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The Groton Independent

Vol. 143 No. 47 ♦ Groton, SD ♦ Wednesday, Aug. 5, 2026 ♦ Established in 1889

New social studies teacher, replaces Scott Thorson

by Dorene Nelson

Sam Markley, originally from Sioux Falls, is the new social studies teacher at Groton High School. "I attended Sioux Falls Washington for high school and then the University of South Dakota to get my Bachelor's of Science degree in education," Markley explained.

"When I went to college, I had originally planned to become a lawyer," he said. "After working at a few summer camps and volunteering my time at various after school activities, I realized that my heart wanted me in the education system!"

"This is my first teaching job, and I'm excited about meeting all of the students and having smaller classes than I had in high school," he admitted. "I will be teaching government, history, geography, and social studies."

"One of the first things I'll have to do is learn my students' names as quickly as possible," Markley stated. "I should be able to do this since I'm used to larger classes."

"I live in Aberdeen and am looking forward to starting my teaching career here in Groton," Markley said. "I enjoy playing board games and card games and hope to get involved in the local game store in Aberdeen as well as participate in the community theatre."

"I decided to apply here in Groton for several reasons," Markley admitted. "Of course class size is important to me, but I also was seeking a position that fit my preferences of a smaller town, a smaller school, and a friendly, welcoming atmosphere."

"I am hoping that my classroom becomes a place where students look forward to attending," he stated, "not because it will be an easy class, but because they know it is a place that wants the best out of them with a teacher who truly cares."

"I'm eager to start my career and meet new people, both colleagues and students," Markley said. "I'm looking forward to getting to know how supporting the Groton community is as we join together and cheer our athletic teams on to victory!"



Sam Markley

Groton City Council discusses ballpark improvements, cybersecurity

By Elizabeth Varin

A discussion about repairing unstable bleacher stairs at the Groton baseball complex expanded into a debate Tuesday night over funding priorities and the responsibilities of the Groton Baseball and Softball Foundation.

Some council members and a representative from the Groton Baseball/Softball Foundation expressed concern that the bleachers have become unstable, with sections of stairs shifting when people walk on them.

Foundation Vice President Jarod Fliehs said that while many areas of the bleachers are level, the stairs are a big issue.

"It seems like it's more of a safety hazard on city property," he said.

While those in attendance agreed the issue should be addressed, some questioned whether the foundation's initial project proposal estimated to cost more than \$15,000 was the best solution before other options had been explored.

Councilman Brian Bahr said he has looked at the bleachers, but doesn't agree with the proposal to use a crane to move the bleachers, install new support and a sidewalk, and then move the bleachers back into place. He recommended bringing someone in to add shims and weld them to the bleacher stairs.

"In all my years in building, there's good money and bad money thrown at things," he said. "...Safety is always important, but we can come up with something cheaper and not just land on the first thing presented."

Fliehs also outlined additional improvements the foundation hopes to pursue at the baseball complex, including moving the scoreboards on the smaller fields as they are obstructed by the dugouts and possibly putting some sidewalk leading to the fields to help those in wheelchairs, those with walkers or those with strollers.

The discussion shifted from facility projects to the foundation's role in managing the program when Bahr said the organization should take on more operational responsibilities—such as distributing uniforms and hats to players—rather than relying on city staff while simultaneously requesting city funding for capital improvements.

Discussion ended with no action or recommendations on repairs to the bleachers.

The council also discussed contracting with an information technology management company to strengthen the city's cybersecurity.

Finance Officer Douglas Heinrich said recently the city had an issue with questionable

Wilbur's Last Stand wins again!



Blaine Snyder, Jon Cutler, Jeff Howard and Brett Anderson (Wilbur's Last Stand) are pictured with the First Place Award and the People's Choice Award plaques presented at the Third Annual Rib Fest held Saturday at the Groton City Park. Howard presented the awards and he also donated the ribs for the event. This is the second consecutive year that this team has won. (Photos by Paul Kosel)



Cody Keller received the third place award from Jeff Howard. (Photo by Paul Kosel)



Trevor Van Tilburg and his son, John, took second place at the Rib Fest with Jeff Howard presenting the award. (Photo by Paul Kosel)

Continues on back page



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Competing for a roster or practice squad spot: Bangally Kamara, Keli Lawson, Jacob Roberts, Josh Ross

Why I’m confident: The two starting inside linebackers, Cashman and Wilson, have both proven they’re more than capable of playing LB in the Brian Flores system. Cashman just turned 30 years old in May and has been a key piece of the defense since signing with the Vikings in 2024. Wilson is a little older, turning 32 in September, but played well last season. Originally brought back for depth, he ended up starting 16 games and was re-signed this offseason to see if he can replicate his results. Behind the two veterans are two young and athletic players, Ivan Pace Jr. and rookie Jake Golday.

Cause for concern: Since taking Anthony Barr in the first round of the 2014 draft and Eric Kendricks in the second round of the 2015 draft, the Vikings have had zero luck finding solid players at the LB position. From 2016-2025, the Vikings have drafted Kentrell Brothers, Ben Gedeon, Elijah Lee, Devante Downs, Cameron Smith, Troy Dye, Chazz Surratt, Brian Asamoah, and Kobe King. Nine players in 10 drafts, which produced one decent depth piece. Ivan Pace Jr. was an undrafted player who looked like he might be a diamond in the rough but has severely fallen off and will need to fight for a roster spot in training camp.

While I have faith in Brian Flores, I don’t have faith in the Vikings’ ability to draft linebackers. Will rookie Jake Golday be the solution at linebacker? Will Blake Cashman be able to stay healthy, a feat he’s been unable to achieve during his seven-year career? Will Eric Wilson prove last year wasn’t just a flash in the pan?

Another cause for concern is the fact that rookie Jake Golday has repeatedly been compared to Andrew Van Ginkel. Don’t get me wrong; AVG is a heck of a player, and if the comparison turns out to be true, that’s good news for Golday. The issue here is that Van Ginkel plays outside linebacker. If Golday was drafted to be more of a pass rusher than an inside LB, that means the only real backup would be Ivan Pace Jr., which is less than ideal.

The Vikings did recently sign former Pro Bowler Jamal Adams, the former Seahawks safety who has evolved into more of an inside linebacker. However, since 2021, Adams has fallen far, and the Vikings will be his fourth team in two years, so there’s no guarantee he even makes the roster.

Potential upgrades: Luckily for the Vikings, there are a ton of starting-caliber players available at the linebacker position. Bobby Okereke, Logan Wilson, Kenneth Murray, and Devin Bush are just a few of the available free agents the Vikings could call on if they feel like they need to bring in another linebacker.



Don’t overlook your computer’s first line of defense

With the recent storms we’ve experienced, power outages affecting portions of our community, and the ongoing replacement of electric meters throughout town, now is a good time to think about something many of us don’t give much thought until it’s too late—protecting our computers.

Whether the power goes out unexpectedly because of severe weather or is briefly interrupted during scheduled electrical work, computers simply don’t like sudden losses of electricity. A split-second interruption may seem insignificant, but to a computer it can mean the difference between shutting down properly and crashing unexpectedly. That can result in corrupted files, damaged operating systems, or, in some cases, hardware failures that require professional repairs.

As someone who has worked with computers over the years, I’ve seen more than my share of systems that wouldn’t boot after a power outage. In many cases, the owner was convinced the outage was “only for a second.” Unfortunately, a second is all it takes.

One of the least expensive investments you can make is purchasing an uninterruptible power supply, better known as a UPS or battery backup. For a relatively small cost, a UPS can save hundreds—or even thousands—of dollars in repair bills, replacement equipment, or data recovery services.

Think of a UPS as inexpensive insurance. Most of us insure our homes, vehicles, and other valuables. Yet many people have years of family photos, tax records, business documents, and irreplaceable memories stored on a computer with no protection whatsoever.

A UPS does more than simply keep your computer running for a few minutes during a power outage. It gives you time to save your work, properly shut down your computer, and avoid the sudden loss of power that can damage operating systems, hard drives, and important files. Instead of your computer instantly going dark, the battery backup quietly takes over long enough for you to close programs and power down safely.

However, owning a UPS is only half the battle.

The batteries inside these units don’t last forever. Most UPS batteries have a life expectancy of about three to five years. Many units include a warning light or audible alarm indicating when the battery should be replaced, but those warnings are often overlooked. It’s easy to assume everything is working because the light on the front of the UPS is still on.

Unfortunately, that isn’t always the case.

A worn-out battery can leave you with a false sense of security. Everything appears normal until the electricity goes out—and then you discover your battery backup no longer has enough capacity to do its job. Replacing the battery every few years is a small expense compared to replacing a computer or paying for data recovery.

