



City Election for Mayor set for April 12th

Groton City residents will be going to the polls on April 12th to elect a mayor. There are two candidates, Aaron Grant and Incumbent Scott Hanlon.

Mayor Candidate Profile: Scott Hanlon

Groton mayor Scott Hanlon is running for his 4th term in office. Hanlon, whose hometown is Verdon, SD, has been in the construction business his entire adult life.

"My mother took over the construction business following my father's untimely death," he explained. "Then my brother Guy and I took over when we graduated from Conde High School. Now I guess I'm in charge and have the valuable assistance from my sister-in-law who does the bookwork."

"I have two daughters, Brooke, who is an adult, and Ataiah, 13, who lives with her mother," Hanlon stated. "I also have five brothers and two sisters."

"Before becoming the mayor of this fine city, I served on the city council," he explained. "While serving on the city council, Mayor Roy Olson passed away, and the council members were asked if anyone wanted to take over as mayor and finish the remaining year of Roy's term in 2013."

"No one else volunteered, so I said I was willing to give it a try," Hanlon admitted. "After that year was finished, I decided to run again, but this time I had an opponent, Eddie Nehls. For subsequent elections, I have had no opponents."

"Even though I originally had no desire to become the mayor, I found that I really do enjoy the job," he smiled. "I meet a lot of nice people, enjoy the challenges that come with this position, and am very grateful that I can help others who come to me with their problems."

"I consider Groton to be an excellent small town with many good features that most of us take for granted," Hanlon said. "For example, we have good infrastructure, great water, sewer, and electrical systems, better snow removal, and excellent police protection than many other, even larger towns, and, best of all, we have people living here who care about each other!"

"Yet, even in Groton there are issues that cause some concern," he admitted. "For example, with the new water tower, water rates also had to be increased. Some people wish more and better snow removal could be done. Even though the city is trying to work on this, there are some areas in town that need to be cleaned up."

"Anyone who has an idea, a problem, or a concern, should contact me," Hanlon suggested. "I enjoy visiting with others and try to keep an open mind. When someone tells me there is a problem, I always listen first. Then I'll ask them what they think would be a good solution."

"I think that we have a very nice little town here in Groton with a great school, interested citizens, and willing workers," he listed. "This is a wonderful community to live and work in and to raise families."

- Dorene Nelson



Scott Hanlon



Aaron Grant

Mayor Candidate Profile: Aaron Grant

Aaron Grant, originally from Fairport, New York, is running for the position of Groton city mayor against incumbent Scott Hanlon. Grant is a teacher, author, and Certified Peer Supporter who counsels wounded veterans.

"I am a Staff-Sergeant in the United States Marine Corps," Grant stated. "It was an eight-year experience I wouldn't change for anything. Operation Iraqi Freedom was my only combat deployment."

"My wife Sarah and I have four children, ages 6 to 21," he smiled. "In 2020 we purchased our home that was built in 1903. Winter has been a challenge, with generations of plumbing freezing constantly, but

I was able to fix the problems as they came."

"My family and I really love Groton. After moving every three years of my adult life, we very much want to stay and build a life here," he admitted, "but I am concerned about the drainage situation in the event of flooding. I am currently pouring over maps to become familiar with the situation."

"I have never been in a public election before this one for city mayor," Grant stated, "but I have served as an elected leader of several large veteran organizations."

"I am the founding Commandant of the Marine Corps League and the Past Commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, both in Naples, NY. The Commander and the Commandant work with the mayor of the respective town for a variety of public functions," he explained. "One of the most difficult things I have had the honor to do was handing a folded flag to the bereaved."

"I believe taxes are one of the major issues in Groton right now," Grant said. "I realize that there are other forces at work when deciding upon property taxes and utility fees, such as federal policy and inflation, but it would be wonderful to have the tax burden on local citizens kept as low as possible."

"One of the most amazing things I've discovered about Groton is that there are many people who have lived here ten, twenty, even fifty years!" he exclaimed. "This is unusual; and absolutely outstanding and all because of peace, easy taxes, and a tolerable administration of justice. This is the kind of town I want my children to grow up in."

"At the bi-monthly city council meetings I attend, I was informed that a food pantry is being organized by a city council member, and I would like to aid in this project," Grant added. "If I am elected, I would like to establish a 'Mayor's Reading Night,' where I read a short story to children once a month and answer any questions they might have."

"I consider myself a true listener and, after careful consideration, will give a straight answer every time," Grant stated. "Being a Certified Peer Supporter for veterans requires an individual to be patient and accepting, open and non-judgmental. When a person confides in me, they can count on my integrity."

"I realize that I'm running for 'volunteer-in-chief.' You can count on me to be the first in the cold and willing to do all kinds of hard, even dirty work with energy and commitment. I am thirty-nine years old, and still have much to give," he said.

- Dorene Nelson

UpComing Events

Saturday, March 26

State DI at Tri-Valley

Monday, March 28

7 p.m.: School Board Meeting

FFA CDE at Tri-Valley

Friday, April 1

FFA CDE at SDSU, Brookings

Saturday, April 2

ACT testing in Groton, 8 a.m. to Noon

Groton Garden Club

The Groton Garden Club met at the home of Marjorie Overacker. Thirteen members answered roll call with a sign of spring. Discussion was held about possible summer activities.

The next meeting will be with Linda Anderson at the Groton Community Center on Monday, April 18, 6:30 p.m.

Weekly Vikings Roundup

Free Agency Begins

By Duane & Jack Kolsrud

It was a wild and crazy first week of free agency in the NFL. Not only did some unrestricted free agents get deals with new teams but there were also few monumental trades that could sway the divisions for years to come.

Starting in the NFC North, the rival Green Bay Packers had to say goodbye to what many consider the best wide receiver in the league in Davante Adams. After signing Aaron Rodgers to a new deal and making it known he would not play under the team's franchise tag, Adams got traded to the Las Vegas Raiders. Now we'll see if Adams is a great receiver or was yet another wideout fortunate to play with Rodgers.

In the AFC, the big news was Deshaun Watson being traded to the Cleveland Browns in another quarterback mega deal. Giving up multiple #1 picks and then signing him to a huge contract that may leverage the future of the organization. They also signed the Cowboys top receiver in Amari Cooper earlier in the week. Late breaking news on Sunday afternoon indicate the Browns have now cut their top running back and second leading rusher in the NFL last season, Nick Chubb.

On the Minnesota Viking front, the new front office was very active but no real splashy events. Kirk Cousins extends his contract and helps the team lower his cap number. There had been speculation that Cousins may get traded but it now appears that new coach Kevin O'Connell would prefer to take the veteran to the next level and see if things can work out in year 5 with the Vikings.

The team did not move on Danielle Hunter as many people suspected and would like to keep the pro bowler lining up in their new 3-4 defense. They also added Buffalo Bills nose guard Harrison Phillips while letting Michael Pierce move on after playing in less than 50% of the games the past two seasons. The Vikings signed free agent linebacker Jordan Hicks while everyone is still waiting to see what happens with Anthony Barr. It would be nice to keep Barr, but it appears highly unlikely.

