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The Groton Independent

Vol. 143 No. 41 ♦ Groton, SD ♦ Wednesday, June 24, 2026 ♦ Established in 1889

American Legion holds Convention

The South Dakota American Legion 107th Department Annual Convention was held in Aberdeen last Friday thru Sunday.



US Senator Mike Rounds addresses the SD American Legion Convention.

(Photo courtesy Bruce Babcock)



Groton Post 39 Americanism Officer Bruce Babcock and Post Commander Doug Hamilton receive the Department Americanism Excellence Award. Presenting the award is Department Commander Kevin Hempel and Department Americanism Chairman Carol Howitz.

(Photo courtesy Bruce Babcock)

Local Groton Fire District EMT Weston Dinger receives the SD American Legion Department EMT of the Year Award. Presenting the award L-R Department Commander Kevin Hempel and Department Public Safety Committee Chairman Larry Price.

(Photo courtesy Bruce Babcock)



Groton Fire Captain Dale Ringgenberg receives the SD American Legion Firefighter of the Year Award. He also competed at the American Legion Midwest Region and he won the regional competition. Presenting the award L-R Department Commander Kevin Hempel and Department Public Safety Committee Chairman Larry Price.

(Photo courtesy Bruce Babcock)



Groton's previous Post Commander Bruce Babcock receives the prestigious SD Department "Pride of the Prairie" Award of excellence for Groton's Post 39. Presenting the award is the previous Department Commander Kevin Hempel and current Department Commander Bill Peters.

(Photo courtesy Bruce Babcock)



Groton Post 39's finance officer Brent Wienk receives the District 4 Legionnaire of the Year award.

(Photo courtesy Bruce Babcock)

Anderson honored as South Dakota Assistant Track Coach of the Year

A familiar name to Groton sports fans has received statewide recognition for her contributions to high school track and field.

Katie Anderson, a Groton native and graduate of Groton Area High School, was recently named the South Dakota Track and Field Coaches Association's Area 3 Class AA Assistant Coach of the Year. Anderson serves as an assistant coach for the Aberdeen Central track and field program.

The South Dakota Track and Field Coaches Association announced its annual Coach of the Year awards, recognizing outstanding head and assistant coaches from across the state. Anderson was among a select group of coaches honored for their dedication to student-athletes and the success

of their programs.

Since joining the Aberdeen Central coaching staff, Anderson has helped guide the Golden Eagles to strong performances in one of the state's most competitive classes. Her work with athletes both on and off the track has earned the respect of fellow coaches throughout South Dakota.

Other area coaches receiving honors included Brian Tvedt of Deuel as Area 1 Class A Head Coach of the Year, Jackie Braun of Aberdeen Roncalli as Area 1 Class A Assistant Coach of the Year, Alli Jackson of Northwestern as Area 1 Class B Head Coach of the Year, and Brian Hogie of Ipswich as Area 1 Class B Assistant Coach of the Year.

The annual awards are voted on by members of the South Dakota Track and Field Coaches Association and recognize coaches who have demonstrated excellence in developing athletes and advancing the sport throughout the state.



Katie Anderson



Newly sworn in American Legion District 4 Commander Bruce Babcock and his wife Karyn pose with visiting American Legion National Commander Dan Wiley at the Legion/Auxiliary Joint Banquet.

(Photo courtesy Bruce Babcock)

Groton baseball teams keep busy with wins, tournament success

Senior Legion

Takes third at Milbank Tournament

Groton Legion Post 39 put together an impressive stretch, winning four of six games and finishing third at the Milbank Tournament. The tournament opened with an 8-0 shutout of Castlewood. Jordan Schwan starred with three hits, including an inside-the-park home run, a triple and a single, while Gavin Englund struck out eight over 5 1/3 scoreless innings. Englund, Schwan and Carter Simon each collected three hits in the victory.

Parkston handed Groton a 4-1 setback in the next contest despite a strong pitching effort from Jarrett Erdmann, who struck out six. Carter Simon drove in Groton's lone run. The squad bounced back Sunday by defeating Sisseton 6-4 in the third-place game. After trailing 2-1, Groton scored four runs in the third inning behind a Carter Simon double, a sacrifice fly by T.C. Schuster and an RBI single from Nick Groebelinghoff. Alex Abeln started the game and Groebelinghoff earned the win in relief.

Back home Tuesday, Groton swept a double-header from Milbank. In the opener, Post 39 rolled to a 16-6 victory. Groton scored eight runs in the first inning and never looked back. T.C. Schuster highlighted the offense with an RBI double, while Carter Simon drove in three runs. Alex Abeln and Groebelinghoff each added two hits, and Gavin Englund earned the win.

The nightcap produced one of the most exciting finishes of the season. Trailing 11-6 entering the bottom of the fourth, Groton rallied with five runs to tie the game before Lincoln Krause delivered a walk-off RBI single in the fifth for a 12-11 victory. Englund led the offense with two hits, while Schuster drove in two runs and Isaiah Scepaniak earned the complete-game win.

Junior Legion

Post 39 earns split with Sisseton

Groton Post 39 Junior Legion finished the week with a 10-9 victory and a 4-0 loss against Sisseton while also dropping games to Volga and Britton. The highlight came in a dramatic 10-9 win over Sisseton. T.C. Schuster went 3-for-3 and doubled, Zach Fliehs added two hits and two RBIs, and Groton overcame a late 9-7 deficit by scoring three runs in the fifth inning. Wesley Borg tossed 1 1/3 innings of scoreless relief to secure the win. Earlier in the week, Sisseton blanked Groton 4-0 despite hits from Braden Fliehs and Alex Abeln.

Against Volga, Groton led 4-0 after Jordan Schwan tripled and later blasted a solo home run. Lincoln Shilhanek added a pair of hits, but Volga rallied for a 7-4 victory despite Groton out-hitting the hosts 11-6. Groton jumped out to a 6-0 lead against Britton before an eight-run third inning changed the game. Zach Fliehs went 3-for-3 with three RBIs and Jordan Schwan collected two hits in the 15-6 loss.

14U Legion

Post 39 posts five victories

Groton's 14U squad continued to show improvement, posting five victories during a busy week. The team swept Watertown on Tuesday. In a 10-7 victory, Groton built an early lead behind RBIs from Trayce Schelle, Tucker Leicht, Easton Larson and Kyson Kucker. Bentley Ehresmann earned the win.

The second game saw Groton cruise to an 8-3 win. Owen Tewksbury drove in a run with a first-inning single, while Gavin Hanten delivered a two-hit, three-RBI performance that included a triple. Easton Larson earned the pitching victory.