It’s also important to understand that not every outlet on the back of a UPS performs the same function.

Many people assume every outlet is connected to the battery. In reality, most UPS units have two groups of outlets. One group provides

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both surge protection and battery backup. The other group provides surge protection only.

That’s an important distinction.

Your computer tower should always be plugged into one of the battery backup outlets. If you use a desktop computer, your monitor can usually be plugged into one of the surge-protected outlets because it doesn’t need battery power to protect your files. Printers, speakers, desk lamps, and other accessories generally belong on the surge-protection-only side. That leaves the battery-backed outlets available for the equipment that matters most.

If you work from home or rely on the internet, you may also want to plug your modem and router into battery-backed outlets. Doing so often allows your internet connection to stay active long enough to save your work, send that last email, or finish uploading an important document before shutting everything down.

Another point worth mentioning is that a UPS is not designed to let you keep working for hours after the power goes out. Its purpose is to buy you enough time to shut your computer down correctly. Those few extra minutes can make all the difference.

Of course, a battery backup is only one part of protecting your investment. A UPS cannot replace a good backup routine. Important documents, financial records, business files, and family photographs should be backed up regularly to an external hard drive or a secure cloud service. Computers can fail for many reasons besides power outages. Hard drives wear out. Software becomes corrupted. Accidents happen. Having your files stored in more than one location provides peace of mind that no battery backup alone can offer.

With the recent storms and electrical work taking place around town, this is a perfect opportunity to take five minutes and look behind your computer. Do you have a UPS? Is your computer plugged into the battery backup side instead of just the surge-protected outlets? How old is the battery? Have you ever tested it? And just as importantly, when was the last time you backed up your important files?

Those are simple questions that can save you a great deal of frustration someday.

I’ve often said that the best repair is the one you never have to make. Spending a modest amount on a quality UPS, replacing its battery when necessary, and keeping good backups of your important files is far less expensive—and far less stressful—than trying to recover from a preventable computer failure.

Sometimes experience is the best teacher. Hopefully, this is one lesson you can learn without having to learn it the hard way.

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Bones need strong muscles for support.
Not exercising weakens those supporting muscles.
Weak muscles put more stress on joints. - Mayo Clinic

Rain dumped on Groton and area



The golf course was under water, again, as Groton received 3.66 inches of rain in about two hours on Thursday, Aug. 30.



Water had gone over Main Street at the 10th Avenue area and also other areas as well.



Bruce Babcock took this picture of the flooded intersection E 5th Ave and N 5th St during the heavy rains Thursday afternoon in Groton.

Fire at Avantara Groton

The Groton Fire Department responded to a fire at Avantara Groton last night. A fire started in the boiler room and it was quickly extinguished, according to a phone call that went out to family members. The residents were evacuated during the event.



The water was up over the curb in downtown Groton with it getting right up to the buildings.



Players at the meeting were Rylan Blackwood, Hank Hill, Gavin Hanten, Knox Mulder, Owen Tewksbury, Trayce Schelle, Tucker Leicht, Hudson Eichler, Graham Rose, Kyson Kucker, Easton Larson, Asher Zimmerman, Keegan Kucker, Carter Boorgen, Mason Locke and Bentley Ehresmann. Coaches were Josh Larson, Chris Ehresmann and Matt Locke. (Photos by Elizabeth Varin)

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

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EMPLOYMENT

Position available for full-time Electric Utility Superintendent. Journeyman certification required. Salary negotiable DOE. Benefits include medical insurance, life insurance, and SD State Retirement. Please send application and resume to the City of Groton, PO Box 587, Groton, SD 57445, or email to city.doug@nvc.net. Position is open until filled. Full job description and application may be found at <https://www.grotonsd.gov/o/grotoncity/page/employment-options>. For more information, please call 605-397-8422. Equal opportunity employer. (0729.0805)

Position available for full-time Public Works Laborer. Formal training and/or experience highly preferred. Salary negotiable DOE. Benefits include medical insurance, life insurance, and SD State Retirement. Please send application and resume to the City of Groton, PO Box 587, Groton, SD 57445, or email to city.doug@nvc.net. Position is open until filled. Full job description and application may be found at <https://www.grotonsd.gov/o/grotoncity/page/employment-options>. For more information, please call 605-397-8422. Equal opportunity employer. (0729.0805)

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JULY 28, 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, Dinger, Gage, Sutton and Wiese. Commissioner Wiese led the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

PUBLIC COMMENT: Chairman Sutton shared that the County was having problems with their phone lines so not able to receive or make calls out, but the IT Department was working on it.

Representative Al Novstrup informed the Commission that they had an Appropriations meeting last week and Commissioner Greenfield gave an update on Richmond Dam. Representative Novstrup shared some of the information from the progress report given – Sioux Falls Construction will be driving sheet piles 24/7 for 6 days and Foothills Construction is working on the earth fill. Commissioner Greenfield gave an extensive report which is available online, but a comment was made that they were fortunate the lake was drained prior to the 7” and 4” of rain recently received because they are not sure the dam would’ve held.

Dirk Rogers, Highway Superintendent gave the Commission a quick update that they are setup and ready to start on Br. Co. 14 and the equipment takes up a lot of space but waiting for oil. The north half will be a test situation, and the south end should be good. Around the 10th of August they will be starting the Cold-In Place from Bath Corner and 6 miles south. Both roads will be open but be conscience of width restrictions during these projects. Dirk will reach out to DOT so not to be working on Prairiewood Detour during the Fair.

BRAINARD TOWNSHIP DRAINAGE ISSUE: Jeff Forsting, Scott Dennert and Jeff Hanson with Brainard Township met with the Commission to discuss a drainage situation and looking for some guidance because they have been sued twice and are still dealing with the dilemma and due to cost of legal fees want to see what options there are. The Township authorized the replacement of a culvert, the landowner said he would hire Jacobs, but township said they needed to be notified when they were going to be there to do it, which they were not. There were 2-18” culverts there and the landowner had 1-24” culvert installed. Township requested to have it put back the way it was with 2-18” culverts. Landowner didn’t do that; it was decided the Township would replace it back at their expense. Landowner then filed a restraining order against the township so they couldn’t do anything until it went to court, which was 2 years ago. Now they are suing the township for damages to their land because they didn’t allow proper drainage. Dirk Rogers, Highway Superintendent, shared that he may have an option for them to help with Engineering Costs.

RICHMOND DAM UPDATE: Chairman Sutton shared that Emergency Management Director, Scott Meints sent the following information: SFC will continue driving sheet piling on the upstream cofferdam; is maintaining lake elevation of 1349’; Foothills Contracting will start building the upstream cofferdam week of July 27th and Bauer Foundations is scheduled to start full production of the Seepage Cutoff Wall on August 3rd and they will be working 24/7 for 6days until the cutoff wall is completed. Commissioner Wiese mentioned that the residents have been doing a lot of clean up. Mike Russell stated the clean-up days went well, and they still have dumpsters around the lake.

ORDINANCE #331 – FIRST READING: Chairman Sutton informed everyone that the Commission plans to pass this ordinance and refer it to the vote of the people on November 3, 2026. It doesn’t benefit any renters but will benefit owner-

occupied homeowners. Commissioner Wiese commented that it gives the county the option or opportunity to broaden our tax base and collect sales tax revenue from non-citizens of Brown County. Commissioner Dennert shared that he appreciates this will go to the voters in November and that property taxes have been an issue the last couple of years. Gene Loeschke, Director of Equalization, shared that the amount of savings will vary because this is only on the County Levy portion. SB 245 will go into effect for 2027, and SB 96 will go into effect in 2028, if passed in Brown County.

Moved by Commissioner Dinger, seconded by Wiese to amend Ordinance #331 and add refer to a vote of the people in the General Election to be held on November 3, 2026. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

Moved by Commissioner Wiese, seconded by Dinger to approve the Amended Proposed Ordinance #331 for the purpose of providing additional revenue for Brown County, South Dakota, by imposing county gross receipts tax pursuant to the powers grant to the county by the State of South Dakota, by SDCL 10-XX entitled Uniform County Non-Ad Valorem Tax Law and acts amendatory thereto. The purpose of the county gross receipts tax is to provide property tax relief on the county property tax levy for all property classified as owner-occupied. All monies collected by the county from the gross receipts tax must be deposited into a property tax reduction fund, which is hereby created. From and after the first day of January 2027, a one half percent (0.5%) on the gross receipts of all persons engaged in business with the jurisdiction of Brown County, South Dakota, who are subject to the South Dakota Retail Occupational Sales and Service Tax, SDCL 10-45 and at the same rate upon all transactions or use, storage and consumption which are subject to the South Dakota Use Tax, SDCL 10-46, and acts amendatory thereto. Referring to a vote of the people in the General Election on November 3, 2026. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

ORDINANCE #328 – SECOND READING/POSSIBLE ADOPTION: Moved by Commissioner Dennert, seconded by Wiese to adopt Ordinance #328. Applicant Stanley & Carol Gage to rezone 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, “Zemlicka Addition” in the NE1/4 of Section 12-T124N-R64W of the 5th P.M. Brown County, South Dakota (12541 388th Avenue; Lincoln Twp.). The motion passed with 4 votes; Commissioner Gage abstained. Motion carried.