To help with the Vikings tight salary cap issues, Harrison Smith and Adam Thielen reworked their contracts to give the team some breathing room to sign a few additional players. They also let free agents Tyler Conklin and Xavier Woods move onto other teams. Conklin would have been a nice player to keep after a productive season in 2021 but

The siren call of baseball

Well, I see seed potatoes are in at the store, wisps of green will soon dominate ditches, and winter has relaxed its icy grasp. It's spring, and with spring comes hope. The hope for good crops, healthy calves, and in my case, optimism about the coming baseball season.

I know. I can't help myself. Just about every spring for the 30-plus years I've been sending out these missives, I have to write about baseball.

I fell in love with the Baltimore Orioles as a kid—the Robinson Brothers, Brooks and Frank, mashers like Boog Powell, all-field, no-hit wonders like Mark Belanger at shortstop, and a banty rooster of a manager, Earl Weaver, scourge of all umpires. One year, they even had four 20-game winners, something you'll never see again in this Moneyball/Metrics Era. I'm okay with that. The game changes.

For all my affection for the hapless O's, my loyalties have slowly "slud," as Dizzy Dean used to say, toward the Minnesota Twins, and if you're a fan, you can't help feeling that this might be the year the Twins make some noise. After all, they picked up the top free agent, Houston shortstop Carlo Correa. The Twins big spenders? Indeed.

It doesn't have to be professional baseball for me to enjoy it, though. I wonder how many times I've pulled into an unfamiliar town to watch a Little League game while passing through. It's the sense of community in the stands as much as the action on the field that draws me in. Sunflowers get spat, balls and strikes are quietly debated, and parents cheer their kids even when they whiff. At every level of baseball, it's the same, knowledgeable fans at a picnic and all kinds of conversations with folks you'll never see again. But for the next two hours, you're old friends.

My dad took me to see the Aberdeen Pheasants play in 1971 and I distinctly remember the thoroughbred grace of outfielder Al Bumbry who went on to star with the Orioles. When I lived in Denver, I saw shortstop Barry Larkin play for the Bears (who became the Zephyrs). You know time has flown by when a player you saw in the minors is now in Cooperstown.

One of the perks of working for a radio station in Denver, if not big bucks, were free tickets, so I went to a lot of games at old Mile High Stadium. I took my Grandpa Bender one perfect afternoon, outfitted him with a new Denver Bears cap and a footlong as we sat in box seats. "I feel chust like a king," he said with a grin. I miss the king.

There are always sourpusses who frown upon these distractions, but like kittens and kids, we need to play. We need to celebrate. Life. Perhaps the drama and heroics on the field shouldn't matter, but somehow, they do. They produce memories, tales to tell.

In Ken Burns' epic series "Baseball," he recounts a story of Ty Cobb, as great a player as he was a miserable human being, and Honus Wagner, a stumpy infielder who could run like the wind. They were, at the time, the best players in the game, and when Cobb's Tigers met Wagner's Pirates in the World Series, legend has it that Cobb told the "Krauthead" that he was stealing second base, sharpened spikes flying. "Come on down," Wagner said, and when Cobb arrived, Wagner tagged him hard in the mouth.

That's the story. Did it really happen that way? Did Babe Ruth really call that homerun? Who knows for sure? Maybe it's better that we don't. There's something romantic about such stories, something to be said for misremembering or embellishing.

My brother Scott was the batboy for one of my games in Ellendale, ND, and the way he remembers it, I hit a towering homerun over the scoreboard, and I did, but it went foul. I've tried to correct the record from time to time, but not adamantly.

It's a great memory even if it isn't mine.



That's Life

by Tony Bender

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it's time for Irv Smith, Jr. to take over the #1 slot at tight end.

In the coming weeks we'll start evaluating what the Vikings will be aiming for in the 2022 college draft. On the offensive side, the annual pursuit for another rookie offensive lineman would seem logical but after the past two seasons of defensive ineptitude, it may be time to make a big splash with either a shutdown cornerback or stud defensive lineman. Time will tell and no one is quite sure what the new Vikings brain trust will have in store for 2022.

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Groton hosts District 6 South Dakota Municipal League Meeting



Groton Mayor Scott Hanlon gave the welcome at the District 6 South Dakota Municipal League Meeting. The event was held at the Groton Post #39 conference center. (Photo by April Abeln)



Brad Wilson is the administrator of the SDML Worker's Compensation and Employer Liability. He gave a report of the benefits that the company can provide to municipalities. (Photo by Paul Kosel)



Lynn Bren is the administrator of SDML worker's compensation and Employer liability pool. She gave a report of the program. (Photo by Paul Kosel)



Emilie Miller gave a report on the South Dakota Public Funds Investments Trust (FIT). Many municipalities have funds invested in FIT. (Photo by Paul Kosel)



Rapid City Mayor Steve Allender RC Mayor is the president of the SD Municipal League. He gave various reports and encouraged the members that local control is very important. (Photo by Paul Kosel)



Yvonne Taylor is the Executive Director and is hired by the 19-member Board of Directors, and is responsible for all aspects of the operations of the League. She gave a legislative briefing. Some things of interest is that there 552 bills submitted with 252 that passed. The legislature passed a bill for \$200 million in housing funds and \$600 million in water and sewer projects funding. Homegrown cannabis is allowed, but is limited to two flowering and two non-flowering plants. (Photo by Paul Kosel)



A good crowd was on hand for the District 6 Municipal League Meeting. It has been a long time since Groton has hosted the event with the last mayor to host it was Roy Olson. Hecla will host it next year. (Photo by Paul Kosel)



Ipswich Councilman Mike Hammrich was elected as the vice-chair of the District 6 SD Municipal League. Bowdle Mayor Rick Boschee was re-elected as chairman. (Photo by Paul Kosel)

Municipal officials meet in Groton

Groton, SD -- More than 55 municipal officials representing 10 cities gathered at the South Dakota Municipal League's annual District 6 Meeting, held in Groton on March 23, 2022.

Yvonne Taylor, South Dakota Municipal League Executive Director, spoke about the outcome of the 2022 Legislative Session, and the effect new laws will have on South Dakota municipalities. Taylor also discussed the direction and future of the Municipal League and services offered to the municipalities.

"More and more we are seeing the need to get better information out to the citizens and legislators. Municipal government provides a vast array of services, and people need to be informed of where their tax dollars are going. This type of education can only benefit municipal government. The taxpayers would be very proud of their local government if they were fully aware of how much service a municipality provides at a relatively low cost," Taylor said.

Steve Allender, SDML President for 2022 and Mayor of Rapid City, was also on hand to discuss his priorities for the current year as well as to conduct the election of District 6 officers for the upcoming year. Others in attendance were representatives of various state agencies and representatives of groups affiliated with the Municipal League.

Rick Boschee, Mayor of Bowdle, was re-elected as District 6 Chair and, Mike Hammerich, Councilmember for Ipswich, was elected as Vice Chair.