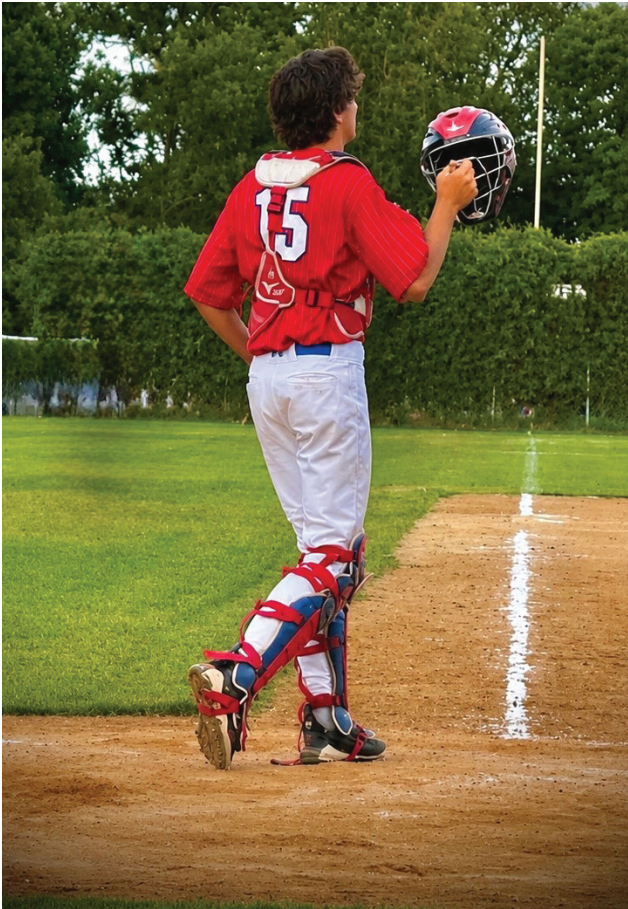
Groton then split with Clark on Sunday. The opener ended dramatically when Keegan Kucker lined a walk-off two-run single in the seventh inning to lift Post 39 to a 7-6 win. Kucker, Asher Zimmerman and Kyson Kucker each had two hits, while Tucker Leicht turned in six strong innings on the mound.

In the second game, Groton completed the sweep with a 12-5 victory. Tucker Leicht collected two hits and three RBIs, while Rylan Blackwood added two hits and Owen Tewksbury chipped in an RBI single.

The 14U team also suffered losses to Britton and Sisseton. Against Britton, Easton Larson collected two hits in a 9-3 defeat. In a 16-10 slugfest against Sisseton, Keegan Kucker went 3-for-4 with a double, triple and three RBIs, while Easton Larson added three hits. Sisseton completed the sweep with an 11-1 victory in the second game, though Tewksbury doubled and drove in Groton's lone run.



Noah Seipaniak is batting. Zac Fliehs is on 3rd leading off. Head Coach Aaron Severson at 3rd. (Photo courtesy Bruce Babcock)



John Bisbee, Groton catcher, in win over Sisseton in game 2 (10-9). (Courtesy Photo)

Amateur Baseball

Locke Electric outslugs Merchants

Groton Locke Electric picked up a 9-7 victory over Merchants Sunday in Northville behind a big offensive day from Bradin Althoff. Althoff drove in four runs and finished with three hits, highlighted by a two-run home run in the third inning and a two-run single in the eighth. Groton pounded out 18 hits as Brian Hansen went 5-for-5. Ty Sieber, Alex Morris, Jonah Schmidt, Brevin Fliehs and Ben Althoff all contributed multiple-hit performances, while Palmer Boyd struck out nine over six scoreless innings to earn the win.



Groton U-14 pitcher Owen Tewksbury on the mound for the win in the night-cap doubleheader vs Clark. (Photo courtesy Bruce Babcock)



YOU'RE INVITED TO BE A PART OF A

card shower

for Ida Hannon's 90th Birthday

Ida will be turning 90 on July 7th! While a party isn't possible this year, we still want to make her day extra memorable. We'd like for her dearest friends and family (that's you!) to send her a card or gift this year. Include a message, old memories, photos, or simply birthday wishes. Help us make her day one that she won't forget.

We will gather the cards and gifts for her to have on her big day.

please mail your card/gifts to:

Ida hannon (granddaughter Michelle)
1208 appollo ave
Aberdeen SD, 57401
by July 11th

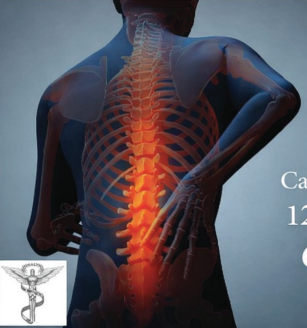
thank you for making this day extra special for my grandma.





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“Dementia and Home Safety: Tips for Caregivers”

Caregivers of people with dementia are often tasked with keeping their loved ones safe at home. Unpaid family members or friends, referred to as care partners or caregivers, dedicate significant time and resources to assist the person with dementia as their needs intensify. Caregivers may find themselves providing increased assistance with everyday tasks like cooking and cleaning, and self-care tasks like dressing, bathing and toileting. This is often due to a decline in the person with dementia’s awareness of time and place, ability to solve problems or assess situations, strength and mobility, and senses (vision, hearing or depth perception). These declines also put people living with Alzheimer’s disease or other related dementias at increased risk of injury, especially as the disease progresses.

Caregivers can take steps to create a safe home environment that minimizes the risk of injury or harm while maximizing the person’s independence for as long as possible. First, organize important information, including insurance information, names and contact information for healthcare providers, medications and allergies, emergency contact numbers, legal papers (living wills, advance directives and power of attorney), and contact information for friends and family members. Next, assess the home and outdoor spaces for potential barriers, such as uneven terrain or thresholds, poor lighting, chemicals or other potentially hazardous items. Once safety concerns are identified, caregivers can implement helpful strategies and adaptations to keep their loved ones safe, including:

- Checking the temperature of food, beverages and bathwater
- Removing throw rugs, cords or other items that could cause someone to fall
- Installing adaptive equipment in the bathroom, like grab bars or shower chairs
- Adding extra lighting or nightlights in entryways, stairwells, bathrooms and hallways
- Using a hidden breaker or gas valve, or removing knobs to limit use of the stove when unattended
- Storing hazardous items or tools in a secure location
- Locking up medications and supplements

Some people living with dementia may exhibit wandering behaviors, such as forgetting how to get to familiar places in the home or community, talking about past obligations like going to work, restlessness or pacing, or being nervous in crowded or new locations. Structured routines, exercise or movement, deadbolts or locks on upper doors and cabinets and increased supervision or support can decrease the risk of wandering.

While the journey with dementia brings many challenges, creating a safe home can help foster peace of mind for everyone involved. A sense of purpose and connection through participation in familiar routines, favorite activities and nurturing relationships with family and friends can promote safety, comfort and quality of life for people living with Alzheimer’s disease or other related dementias.

If you or someone you love is impacted by Alzheimer’s disease or other related dementias, 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, home safety checklists and recommendations, extra help in the home and support groups. Check with your state to see what resources may be available to you.

Ranelle Nissen, Ph.D., OTR/L, serves as an associate dean and associate professor in the School of Health Sciences at the University of South Dakota. Nissen is a licensed occupational therapist in South Dakota. She has helped families and individuals affected by dementia through both her professional work and her volunteer work with the South Dakota Alzheimer’s Association.

Allison Naber, Ph.D., OTD, OTR/L, is the academic fieldwork coordinator and an associate professor in occupational therapy at the University of South Dakota. Naber is a licensed occupational therapist in Minnesota and South Dakota. She volunteers for the South Dakota Alzheimer’s Association as a support group facilitator and community educator. Follow The Prairie Doc® at www.prairedoc.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).



Specialized Care in Aberdeen

Your care team lives in the same community you do, and that means something. The team at Avera St. Luke’s Hospital will be here for you and your family through it all with the latest treatment options, allowing you to get care in your local clinic. These specialized providers are located right here in Aberdeen and visit clinics across the area as part of our outreach care program.