ORDINANCE #329 – SECOND READING/POSSIBLE ADOPTION: Moved by Commissioner Gage, seconded by Dennert to adopt Ordinance #329. Amending Title 4 Zoning Ordinance of Brown County with Chapter 4.02 – Jurisdictions. Title 4 Zoning; Chapter 4.02 Jurisdiction: 4.0201 Jurisdiction. The provisions of Title 4 shall apply within the unincorporated area of Brown County, South Dakota, (excluding including areas of joint jurisdiction being, one (1) mile outside of Groton city limit boundary line, one (1) mile outside of Hecla city limit boundary line, one-half (1/2) mile outside of Frederick city limit boundary line, and one and one-half (1 1/2) miles of Warner City limits; and also including the incorporated communities of Claremont, Columbia, Verdon and Stratford, as established on the map entitled “The Official Zoning Map of Brown County, South Dakota”. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

ORDINANCE #330 – SECOND READING/POSSIBLE ADOPTION: Moved by Commissioner Dinger, seconded by Gage to adopt Ordinance #330. Amending Title 5 Subdivision Regulations; Chapter 5.01 General Provisions: 5.0102 Jurisdiction. These regulations shall apply within the unincorporated areas of Brown County, South Dakota, and including the incorporated municipalities of Claremont, Columbia, Verdon and Stratford yet excluding and including areas of joint jurisdiction with Frederick (1/2 mile outside city limit boundary line), Groton (1 mile outside city limit boundary line), and Hecla (1 mile outside city limit boundary line) and Warner (1 1/2 mile). (Ordinance 087 amendment).

All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

VICTIMS OF CRIME ACT (VOCA) AND DOMESTIC & SEXUAL ABUSE (DASA) GRANT SIGNATORY: Moved by Commissioner Wiese, seconded by Dennert to authorize Karly Winter, States Attorney, to sign the VOCA & DASA Grant documents. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

BUDGET HEARING: Moved by Commissioner Wiese, seconded by Gage to move \$992,872.07 from Assigned for Jail fund to Unassigned Fund Balance due to purchasing of the new jail building. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

Moved by Commissioner Wiese, seconded by Dinger to supplement the Maintenance Budget in the amount of \$992,872.07 for purchasing the new jail building. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

Moved by Commissioner Dennert, seconded by Gage to move \$256,404.02 from Assigned for Fairgrounds/Hwy Roads fund balance to Unassigned Fund Balance for improving the roads at the Fairgrounds. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

Moved by Commissioner Wiese, seconded by Dinger to do a budget transfer from General 101.5.911.191.00 to Road & Bridge Fund 201.4.37100 in the amount of \$256,404.02 for repairing the roads at the Fairgrounds. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

FY2027 PROVISIONAL BUDGET: Auditor Heupel shared that the request of \$500,000 for the Grandstands would not be included in the FY2027 Budget unless they planned on including that as a Capital Accumulation for several years per Legislative Audit. They can assign funds at the end of the Fiscal Year. Moved by Commissioner Wiese, seconded by Dennert to approve FY2027 Provisional Budget and to authorize advertising public hearing for September 8, 2026 for the purpose of considering the foregoing Provisional Budget for the fiscal year of 2027 and the various items, schedules, amounts and appropriations set forth therein and as many days thereafter as is deemed necessary until the final adoption of the budget. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

LANDFILL CELL #5 CONSTRUCTION – PAYMENT #3: Moved by Commissioner Dinger, seconded by Wiese to approve and authorize Chairman Sutton to sign the Payment #3 for the Landfill Cell #5 Construction to Midland Contracting, Inc. for \$623,093.91. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

MINUTES: Moved by Commissioner Dennert, seconded by Gage to approve the General Meeting Minutes of July 21, 2026. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

CLAIMS/PAYROLL: Moved by Commissioner Gage, seconded by Dinger to approve the following Claims: Professional Fees: CenturyLink-Lumen \$203.38; Cogley Law Office, Prof LLC \$4,074.80; Kuck Law Office \$2,202.10; Modern Day Health Care Prof LLC \$4,725.00; Taliaferro Law Firm, PC \$1,692.60; Tammy Stolle Court Reporting \$1,636.80; Yankton County Sheriff’s Office \$50.00; Youngberg Law, Prof. LLC \$256.20; US Bank \$755.22. Publishing: Groton Daily Independent \$381.00; McQuillen Creative Group, Inc \$245.69; US Bank \$567.50. Rentals: Advantage Self Storage \$276.00. Repairs & Maintenance: Asphalt Zipper \$20.69; Auto Glass Solutions Inc \$352.44; Dependable Sanitation, Inc \$387.00; Hub City Roofing Inc \$90.00; Jake’s Heating & Cooling \$689.50; JGE, Inc \$165.44; Leidholt Electric, LLC \$76.53; Lela Sandoz \$99.98; Menards \$1,064.47; TripleC Pros LLC \$1,220.00; US Bank \$781.64. Supplies & Materials: A-1 Locksmithing \$72.00; AgTegra Cooperative \$120.00; Amazon Capital Services, Inc \$335.98; Asphalt Zipper \$252.50; Bob Barker Company Inc \$186.39; C Scott Bader \$9.99; Century Business Products \$13.63; Cole Paper Inc \$1,204.54; Johnson Brothers of South Dakota, Inc. \$1,493.06; Kuck Law Office \$75.10; L.G. Everist, Inc \$22,775.56; Leidholt Tool Sales, LLC \$71.18; Menards \$2,722.84; Performance Oil \$27.30; Runnings \$61.97; Stan Houston Equipment Company, Inc \$204.00; Steven Lust Automotive \$44.83; US Bank \$6,930.57. Travel & Conference: American Red Cross Training Services \$754.00; Becca Tullar \$35.00; Brandon Mills \$161.00; C Scott Bader \$544.90;

Neil Bittner \$19.00; Scott Kolb \$19.00; US Bank \$3,257.30. Utilities: Dependable Sanitation, Inc \$322.00; Montana-Dakota Utilities Co \$37.39; Northwestern Energy \$9,197.60; T-Mobile USA Inc \$1,545.49; US Bank \$2,640.88. Other: Midland Contracting Inc \$623,093.91; Tommy Ortmeier \$315.00. Machinery & Equipment: Pierson Ford Lincoln, Inc \$50,000.00. Payroll: Commission \$5,165.81; Elections \$6,270.33; Auditor/Welfare \$9,682.16; Treasurer \$19,864.99; SA \$38,966.19; Public Defender \$14,449.33; Maintenance \$12,800.90; Assessor \$17,506.93; Register of Deeds \$12,672.05; VSO \$5,259.85; GIS \$3,110.76; IT \$10,766.94; HR \$5,721.14; Sheriff \$59,619.63; Jail \$75,186.98; Coroner (Voucher) \$1,250.00; Court Security \$6,540.44; JDC \$31,536.37; Museum \$15,906.94; Parks/Fairgrounds \$9,574.03; Fair Board \$5,638.89; 4-H \$1,662.07; Weed \$6,231.57; Planning & Zoning \$8,510.51; Highway \$58,710.24; Dispatch \$37,892.42; Emergency \$5,805.34; 24/7 Sobriety \$2,744.96; Landfill \$14,372.34; Meal Benefits \$76.00; FICA \$29,978.25; Medicare \$7,011.03; HSA \$6,584.58. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

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

- o Promotion of Daniel Dow from Brown County Jail Detention Officer to Brown County Jail Senior Detention Officer; starting wage \$24.93/hr. – effective August 2, 2026.

- o Promotion of Chase Galbraith from Brown County Jail Detention Officer to Brown County Jail Senior Detention Officer; starting wage \$25.55/hr. – effective August 2, 2026.

- o Promotion of Logan Hanson from Brown County Jail Detention Officer to Brown County Jail Senior Detention Officer; starting wage \$24.32/hr. – effective August 2, 2026.

- o Promotion of Tyler Richards from Brown County Jail Detention Officer to Brown County Jail Senior Detention Officer; starting wage \$25.55/hr. – effective August 2, 2026.