In other business, those attending voted to hold the 2023 District 6 Meeting in Hecla.

The South Dakota Municipal League was organized in 1934 as a nonpartisan, nonprofit association of incorporated municipalities in South Dakota. The League's mission is the cooperative improvement of municipal government in South Dakota.

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An embarrassing story about community dialogue



Paula Jensen
Vice President of
Program Development

Quite simply, community dialogue is an exchange of ideas and experiences through listening, sharing, and questioning. At its best, community dialogue is created in a safe environment where a diverse group of people gather to talk and understand each other. Community dialogue at its worst looks something like the embarrassing story I am going to share about my own community members and town board.

A few years ago, there was a local issue flaring up in my community. Honestly, I can't even remember the topic of the issue, but it was important enough that community residents were rallying together to attend the monthly town board meeting so they could have a voice in the decision-making process. I decided to attend. About 15-20 residents filed into the fire hall taking a seat on a folding chair or standing against the wall as the meeting was called to order. The town board and staff sat at a rectangle table at the front of the building. They moved through the approval of their agenda never acknowledging the small crowd to their back. The crowd sat quietly and respectfully for the first 30 minutes, but then some chatter started in the back. After more than an hour the town board got to the issue at hand. The town board began discussion among themselves at the table, which was hard to hear because two of them had their backs to the group. Someone sitting toward the back of the room asked, "Could you speak up?" Again, the town board members never acknowledged the group but continued their

discussion with each other about the issue at hand. Suddenly something was said by one of the town board members that was clearly heard but not popular with the group. The man behind me started booing loudly! Others started talking and heckling. One person was saying, "Be quiet! I can't hear." One of the town board members then turned to ask the group to quiet down and show respect as they finish their discussion. Someone yelled, "Don't we get to speak?" There was no response. The town board made their motion, voted, approved their decision, and moved to the next agenda item. In the chaos, people started to realize the town board had moved past their issue, so they noisily filed out of the fire hall into the parking lot. The group was confused about what had just been decided and everyone was astonished that not one person was allowed to have a voice in the conversation. There was absolutely no dialogue allowed!

As I stood outside the fire hall, embarrassed and stunned by the behavior I had just witnessed in that meeting, it was obvious to me that my town leaders were frightened to engage the public and the public wasn't equipped to engage in healthy community dialogue!

As a community coach, I regularly hear local leaders verbalize their fear that the negative voices will just take over and chaos will ensue if they host a community conversation. I assure you community dialogue doesn't have to be frightening or end in chaos, instead it can create motivation and common vision.

When discovering how to fearlessly engage in good dialogue, it's helpful to recognize what dialogue IS NOT. Dialogue is not debate. In debate the goal is to be right. You believe your solution is the right solution, and your duty is to find flaws in the other solutions presented. Dialogue is also not about total agreement with others. People can be respectful to one another while not needing to agree with everything they believe and do.

On the other hand, dialogue IS a motivator of people and their communities. Dialogue helps people collectively work toward a common vision, understanding, or solution to an issue. People engaged in dialogue listen to understand perspectives, needs, expectations, or solutions. Dialogue is an opportunity for people to be heard and understood while displaying open-minded attitudes and a willingness to be wrong and accept change.

Creating healthy community dialogue starts with one...YOU. To get started, the next time you engage in dialogue with an individual or small group, practice listening to understand rather than listening to respond. Allow for two-way collaborative communication by asking a series of open-ended questions such as What's happening? What's your one biggest challenge? How can I help? What do you want in the end? or What are the possible solutions? Throughout your dialogue practice just remember it's about three simple behaviors: listening, sharing, and questioning. You can do it!

The Community Coach. Having a passion for community leadership and development is what drives Paula Jensen's personal and professional life. Paula lives in her hometown of Langford, South Dakota, population 348+. She serves as a Strategic Doing practitioner, grant writer and community coach with Dakota Resources based in Renner, South Dakota. Dakota Resources

is a mission-driven 501c3 Community Development Financial Institution working to connect capital and capacity to empower rural communities. Contact her at paula@dakotaresources.org.

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2022 Groton Area Elementary

Kindergarten Roundup (Screening) for children turning

5 on or before September 1, 2022

Friday, April 1, 2022

If your child is currently attending Junior Kindergarten at Groton Area Elementary school, please DISREGARD this notice. Your teacher will be sending information if necessary.

Packets are being sent home this week with information regarding KG Roundup. These would apply to families who have children eligible for KG and JK this coming 2022-2023 school year who are not currently enrolled in our school. Please contact the school if you do not receive a packet. We do not have all children in our census. Thank you!!!

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THE PANTRY



Nancy Larsen is pictured with the first delivery of food items to The Pantry. The donation was from Emmanuel Lutheran Church. (Photo by Paul Kosel)



Karyn Babcock cleaned off the shelves in The Pantry. The shelves were moved by the Groton Public Works Department from the basement of City Hall over to the Community Center. (Photo by Paul Kosel)

It's a dream that is coming true. Nancy Larsen has talked about the need of a food pantry in Groton.

It is true that the school has the BAGS program at the school, but she said there are other people and families that are in need of food from time to time. Larsen brought up the idea to the Groton Lions Club and they have taken on the job of making that dream come true.

The Lions Club will serve as the conduit to receive food from Feed South Dakota. The northwest room of the Community Center is now serving as The Pantry.

Hours have not been set up yet. If you have a donation for The Pantry, contact Paul Kosel by calling or texting him at 605/397-7460.

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VENDOR FAIR

A vendor fair has been organized in Groton for March 26, 2022, at the Groton Community Center, from 10 am. – 3 p.m. A variety of crafters and vendors will be available. Proceeds from an auction table will be donated to Make-a-Wish Foundation.



National Honor Society

The induction ceremony was Monday, March 21, 2022 @ 7:00 in the library conference room. School Board President Deb Gengerke gave a talk to the new National Honor Society Members about having Good Character.

Front left: Cadance Tullis, Aspen Johnson, Madisen Bjerke, Brooke Gengerke
Back Left; Elliana Weismantel, Caleb Hanter, Andrew Marzahn, Jacob Lewandowski

(Photo Courtesy Brenda Madsen)



Prismatic Sensations take second at Mitchell

The Groton Area Prismatic Sensations took second in their division at the Mitchell competition held Saturday. According to director Kayla Duncan, "These kids reworked their whole formations in a week and showed an unbelievable amount of commitment to each other to make it work-I can't even begin to say how proud I am of them! Finished the season strong with a 2nd place finish in our division! I am so thankful for all the help I've had and for Amy Rohrbach Warrington and Dez Yeigh for taking them and making sure they could still compete! What a great season!" Yeigh added, "A special thank you to Kaitlin O'Neill for helping the kids with their new placements and working with them today! The pit band was also excited that we had the highest band score in our division. Thanks everyone for a great season!!"