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- Clinical trials
- 24/7 Level III Trauma Center
- Specialty services brought to rural facilities
- Telemedicine services
- Surgical care



Specialty care includes:

- | | |
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| • Urology | • Orthopedics |
| • Pulmonology | • Sports Medicine |



Specialized care is what we do.
Compassionate is who we are.

Avera.org/StLukes



Every NFL offseason brings optimism. Every fanbase convinces itself the rookies will hit, the free agents will work out, and this is finally the year everything comes together. But before the season starts and hope takes over, it's worth taking a hard look at the roster as it actually exists today.

Over the next ten weeks, we'll break down every position group on the Vikings' roster and rank them from the group I have the most confidence in to the one I trust the least entering the 2026 season. We'll look at the projected starters, depth pieces, offseason additions, and biggest questions each group faces.

Coming in at number 9 last week was the TE group. This week is a group that surprised me in the rankings... running back.

Confidence level: 90%

Weekly SUDOKU

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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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Current projected starters: Jordan Mason, Aaron Jones, Max Bredeson (FB)

Competing for a roster or practice squad spot: Demond Claiborne, Xavier Scott, Kejon Owens

Why I'm confident: When I was creating this list, I had to keep reminding myself this isn't a list of which groups I think will be the best. This is a list of which groups I have confidence in. Confidence that they'll go out there and we'll know what to expect. No question marks. No roller coaster rides. That almost perfectly describes the running back group. There's a reason the Vikings brought back Jones, who will be 32 years old this season. He's consistent.

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King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 "Caught ya!"
4 Spring melt-down
8 Baby's bed
12 Barbecue seasoning
13 Meditative exercise
14 Verdi heroine
15 Muffin-like treats
17 General — Chicken
18 Couturier Christian
19 Bracelet site
20 Liniment targets
22 "Arrivederci —"
24 One-named supermodel
25 Castle features
29 Unruly group
30 Ram
31 Solidify
32 Short extracts
34 Taj Mahal site
35 TV host Kelly
36 Analyze
37 Poultry choice
40 Humdrum
41 Honker
42 Marching band section
46 Scrambled wd.

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49 Sleep phenomena
50 Whig rival
51 Bagel topper
7 Existed
8 40 winks
9 Jeopardize
10 Teen fave
11 Pyramid part
16 Carriage
19 You love (Lat.)
20 Goals
21 "Let's go!"
22 Indian yogurt dish
23 Unrefined metals
25 Get ready, briefly
26 Paint finish
27 Prefix with byte
28 Do in
30 Neat as —
33 Plug parts
34 Now, on a memo
36 Makeup brand
37 Scorch
38 Highly rated
39 Baby carriage
40 Duelist Aaron
42 Youngster
43 MGM rival
44 Eastern path
45 Boston team, for short

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Potential upgrades:

The free agent market for running backs is slim. There aren't any players who would be a clear upgrade over Jordan Mason and Aaron Jones. However, there are a few players who could come in and handle the starting role if either player misses a significant chunk of time this season. Joe Mixon, Najee Harris, and Antonio Gibson all have some tread left on their tires, while Nick Chubb and Austin Ekeler are both on the wrong side of 30 but could fill in just fine for a few games. And hey, worst case scenario, the Vikings could always bring back Cam Akers, who always seems to find a way to end up in purple and gold.

At the end of the day, I'm not expecting the Vikings' RB group to strike fear into the hearts of opposing defenses. But we know what we're getting with them, which is why they are so high on this list.



JUNE 16, 2026 – 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, Gage, Sutton and Wiese. Commissioner Dinger was absent. Commissioner Gage led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Chairman Sutton informed everyone that Jordon Menken with SD Game, Fish & Parks was not able to attend the meeting today so that was being scratched from the agenda. Moved by Commissioner Wiese, seconded by Gage to approve the amended agenda. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None
RICHMOND DAM UPDATE: Scott Meints, Emergency Management Director shared that the Foot Creek gauge was fluctuating and water level was just under 8 foot. The James River and Moccasin Creek are full. Dirk Rogers, Highway Superintendent figures they have 2 pumps currently running because pumping 6 cubic feet per hour. Dirk also informed everyone that they would finish up the surfacing on the detour today, then in the near future they would fog seal and stripe the detour as well.

OPENING CONFERENCE FOR 2025 AUDIT: Kasie Ingraham with SD Department of Legislative Audits (DLA) met with the Commission for her Entrance Conference for the Audit being conducted for Fiscal Year 2025. Moved by Commissioner Wiese and seconded by Dennert to authorize Chairman Sutton to sign the understanding of services with Department of Legislative Audit. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

QUOTES FOR NORTH PARKING LOT RENOVATION: Randy Zens, Assistant Building Superintendent, presented the Commission with 3 quotes for renovations to the North Parking Lot. They are as follows: Wright & Sudlow for \$11,960.00; CWF Concrete & Masonry for \$21,081.67 and Huff Construction for \$15,316.00. Randy shared that he got confirmation from the City of Aberdeen as well to continue with this project. Moved by Commissioner Wiese, seconded by Gage to approve the quote from Wright and Sudlow for \$11,960.00 to renovate the north parking lot. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

ABERDEEN SECURITY & INVESTIGATIONS CONTRACT FOR 2026 BROWN COUNTY FAIR:

Rachel Kippley, Fair/Fairgrounds/Parks Manager presented contract with Aberdeen Security & Investigates for the 2026 Brown County Fair, they are reducing the amount of hours so will be 8-10 people for crowd control at the concerts at the rate of \$30/hr. for 2026 and \$32/hr. for 2027. Moved by Commissioner Wiese to approve the contract with Aberdeen Security & Investigates for Brown County Fair and authorize Chairman Sutton to sign the contract, seconded by Dennert. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

JR. FAIRBOARD FOR 2026 BROWN COUNTY FAIR: Rachel Kippley, Fair/Fairgrounds/Parks Manager presented list of Jr. Fair Board Members for 2026 Brown County Fair. Moved by Commissioner Dennert, seconded by Wiese to approve the following for the 2026 Brown County Jr. Fair Board: from Aberdeen Christian H.S. Iszabell Helm; from Groton H.S. Addison Hoeft, Paisley Mitchell, Payton Mitchell, Gentry Pigors, Taryn Thompson; from Frederick H.S. Jax Holmes, Noah Kippley, Titus Kippley; from Roncalli H.S. Sophia Feickert, Leah Eisenbeisz; and from Warner H.S. Olivia Marcuson. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

EXPRESS NDAA CERTIFICATION: Rachel Kippley, Fair/Fairgrounds/Parks Manager presented a contract with Express NDAA Certification for the 2026 Fair. Moved by Commissioner Wiese, seconded by Gage to approve and authorize Chairman Sutton to sign the contract with Express NDAA Certification for the 2026 Brown County Fair. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

DEPARTMENT UPDATE – FAIR/FAIRGROUNDS: Rachel Kippley, Fair/Fairgrounds/Parks shared with the Commission that we are 55 days out for the Fair, they've had 77 volunteer's sign-

up. They did an event at Dakotaland Federal Credit Union last week and have a couple more events coming for people to attend and sign up to volunteer at the Fair. They are June 26th at the Brown County Speedway at 5:30pm or when gates open; at the Fairgrounds on July 7th beginning at 6pm with BINGO to follow and then with Aberdeen Federal Credit Union at Wylie on July 10th at 5pm. Ticket outlets will open next Monday at C Express (North location), Hitch-n-Post and Ken's SuperFair Foods. They had Hwy. 12 Livestock Show at the Fairgrounds last weekend and it was great turnout. Busy with wedding season as well for rentals.