- o Temporary 2026 Brown County Fair Workers, August 10th to 16th

- o Fair Security - \$41.00/hr.
- o Andrea Carlson
- o Justine Charles
- o Chris Jackson
- o Keith Miller
- o Michael Volz
- o Ticket Sellers
- o April Fryer - \$15.25/hr.
- o Samantha Garrison - \$14.00/hr.
- o Anje Hinkelman - \$14.75/hr.
- o April Larman - \$14.25/hr.
- o Jackie Ohleen-Kallhoff - \$15.50/hr.
- o Diane Randall - \$14.25/hr.
- o Odde Office Staff
- o Marlys Brick - \$14.25/hr.
- o Roberta Dempsey - \$14.50/hr.

- o Jan Erickson - \$14.50/hr.
- o Jeannette Hassebroek - \$14.50/hr.
- o Penny Rohrbach - \$14.00/hr.
- o Julie Van Dover - \$14.50/hr.
- o Gates
- o Cassandra Florence - \$12.25/hr.
- o Tyler Garrison - \$12.00/hr.
- o John Huettl - \$12.00/hr.
- o Kyle Johnson - \$12.00/hr.
- o Hunter Kramer - \$12.00/hr.
- o Colleen Palmer - \$12.00/hr.
- o Ivy Rott - \$12.00/hr.
- o Jake Wipf - \$12.00/hr.

All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

TRAVEL REQUESTS: Moved by Commissioner Dennert, seconded by Wiese to approve the following Travel Requests: Ron Keller & D. Chris Anderson with Planning & Zoning to attend Western Planners/South Dakota Planners Assoc. Conference; Mariann Malsom, ROD to attend the SDACO Fall Convention. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

LEASE AGREEMENTS: Moved by Commissioner Gage, seconded by Wiese to approve and authorize Chairman Sutton to sign the following lease agreements: Brown County Democrat Party to lease 1 People Mover on Sept. 25-26, 2026; Jenna Helms & Brent Hokeness to lease Clubhouse on July 16-19, 2027 for a wedding. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

AUDITOR’S REPORT OF ACCOUNTS FOR JUNE 2026: Moved by Commissioner Dinger, seconded by Dennert to approve the Auditor’s Report of Account for June 2026: Total Cash and Checks on Hand \$7700.00; Total Checking Account Bal-

ances: \$21,575,608.75; Total Savings Account Balances: \$1,275,447.42; Total Certificates of Deposit: \$13,336,058.88; Grand Total Cash and Balances: \$36,194,815.05. General Fund \$20,106,717.97; Road & Bridge Fund \$3,429,631.16; Road & Bridge Fund - restricted \$0.00; 911 Service \$678,898.92; Emergency & Disaster \$168,330.62; Domestic Abuse \$1,338.08; SA Grants \$178,368.07; 24/7 Sobriety \$60,939.31; ROD M&P \$71,068.35; Opioid Settlement Fund \$45,598.64; Rural Access Infrastructure \$473,290.90; Tif Debt Service \$78,175.39; Landfill + cash change \$8,080,616.48; Landfill - restricted \$1,894,495.06; Trust and Agency Funds \$2,821,841.16; GRAND TOTAL GENERAL FUND CASH AND INVESTMENTS \$36,194,815.05. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

ZONING ORDINANCES-SET HEARING DATE/AUTHORIZE ADVERTISING: Moved by Commissioner Gage, seconded by Dinger to set hearing date and authorize publication for the first reading of the following zoning ordinances to be held on August 18, 2026 in the Commission Chambers, Courthouse Annex, Brown County, South Dakota. Proposed Ordinance #332, applicant Michael & Caroline Sommers for the purpose of rezoning 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: Lots 7 & 8, in the SW1/4 of Section 17-T123N-R64W of the 5th P.M. Brown County, South Dakota (38310 133rd Street; Aberdeen Twp.). Proposed Ordinance #333, applicant Wayne & Janeen Haas for the purpose of rezoning 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: Thomas’ Outlot 1 in the SE1/4 of Section 23-T126N-R64W of the 5th P.M. Brown County, South Dakota (38696 116th Street; Oneota Twp.). All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

REINTS FIRST ADDITION PLAT:

RESOLUTION #2026-28
Commissioner Dinger brought the following Resolution “Be it resolved by the Board of County Commissioners of Brown County, South Dakota that the plat showing “REINTS FIRST ADDITION” in the E 1/2 SE 1/4 of Section 10-T125N-R60W of the 5th P.M., Brown County, South Dakota” having been examined, is hereby approved in accordance with the provision of SDCL 11-3, and any amendments thereof. Seconded by Dennert. All members present voting aye. Resolution adopted.

MARK ERICKSON’S THIRD SUBDIVISION PLAT:

RESOLUTION #2026-29
Commissioner Dinger brought the following Resolution “Be it resolved by the Board of County Commissioners of Brown County, South Dakota that the plat showing “MARK ERICKSON’S THIRD SUBDIVISION” in the SW 1/4 of Section 20-T122N-R62W of the 5th P.M., Brown County, South Dakota” having been examined, is hereby approved in accordance with the provision of SDCL 11-3, and any amendments thereof. Seconded by Wiese. All members present voting aye. Resolution adopted.

ZECK FAMILY FIRST ADDITION PLAT:

RESOLUTION #2026-30
Commissioner Gage brought the following Resolution “Be it resolved by the Board of County Commissioners of Brown County, South Dakota that the plat showing “ZECK FAMILY FIRST ADDITION” in the E 1/2 SW 1/4 and the SE 1/4 of Section 25-T123N-R62W of the 5th P.M., Brown County, South Dakota” having been examined, is hereby approved in accordance with the provision of SDCL 11-3, and any amendments thereof. Seconded by Wiese. All members present voting aye. Resolution adopted.

RATH SECOND ADDITION PLAT:

RESOLUTION #2026-31
Commissioner Dinger brought the following Resolution that the plat as shown hereon and as described on the accompanying plat of “RATH SECOND ADDITION” in the SW 1/4 of Section 26, Township 124 North, Range 64 West of the 5th P.M., in Brown County, South Dakota, be approved and accepted and the County Auditor is hereby instructed to endorse on such plat a copy of this resolution and to certify the same. Seconded by Wiese. The motion passed with 4 votes; Commissioner Dennert abstained. Resolution adopted.

MCNEIL-RANDALL FIRST ADDITION TO ELM LAKE PLAT:

RESOLUTION #2026-32
Commissioner Dennert brought the following Resolution “Be it resolved by the Board of County Commissioners of Brown County, South Dakota, that the plat showing “MCNEIL-RANDALL FIRST ADDITION TO ELM LAKE” in the SE 1/4 of Section 20-T128N-R65W 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: Chairman Sutton reminded everyone that today was the Governor Runoff Election and encouraged people to get out and vote.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: Moved by Commissioner Wiese, seconded by Dennert to go into Executive Session per SDCL 1-25-2 for Personnel, Contracts and Legal. All member present voting aye. Motion carried. Chairman Sutton declared the Executive Session closed with No Action taken.

Chairman Sutton informed Auditor Heupel that they decided after visiting with HR Director, Allison Tunheim, to figure a Part-time position for the Auditor’s Office and a Seasonal Part-time for the Treasurer’s Office for 2027 Budget.

ADJOURNMENT: Moved by Commissioner Dennert, seconded by Wiese to adjourn the Brown County Commission at 11:45 A.M. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

Lynn Heupel, Brown County Auditor

Published August 5, 2026 at the total approximate cost of \$212.03 and may be viewed free of charge at www.sdpublicnotices.com. 27059



JULY 30, 2026 – CANVASS OF JULY 28, 2026 GOVERNOR RUNOFF ELECTION

Chairman Sutton, called the meeting to order in the Commission Chambers, Courthouse Annex, Brown County, SD. Present were Commissioners Dennert, Dinger, Gage, Sutton and Wiese. Auditor Heupel led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Moved by Commissioner Wiese, seconded by Gage to approve the Official Canvass, as follows: (Note: There was 1 provisional ballot, and it is included in these totals).

Governor:
Toby Doeden.....1872
Larry Rhoden.....3963
POST-ELECTION DRAW:

Commissioner Dennert drew VC-2 – Best Western Ramkota with 676 ballots cast. The Post Election Audit will be on Thursday, August 6, 2026 at 5:00p.m.