Brown County March 15, 2022

Meeting Minutes

MARCH 15, 2022 – GENERAL MEETING

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

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Moved by Wiese, seconded by Gage to approve the agenda. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

BID OPENING – COURTHOUSE ANNEX ROOF:

Place and time as advertised, to open read and consider bids for Courthouse Annex Roof. Moved by Feickert, seconded by Gage to award sole bid from Hub City Roofing, Inc in the amount of \$167,000.00. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

QUOTES – AC UNIT 124 S. 1ST ST.

Judy Dosch, Building Superintendent presented quotes for 1 Carrier 5 ton roof top unit to replace existing unit at the 124 S. 1st St Building. Moved by Wiese, seconded by Feickert to accept low quote from Woodman Refrigeration, Inc in the amount of \$12,100, rejecting quote from Custom Sheet Metal, Inc in the amount of \$12,936.00. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

BID OPENING – FAIR-GROUNDS LAND LEASE:

Place and time as advertised, to open read and consider bids for Land Lease at the Fairgrounds. Moved by Fjeldheim, seconded by Wiese to award lease to high bidder Don Schumacker at \$90 an acre, rejecting bids from Dustin Griese at \$85 per acre and Larry Akkermen at \$71 per acre. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

BID OPENING – RICHMOND YOUTH CAMP LAND LEASE:

Place and time as advertised, to open read and consider bids for Land Lease at the Richmond Youth Camp. Moved by Wiese, seconded by Gage to award lease to high bidder Don Schumacker at \$42.50 an acre, rejecting bid from Reid Albrecht at \$35 an acre. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

ORDINANCE 213 – FIRST READING:

Moved by Fjeldheim, seconded by Wiese to approve first reading of proposed ordinance 213. Applicant Neil Bellikka requesting to rezone the following property from Chapter 4.06 Agriculture Preservation District (AG-P) to Chapter 4.14 Highway Commercial District (HC): Proposed Outlot 1 and Outlot 2, "B and B Outlots" in the NE ¼ of Section 23-T123N-R63W of the 5th P.M., Brown County, South Dakota. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

ORDINANCE 214 – FIRST READING:

Moved by Wiese, seconded by Gage to approve first reading of proposed ordinance 213. Applicant Roger Spanier requesting to rezone the following property from Chapter 4.06 Agriculture Preservation District (AG-P) to Chapter 4.07 Mini Ag District (M-AG): "Spanier Outlot A" in the NW1/4 of Section 25-T123N-R60W of the 5th P.M., Brown County, South Dakota. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

APPLICATION FOR OCCUPANCY:

Moved by Feickert, seconded by Wiese to approve the following application for occupancy of Brown County Highway Right of Way for potable water line. Application is made by WEB Water Development for occupancy of Brown County Highway Number 6, Section 31, Township 127, Range 64, Brown County, South Dakota. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

APPLICATION FOR OCCUPANCY:

Moved by Wiese seconded by Fjeldheim to approve the following application for occupancy of Brown County Highway Right of Way for telecommunications. Application is made by Northern Valley Communications for occupancy of Brown County Highway Number 20, Section 14,23,26,27, Township 124, Range 60, Brown County, South Dakota; Brown County Highway Number 13, Section 21,22,23/5,3,2, Township 124/123, Range 61/60

Brown County, South Dakota; Brown County Highway Number 12E, Section 29,28,27,26,25, Township 123, Range 60, Brown County, South Dakota; Brown County Highway Number 18, Section 1,36,31,25,24,19,13,18, 12,1,6,31 Township 122,123,124 Range 62,61, Brown County, South Dakota; Brown County Highway Number 21, Section 3, 11,2,1,18,17,16,15,10,18,17,8, 16,15,10 Township 122 Range 62,61,60, Brown County, South Dakota; Brown County Highway Number 20/20A, Section 8,29,32,33,20/10,15,22 Township 127/128 Range 60, Brown County, South Dakota; Brown County Highway Number 18/5 Section 21,22,16,9,4,33,26,22 Township 127,128 Range 61, Brown County, South Dakota; Brown County Highway Number 5,20 Section 22,23,26,25,24,19,20,21,22,23,24,19,20,21,22, Township 128, Range 62/61/60, Brown County, South Dakota. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

LOAD LIMITS:

Commissioner Fjeldheim offered the following Resolution: RESOLUTION #13-22

WHEREAS: Enforce Annual Seasonal Load Restrictions on overweight limits, over width load limits, and speed limits on Brown County Roads. All Brown County oil Roads are posted at 6-ton per axle and truck speed of 40 MPH, with the exception of Brown County Road #10, from Brown County Road #13 (Prairiewood Road) north 2.00 miles is posted at 12-ton gross load limit with truck speed at 40 MPH year round.

WHEREAS: The Brown County Board of Commissioners request that the South Dakota Highway Patrol assist and enforce load restrictions on the posted gross limit per axle and truck speed at 40 MPH as posted by the Brown County Board of Commissioners during the February/March/April spring thaw and breakup period that the roads are posted.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: That the Brown County Board of Commissioners authorizes the Brown County Highway Department Superintendent to work with the South Dakota Highway Patrol to reduce weight maximums due to the thawing and excessive moisture and until the roads are free of frost and become stable. SDCL 32-22-25

Seconded by Commissioner Wiese. Roll call vote: Commissioners Feickert-aye, Sutton-aye, Wiese-aye, Gage-aye, Fjeldheim-aye. Resolution adopted.

DRONE EQUIPMENT PURCHASE:

Moved by Wiese, seconded by Fjeldheim to approve quote from Elite Unmanned LLC for purchase of Autel Robotics EVO II 640T Enterprise Bundle in the amount of \$9,200.00. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

FAIRGROUNDS ELECTRICAL UPGRADES:

Moved by Wiese, seconded by Feickert to approve project for electrical upgrades at the fairgrounds. Low quote awarded to Jim Kramp in the amount of \$18,946, rejecting quotes from Muth Electric at \$84,319.71 and Ringgenberg Electric in the amount of \$36,450.00 All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

ELECTRICAL TRANSFORMER PURCHASE:

Moved by Feickert, seconded by Wiese to approve the purchase of increased transformer capacity in the amount of \$5,000 for 60 more camping sites from Northern Electric. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

CAMPING PEDESTALS:

Moved by Wiese, seconded by Feickert to approve spending authority up to \$17,500 to purchase 60 single head camping pedestals. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

BID – SPRAY FOAM CONTRACTORS:

Moved by Feickert, seconded by Wiese to authorize advertising public hearing to open, read and consider bids for either one inch or two inch foam insulation spray on the ceiling of the beef barn located at the Brown County Fairgrounds at 8:45 a.m., on April 5, 2022 in the Commissioner's Chambers, Courthouse Annex, Brown County, SD. Specifications are online brown.sd.us and on file in the Brown County Auditor's Office. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

COUNTY FAIR UPDATE:

Fair Manager, Rachel Kippley gave an update on the 2022 fair. The Rodeo will be live broadcast on the Cowboy Channel. Fair grandstand concerts will have

the clear bag policy enforced. Fair board is reviewing camper lot sizes.