APPLICATIONS FOR OCCUPANCY: Moved by Commissioner Wiese, seconded by Dennert to approve the following application submitted by Web Water for occupancy of Brown County 23 (aka 142nd St.) in Section 2-T121-R64, Brown County, SD to install potable waterline service. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

DEPARTMENT UPDATE – HIGHWAY: Dirk Rogers, Highway Superintendent, informed the Commission that they planned to finish the Richmond Lake detour today and will fog and stripe it down the road, like in 2 weeks or so. No dates are set for Brown County 14 or 16 yet, but they will be done by year-end. Paving on 27 from James River bridge to county line; done off Spink County bid. They are struggling a bit with milling – will pave at the Fairgrounds next week then go up to Road 9 west of Westport next. Doing crack sealing and patching between jobs. The bridge has been removed at Sand Lake, and they are moving along on that project.

ORDINANCE #325 – FIRST READING: Moved by Commissioner Gage, seconded by Wiese to approve the First Reading of Proposed Ordinance #325. Applicant James Arneson to rezone from Agriculture Preservation District (AG-P) to Mini-Agriculture District (M-AG) to bring these parcels into compliance for their current use. Description of property: Proposed Lots 1 & 2, "Arneson Addition" in the NE1/4 of Section 35-T126N-R64W of the 5th P.M. Brown County, South Dakota (11715 387th Avenue; Oneota Twp.). All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

ORDINANCE #326 – FIRST READING: Moved by Commissioner Dennert, seconded by Wiese to approve the First Reading of Proposed Ordinance #326. Applicants Katherine Osterman/ Eric Olson to rezone from Agriculture Preservation District (AG-P) to Mini-Agriculture District (M-AG) to bring this parcel into compliance for its current use. Description of property: "Johnson's Outlot 1" in the SW1/4 of Section 15-T123N-R61W of the 5th P.M. Brown County, South Dakota (40310 133rd Street, Henry Twp.). All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

ORDINANCE #327 – FIRST READING: Moved by Commissioner Gage, seconded by Dennert to approve the First Reading of Proposed Ordinance #327. Applicant TC Wright Trust to rezone from Heavy Industrial District (H-I) to Mini-Agriculture District (M-AG) to bring this parcel into compliance for its current use. Description of property: Proposed Lot 2, "Specialty-Wright Addition" in the W1/2 of Section 8-T123N-R62W of the 5th P.M. Brown County, South Dakota (13146 395th Avenue; Bath Twp.). All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

MINUTES: Moved by Commissioner Wiese, seconded by Gage to approve the General Meeting Minutes of June 9, 2026. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

Moved by Commissioner Wiese, seconded by Dennert to approve the Post Election Audit Minutes of June 10, 2026. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

CLAIMS/PAYROLL: Moved by Commissioner Gage, seconded by Wiese to approve the following Claims/Payroll. Claims: Professional Fees: Aberdeen ED \$1,290.12; Aberdeen Imaging \$337.65; Alcohol Monitoring Systems Inc \$2,153.60; AMG Cardiovascular Aberdeen \$7.56; Avera Addiction Care Center \$136.60; Avera Medical Group Orthopedics Aberdeen \$147.77; Avera Medical Group Radiology \$339.35; Avera St. Luke's \$417.13; Avera St. Luke's Hospital \$9,292.51; Certified Languages International LLC \$1,112.10; Cogley Law Office \$3,249.40; Dependable Sanitation Inc \$43,976.00; Devnet \$10,580.78; Dohrer Law Office \$4,661.60; Domestic Violence Consulting Services Inc \$8,175.00; IMEG Corp \$15,000.00; Language Line

Services Inc \$635.00; Lewis & Clark BHS \$675.00; Liberty Tire Recycling LLC \$10,931.71; Lincoln County Auditor \$1,069.32; Matt Heupel \$44.50; National Medical Resources Inc \$175.00; Network Center Inc \$9,249.05; Northeastern Mental Health Center \$5,031.25; Sanford Clinic \$6,818.97; Sanford Health \$2,823.05; Sara Zahn \$55.25; SD Dept of Health \$165.00; SDSU Extension 4-H Programs \$360.00; Taliaferro Law Firm PC \$1,029.10; Yankton County Sheriff's Office \$100.00. Publishing: Friends of SDDP-Underwriting \$4,000.00; Groton Daily Independent \$266.74; McQuillen Creative Group Inc \$1,313.84; The Watertown Current \$198.00. Rentals: Vestis \$262.50. Repairs & Maintenance: Auto Glass Solutions \$50.00; B&B Contracting Inc \$4,484.70; C Express Inc \$12.00; Dakota Electronics LLC \$766.03; Dakota Oil \$101.50; Harry Implement Inc \$278.35; House of Glass \$21,638.00; Hub City Roofing \$255.00; Jake's Heating & Cooling \$115.00; Leidholt Electric LLC \$257.80; Les Schwab Group Holdings LLC \$53.99; Pierson Ford Lincoln Inc \$1,042.48; Pomp's Tire Service Inc \$134.00; Rinse & Go Car Wash \$11.25. Supplies & Materials: Advance Auto Parts \$22.94; Amazon Capital Services Inc \$1,395.77; Avera LTC Pharmacy Aberdeen \$396.15; Cartney Bearing \$694.56; Century Business Products \$2,142.38; Charm-Tex Inc \$1,487.68; Cole Papers Inc \$2,141.66;; Dakota Oil \$381.00; Dohrer Law Office \$7.80; East Side Jersey Dairy Inc \$2,161.25; Farm Power Mfg. \$10.98; Geffdog Designs \$20.30; Harry Implement Inc \$110.84; L.G. Everist Inc \$5,010.68; Leidholt Tool Sales, LLC \$31.90; Leidholt Electric LLC \$6.98; LEM Inc \$10,299.97; Les Schwab Group Holdings LLC \$73.97; Lien Transportation Company \$1,117.60; Menards \$158.77; NVC \$33.76; O'Reilly Auto Enterprises LLC \$12.49; Panterior Cleaners Inc \$60.00; Pierson Ford Lincoln Inc \$36.00; Pomp's Tire Service Inc \$7.00; Steven Lust Automotive \$269.94. Travel & Conference: Domestic Violence Consulting Services Inc \$1,523.00; Gene Loeschke \$19.00; Joe Kraft \$503.80; Kathy Fischer \$502.35; Kent Karlen \$19.00; Marianne Martilla-Klipfel \$189.00; Patricia Kendall \$189.00; Russell Metz \$227.00; Sarah Swenson \$19.00; Scott Kolb \$19.00; Sherri Rawstern \$189.00; Stephanie Morgan \$546.35. Utilities: CenturyLink \$578.63; City of Aberdeen Treasurer \$671.45; City of Hecla \$189.00; Dakota Electronics LLC \$115.00; Northern Electric \$117.50; Northwestern Energy \$297.52; NVC \$32,212.82; State of South Dakota PMB 0112 \$94.00; Verizon Wireless \$460.29. Other: SD Association of County Officials \$984.00; SD Dept of Agriculture & Natural Resources \$5,205.57; WageWorks \$909.02. Payroll: Commission \$5,165.81; Elections \$21,567.02; Auditor/ Welfare \$14,700.25; Treasurer \$26,650.06; SA \$39,015.06; Public Defender \$14,489.61; Maintenance \$13,613.85; Assessor \$17,506.94; Register of Deeds \$11,511.06; VSO \$8,046.84; GIS \$3,110.76; IT \$10,766.94; HR \$5,721.14; Sheriff \$64,620.01; Jail \$84,652.21; Coroner (Voucher) \$1,050.00; Court Security \$9,358.43; JDC \$36,097.76; MI Board \$0.00; Museum \$15,786.91; Parks/Fairgrounds \$10,334.78; Fair Board \$5,441.94; 4-H \$1,465.15; Weed \$5,766.10; Planning & Zoning \$8,510.51; Highway \$57,223.24; Dispatch \$38,922.46; Emergency \$5,805.33; 24/7 Sobriety \$2,817.74; Landfill \$22,795.21; Meal Benefits \$285.00; Tips \$730.00; FICA \$32,660.55; Medicare \$7,638.33. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