ADJOURNMENT:

Moved by Commissioner Dennert, seconded Wiese by to adjourn the Canvass Meeting for the July 28, 2026 Governor Runoff Election. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

Lynn Heupel, Brown County Auditor

Published August 5, 2026 at the total approximate cost of \$12.72 and may be viewed free of charge at www.sdpublicnotices.com. 27060

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PROVISIONAL BUDGET FOR BROWN COUNTY, SD
For the Year January 1, 2027 through December 31, 2027

	Governmental Funds										
	General Fund	County Road and Bridge Fund	E-911 Dispatch Fund	Emergency Management Fund	Domestic Abuse Fund	24/7 Fund	Moderization & Preservation Fund	Opioid Settlement Fund	Rural Infrastructure Fund	Debt Service Fund	Solid Waste Landfill Fund
	101	201	207	226	229	248	251	294	295	401	504
Cash Balance Applied	7,756,689	1,599,931	504,401	-	1,300	61,000	28,250	20,000	220,000	(0)	329,092
311 Current Property Tax Amount	19,482,262	1,683,475								865,308	6,000
Less current uncollected											
311 TIF Property Taxes											
312/319 - Other Taxes	161,500	761,500									
NET TOTAL TAXES	19,643,762	2,444,975	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	865,308	6,000
320 Licenses & Permits	114,800	2,500			6,000						
330 Intergovernmental Revenue	390,250	4,766,000	1,427,250	60,000	1,200	5,000					
340 Charges for Goods & Services	2,662,413				2,500	100,000	15,000				2,500,000
350 Fines & Forfeits	25,250										
360 Miscellaneous Revenue	704,000	60,000	14,292	1,000		700	1,250				1,171,930
370 Other Financing Sources	-	5,032,144	515,000	343,995		29,960					
TOTAL OTHER REVENUES	3,896,713	9,860,644	1,956,542	404,995	9,700	135,660	16,250	-	-	-	3,671,930
NET MEANS OF FINANCE	31,297,164	13,905,550	2,460,943	404,995	11,000	196,660	44,500	20,000	220,000	865,308	4,007,022
TOTAL APPROPRIATIONS	31,297,164	13,905,550	2,460,943	404,995	11,000	196,660	44,500	20,000	220,000	865,308	4,007,022

ADOPTION OF PROVISIONAL BUDGET FOR BROWN COUNTY, SOUTH DAKOTA

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN: That the Board of County Commissioners of Brown County, will meet in the courthouse at 25 Market Street, Aberdeen, South Dakota on **Tuesday, September, 8, 2026 at 8:45 a.m.** for the purpose of considering the foregoing Provisional Budget for the year **2027** and the various items, schedules, amounts, and appropriations set forth therein and as many days thereafter as is deemed necessary until the final adoption of the budget on the **29th day of September, 2026**. At such time, any interested person may appear either in person or by a representative and will be given an opportunity for a full and complete discussion of all purposes, objectives, items, schedules, appropriations, estimates, amounts, and matters set forth and contained in the Provisional Budget.

Lynn Heupel, County Auditor
Brown County, South Dakota

Published once at the total approximate cost of \$93.72 and may be viewed free of charge at www.sdpublicnotices.com. 27061



NOTICE OF HEARING
Application has been made to the Brown County Planning/Zoning Commission for a **VARIANCE PETITION**. A hearing will be held in the Basement Community Room, Brown County Courthouse Annex, on August 18, 2026, at 7:00 P.M.
Petitioner / Owner: Steven Cutler Family Farm LLC
Description of property: Proposed Lot 1, "Ben & Alyssa Gustafson First Addition" in the NE1/4 of the NE1/4 of Section 14-T125N-R60W of the 5th P.M., Brown County, South Dakota (12013 412th Avenue, Claremont Twp.).
Reason: Variance to Lot Size to allow Lot 1 (9.19 acres) to be smaller than 40.0 acres and stay zoned as Agriculture Preservation District (AG-P) per 4.0605 of Brown County Ordinances.
The public is invited to attend the hearing and to present comments and testimony regarding the proposed ordinance amendment.
Dated this 5th day of July 2026.
Planning/Zoning Commission and
Scott Bader – P&Z Director
25 Market Street
Aberdeen, SD 57401
Office: (605) 626-7144
Published once in the "Groton Independent" at the total approximate cost of \$13.67 and may be viewed free of charge at www.sdpublicnotices.com. 27062



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 August 18, 2026, at 7:00 P.M.
Petitioner: County Line Developers, LLC
Legal description of property: Lot 1, "Ronnie's Way Addition" in the NW1/4 of Section 17-T123N-R63W of the 5th P.M., Brown County, South Dakota (2520 8th Avenue NE; Aberdeen Twp.).
Reason: A Conditional Use Petition (CUP) to build a 72'x100' structure for a small business, dining establishment, laundromat, & gaming establishment in a Highway Commercial District (H-C).
The public may attend the hearing and present comments and testimony regarding the proposed Conditional Use Petition (CUP) request.
Dated this 5th day of August 2026.
Planning/Zoning Commission and
Scott Bader – P&Z Director
25 Market Street
Aberdeen, SD 57401
Office: (605) 626-7144
Published once in the "Groton Independent" at the total approximate cost of \$13.67 and may be viewed free of charge at www.sdpublicnotices.com. 27063



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 August 18, 2026, at 7:00 P.M.
Petitioner: County Line Developers, LLC
Legal description of property: Lot 2, "Ronnie's Way Addition" in the NW1/4 of Section 17-T123N-R63W of the 5th P.M., Brown County, South Dakota (2620 8th Avenue NE; Aberdeen Twp.).
Reason: A Conditional Use Petition (CUP) to build a 72'x100' structure for a small business, dining establishment, laundromat, & gaming establishment in a Residential District (R-1).
The public may attend the hearing and present comments and testimony regarding the proposed Conditional Use Petition (CUP) request.
Dated this 5th day of August 2026.
Planning/Zoning Commission and
Scott Bader – P&Z Director
25 Market Street
Aberdeen, SD 57401
Office: (605) 626-7144
Published once in the "Groton Independent" at the total approximate cost of \$13.35 and may be viewed free of charge at www.sdpublicnotices.com. 27064



NOTICE OF HEARING
A PETITION to REZONE has been submitted to Brown County Planning/Zoning Commission. A hearing will be held in the Basement Community Room, Brown County Courthouse Annex, on August 18, 2026, at 7:00 P.M.
Petitioner: County Line Developers, LLC
Description of property: Lot 2, "Ronnie's Way Addition" in the NW1/4 of Section 17-T123N-R63W of the 5th P.M., Brown County, South Dakota (2620 8th Avenue NE; Aberdeen Twp.).
Reason: Rezone parcel from Residential District (R-1) to Highway Commercial District (HC) to bring this parcel into compliance for its future use.
The public is invited to attend the hearing and to present comments and testimony regarding the proposed rezone petition. At the conclusion of the hearing, the Brown County Planning/Zoning Commission will forward a recommendation to the Board of Brown County Commissioner's with a future meeting date in the Commission Chambers. Verify the meeting dates with the Brown County Auditor.
Dated this 5th day of August 2026.
Planning/Zoning Commission and
Scott Bader – P&Z Director
25 Market Street
Aberdeen, SD 57401
Office: (605) 626-7144
Published once in the "Groton Independent" at the total approximate cost of \$14.94 and may be viewed free of charge at www.sdpublicnotices.com. 27065



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 August 18, 2026, at 7:00 P.M.
Owner / Petitioner: NuStar Pipeline Operating Partnership
Legal description of property: "Outlot A" in the NW1/4 of Section 35-T124N-R64W of the 5th P.M., Brown County, South Dakota (12948 386th Avenue; Lincoln Twp.).
Reason: A Conditional Use Petition (CUP) to replace the office roof due to storm damage 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 5th day of August 2026.
Planning/Zoning Commission and
Scott Bader – P&Z Director
25 Market Street
Aberdeen, SD 57401
Office: (605) 626-7144
Published once in the "Groton Independent" at the total approximate cost of \$12.72 and may be viewed free of charge at www.sdpublicnotices.com. 27066

ett, seconded by Engelhardt, carried; to approve the financials as presented.
A motion was made by Prickett, seconded by Engelhardt, carried; to approve the following claims for payment: -General Fund-NWE Bills: (st Its) \$505.10, (ball pk) \$12.94, (tennis) \$12.00, (st Its2) \$193.28, (hall) \$172.37, (sign) \$14.81; James Valley: \$44.75; Quick-books: \$40.36; PDFFiller: \$20.90; Menards: \$31.83; \$533.33; \$78.58; \$98.98; Kessler's: \$135.80 (pork); \$69.23 (cleanup); Ken's: \$12.84 (4th); \$40.25 (buns); \$128.32 (4th food); Sherwin Williams: \$323.64 (paint); Wal-Mart: \$21.18 (float); DANR Fees: \$.75 (Efee); Mowing: \$950 (kadoun3).-Water Sewer Fund-NWE Bills: (2nd st) \$40.26, (p hse) \$12.00; Web Water: \$1,609.06; DPC: \$559.18; USDA RD Loan: \$478.00; NESD Loan: \$383.71.
OLD BUSINESS
None
NEW BUSINESS
Contract to hire Helm's Engineering for the park project reviewed. A motion was made by Engelhardt, seconded by Prickett, passed; to approve the terms of the contract.
WEB water usage will increase to \$6.65/1000 gal October 1. A motion was made by Prickett, seconded by Engelhardt, passed; to increase our water usage costs to reflect this increase.
Maintenance assessed for work needed. Waiting on bids for: basement wall, new flush for urinal at hall, brick/siding gap on front of community center.
Lund property rezone to commercial request discussed. Will discuss more details with Brown County.
Proposal from Robert Kadoun to extend mowing agreement for two more years. A motion was made by Prickett, seconded by Engelhardt, passed; to draft an agreement to be reviewed.
CLOSING:
Next regular board meeting is scheduled for August 18th, 2026 at 6:30pm at town hall.
A motion was made by Prickett, seconded by Engelhardt, carried; to adjourn the meeting.
-Anna Kwak; Finance Officer
Published once at the total approximate cost of \$23.18 and may be viewed free of charge at www.sdpublicnotices.com. 27067

