of Section 17-T121N-R60W of the 5th P.M., Brown County, South Dakota (40751 144th Street, Bates Twp.). Proposed Ordinance #319, applicant Larson Land Limited Partnership for the purpose of rezoning the following property from Agriculture Preservation District (AG-P) to Mini-Agriculture District (M-AG) to bring this parcel into compliance for its future use. Description of property: Proposed Lot 3, "Larson-Wockenfuss Addition" in the S1/2 of Section 29 and N1/2 of Section 32-T125N-R62W of the 5th P.M., Brown County, South Dakota (approx. 39518 123rd Street, Columbia Twp.). Proposed Ordinance #320, applicant Chad Pray for the purpose of rezoning the following property from Agriculture Preservation District (AG-P) to Mini-Agriculture District (M-AG) to bring this parcel into compliance for its future use. Description of property: Proposed Lot 1, "MB Bellikka Addition" in the SE1/4 of Section 30-T123N-R63W of the 5th P.M., Brown County, South Dakota (approx. 12851 389th Avenue, Ordway Twp.). All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

LARSON-WOCKENFUSS ADDITION PLAT:

RESOLUTION #2025-59
Commissioner Gage brought the following Resolution "Be it resolved by the County Commission of Brown County, South Dakota, that the plat showing: LARSON-WOCKENFUSS ADDITION in the S 1/2 of Section 29 and N 1/2 of Section 32 Township 125 North, Range 62 West of the 5th P.M., Brown County, South Dakota having been examined is hereby approved in accordance with the provisions of SDCL of 1967, Chapter 11-3, and any amendments thereof." Seconded by Dennert. All members present voting aye. Resolution adopted.

MB BELLIKKA ADDITION PLAT:
RESOLUTION #2025-60
Commissioner Dinger brought the following Resolution "Be it resolved by the County Commission of Brown County, South Dakota that the plat showing: MB BELLIKKA ADDITION in the SE 1/4 of Section 30, Township 124 North, Range 63 West of the 5th P.M., Brown County, South Dakota having been examined is hereby approved in accordance with the provisions of SDCL of 1967, Chapter 11-3, and any amendments thereof." Seconded by Wiese. All members present voting aye. Resolution adopted.

SCHILE SECOND SUBDIVISION PLAT:
RESOLUTION #2025-61
Commissioner Dennert brought the following Resolution "Be it resolved by the County Commission of Brown County, South Dakota that the plat showing: SCHILE SECOND SUBDIVISION in the SE 1/4 of Section 19, Township 125 North, Range 65 West of the 5th P.M., Brown County, South Dakota having been examined is hereby approved in accordance with the provisions of SDCL of 1967, Chapter 11-3, and any amendments thereof." Seconded by Wiese. All members present voting aye. Resolution adopted.

WEST HANSON-MUD CREEK ADDITION PLAT:
RESOLUTION #2025-62
Commissioner Gage brought the following Resolution "Be it resolved by the County Commission of Brown County, South Dakota that the plat showing: CORRECTIVE PLAT OF WEST HANSON-MUD CREEK ADDITION in the SW 1/4 of Section 11, Township 122 North, Range 61 West of the 5th P.M., Brown County, South Dakota having been examined is hereby approved in accordance with the provisions of SDCL of 1967, Chapter 11-3, and any amendments thereof." Seconded by Wiese. All members present voting aye. Resolution adopted.

D. MUNGER ESTATE ADDITION PLAT:
RESOLUTION #2025-63
Commissioner Dinger brought the following Resolution "Be it resolved by the County Commission of Brown County, South Dakota that the plat showing: D. MUNGER ESTATE ADDITION in the N 1/2 and E 1/2 SW 1/4 of Section 5, Township 121 North, Range 63 West of the 5th P.M., Brown County, South Dakota having been examined is hereby approved in accordance with the provisions of SDCL of 1967,

Chapter 11-3, and any amendments thereof." Seconded by Dennert. All members present voting aye. Resolution adopted.