BROWN COUNTY PROCLAMATION – WELCOME HOME VETERAN'S DAY:

Brown County Proclamation A proclamation designating March 29, 2022 as "Welcome Home Veteran's Day"

Whereas, the Vietnam War was fought in Vietnam from 1961 to 1975, and involved North Vietnam and the Viet Cong in conflict with the United States Armed Forces and South Vietnam; and

Whereas, the United States became involved in Vietnam because policymakers in the United States believed that if South Vietnam fell to a Communist government then Communism would spread throughout the rest of Southeast Asia; and

Whereas, members of the United States Armed Forces began serving in an advisory role in the South Vietnamese in 1961; and

Whereas, as a result of the Gulf of Tonkin incidents on August 2, 1964, and August 4, 1964, Congress overwhelmingly passed the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, on August 7, 1964, which effectively handed over war-making powers to President Johnson until such time as "peace and security" had returned to Vietnam; and

Whereas, in 1965, United States Armed Forces ground combat units arrived in Vietnam; and

Whereas, by the end of 1965, there were 80,000 United States troops in Vietnam, and by 1969 a peak of approximately 543,000 troops was reached; and

Whereas, on January 27, 1973, the Treaty of Paris was signed, which required the release of all United States prisoners-of-war held in North Vietnam and the withdrawal of all United States Armed Forces from South Vietnam; and

Whereas, on March 29, 1973, the United States Armed Forces completed the withdrawal of combat troops from Vietnam; and

Whereas, more than 58,000 members of the United States Armed Forces lost their lives in Vietnam and more than 300,000 members of the Armed Forces were wounded; and

Whereas, members of the United States Armed Forces, who served bravely and faithfully for the United States during the Vietnam War, were caught upon their return home in the crossfire of public debate about the involvement of the United States in the Vietnam War; and

Whereas, it was also the first time in history America failed to welcome its veterans back as heroes; and

Whereas, the establishment of a "Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day" would be an appropriate way to honor those members of the United States Armed Forces who served in Vietnam during the Vietnam War; and

Now, therefore be it resolved that the Brown County Commissioners do hereby recognize March 29, 2022 as "Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day". The Brown County Commissioners further honors and recognizes the contributions of veterans of the Armed Forces who served in Vietnam.

Dated this 15th day of March, 2022.

MINUTES:

Moved by Feickert, seconded by Fjeldheim to approve the general meeting minutes of March 08, 2022. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

CLAIMS/PAYROLL:

Moved by Wiese, seconded by Gage to approve the following claims and payroll:

Payroll:

Commission \$4,503.96; Auditor \$9,637.93; Treasurer \$12,763.61; SA \$25,658.83; SVAWA \$0.00; Maintenance \$9,640.87; Assessor \$15,215.89; Register of Deeds \$8,028.80; VSO \$4,155.96; GIS \$2,483.72; IT \$7,655.63; HR \$4,061.37; Sheriff \$47,304.05; Jail \$57,561.99; Coroner (Voucher) \$0.00; Court Security \$9,078.21; JDC \$28,651.97; Welfare \$2,161.43; Museum \$8,586.50; Parks/Fairgrounds \$3,779.24; Fair Board \$4,720.00; 4-H \$620.00; Weed \$1,235.82; Planning & Zoning \$5,681.44; Highway \$41,649.70; Dispatch \$39,300.85; Emergency \$4,285.81; Teen Court \$715.92; JDAI \$1,846.15; 24/7 Sobriety \$1,397.45; Landfill \$15,424.98; Matching Benefits \$22,569.52; Medicare \$5,278.31; Discovery HSA

\$915.84.

Insurance: SD PUBLIC AS-SURANCE ALLIANCE-HAGAN INSURANCE \$232,370.34 Professional Fees: AVERA ST. LUKE'S \$519.92; CARLESON FUNERAL HOME & CREMATORY \$1,360.00; CGI \$465.08; DARCY LOCKWOOD \$6.00; DEPENDABLE SANITATION INC \$24,917.40; GELLHAUS & GELLHAUS, PC \$80.00; LEWIS & CLARK BHS \$552.00; LUCY LEWNO \$110.00; MARK KAT-TERHAGEN \$6.00; NE MENTAL HEALTH CENTER \$1,378.00; SANFORD CLINIC \$3,143.36; SD DEPT OF HEALTH \$2,025.00; TAMMY STOLLE COURT REPORTING \$13.60; TYLER TECHNOLOGIES INC \$260.00; UNIVERSITY OF NORTH DAKOTA \$2,380.00; WEST PUBLISHING CORP. \$275.05; WEX HEALTH INC. \$175.20; YELLOW ROBE CONSULTING, INC. \$3,000.00 Repairs & Maintenance: BUTLER MACHINERY CO \$118.00; 3E Generator Shop \$390.00; COMTECH INC. \$7,550.00; DERWIN D. KAMPA \$179.59; ECOLAB PEST ELIMINATION \$117.60; GRAHAM TIRE INC \$239.45; HF JACOBS & SON CONSTRUCTION INC \$131.25; Holland Bros. Oil, Inc \$40.00; HOVEN AUTO REPAIR INC \$73.00; LEIDHOLT ELECTRIC LLC \$823.50; MB LLC \$35.00; POMS TIRE SERVICE, INC \$299.98; SCOTT DEMERY \$556.30; STEVEN LUST AUTOMOTIVE \$134.99; WOODMAN REFRIGERATION, INC. \$966.13 Supplies: ABERDEEN AREA RADIATOR LLC \$850.00; ABERDEEN DOWNTOWN ASSN \$280.00; ABERDEEN MEDICAL CENTER PHARMACY \$407.77; AGTEGRA COOPERATIVE \$16,203.67; APH STORES, INC \$420.81; BEHNKE PIT \$76,476.71; COLE PAPERS \$711.04; CREATIVE PRODUCT SOURCING, INC. \$12.70; DAKOTA OIL \$1,133.15; GRAHAM TIRE INC \$803.80; Holland Bros. Oil, Inc \$4.00; KESSLERS \$94.70; LEIDHOLT ELECTRIC LLC \$1,851.31; Linde Gas & Equipment Inc. \$889.67; LUCY LEWNO \$2.25; MENARDS \$432.13; MIDSTATES PRINTING \$90.00; NORTHWEST DIVERS \$12,627.00; PERFORMANCE RENTALS LLC \$100.00; PRECISION KIOSK TECHNOLOGIES \$2,700.00; RUNNINGS \$1,251.81; SHARE CORP \$720.00; SHERWIN WILIAMS \$439.20; STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA \$178.40; WEB WATER BOTTLING COMPANY \$37.50 Travel & Conference: PATTI WOODS \$39.48 Utilities: CITY OF ABERDEEN \$409.57; CITY OF HECLA \$198.42; NORTHERN ELECTRIC COOP, INC \$86.00; NORTHWESTERN ENERGY & COMMUNICATIONS \$4,342.72; QWEST CORPORATION \$60.86; STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA \$146.55; VERIZON WIRELESS SERVICES LLC \$3,274.64; WEB WATER DEVELOPMENT ASSOC. INC. \$83.86 Rentals: ARAMARK UNIFORM & CAREER APPAREL GROUP, INC \$294.03; Linde Gas & Equipment Inc. \$47.62

All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

HR REPORT:

Moved by Feickert, seconded by Fjeldheim to approve the following Human Resource Report: Acknowledge declined offer of Barbara Wacholz, Brown County Jail Correctional Officer, full-time; effective March 8, 2022

Approve hiring of James Marnette as Brown County Jail Correctional Officer/GPS Coordinator, full-time; starting wage \$18.87 per hour; effective March 21, 2022

Approve hiring of Anthony Lawson as Brown County Jail Correctional Officer, full-time; starting wage \$18.87 per hour; effective March 22, 2022.