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LandReport 2024

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6 ♦ Groton Independent ♦ Wed., Aug. 5, 2026



C	O	M	A	H	A	L	A	M	E	S
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UNOFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF BOARD OF EDUCATION
GROTON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 06-6
REGULAR MEETING
July 13, 2026
President Rix called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. in the GHS Library Conference Room. Members present: Fliehs (7:14), Lerseth-Fliehs, Rix, Strom, Weber, and Weismantel. Absent: Harder. Others present were Supt. J. Schwan, Principal Edwards, and Business Manager Neiber.

Moved by Weismantel, seconded by Strom, to approve the proposed agenda. All voted aye, no dissenting vote; motion carried.

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

Moved by Weber, seconded Strom to approve consent agenda items June 8, 2026, board minutes, and year-ending FY 2026 bills. All voted aye, no dissenting vote; motion carried.

GENERAL FUND: Aberdeen Awards-Softball, Golf, Track Awards-384.00, Amazon-Maint Supplies-241.63, ASPI Solutions-Bound Pro-1,050.00, Quintin Biermann-Gas-89.18, City Of Groton-Electricity-14,274.57, Cole Papers-Maint Supplies-232.84, Dakota Supply Group-Maint Supplies-326.22, Decker Equipment-Maint Supplies-31.95, Dependable Sanitation-Garbage-1,577.00, Megan Dockter-Background Check Reimb-50.00, Farmers Union Co-Op-Bus Barn Supplies-146.30, Groton Daily Independent-Publishing-371.67, Hampton Inn & Suites by Hilton Southwest-Track Travel-3,336.00, Hillyard-Maint Supplies-3,065.16, Lodge At Deadwood-HS Principal Conference Lodging-420.00, Menards-Ceiling Tiles-106.62, MJ's Sinclair-Fuel-8,921.14, Northwestern Energy-Bus Shop/Columbia Utility-32.08, NVC-Telephone-775.65, Petty Cash-Postage-351.30, Quality Welding-Bleacher Repair-986.88, Sheyenne Transport-Bus Barn Supplies/Repairs-6,781.83, Smith Autobody-Bus Barn Repairs-2,977.50, Sun Dail Manor-Nurse Aide Exam-225.00, Wageworks-Admin Fee-101.00
Fund Total: 46,855.52

CAPITAL OUTLAY: A & B Business Solutions-Copier Agreement-1,942.89, Decker Equipment-Bathroom Door-550.11
Fund Total: 2,493.00

SPECIAL ED: Avera St. Luke's-Physical, Occupational, Speech Therapy-10,244.72
Fund Total: 10,244.72

FOOD SERVICE: Americinn Ft. Pierre-Pathways Lodging-1,062.00, Anderson, Aaron Or Jessica-Lunch Refund-97.75, Brandon Clocksene-Conference Meal-50.82, Alicia Conn-Lunch Refund-53.30, Anje Hinkelman-Conference Meals-52.26, Jana Simunek-Conference Meals-56.18
Fund Total: 1,372.31

ENTERPRISE: Amazon-Ost Supplies-192.96
Fund Total: 192.96

Members of the public are allowed five minutes to address the board on any topic of their choice. No public comments were made. Bob and Travis Swisher were present as visitors (arrived at 7:05p.m. and departed at 8:17p.m.)

Moved by Weismantel, seconded by Lerseth-Fliehs, to approve June 2026 financials, custodial accounts, and investments. All voted aye, no dissenting vote; motion carried.

Moved by Lerseth-Fliehs, seconded Weismantel, to approve the June 2026 School Lunch Report. All voted aye, no dissenting vote; motion carried.

The Board discussed liability insurance coverage requirements for non-school entities using district facilities. No action was taken.

The following items were discussed in administrative reports: J. Schwan: ASBSD/SASD Joint Convention will be held in Sioux Falls on August 6-7; registration is open for board members. Attending the State Superintendent Conference on July 19-22, specifically to participate in the SASD Executive Board Meeting. The maintenance team has been working hard, focusing on floor maintenance, and are on track to have the facility ready to go for back-to-school. New Education-Related Laws: Free

GROTON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT 06-6 FINANCIAL REPORTS								
	General Fund	Capital Outlay	Special Ed.	Food Service	OST	Driver's Ed	Custodial	
JUNE 1 2026	\$2,580,312.32	\$1,801,178.65	\$646,666.02	\$66,880.06	\$53,084.00	\$31,437.01	\$255,397.01	
RECEIPTS.....								
Local Sources	\$447,750.65	\$210,461.89	\$114,793.09	(\$14,524.56)	\$32,685.41	\$300.00	\$69,330.90	
County Sources	\$3,728.14							
State Sources				\$909.68				
State Aid	\$48,573.00							
Wind Farm								
Mentor Teacher Program								
State Apportionment								
State Reimbursements								
Bank Franchise								
Federal Sources	\$105,670.00							
Sale of Assets.....								
Due from Govt/Others.....	\$173,942.32							
Account Revieables.....	\$300.00							
					\$8,321.71			
					\$5,498.30			
TOTAL MONTHLY RECEIPTS	\$779,964.11	\$210,461.89	\$114,793.09	\$205.13	\$32,685.41	\$300.00	\$69,330.90	
FUNDS AVAILABLE.....	\$3,360,276.43	\$2,011,640.54	\$761,459.11	\$67,085.19	\$85,769.41	\$31,737.01	\$324,727.91	
MONTHLY DISBURSEMENTS.....	(\$837,487.49)	(\$21,215.43)	(\$91,464.98)	(\$16,507.63)	(\$9,950.12)	(\$1,309.07)	(\$28,524.59)	
JOURNAL ENTRIES.....	\$3,090.92		\$1,218.58	\$7,638.42	(\$17,742.77)			
JUNE 30. 2026	\$2,525,879.86	\$1,990,425.11	\$671,212.71	\$58,215.98	\$58,076.52	\$30,427.94	\$296,203.32	
	GENERAL FUND	SPECIAL EDUCATION	FOOD SERVICE	OST	Driver's Education			
Payroll								
Instruction	\$303,983.29	\$50,338.46	\$7,526.37	\$7,281.78	\$1,151.85			
Employee Benefits	\$75,323.52	\$15,007.83	\$1,887.17	\$786.78	\$157.22			
Total	\$379,306.81	\$65,346.29	\$9,413.54	\$8,068.56	\$1,309.07			

and Reduced-Price Lunches (HB1082), Property Insurance May be Paid from Capital Outlay Funds (HB1130), Coaches as Mandatory Reporters of Child Abuse or Neglect (HB1187), and Instruction in Prenatal Human Growth and Development using DOE Approved Resources (HB1313), and set staff negotiations for tentative March 31st (GTA), and April 1 (GASA).

With no further old or continuing business remaining, it was moved by Weismantel, seconded by Strom, to adjourn the final 2025-26 school board meeting at 7:23 pm. All voted aye, no dissenting vote; motion carried.

Neiber convened the first meeting of the 2026-27 school year at 7:24 p.m. and read the Oath of Office statements to install Heather Lerseth-Fliehs and Grant Rix for a three-year term as school board members.

Neiber took nominations for the 2026-27 School Board President. Moved by Strom, seconded Fliehs to nominate Grant Rix for Board President. Motion carried. A motion was then made by Weismantel, seconded by Lerseth-Fliehs to cease nomination. Motion carried. Grant Rix was declared as Board President.

Rix opened the floor for nominations for Vice President. Moved by Lerseth-Fliehs, seconded by Fliehs to nominate Strom. Motion carried. A motion was then made by Weismantel, seconded by Fliehs to cease nomination. Motion carried. Nick Strom was declared as Vice President.