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

- o Resignation of Abby Jones as Brown County Jail Records Technician, FT; effective June 11, 2026. Request to fill.
- o Temporary 2026 Brown County Election Workers June 12th to July 28th at \$16.00/hr.
- o Delane Bertsch
- o Darlene Evans
- o Janis Erickson
- o Cheryl Finstad
- o Phyllis Gab
- o Darlene Grote
- o Penny Rohrbach
- o Jan Weismantel
- o Amendment on wages effective for December 21, 2025
- o Aaron Walberg – submitted \$34.37/hr., \$2,749.46/pay period and should be \$2,888.65/pay period.
- o Jesse Milbrandt – submitted \$28.21/hr. and should be \$29.64/hr.

o Payment of retirement award for Judy Dosch in the amount of \$150.00 before taxes; requirement was met.

All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

TRAVEL REQUESTS: Moved by Commissioner Dennert, seconded by Wiese to approve the following Travel Requests: Jeremias Vega & Taylor Harman to attend Controlled Force Training . All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

LEASE AGREEMENTS: Moved by Commissioner Wiese, seconded by Dennert to approve & authorize Chairman Sutton to sign the following lease agreements: Exchange Club of Aberdeen to lease Fairgrounds (Parking Lot for Flag Retirement) on June 22-23, 2026; Tanner Eggert to lease the Clubhouse for a wedding on August 28-31, 2026. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

OTHER BUSINESS: Patricia Kendall, Museum Director, met with the Commission to ask if they could use the parking lot of the new building to line up floats for the July 4th 250th Celebration Parade. Chairman Sutton asked if anyone would object and there was none, so they told her it was fine for them to use the Parking lot on July 4th. Patricia shared the parade route that will go from S of Railroad Tracks down main street to 5th Avenue. There will be a Pancake Feed at the Depot that morning before the parade and parade will start at 10am. Currently, they have 30 floats registered.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: Moved by Commissioner Dennert, seconded by Wiese to go into Executive Session per SDCL 1-25-2 for Personnel & Legal. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

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

Moved by Commissioner Wiese, seconded by Dennert to approve and authorize Chairman Sutton to sign Host Agency Agreement with National Indian Council for Senior Community Service Employment Agreement to have a volunteer at the Dacotah Prairie Museum. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT: Moved by Commissioner Wiese, seconded by Dennert to adjourn the Brown County Commission at 9:46 A.M. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

Lynn Heupel, Brown County Auditor

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June 16, 2026

The Groton City Council met on the above date at 7:00pm at 120 N Main Street for their second monthly meeting with the following members present: Bahr, Shilhanek, Babcock, Cutler via telephone, and Mayor Hanlon presiding. Also present were Attorney Chad Locken, Douglas Heinrich, Marla Kiesz, and Elizabeth Varin.

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

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

Kiesz discussed the plan for Area IV Senior Nutrition to utilize the Groton Community Center. Moved by Babcock and seconded by Shilhanek to allow Area IV Senior Nutrition to lease the Groton Community Center for \$2,400, due upon the end of the lease term. All members present voted aye.

Kiesz exited the meeting. Moved by Bahr and seconded by Babcock to approve donated electricity for the Groton Community Historical Society's jail with the stipulation that the city controls the electric load. All members present voted aye.

Moved by Shilhanek and seconded by Babcock to table the airport discussion and update on hangar leases. All members present voted aye.

The May finance report was approved on a motion by Shilhanek and seconded by Bahr. All members present voted aye. Discussion took place regarding the building permit ordinances and effect of South Dakota Senate Bill 3 on the ordinances. The minutes from the previous

meeting were approved on a motion by Babcock and seconded by Shilhanek. All members present voted aye.

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

Payroll, \$15,221.34, Employee salaries; Executive, \$387.84, ; Public Safety, \$9,088.28, ; Culture & Recreation, \$5,745.22, ; Milbank Boys Athletics 2032, \$500.00, U8/U10/U12 baseball tournament registration; McGannon Plumbing & Heating, \$6,925.93, Improvements to park bathrooms; CABS, \$250.00, Jr. Legion tournament fee; Dacotah Bank, \$4,570.24, Withholding/SS/Medicare; SD State Treasurer, \$11,536.90, Sales and Excise Tax - May 2026; City of Groton, \$600.34, Utility deposits applied to bills; Dodie Martin, \$14.66, Utility deposit refund; SD Supplemental Retirement, \$540.00, Supplemental retirement; Heartland Waste Management, \$12,356.00, Garbage hauling; Runnings, \$29.97, Clamps - City Shop; Crawford Trucks and Equipment, \$296.75, Condenser for dump truck - Street Dept.; The Groton Independent, \$72.11, Publishing costs; Cole Papers, Inc., \$189.26, Garbage bags - Multiple Depts.; Altec Capital Services, LLC, \$2,189.93, Digger truck lease; Flihs Sales & Service, \$40.00, Oil filters - Cemetery; IMEG, \$12,500.00, Engineering services for wastewater project - invoice no. 9; Merchant Job Training & Safety, \$1,100.00, Book 1 tuition for journeyman lineman x2 - Electric Dept.; Irby, Inc., \$1,654.26, Form 2ES meters, hard hats, FR clothing - Electric Dept.; Heartland Energy, \$55,516.80, Power services - May 2026; Douglas Heinrich, \$409.50, Mileage/meal reimbursement - HR/FO School in Ocoma; WAPA, \$24,468.20, Power services - May 2026; Fire Safety First, LLC., \$1,200.93, Annual fire extinguisher certification and first aid supplies; MJ's Sinclair, Inc., \$1,865.09, Fuel purchases - Multiple Depts.; NVC, \$909.51, Telephone and internet services; Dacotah Bank Visa, \$4,407.06, Storage containers, envelopes, taillight assembly, stamped envelopes, water sample, aluminum bat, hotel stay - water distribution exam, baseball/softball equipment bags, protecting gear for baseball/softball, water activity equipment, website hosting fee, spot markers, BB concession food for resale, fuel purchases, catchers gear, clipboards, coffee, creamer - Multiple Depts.; Bound Tree Medical, LLC., \$296.99, AED pad replacements - Baseball Complex.