Acknowledge the following personal miles driven while using county owned vehicle to be taxed at \$.585 per mile: Kendall Titze 96miles @ \$56.16; John Florey 108 miles @ \$63.18; Dirk Rogers 646 miles @ \$377.91; Mike Scott 140 miles @ \$81.90

All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

FAIR CONTRACTS: Moved by Feickert, seconded by Wiese to approve the following fair contracts: Craig Morgan (entertainment); NB Golf Cart for cart rental in the amount of \$19,625.00; Street Smart for rental of portable traffic signal in the amount of \$6,700. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

BID – WEED AND PEST CHEMICAL: Moved by Feickert, seconded by Gage to authorize advertising public hearing to open, read and consider bids for weed and pest chemical at 8:45 a.m., on April

5, 2022 in the Commissioner's Chambers, Courthouse Annex, Brown County, SD. Specifications are online brown.sd.us and on file in the Brown County Auditor's Office. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

OUT OF STATE TRAVEL:

Moved by Fjeldheim, seconded by Wiese to approve out of state travel for Fair Manager Rachel Kippley, and Fair Board Members Suzanne Moen and Joni Napton to travel to La-Crosse, Wisconsin for IAFE Zone 4 Conference. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

LANDFILL REVERSE CREDITS 2021:

Moved by Fjeldheim, seconded by Feickert to acknowledge the reverse credits at the landfill for 2021 as follows: Ticket 764659 (billing error); Ticket 768319 (billing error); Ticket 76353 (billing error). All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

CLAIM ASSIGNMENTS:

Moved by Fjeldheim, seconded by Feickert to authorize auditor to sign claim against an individual to Credit Collections Bureau for the purpose of collecting liens. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

FIREWORKS PERMIT:

Moved by Gage, Seconded by Wiese to approve fireworks permit for Brown County Fair with Lew's Fireworks as Display Vendor for Saturday August 20, 2022 at the Brown County Fairgrounds. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

LIBRARY CONTRACT 2022: Moved by Wiese, seconded by Feickert to approve contract with Aberdeen City Library in the amount of \$6,000 for county resident library services in 2022. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

BID – WAGE STUDY:

Moved by Feickert, seconded by Gage to authorize advertising public hearing to open, read and consider requests for proposals for a wage study at 8:45 a.m., on April 12, 2022 in the Commissioner's Chambers, Courthouse Annex, Brown County, SD. Specifications are online brown.sd.us and on file in the Brown County Auditor's Office. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

LEASES: Moved by Fjeldheim seconded by Wiese to approve the following lease agreement: D'OM Veterans Ranch for lease of Expo Building May 14, 2022. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

ABATEMENT: Moved by Wiese, seconded by Fjeldheim to approve the following abatement: Janet Wilson; LT 16 BK 20 Howard & Hedger RPL of NW Add (Adjusted for fire) \$392.39. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT: Moved by Fjeldheim, seconded by Gage to adjourn the Brown County Commission at 9:50a.m. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

Cathy McNickle, Brown County Auditor
Published once at the total approximate cost of \$177.98. 21029

Brown County Chemical Dealers Bid Notice

NOTICE TO CHEMICAL DEALERS

Sealed bids will be received in the Chambers of the Brown County Board of Commissioners, Brown County Courthouse Annex at Aberdeen, South Dakota 57401 until 8:45 A.M. on April 05, 2022, at said time and place all bids will be publicly opened, read and considered for furnishing of chemical for the Brown County Weed and Pest Board for 2022.

Proposal Guaranty: No deposit or bond will be required at time of bid opening.

Contract: Brown County will give notice to the successful bidder that his proposal has been accepted, and said bidder shall within ten (10) days thereafter enter into a contract with Brown County in accordance with the bid as accepted. Successful bidder shall furnish proper certificates of insurance as required by Brown County. Contract for the chemicals shall be firm and will be in effect for a period of eight months from April 1 to November 30, 2022.

Sealed envelopes containing bids shall be addressed to Brown County Auditor, 25 Market Street, Ste 1, Aberdeen, South Dakota and be marked "Chemical Bid for Brown County Weed and Pest Board" and to be opened at 8:45 A.M. on April 05, 2022.

The Brown County Board of Commissioners reserves the right to accept or reject any or all

bids, and to accept the bid they deem to be in the best interest of Brown County. Brown County is exempt from Federal Excise Tax and State Sales Tax. Specifications are on file and may be obtained at no charge at the office of the Brown County Auditor and the Brown County Weed and Pest Office.

ATTEST: Cathy McNickle, Brown County Auditor
(0323.0330)

Published twice at the total approximate cost of \$33.66. 21030

Brown County Noxious Weeds Declared Pests

NOTICE OF RESPONSIBILITY TO CONTROL NOXIOUS WEEDS AND DECLARED PESTS

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN this 23rd day of March, 2022 pursuant to SDCL 38-22 as amended to all owners, occupants, agents and public officials in charge of lands in Brown County, South Dakota, that they are responsible for the suppression, control, and eradication of noxious weed and declared pest infestations that may exist on such lands.

Chemical, biological and/or cultural control methods used for the suppression, control and eradication of noxious weed and declared pest infestations shall be those approved for such purposes by the Brown County Weed and Pest Supervisor, Regional Extension Educator or the South Dakota Department of Ag.

Upon failure to observe this notice, the county Weed and Pest Board is required to proceed pursuant to the law and have the noxious weeds or declared pests destroyed by such methods as they may find necessary, the expense of which shall constitute a lien and be entered as a tax against the land, and be collected as other real estate taxes are collected, or by other means as provided by law.

Plants and animals designated as being noxious weeds and declared pests in the state of South Dakota are Leafy Spurge, Salt Cedar, Perennial Sow Thistle, Russian Knapweed, Hoary Cress, Canada Thistle, Purple Loosestrife, Absinth Wormwood, and Gypsy Moth.

In addition, Musk and Plumeless Thistle, Yellow Toadflax, and Bull Thistle have been approved by the South Dakota Weed and Pest Control Commission and are subject to the same suppression, control and eradication requirements as the before mentioned plants and animals.

.. NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that upon establishing probable cause to believe a noxious weed or declared pest infestation exists upon any property in Brown County a representative of the Brown County Weed and Pest Board will enter upon said property for the purpose of inspecting and confirming that such infestation actually exists.