Moved by Weismantel, seconded by Fliehs, to approve the proposed agenda. All voted aye, no dissenting vote; motion carried.

Moved by Weismantel, second Weber to approve the following consent agenda items: July 2026 District bills; Rodney Freeman of Churchill, Manolis, and Freeman of Huron as official school attorney; Neiber as custodian of all district accounts; Neiber to continue existing funds, establish new accounts and continue to invest reinvest in local institutions which serve the greatest advantage to the District; Neiber to publish staff salaries; Dacotah Bank as official bank depository; Groton Area School District Policy Manual with such revisions as previously approved; Special Education Comprehensive Plan; office personnel to administer Custodial Funds and National School Lunch Program funds with oversight by Neiber; J. Schwan to administer or direct federal programs with Consolidated Applications for Title Programs and related ESSA compliance issues assigned to the building principals; Appoint Maria Martens District's McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaison; J. Schwan to act as Asbestos Compliance Officer; J. Schwan or his designee to close school in emergency situations or inclement weather; J. Schwan or designee to institute NSLP and School Breakfast Agreement; Food Safety Plan, HACCP-Based Standard Operating Procedures; J. Schwan or designee to institute ASBSD school bus mutual assistance pact; Neiber to transfer petty cash and incident payment funds in accordance with SDCL 13-18-16/17; peripheral sports and other volunteer school workers such as chain gang, line judges, Booster Club/PAC workers, assistant coaches, volunteer coaches, volunteer drivers, school board members etc., to be included in the school's worker's compensation insurance coverage; and approve open enrollment application #27-10. All voted aye, no dissenting vote; motion carried.

GENERAL FUND: ASBSD-

Dues- 1,457.62, Aspi Solutions-Software Renewal-1,050.00, CCASD-Guidance Workshop-90.00, City Of Groton-Electricity/Water & Sewer-13,120.16, Geffdog Designs-Record Books-1,465.00, Good Shred-Paper Shredding Service-43.50, Healthy Roster-Concussion Testing Program-558.60, Ken's Food Fair & Shell Express-Board Supplies-9.10, Northwestern Energy-Utility-849.67, Performance Office Papers-Copy Paper-6,280.00, QBS-Elem/HS Principal Recertification-1,798.00, SASD-Workshop Registration-100.00, SDHSCA-VB Coaches Fees-160.00, Sheyenne Transport-Inspection-125.00, Twin Valley Tire-Tires-1,500.00, U.S. Postal Service-PO Box Rental-296.00
Fund Total: 28,902.65

CAPITAL OUTLAY: Apptegy-Website-14,240.94, EasyVisa-Software-754.20, Foreman Sales & Service-Chevy Collins 33 Passenger-102,500.00, Forte-Instructional Software-789.93, Harry Implement-Tractor/Snow/Tiller-44,500.00, Hewlett-Computer Lease-38,822.56, Hudl-Non Instructional Software-9,200.00, Turf Tank-Non Consumable Supplies-15,700.00, MRG Hauff-Softball Tees-223.00, Renaissance-Instructional Software-9,919.85, Riddell-FB Helmets-4,302.75, Riverside Technologies-Computer Equipment-5,516.00, SHI International Corp-Computer Equipment-4,718.97, Software Unlimited-SUI Renewal/Annual Fee-8,150.00, Splashtop-Software-1,685.40, Time Management Systems-Red Rover Time Tracking-9,035.52, Two Trees Technology-Software20,342.49, Typing Agent-Instructional Software-786.20
Fund Total: 291,187.81

SPECIAL ED: None
FOOD SERVICE: Infinite Campus-Food Service Software-1,363.20
Fund Total: 1,363.20

ENTERPRISE: None
Rix requested a short recess to discuss the 2026-2027 District Budget Hearing at 7:33 pm. Neiber presented the 2026-27 District Budget. No action was taken. Rix declared out of recess at 7:41 pm.

Moved by Fliehs, seconded by Weismantel, to review surplus items and declare stage curtains as surplus. All voted aye, no dissenting vote; motion carried.

The board reviewed and acknowledged South Dakota Open Meeting Law pursuant to SDCL 1-25-13.

Motion by Weismantel, seconded by Fliehs, to adopt the FY2027 District Budget and authorize the business manager to file tax requests with county auditors. All voted aye, no dissenting vote; motion carried.

Motion by Fliehs, seconded by Strom, to approve the selection of Hausmann Construction as the Construction Manager at Risk (CMAR) for the middle school/high school building project. The Buildings & Grounds Committee reported that ten applications were received, and four construction firms were selected for interviews. A contract will be presented to the board for approval at a future meeting. All voted aye, no dissenting vote; motion carried.

Motion by Weismantel, seconded by Weber, to approve out-of-district transportation requests from Langford Area School District and Webster Area School District. All voted aye, no dissenting vote; motion carried.

Quotes for fuel oil, diesel, and gas were opened as follows: Ken's Food Fair & Shell Express: #2 Diesel – 4.02, #1 Diesel – 4.17, Ethanol – 3.29, Lead-Free – 3.90, and E-85 – .9144; MJ's

Sinclair/Fuel Stop: #2 Diesel – 3.598286, #1 Diesel – 3.788286, Ethanol – 3.143857, Lead-Free – 3.718286, and E-85 – .955643; Moved by Weismantel, seconded by Strom, to award fuel contract to MJ's Sinclair/Fuel Stop. All voted aye, no dissenting vote; motion carried.

Quotes for the official newspaper were opened as follows: Aberdeen Insider - legal line rate \$0.289 per line, classified advertising \$0.25 per word, with a minimum charge of \$20.00 for 10 words, local open display advertising is included per column inch, and the current Groton Area School District patrons who subscribe are 110. The Groton Independent - legal line rate \$0.3730 per line, classified advertising \$0.10 per word, with a minimum charge of \$4.50 for 30 words, local open display advertising is \$5.00 per column inch, and the current Groton Area School District patrons who subscribe are 237. Reporter & Farmer - legal line rate \$0.45 per line, classified advertising \$0.40 per word, with a minimum charge of \$8.00 for 20 words, local open display advertising is \$8.45 per column inch, and the current Groton Area School District patrons who subscribe to their print newspaper are 496. Moved by Weismantel, seconded by Weber to award the newspaper contract to The Groton Independent. All voted aye, no dissenting vote; motion carried.

Board members appointed Strom as a voting member of the North Central Special Education Governing Board for the 2026-27 school year.

Motion by Weismantel, seconded by Strom to set times and dates for regular school board meetings on the second Monday of each month to be held in the GHS Conference Room at 6:00 pm exceptions are for October 13 (Tuesday) 7 am, November 10 (Tuesday) 7 am, and May 11 (Tuesday) 7 am. The board will meet for negotiations on March 31 and April 1, 2027, with time to be determined. All dates will be considered for rescheduling to other dates, times, and places when deemed necessary or appropriate. All voted aye, no dissenting vote; motion carried.

Moved by Weismantel, seconded by Lerseth-Fliehs to set board member salaries at \$50 per meeting and board president salary at \$75 per meeting, with mileage if applicable. All voted aye, no dissenting vote; motion carried.

Moved by Fliehs, seconded by Weber, to set the rate for substitute teacher pay at \$140/day. All voted aye, no dissenting vote; motion carried.

Moved by Weismantel, seconded by Fliehs, to set substitute bus drivers' rate at \$105/day. All voted aye, no dissenting vote; motion carried.

Moved by Weismantel, seconded by Fliehs to approve admission & lunch prices: Admission – Adults \$6, \$7 for doubleheader, \$50 for 10-punch ticket, \$75 for all-season pass, Grades 1 through 12, \$5; Activity Tickets – Grades 6 through 12, \$35, Grades 1 through 5, \$30; Breakfast – Adults, \$3.75, Grades 6 through 12, \$3.35, Grades JrK through 5, \$2.85; Lunch – Adults, \$5.50, Grades 6 through 12, \$4.35, Grades Jr. K through 5, \$3.85, 2nds on meal – Grades K through 12, \$2.00, and extra milk – \$0.50. All voted aye, no dissenting vote; motion carried.

Moved by Weismantel, seconded by Lerseth-Fliehs to approve resignation with liquidated damages of Kiya Stillman, 7-9 ELA Teacher, for the 26-27 school year. All voted aye, no dissenting

vote; motion carried.

Moved by Weismantel, seconded by Lerseth-Fliehs, to adjourn at 8:27 pm. All voted aye, no dissenting vote; motion carried.

Madisyn Neiber, Business Manager

Grant Rix, President
The addition of signatures to this page verifies these minutes as official.