Announcement: City offices will be closed on June 19, 2026, for Juneteenth.

Varin exited the meeting.

Moved by Bahr and seconded by Babcock to adjourn into executive session for personnel and legal matters 1-25-2 (1) & (3) at 8:37pm. All members present voted aye. Council reconvened into regular session at 9:09pm.

Moved by Babcock and seconded by Cutler to adjourn the meeting at 9:23pm. All members present voted aye.

Scott Hanlon, Mayor
Douglas Heinrich, Finance Officer

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NOTICE OF SURPLUS EQUIPMENT

Notice is hereby given, that pursuant to SDCL 6-13 et al, the following described property will be offered for sale by sealed bid which sealed bids will be opened at the Groton Fire Station, 305 E. Railroad Avenue, Groton, SD 57445 on June 29, 2026 at 7:30 o'clock P.M.

This property has been approved for public sale by the Groton Area Fire Protection and Rescue District. Purchase price of the property shall be paid in full immediately upon notification to the successful bidder and a bill of sale will be issued to the successful bidder. Property offered for sale is as follows:

1. One (1) 1987 Chevy C70 single axle fire truck with 427 CID engine, 5-speed transmis-

sion with 2-speed transfer, tires like new, approximately 9,850 miles, together with a 1988 Central States Apparatus including a 1,000 G.P.M. Darley pump, 454 Chevy pump engine, 1,000-gallon tank, stainless steel chassis mount with cab, and a 2,500-gallon drop tank with all attached, ladders, roof ladder, and roof ladder holder, all as one item.

The Fire Truck is currently located and available for viewing on Highway 12 in the parking lot of Hanlon Bros.. Items are sold as is with no guarantee of description, accuracy, running order, or condition.

Please return sealed bids to P.O Box 438, Groton South Dakota, 57445. Seller reserves the right to accept or reject any and all bids. Bids will be opened by the Groton Area Fire Protection and Rescue District Board.

Bailey Sippel
Secretary, Groton Area Fire Protection and Rescue District

Published June 17 and 24, 2026 at the total approximate cost of \$32.24 and may be viewed free of charge at www.sdpublicnotices.com. 26945



For Sale by Sealed Bid
Groton Area School District has the following item(s) to sell by sealed bid:

- 2003 Buick LeSabre
- John Deere Lawnmower

Tractor with snowblower and brush
To view, contact the school transportation supervisor
Damian Bahr at 605-290-4410.

Mark your bid envelope "School Vehicle Bid" and return it to the Groton Area School District Business Office at 502 N 2nd Street, Groton, SD 57445, no later than 2:00 pm, Monday, July 13, 2026.

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Groton Area School Project
Groton Area School District 06-6, South Dakota is soliciting Request for Proposals for Construction Manager at Risk Services (CMAr) from interested firms to assist with additions and renovations to the existing facilities located in Groton, SD.

Requests for Proposals will be sent out Thursday June 11, 2026, and Proposal responses will be received by 1:00 p.m., local time on Thursday July 2, 2026.

The District has contracted with CO-OP Architecture for Architecture and Engineering services in preparation for a potential bond vote. The selected firm would be assisting throughout the design and specification development of this project and would also provide construction manager services throughout the construction. The District is required to competitively bid the project once plans and specifications are complete and the School Board is comfortable with the cost estimates and construction timelines. AIA Document A133 will be utilized for the agreement between the CMAr and District.

Contact Kyle Raph, CO-OP Architecture, at 605-334-9999 or kyle@co-oparch.com to receive the RFP and more detailed project information.

One (1) electronic copy of the RFP response must be submitted to CO-OP Architecture at:

CO-OP Architecture, c/o Kyle Raph
kyle@co-oparch.com

Groton Area School District 06-6 reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals and to waive any irregularities therein.

Groton Area School District 06-6, South Dakota

By: Joe Schwan
Superintendent

Published June 17 and 24, 2026 at the total approximate cost of \$33.93 and may be viewed free of charge at www.sdpublicnotices.com. 26947

Real estate, car dealerships, bitcoin and a TIF: A look into Toby Doeden’s empire

ABERDEEN, S.D. – Businessman Toby Doeden, whose campaign for governor has hinged largely on the elimination of all property taxes for South Dakotans, has links to real estate investment companies that would save more than half a million dollars every year under that plan, according to public records. That number reflects the sheer size of the candidate’s reach and business experience in the state’s third-largest city.

Though Doeden has frequently referred to his experience in the business world as his primary qualifier for the office of governor, little was known about the full extent of his ventures and wealth.

In addition to a vast portfolio acquired through multiple real estate investment and development companies, Doeden also owns the Aberdeen Chrysler dealership in Aberdeen and Redfield Ford in Redfield. He also has ties to land next to the Aberdeen dealership that company Plaza Rentals and his son had rezoned in 2020 to allow for bitcoin mining. And that’s only a few of the two dozen LLCs with links to Doeden.

Searches of the Better Business Bureau, court records and the state of South Dakota’s consumer protection portal paint a generally positive picture of the empire: Doeden’s companies are in good standing and have not had any major outstanding legal or civil issues. All but one of his limited liability companies remain active on the South Dakota Secretary of State’s website, Scotty’s Diner, LLC, which closed in 2024.



The Roosevelt Apartments at 214 S. Kline St. in Aberdeen, S.D., on June 15, 2026. Doeden’s Plaza Rentals owns and operates the 32-unit building. The property was originally purchased and renovated in 2013 by Roosevelt Apartments LLC. Brown County Register of Deeds records indicate Plaza Rentals purchased the property in 2021. (Photo: Molly Wetsch/South Dakota News Watch)

Doeden declined a phone interview with News Watch to clarify his current status at the companies but provided a statement.

“I am extremely proud of the work my team and I have been able to accomplish over the years at Doeden Investment Group. Being able to give back to the people and state that have given me so much has been the honor of a lifetime,” Doeden said in the statement.

“We have created thousands of jobs, grown countless businesses, and invested 100% of that money back into our communities right here in South Dakota. I look forward to bringing that much needed business experience directly to Pierre as Governor.”

Doeden Investment Group is the mechanism behind much of Doeden’s real estate and business portfolio. It describes itself as “a leading investment firm dedicated to identifying and nurturing business opportunities that drive growth and prosperity within communities” and says it has “a diverse portfolio spanning various industries.”

Dozens of properties make up real estate portfolio in northeastern SD
Companies Plaza Rentals LLP, Tenth Street

Properties LLC and Five-Star Management LLC, all with links to Doeden through years of annual reports filed with the South Dakota Secretary of State’s office, own more than \$30 million of property in and around Aberdeen.

That includes single-family homes, commercial buildings and multi-family buildings, according to data from the Brown County Equalization Department.

Doeden told the Aberdeen Insider on June 17, though, that categorizing him as a major property owner in Aberdeen is incorrect because he is no longer deeply involved with the companies’ business dealings. Several other individuals are involved in the day-to-day management of those real estate companies, including sons Jonathan and Jackson and daughter Josie.

“But I hear, ‘Toby owns all the property...’ Well, Toby doesn’t hardly own any property in Aberdeen, and I haven’t for a long time. That property was put into a trust many years ago. I don’t control it. I don’t manage the companies. They’re trying to connect me to things that (I’m not even) involved with anymore, that I don’t even own anymore. And it’s unfortunate,” Doeden told the Insider.