HITCHCOCK FIRST ADDITION PLAT:
RESOLUTION #2025-64
Commissioner Gage brought the following Resolution "Be it resolved by the Board of County Commissioners of Brown County, South Dakota that the plat showing: HITCHCOCK FIRST ADDITION in the NW 1/4 NE 1/4 and the NE 1/4 NW 1/4 of Section 17-T121N-R60W of the 5th P.M., Brown County, South Dakota having been examined is hereby approved in accordance with the provisions of SDCL 11-3, and any amendments thereof." Seconded by Wiese. All members present voting aye. Resolution adopted.

OTHER BUSINESS: None
EXECUTIVE SESSION: None
ADJOURNMENT: Moved by Commissioner Dinger, seconded by Wiese to adjourn the Brown County Commission at 10:28a.m. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

Lynn Heupel, Brown County Auditor

Published January 7, 2026 at the total approximate cost of \$255.06 and may be viewed free of charge at www.sdpublicnotices.com. 26422



NOTICE

An application has been made by Marilyn Thum to the Brown County Board of Commissioners for a change of zoning. Hearing to be held in the Commissioner's Chambers, Courthouse Annex, Brown County, South Dakota on January 20, 2026 for the purpose of rezoning the following property from Agriculture Preservation District (AG-P) to Mini-Agriculture District (M-AG) to bring this parcel into compliance for its future use.

Description of property: Proposed Lot 1, "Hitchcock First Addition" in the NW1/4 NE1/4 and the NE1/4 NW1/4 of Section 17-T121N-R60W of the 5th P.M., Brown County, South Dakota (40751 144th Street, Bates Twp.).

The public is invited to attend the hearing and to present comments and testimony regarding the amendment to the Second Revision Brown County Ordinances pertaining to rezoning the property described. At conclusion of the hearing, the Brown County Commission may adopt the first reading of Ordinance No. 318.

ATTEST: Lynn Heupel, Brown County Auditor

Published January 7, 2026 at the total approximate cost of \$12.88 and may be viewed free of charge at www.sdpublicnotices.com. 26423



NOTICE

An application has been made by Chad Pray to the Brown County Board of Commissioners for a change of zoning. Hearing to be held in the Commissioner's Chambers, Courthouse Annex, Brown County, South Dakota on January 20, 2026 for the purpose of rezoning the following property from Agriculture Preservation District (AG-P) to Mini-Agriculture District (M-AG) to bring this parcel into compliance for its future use.

Description of property: Proposed Lot 1, "MB Bellikka Addition" in the SE1/4 of Section 30-T123N-R63W of the 5th P.M., Brown County, South Dakota (approx. 12851 389th Avenue, Ordway Twp.).

The public is invited to attend the hearing and to present comments and testimony regarding the amendment to the Second Revision Brown County Ordinances pertaining to rezoning the property described. At conclusion of the hearing, the Brown County Commission may adopt the first reading of Ordinance No. 320.

ATTEST: Lynn Heupel, Brown County Auditor

Published January 7, 2026 at the total approximate cost of \$12.57 and may be viewed free of charge at www.sdpublicnotices.com. 26425

NOTICE

An application has been made by Larson Land Limited Partnership to the Brown County Board of Commissioners for a change of zoning. Hearing to be held in the Commissioner's Chambers, Courthouse Annex, Brown County, South Dakota on January 20, 2026 for the purpose of rezoning the following property from Agriculture Preservation District (AG-P) to Mini-Agriculture District (M-AG) to bring this parcel into compliance for its future use.

Description of property: Proposed Lot 3, "Larson-Wockenfuss Addition" in the S1/2 of Section 29 and N1/2 of Section 32-T125N-R62W of the 5th P.M., Brown County, South Dakota (approx. 39518 123rd Street, Columbia Twp.).

The public is invited to attend the hearing and to present comments and testimony regarding the amendment to the Second Revision Brown County Ordinances pertaining to rezoning the property described. At conclusion of the hearing, the Brown County Commission may adopt the first reading of Ordinance No. 319.

ATTEST: Lynn Heupel, Brown County Auditor

Published January 7, 2026 at the total approximate cost of \$13.20 and may be viewed free of charge at www.sdpublicnotices.com. 26424

MEYERS

TRACTOR SALVAGE

ABERDEEN, SD

1000+ Salvaged Tractors & Combines
400+ Reground Crankshafts
500+ Tractor Tires
300+ Rebuilt Radiators

Large Line of Swather, Baler & Cutter Parts.