Cathy McNickle, Brown County Auditor
(0323.0330)
Published once at the total approximate cost of \$41.40. 21031

Brown County Classification & Total Compensation Study

Public Notice of Request for Proposal for Classification and Total Compensation Study

Notice is hereby given; Brown County invites written proposals from qualified consultants to perform a Classification and Total Compensation Study. Proposals will be received in the Brown County Auditor's Office, 25 Market St., Aberdeen, SD 57401, until 8:45 am on Tuesday, April 12, 2022. Proposals should be clearly marked "Classification and Total Compensation Study." The proposal shall be signed by an authorized consultant or representative and made in accordance with the Request for Proposal.

A complete Request for Proposal may be obtained online at <http://www.brown.sd.us/> or the Brown County Auditor's Office, 25 Market St., Aberdeen, SD 57401. The proposal opening will be held at the Brown County Commission Meeting on Tuesday, April 12, 2022, at roughly 8:45 a.m.

Brown County does not discriminate against a bidder or consultant based on age, disability, national origin, race/color, religion, sex, or any other basis prohibited by state or federal law relating to discrimination in employment.

Cathy McNickle, Brown County Auditor
(0323.0330)

Published twice at the total approximate cost of \$24.28. 21032

**Groton School
March 14, 2022**

Meeting Minutes

UNOFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS
OF BOARD OF EDUCATION
GROTON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 06-6
REGULAR MEETING
March 14, 2022

President Gengerke called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the GHS Library Conference Room. Members present: Flihs, Gengerke, Harder, Pharis, Rix, and Smith. Absent: Weismantel. Others present were Supt. J. Schwan, Principals B. Schwan and Sombke and Business Manager Weber.

Moved by Harder, second Pharis to approve the agenda with one amendment: under New Business Item #9 – approve resignation. Motion carried.

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

Moved by Flihs, second Smith to approve consent agenda items as presented: District minutes of February 14, 2022, bills, financial reports, custodial accounts, investments, lunch report, and transportation report. Motion carried.

GENERAL FUND: Net Salary – 203,941.24; FIT – 17,650.20; Medicare – 7,645.40; FICA – 32,690.58; American Funds – 547.60; SDRS – 32,112.94; HSA – 100.00; Waddell & Reed – 1,390.00; Horace Mann – 907.61; Thrivent – 250.00; AFLAC – 2,914.01; Delta Dental – 4,121.49; SD Supplemental Retirement – 2,140.83; Division of Child Support – 951.06; Wellmark – 60,850.33; Standard Life – 716.75; Avesis Vision – 294.03; Wage Works – 1,137.46; A&B Business – staples, 239.75; Amazon – supplies, 126.56; Avera St Luke's – service fee, 2,092.23; Britton-Hecla School – fee, 186.99; Capitol One – supplies, 135.17; City of Groton – utilities, 12,894.95; Clubhouse – supplies, 320.44; Cole Papers – paper, 548.22; Custodial Fund – advanced pays, 24,801.56; Dependable Sanitation – service, 1,238.00; Farm Tire Service – repair, 40.00; Greg's Repair – repairs, 50.00; Groton Area School – bank fee, 56.15; Group Travel Planners – rooms, 789.56; Hillyard – supplies, 1,458.41; Horter's Farm & Ranch Supply – gas, 15.00; Interstate All Battery Center – battery, 28.92; Jostens – service fee, 1,151.75; Lori's Pharmacy – supplies, 11.99; Midstates – shirts, 576.00; NC-SEC – service fee, 5,500.00; Northside Implement – parts, 427.94; Northwestern Energy – utilities, 15,416.13; Prorate Services – testing, 385.00; School Specialty – supplies, 124.20; SDASBO – registration, 75.00; Sewer Duck – repairs, 335.00; Stan Houston – supplies, 53.60; Taylor Music – supplies, 140.70; TIE – registration, 175.00; Training Room – supplies, 191.95; World's Finest Chocolate – fundraiser, 3,615.68; Desiree Yeigh – registration, 30.00. Total General Fund – \$443,593.38.

CAPITAL OUTLAY: A&B Business – print agreement, 2,149.78; Apple – software, 2,000.00; Cardinals Sports – clothing, 2,040.00; Custodial Fund – advanced pays, 490.45; Hauff Mid-America – clothing, 4,749.90; School Specialty – whiteboard, 999.59; SHI International – software, 33.06; Stan Houston – tools, 84.99. Total Capital Outlay – \$12,547.77.

SPECIAL ED: Net Salary – 33,953.10; FIT – 2,809.30; Medicare – 1,256.74; FICA – 5,373.76; SDRS – 5,414.88; Waddell & Reed – 200.00; AFLAC – 412.15; Delta Dental – 829.42; SD Supplemental Retirement – 100.00; Wellmark – 10,595.67; Standard Life – 173.12; Avesis Vision – 63.28; Wage Works – 58.33; Avera St Luke's – PT/OT, 9,761.40; Capitol one – supplies, 62.46;

Custodial Fund – advanced pays, 1,603.87; NCSEC – service fee, 33,094.74; SD Dept of Human Services – placement, 3,589.97; Judy/Gene Williamson – mileage, 529.20. Total Special Ed – \$109,881.39.

ENTERPRISE: Food Service Net Salary – 6,475.61; FIT – 475.62; Medicare – 234.04; FICA – 1,000.66; SDRS – 1,002.78; AFLAC – 218.49; Wellmark – 1,542.00; Standard Life – 3.84; Avesis Vision – 19.63; Ace Refrigeration – repairs, 559.98; Bernard Foods – food, 95.48; BIMBO – food, 283.13; Cintas – kitchen apron/towels, 65.45; Custodial Fund – advanced pays, 151.75; CWD – food, 1,901.52; East Side Dairy – milk, 1,520.30; Performance Foodservice – food, 2,561.77; US Foods – food,

3,207.04. Total Food Service – \$21,319.09. OST Net Salary – 2,046.45; FIT – 133.58; Medicare – 72.50; FICA – 309.96; SDRS – 218.38; AFLAC – 163.93; Wellmark – 678.00; Standard Life – 23.28; Custodial Fund – advanced pays, 411.86. Total OST – \$4,057.94. Total Enterprise Funds – \$25,377.03.

CUSTODIAL FUND: Total – \$39,101.27. RECEIPTS: Local Sources, Taxes – 93,504.65; Other Local Sources – 166,791.74; County Sources – 3,302.51; State Sources – 154,317.00; Federal Sources – 27,410.15; Total Receipts – \$445,476.05.

Members of the public are allowed five minutes to address the board on any topic of their choice. Logan Manhart introduced himself as a candidate running for South Dakota House of Representatives in District 1. The board welcomed him, and he stayed for the remainder of the regular session meeting.

President Gengerke announced that Superintendent Joe Schwan was declared the South Dakota Region 5 Superintendent of the Year and will now represent Region 5 as a candidate for South Dakota Superintendent of the Year.