But that doesn’t jibe with his current Statement of Financial Interest submitted to the South Dakota Secretary of State’s Office in April 2026, which lists him as an owner, employee and shareholder, partner or shareholder of 24 companies and funding sources.

Doeden is the registered agent for Tenth Street Properties and was the registered agent for Plaza Rentals until Tuesday, June 16, when the company’s annual report removed him and listed Mariah Bloom-McNeece, who serves as general counsel for Doeden Investment Group, as the new registered agent. He is still listed as a partner in the company along with the “Trustees of 4J 2023 Trust.” The trust was added to annual reports for Plaza Rentals starting in 2024.

Designating a registered agent is required for the formation of an LLC. The registered agent is the individual who is authorized to receive legal, tax and other government correspondence on behalf of the LLC and is usually a member of the LLC – though not necessarily the owner – or an individual through a professional registered agent service.

Doeden was also identified explicitly as a partner in Plaza Rentals both on his candidate statement of financial interest and in 2023, when the city of Aberdeen implemented a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district for several apartment buildings that the company purchased and redeveloped on North 2nd Street in Aberdeen, now called 4J Commons after Doeden’s four children. The TIF’s purpose is to “redevelop and repurpose a dilapidated apartment complex” and is estimated to mature in 2043.

Doeden also runs a charitable organization called the 4J Foundation.

A copy of the agreement signed by Toby Doeden on behalf of Plaza Rentals to incorporate its land on North 2nd Street in Aberdeen, S.D., into a Tax Increment Financing (TIF)



A building at 605 East Drive in Aberdeen, S.D. on June 15, 2026, which was zoned for 150 bitcoin mining units in 2022 by Plaza Rentals and Doeden’s son Jonathan. (Photo: Molly Wetsch/South Dakota News Watch)



A Toby Doeden campaign sign outside 9 East 10th St in Groton, S.D. on June 15, 2026. The building is an apartment complex that Doeden’s 5-Star Management company operates. (Photo: Molly Wetsch/South Dakota News Watch)

district in 2023.

At least 75 properties in Aberdeen and Groton are linked to Plaza Rentals, Tenth Street Properties and Five-Star Management, with a current taxable portfolio value of at least \$34,246,283 and a property tax commitment this year of at least \$558,129, according to public records from the Brown County director of equalization’s office.

Tenth Street Properties is the deed holder to the building housing Street Corner Urban Market – another LLC tied to Doeden – in Aberdeen, as well as Legends Liquor and Casino. Mulligan’s Sports Bar and Casino is also located in the complex owned by Tenth Street Properties.

Bitcoin mining

Real estate is not Doeden’s only business venture.

One of his businesses was involved in the zoning of a building for 150 bitcoin mining units near his Aberdeen dealership. That zoning permit, which was issued to son Jackson Doeden and company Plaza Rentals, was initially granted in February 2022 for 70 units and was upgraded to 150 units in June 2022, according to Aberdeen News and minutes from the Aberdeen Board of Zoning meetings.

Aberdeen Community Development planner Eric Miller told News Watch that as far as he knew, the mining operation was still active today. But since no extended licensing is required to continue operation of the facility, he could not confirm whether it is still taking place.

Bitcoin mining units are large, complex computers that generate units of cryptocurrency through computing efforts. A large-scale center like the one in Aberdeen can become a mostly passive income stream after the initial investment of the mining units, which can cost up to several thousand dollars per machine, depending on the model.

Because of the largely-opaque nature of cryptocurrency and how it is produced and sold, it is unclear what the Plaza Rentals facility’s bitcoin output is per year, and therefore how much it earns from the operation.

Doeden did, however, disclose “digital assets” as a source of funding on his April 2026 candidate statement of financial interest. Examples of digital assets, according to the IRS, include convertible virtual currencies and cryptocurrencies like bitcoin, stablecoins and non-fungible tokens (NFTs).

Business experience key to campaign

Doeden has spoken about his experience in business frequently and touts it as his biggest qualification for governor, often calling himself the “outsider” and the “businessman” in the governor’s race.

Doeden came out on top in the June 2 Republican primary election with 31%, followed by Gov. Larry Rhoden with 25%. U.S. Rep. Dusty Johnson was third with 23% and state House Speaker Jon Hanson fourth with 21%.

Because no one received 35% of the vote, Doeden and Rhoden are headed to a July 28 runoff election for the Republican nomination



Aberdeen Chrysler Center, which Toby Doeden took over ownership of in 2020, in Aberdeen, S.D., on June 15, 2026. (Photo: Molly Wetsch/South Dakota News Watch)

for governor. The winner will meet Democrat Dan Ahlers in the Nov. 3 general election.

Doeden backed up his promise to largely self-fund his campaign by loaning it another \$2 million this year, in addition to the \$2 million he put up in 2025, according to the latest campaign reports.

Of that latest \$2 million, roughly \$1.4 million has gone to advertisements, while he has also spent \$210,000 on salaries for campaign staff.

Doeden’s campaign website says that he is “one of South Dakota’s most successful self-made business owners.” His campaign ads, too, tout years of business experience and his creation of “thousands of jobs” in South Dakota.

“No one is able to outwork me,” he said in one ad.

In 2023, Doeden told the Aberdeen Insider that the growth of other enterprises he is linked to and his success in the business world can be entirely credited to his work at Aberdeen Chrysler.

“Aberdeen Chrysler is a very successful business,” Doeden said. “That afforded me the ability to start these other companies. Without Aberdeen Chrysler, none of these things would have happened.”

One comment made at an event before Doeden announced his gubernatorial run illustrates just how much the Doeden name means in Aberdeen.

“Here’s how to measure Toby’s success,” Brown County GOP chair Richard Hilgemann joked at the 2025 Brown County Lincoln Day Dinner. “When he buys up enough of Aberdeen that we get to name the town ‘Aber-Doeden,’ that’s when we know he’s successful.”

Post-pandemic lucrative era for Doeden

Doeden’s fast rise to success seems to have started roughly six years ago.

The South Dakota Secretary of State’s office shows that he took over Plaza Rentals as its registered agent in 2020. That’s also when Doeden took ownership of the Aberdeen Chrysler Center after serving as general manager for nine years and gradually purchasing stock.

Roger Gray was the prior owner of Aberdeen Chrysler and also was the registered agent for Plaza Rentals when it was founded in 2007.

All but two of the 27 companies Doeden is linked to were incorporated in or after 2020. Doeden credits his innovative thinking to his success during the pandemic, citing a risk-taking approach and careful planning.

“You can either suffer or find a way to come out the other end,” Doeden said of the pandemic to the Aberdeen Insider in 2023. “We got together, had a plan and had a fantastic three years.”

The Aberdeen businessman boosted Republican populist candidates in last year’s legislative primaries and is exploring his own run in 2026.

Doeden’s business activity during the pandemic, though, has also come under scrutiny on the campaign trail.

During a gubernatorial debate in April, The Dakota Scout’s Jonathan Ellis asked Doeden why he thought it was appropriate to “personally benefit from federal PPP (Paycheck Protection Program) funds and leverage those programs to grow your businesses” when the candidate has come out against government-led economic development programs.

Doeden railed against Ellis’ questioning. “I don’t appreciate you saying that I used

it to further my business interests. That is a flat out lie, and as a moderator, you should apologize to the people here tonight because it’s a flat out, utter lie,” Doeden said during the debate.