GREAT BUYS & SERVICE!

WANT TO BUY TRACTORS, COMBINES & SWATHERS FOR SALVAGE

Phone (605) 225-0185
5 Miles North & 1 Mile West of CASE-IH

AVERA WELCOMES

PATRICK PARKER, DO UROLOGY

Look to Dr. Parker for diagnosis and specialized treatment of conditions and diseases of the urinary system in men and women. He looks forward to joining the compassionate team at Avera Medical Group Urology in Aberdeen.

Abbey Gaske, MD

Kristine Fastenau, NP

310 S. Penn St., Suite 203
Aberdeen, SD 57401
605-622-5475 | Avera.org/Doctors
Schedule an appointment today.

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
 4th consecutive week is free

605/397-NEWS (6397)
 PO Box 34, Groton SD 57445

We Be 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

American Character and a Resurgent Congress Can Restore a Constitutional Presidency

At year's end, we lament the decline of constitutionalism—respect for and adherence to the separation of powers, checks and balances, the Bill of Rights and the rule of law. But in America, hope springs eternal. We are an optimistic nation. Stirred by leaders' eloquent appeals to hope, and historic reminders that we have overcome great challenges—Civil War, Great Depression, grave threats, foreign and domestic—our citizenry has pressed on, rowing longer, running faster and working harder, time and again, refusing to lie down and accept defeat. Such is the American character.

So it is with a grand experiment, and America is an experiment. We take pride in our nation, extol the virtues and values expressed in the Declaration of Independence, which charts the American Creed. We teach it and preach it, even when we don't achieve it. As readers know, when Americans are knocked to the canvass, we don't stay down; we rise and resume fighting for our causes. Since Lexington and Concord and Selma, Americans have fought for liberty and constitutional government, justice and legal protections, representation and remedies.

As participants in a historical experiment—a government of, by and for the people, as Abraham Lincoln described it—citizens understand that defense of democracy requires hard work and vigilance. James Madison, in Federalist 51, emphasized the fact that governmental accountability requires a "principal reliance" on the people, who have a high duty to scrutinize governmental actions, policies and programs, and to demand of those holding office fulfillment of their constitutional responsibilities and progress toward the expectations of the people.

Many across our country have justly expressed deep concerns about governmental institutions—the current indifference, for example, of the president and Congress to constitutional principles. Thoughtful readers have asked about the ways and means necessary to restore a constitutional presidency, which has been a central concern of this column. We may add to this project, as readers have suggested, the responsibility of Congress in accounting for the rise of an imperial presidency, and to ask how the "first branch of government," as Madison explained it, can contribute to the rehabilitation of the executive. These insightful questions and suggestions reflect among the citizenry an intense and admirable interest in self-government, indeed, the experiment launched by our founders, 250 years ago.

It may be that the hope of restoring a constitutional presidency hinges on a genuine resurgence of congressional power, which requires recovery from its own lethargy, passivity and impotence, and a renewal of its institutional integrity and pride. What cannot be ignored, of course, is that the rise of presidential government has been aided by congressional retreat. There would be no imperial presidency were it not for an indifferent Congress, unwilling to assert its powers and defend its turf. What is sorely missing in America is a Congress that takes the Constitution seriously.

Who will sound the trumpet call for a revival of the spirit, fortitude and integrity of congressional bodies that have sought to check executive power, as seen in the assertiveness of the Senate Select Committee that investigated the Watergate scandal, or the Church Committee that endeavored to curb the abuses of the CIA? Is it reasonable to believe that Congress will recover its institutional honor and prevent the further deterioration of the American Republic? As a body, and across the years Congress, whether in the hands of Republicans or Democrats, has been gripped by both partisanship and a lack of institutional dignity. If, at this juncture, when executive power has reached a historic peak, America hopes to witness a legislative reassertion of its lawmaking, foreign affairs, appropriations and oversight powers, in a manner befitting its central role in our constitutional system, for the purpose of renewing a moribund doctrine of checks and balances, then Congress simply must regain its institutional character and curb its partisan loyalties to the occupant in the White House.