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TOWN OF CLAREMONT
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

The Board of Trustees for the Town of Claremont met on July 14, 2026, at 8 p.m. at City Hall, 606 Sixth Ave., Claremont, S.D.

President Spencer called the meeting to order with Frank Rasmussen present. Brad Jaris was absent. Others present were Jenna and Joe Gustafson, Amy Keough, Lacy Olson and Jerry McCabe, all members of the baseball program.

The baseball program group was present to propose its

ideas for improvements to the ball program. The board was in agreement with the group's ideas for the future.

On a motion by Frank, seconded by Jason, the following bills were approved:

GENERAL FUND
Employers Reemployment – \$125.00; Fuel Circle C AG, dyed diesel – \$131.36; IRS – \$106.00; Butler Machinery, parts – \$484.26; NVC, phone, internet and S. phone – \$151.11; NWE, street lights – \$622.21; NWE, City Hall – \$112.86; Amy Keough, mowing, 37.5 hours – \$554.10; Charla Rye, wage – \$500.00; Don Vander Vorst, 5.5 hours and supplies – \$110.14; Jason Spencer, 3 hours – \$45.02.

WSSW:
BDM, water purchased – \$1,156.65; NWE, pump house power – \$108.56; NWE, sewer lift – \$59.13; NWE, storm sewer lift – \$24.00; USDA Rural Development, loan payment – \$576.00; Melinda Spencer, water readings – \$192.08.

Fence posts are to be purchased soon for the lagoon/rubble site.

With no further business before the board, a motion was made by Frank to adjourn. Motion carried.

CRye, Finance Officer
Town of Claremont

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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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Groton Independent ♦ Wed., Aug. 5, 2026 ♦ 7

City Council
Continued from front

things being looked up on the library computer, which prompted the city to restrict access to the computers at the library to adults only. It also prompted Heinrich to reach out to IT Outlet, a company that already works with the city when they need computer technical support, to see about IT management.

Basically IT Outlet would act as the city's IT department for \$225 a month or roughly \$3,500 a year, Heinrich said. It would allow the city to be proactive when facing future tech issues.

"I'm not saying ours is bad at this point," he said. "I'm just saying things are different now."

Council members expressed support for the idea, and Heinrich said he will keep discussing it with IT Outlet and bring an agreement back to the council for a vote.

Earlier in the meeting, the council heard a recap of the 14U Legion baseball season with baseball players and coaching thanking the council for helping fund their trip to the state championship tournament in Vermillion.

Baseball Coordinator Matt Locke told the council about the great experience it was for the players, especially getting to stay together for the weekend instead of in different hotel rooms around the area. While the season ended on a loss, the players grew so much as players over the summer.

Players and coaches thanked city leaders for their continued support of the program before shaking hands with council members.

"Connection is the answer"

The human race has never been more connected to one another. We can reach family, friends and strangers across the world in mere seconds. Despite this alleged connectedness, loneliness is everywhere. The U.S. Surgeon General referred to loneliness as an epidemic that is literally killing us, stating that lacking social connection can increase the risk for premature death as much as smoking up to 15 cigarettes a day. We all know smoking is dangerous, so why do we ignore the danger of loneliness? Ignoring it won't make it go away.

Human connection is crucial to our survival, and it isn't something technology can manufacture for us. Connection allows us to feel seen, heard, and valued. Most importantly, it allows us to feel like we belong. Belonging is a foundational, biological need. We are social creatures who need one another to survive. For early humans, being in a group increased the odds of survival. Rejection meant isolation which, at that time, meant death. No wonder it physically hurts to be rejected or lonely! Our brain is desperately alerting us that we are in danger. We need to start paying attention and stop trying to override the signal.

As a health professional, I have yet to come across a single person who doesn't feel lonely. Many of us do nothing about it due to fear of rejection, fear of judgment, and a lack of confidence in how to connect with others. So what do we do? First, we need to remind ourselves that we all deserve to belong and to love and be loved. We all have value and no one can take that from us.

To connect and feel we belong, we need to put ourselves out there. Yes, it's scary and we won't always be successful but you try anyway. And you try again. Finding common ground and being willing to listen is vital. Listening doesn't mean being in agreement; it means recognizing and respecting another person's human experience, allowing them to feel seen and heard.

To feel seen and heard yourself, you'll need to be a little vulnerable. This is often where people stop. Vulnerability feels like risk, and it is. But it's a necessary one. Sharing about yourself appropriately helps build trust, and trust is the foundation of any relationship. Start small. You don't need to bare your soul to a stranger. Tell someone what you're actually enjoying lately, admit when you're having a hard week, or simply say "I miss you." These small acts of openness signal to another person that you're real, approachable, and wanting to connect. More often than not, they'll reciprocate.

We also need to be present. This is tough when the world is full of stimuli competing for our attention. We must sit with the temporary discomfort of presence in order to rid ourselves of the chronic discomfort of loneliness. Set aside your device, ask someone about their day, and be curious. Share a meal, go for a walk, play cards, or simply sit with another human being. Take the risk of connection. We already know where loneliness leads.

Leah Hendrickson CSW-PIP, QMHP currently works as an outpatient mental health therapist in Brookings, SD. Leah Hendrickson is passionate about helping others live healthier, happier, and more resilient lives. Follow The Prairie Doc® at www.prairiedoc.org, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and Tik Tok. Prairie Doc Programming includes On Call with the Prairie Doc®, a medical Q&A show (most Thursdays at 7pm on SDPB, YouTube and streaming on Facebook), 2 podcasts, and a Radio program (on SDPB, Sundays at 6am and 1pm).



Leah Hendrickson CSW-PIP, QMHP

Watch for our Mega 3-Day Sales Flyer "Going to the Fair" in this week's Aberdeen American News (Thurs. Aug. 5th)

PRICES EFFECTIVE:
August 6-8, 2026

3 DAYS ONLY

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FREE w/\$10 Purchase & Ken's App. 1 quart

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KEN FIEDLER

2ND GENERATION
KEVIN FIEDLER

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

USDA CHOICE DEMKOTA BONELESS BOTTOM ROUND ROAST

\$5.49 Lb.

SAMSON RED OR GREEN SEEDLESS GRAPES

\$1.88 Lb.

SMITHFIELD BONELESS PORK SIRLOIN ROAST

\$1.89 Lb.

USDA CHOICE DEMKOTA BONELESS BOTTOM SIRLOIN STEAK

\$6.99 Lb.

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FROZEN

BLUE RIBBON CLASSIC ICE CREAM

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\$1.99

DAIRY

BEST CHOICE WHOLE, 2% 1 % OR SKIM MILK

1 Gallon Jug

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BEVERAGE

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12 Pk. 12 Oz. Cans

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GROCERY

BEST CHOICE PASTA

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49¢

GROCERY

BEST CHOICE WHITE VINEGAR

64 Oz. Jug

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PRAIRIE BERRY ROSY ASS RHUBARB

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\$3.29

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King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 URL ending
- 4 "Now I get it!"
- 7 Shimmering fabrics
- 12 Texter's "I think"
- 13 Young bloke
- 14 Mover's rental
- 15 H.S. proficiency test
- 16 Held in trust
- 18 Census stat
- 19 Wonderland visitor
- 20 Hindu deity
- 22 Moray, for one
- 23 Ski lift type
- 27 TV screen choice

- 29 Beekeeper's place
- 31 Blood line?
- 34 Sweetie
- 35 Monastery
- 37 Play part
- 38 Romanov ruler
- 39 College URL ender
- 41 Appear
- 45 Chopin piece
- 47 Roman 56
- 48 Branch of government
- 52 Puzzle
- 53 " — Called Wanda"

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- 54 Actress Ruby
- 55 Before
- 56 Give up amateur status
- 57 Pink Floyd's Barrett
- 58 Rds.
- 7 "Time" co-founder
- 8 Sushi fish
- 9 Goat's plaint
- 10 Where Lux. is
- 11 Devious
- 17 Bruins' sch.
- 21 Wedding setting
- 23 Leans
- 24 Sheepish "Hello!"
- 25 Branch
- 26 Bagel variety
- 28 One for the road?
- 30 Cpl.'s subordinate

- 31 Sternward
- 32 Hosp. areas
- 33 Estuary
- 36 Bigfoot's kin
- 37 Hollywood's Hepburn
- 40 Couples
- 42 Santa's crew
- 43 Tennis great Chris
- 44 Blends
- 45 Repeat
- 46 Sized up
- 48 Binge
- 49 "Avatar" craft
- 50 Chips go-with
- 51 Leb. neighbor

DOWN

- 1 Humidor item
- 2 Alpha's opposite
- 3 Cable company device
- 4 — Romeo
- 5 Saluted
- 6 "Paper Moon"