PPP data shows that Aberdeen Auto Center, also known as Aberdeen Chrysler, received \$1.1 million in loans in 2020. Doeden said during the debate that 150 jobs were saved at his company from the program.

PPP loans were sent directly to businesses and were largely intended to cover employee salaries during the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Where would our state economy be today if we hadn’t fought to keep our companies open? I’m proud of that one loan,” Doeden said.

Other loans in Plaza Rentals’ holdings include 77 mortgages on properties in and around Aberdeen since 2020, according to information from the Brown County Register of Deeds’ office.

But long-term debt certainly is not part of the Plaza Rentals business plan.

Many of those mortgages were taken out on five-year terms – a relatively short lifespan. At least 20 of them have been fully satisfied, with several others partially paid. Notably, records show a \$4 million mortgage for the 4J Commons complex from American Bank & Trust was fully satisfied in just one year, between 2023 and 2024.

Mortgages for Plaza Rentals properties have come from regional banks Dacotah Bank, American Bank & Trust, First Interstate Bank and Dakotaland Federal Credit Union.

Doeden has in the past credited strong, trusting relationships with lenders as a reason for his ability to acquire large amounts of property in a short period of time.

What we don’t know

Though public records can illustrate a broad picture of how Doeden came to his financial success and status as a top vote-getter in the gubernatorial campaign, there are still some portions of the story that are unclear.

The trust industry is largely a hidden one, especially in South Dakota. The state’s privacy statute prevents any trust information from being revealed to the public in court proceedings, and trusts by nature are opaque.

We do not know whether the trust Doeden refers to is revocable (a living trust), which can be altered, or irrevocable, which are established trusts that cannot be altered and essentially cede ownership of property.

Toby Doeden’s Statement of Financial Interest submitted to the South Dakota Secretary of State’s Office, which lists him as an owner, employee, partner or shareholder of several companies.

Name of Candidate or		Relationship to Funds	
Family Member		Employee & Shareholder	
Toby Doeden	Name the Source of Funds	Employee & Owner	
Toby Doeden	Aberdeen Auto Center Inc	Owner	
Toby Doeden	5-Star Management	Owner	
Toby Doeden	Bonn River LLC	Owner	
Toby Doeden	Crystal River LLC	Owner	
Toby Doeden	Engels Event Co LLC	Owner	
Toby Doeden	EZ Stop LLC	Owner	
Toby Doeden	Fire River LLC	Owner	
Toby Doeden	Legend’s Aberdeen LLC	Owner	
Toby Doeden	Legend’s Liquor LLC	Owner	
Toby Doeden	Mulligans	Owner	
Toby Doeden	Street Corner Aberdeen	Owner	
Toby Doeden	Tenth Street Properties LLC	Owner	
Toby Doeden	Ziggy River LLC	Member	
Toby Doeden	Aberdeen Lumber LLC	Member	
Toby Doeden	Eagle River LLC	Member	
Toby Doeden	Smokey River LLC	Member	
Toby Doeden	HDH LLC	Member	
Toby Doeden	Ipswich Lumber LLC	Member	
Toby Doeden	Tri Rivers LLC	Member	
Toby Doeden	Valley River LLC	Partner	
Toby Doeden	Plaza Rentals LLP	Owner	
Toby Doeden	Digital Assets	Shareholder	
Toby Doeden	McColla Enterprises	Shareholder	
Toby Doeden	Redfield Auto Center Inc	Member	
Elizabeth Doeden	Eagle River LLC	Member	
Elizabeth Doeden	Smokey River LLC	Member	



Street Corner Urban Market in Aberdeen, S.D., a company for which Doeden is the registered agent, on June 15, 2026. Legends Liquor and Casino also recently opened in the building. (Photo: Molly Wetsch/South Dakota News Watch)

Information that is also unavailable to the public is who the beneficiaries of that trust are – though the trust is ostensibly named after Doeden’s children – and how many properties are actually in trust.

It is also unclear how much real financial stake and income Doeden maintains in and from the companies he is linked to.

How we reported this story

Details for this story were largely sourced from the public record through offices like the South Dakota Secretary of State’s Office, the Brown County Director of Equalization, Aberdeen’s Board of Zoning Adjustment and the Brown County Register of Deeds.

Property values and property tax payments were determined through the most recent tax-assessed data from the Brown County Director of Equalization’s BEACON system. Addresses associated with companies Plaza Rentals, Tenth Street Properties and 5-Star Management were included in the calculation.

Reporter Molly Wetsch visited the Brown County Register of Deeds on June 15 and spent hours viewing public documents. The office does not allow computers or phones when accessing public computers, so notes on mortgage and other deed information were taken by hand.

Wetsch also utilized prior reporting about Doeden and his companies from news outlets across the state.

Weekly SUDOKU												
Answer												
6	3	9	4	2	7	8	1	5				
1	5	7	8	3	6	9	2	4				
8	2	4	1	5	9	7	3	6				
3	9	6	2	7	8	4	5	1				
7	4	2	3	1	5	6	8	9				
5	1	8	6	9	4	2	7	3				
9	6	5	7	8	3	1	4	2				
4	7	1	5	6	2	3	9	8				
2	8	3	9	4	1	5	6	7				

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The Groton City Council has declared the following items as surplus property: 2007 Ford F550 Bucket Truck. Bids will be accepted at Groton City Hall, 120 N Main Street or mailed to PO Box 587. Bids are due by July 21, 2026, by 5:00pm and will be opened that same evening during the regular council meeting at 7:00pm. Please call 605-397-8422 with any questions. The City Council reserves the right to refuse any and all bids.
Published June 24, 2026 at the total approximate cost of \$6.28 and may be viewed free of charge at www.sdpublicnotices.com. 26959

King Crossword — Answers

Solution time: 26 mins.

A	H	A	T	H	A	W	C	R	I	B
R	U	B	Y	O	G	A	A	I	D	A
C	R	U	M	P	E	T	S	T	S	O
			D	I	O	R			A	N
A	C	H	E	S		R	O	M	A	
I	M	A	N		P	A	R	A	P	E
M	O	B		A	R	I	E	S	G	E
S	N	I	P	P	E	T	S		A	G
		R	I	P	A		A	S	S	A
C	A	P	O	N		B	L	A	H	
H	O	R	N		T	R	U	M	P	E
A	N	A	G		O	K	R	A		L
R	E	M	S		T	O	R	Y		L
										O
										X



* Chuck Norris had his own line of jeans called “Action Jeans.”
* At the time of its release, Grand Theft Auto 5 is the most expensive video game ever made -- \$265 million in production costs.

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* Diet Coke isn't a modified form of Coke, but a totally different recipe.
* A brand of anti-chafing foot powder won a 1967 mayoral election in Picoaza, Ecuador. Its platform? The product was touted as potentially bringing hygiene and well-being to the town of 4,000.
* The youngest soldier in the American Civil War was a 9-year-old boy from Mississippi, while the oldest was an 80-year-old man from Iowa.
* After the 9/11 tragedy in 2001, cyclist David Hale Sylvester began bicycling-and-hugging tours all over the world and staged multiple “hug parties” on three continents. As of 2021, he had hugged more than half a million people.
* Australian tennis player Samuel Groth once served a ball that was clocked at an astonishing 163.6 mph.

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