AUCTIONS

DOUBLE J FARMS 52ND Annual Simmental, SimAngus Bull & Bred Female Sale. LIVE: DVAuction.com Noon, Friday, Jan 23 @ Garretson, SD Kipp Julson 605-351-9088 doublejsimentals.com

FOR SALE

FOR SALE: Boston Terrier puppies. Very cute. Health guaranteed. Ready to go Jan. 15th. \$500.00. First come/first serve. Hot Springs, SD. 715-937-0916

NOTICES

ADVERTISE IN NEWSPAPERS statewide for only \$150. Put the South Dakota Statewide Classifieds Network to work for you today! (25 words for \$150. Each additional word \$5.) Statewide Full Digital Ad is \$300 for 1 week. Call the Groton Independent at 605-397-7460.

Ken's SUPER FAIR FOODS
 EVERY WEDNESDAYS IS \$6 SELECT SUSHI ITEMS
 SUNDAY - SATURDAY JAN. 4 - JAN. 10 2026
 Download Our App & Save! Scan the Code TO DOWNLOAD

ABERDEEN'S ONLY LOCALLY FAMILY-OWNED GROCERY STORE THAT TAKES PRIDE IN MAKING THEIR CUSTOMERS FEEL AT HOME!

1ST GENERATION: KEN FIEDLER
 2ND GENERATION: KEVIN FIEDLER
 3RD GENERATION: CONNER FIEDLER

App Deal OF THE WEEK!

WHOLESTONE BONELESS PORK SIRLOIN ROAST **\$1.89** Lb.
 NAVAL ORANGES **99¢** Lb.
FREE SUNNY D PUNCH (With \$10 purchase and Ken's App) 64 Oz. Jug

USDA CHOICE DEMKOTA BONELESS BREAD & BUTTER ROAST \$4.99 Lb.
 LEAN & MEATY PORK SPARERIBS **\$2.39** Lb.

DAIRY DINNER BELL SLICED CHEESE \$6.99 72 CT.	GROCERY SARA LEE CLASSIC WHITE BREAD \$2.79 20 OZ. LOAF	DAIRY BEST CHOICE MILK WHOLE, 2%, 1% OR SKIM \$3.49 1 GALLON JUG	GROCERY FRITO-LAY DORITOS 2/\$7 6-10.75 OZ. BAGS
BEVERAGE PEPSI, DIET PEPSI OR MT. DEW \$2.99 6 PK. HALF LITER BOTTLES	BEVERAGE NIAGARA WATER 2/\$5 24 PK. HALF LITER BOTTLES	FROZEN PIZZA CORNER PIZZA \$6.99 24-28.40 OZ. PKG.	FROZEN BLUE RIBBON CLASSIC ICE CREAM \$4.99 128 OZ. PAL.
LIQUOR-BEER CROWN ROYAL MARQUIS \$31.99 750 ML.	BAKERY KEN'S BAKERY FRESH WHITE HAMBURGER BUNS \$3.29 8 CT.	DELI GRAB & GO 4 PK. SANDWICH COMBO \$6.99 Each	

Ken's GOURMET COFFEE
 SUN 9 AM - 1 PM
 MON-FRI 7 AM - 5 PM
 SAT 8 AM - 2 PM
 Call 605.225.6671

FLAVOR OF THE WEEK! THE GRINCH (WHITE CHOCOLATE AND CREME DE MENTHE) \$3.99-\$4.99

GROTON Ford
605/397-2311
www.grotonford.com

Harry Implement
 "Family Owned & Operated Since 1935!"
CERTIFIED DEALER
AFS
(605) 395-6421
Ferney

This congressional reversal will require leadership, certainly, and quite possibly the leadership that arises from an aroused citizenry triggered by a renewed appreciation for the virtues and values of constitutionalism. In a republic, as Madison told us, there is no substitute for a vigilant citizenry. Let this be our first, and lasting, New Year's Resolution for 2026.

Ice Storm!

Getting ready for the ice storm!
 Snowbirds: When we speak about human snowbirds we mean people who escape to warmer climates during the winter by traveling.

By Another Name...
 G L A Z E
 E V E N T
 S I L V E R
 T H A W

When! Almost there.

David Adler is president of The Alturas Institute, a non-profit organization created to promote the Constitution, gender equality and civic education. This column is made possible with the support of the South Dakota Humanities Council, South Dakota NewsMedia Association and this newspaper.