The following topics were addressed in administrative reports: ASBSD Protective Trust meeting, Fiscal Year 2023 laptop purchases, Legislative Session update, Elementary PAC purchasing STEM equipment, science and math curriculum reports, state assessment testing, Track and Field Day – May 13th, ACT and Smarter Balance testing, NWEA MAPS Spring Assessment, dual credit registration, Planbook Online Lesson System, Dual Credit Registration, school board election update, and 2021 District Audit.

Superintendent Schwan announced bus bids as follows: Harlow's Bus Sales, 2023 IC, 59 passenger seat 53 - \$92,560.25; Foreman Sales & Service, 2023 Thomas, 65 passenger seat 59 - \$94,210.00; and Foreman Sales & Service, 2024 Thomas, 59 passenger seat 53 - \$99,950.00. Moved by Rix, second Flihs to approve to approve bid from Harlow's. Motion carried.

Superintendent Schwan announced elementary roof bids as follows: Architect Roofing & Sheet Metal (ATS), 15-year warranty, Section C - \$110,620.00, Alternate A - \$168,245.00, total bid \$278,865.00; and Hub City Roofing, 20-year warranty, Section C - \$82,000.00, Alternate A - \$154,000.00, total bid \$236,000. Moved by Pharis, second Rix to approve bid for Section C from Hub City Roofing. Motion carried.

Moved by Harder, second Flihs to set 2022 Driver's Education Fees at \$260 and issue Driver's Education Instructor Agreements to Shaun Wanner and Joel Guthmiller. Motion carried.

Description	General Fund	Assigned Gen Funds	Capital Outlay	Special Education	Bond Redemption	Enterprise Fund	Custodial Fund	Total for District
1. Beginning Balance	1,552,676.37	149,575.03	1,624,948.69	314,149.50	0.00	73,605.96	142,940.60	3,857,896.15
a. checking	1,552,676.37	149,575.03	1,624,948.69	314,149.50	0.00	73,605.96	142,940.60	3,857,896.15
b. petty cash	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
2. Transfers in								
3. Revenue to date	2,772,740.78	14,641.76	843,729.85	437,676.59	1,061.30	221,306.01	642,184.84	4,933,341.13
4. Total accounted for	4,325,417.15	164,216.79	2,468,678.54	751,826.09	1,061.30	294,911.97	785,125.44	8,791,237.28
5. Transfers out								
6. Expenditures to date	3,112,282.25	20,508.69	1,261,551.57	485,250.78	0.00	190,015.91	667,401.62	5,737,010.82
a. encumbrances	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
b. disbursements	3,112,282.25	20,508.69	1,261,551.57	485,250.78	0.00	190,015.91	667,401.62	5,737,010.82
7. Ending Balance	1,213,134.90	143,708.10	1,207,126.97	266,575.31	1,061.30	104,896.06	117,723.82	3,054,226.46
a. checking	1,213,134.90	143,708.10	1,207,126.97	266,575.31	1,061.30	104,896.06	117,723.82	3,054,226.46
b. petty cash	(0.00)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	(0.00)
February Receipts	222,522.72	3,186.90	33,800.67	17,898.98	0.00	29,787.61	138,279.17	445,476.05
February Expenses	487,319.66	1,802.47	35,646.10	83,356.36	0.00	29,391.78	38,611.19	676,127.56
Custodial Checking		117,723.82						
District Checking		2,936,502.64						
Certificate of Deposit		0.00						
Total all Funds		3,054,226.46						

Motion carried. Moved by Rix, second Smith to approve contract for Heather Rowen as 3rd Grade Teacher for the 2022-23 school year. Motion carried.

Moved by Harder, second Flihs to approve resignation of Kayla Duncan at the end of the 2021-22 school year. Motion carried.

Moved by Rix, second Smith to adjourn at 10:32 pm. Motion carried.

M. J. Weber, Business Manager
Deborah Gengerke, President
The addition of signatures to this page verifies these minutes as official.

Published once at the total approximate cost of \$125.59. 21035

MONTHLY DISTRICT FINANCIAL REPORT FOR GROTON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT 06-6

For the reporting period beginning July 1, 2021, and ending Feb 28, 2022

Description	General Fund	Assigned Gen Funds	Capital Outlay	Special Education	Bond Redemption	Enterprise Fund	Custodial Fund	Total for District
1. Beginning Balance	1,552,676.37	149,575.03	1,624,948.69	314,149.50	0.00	73,605.96	142,940.60	3,857,896.15
a. checking	1,552,676.37	149,575.03	1,624,948.69	314,149.50	0.00	73,605.96	142,940.60	3,857,896.15
b. petty cash	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
2. Transfers in								
3. Revenue to date	2,772,740.78	14,641.76	843,729.85	437,676.59	1,061.30	221,306.01	642,184.84	4,933,341.13
4. Total accounted for	4,325,417.15	164,216.79	2,468,678.54	751,826.09	1,061.30	294,911.97	785,125.44	8,791,237.28
5. Transfers out								
6. Expenditures to date	3,112,282.25	20,508.69	1,261,551.57	485,250.78	0.00	190,015.91	667,401.62	5,737,010.82
a. encumbrances	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
b. disbursements	3,112,282.25	20,508.69	1,261,551.57	485,250.78	0.00	190,015.91	667,401.62	5,737,010.82
7. Ending Balance	1,213,134.90	143,708.10	1,207,126.97	266,575.31	1,061.30	104,896.06	117,723.82	3,054,226.46
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M. J. Weber, Business Manager
Deborah Gengerke, President
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Published once at the total approximate cost of \$125.59. 21035

**Westport Town
March 7, 2022
Meeting Minutes**

Town of Westport General Meeting
March 7th, 2022

The Town of Westport met on March 7th, 2022. Shane Storm, Mitch Wilson and Doreen Hertel present.

The following expenses were presented:
City General
NWPS (\$565.27), Groton Independent (\$16.83), Payroll – Derek Schoenfelder (\$150.00), Shane Storm (\$50.00), Mitch Wilson (\$150.00), & Doreen Hertel (\$900.00).

Sewer
NWPS (\$52.48), NRWA –loan repayment (\$210.13) & Payroll –Doreen Hertel (\$300.00).

Water
WEB (\$1,422.37), Water Maintenance District (\$459.18), Payroll- Doreen Hertel (\$300.00).
Shane Storm made motion to pay all bills; second by Mitch Wilson.

The following deposits were presented:
City General
Brown County Collections (\$684.52), State of SD (\$2,311.32) & Interest (\$4.05).
Sewer
Resident Payments – (\$2,400.00).
Water
Resident Payments – (\$3,576.47).

NEW BUSINESS:
Equalization meeting will be held on Monday March 21st from 6:00pm to 7:30pm. The city annual report for 2021 was presented and reviewed.
Doreen Hertel, Finance Officer
Published once at the total approximate cost of \$14.90 21034

**Brown County
Approach Grading
Bid Notice**

ADVERTISEMENT
BRO 8007(00)21-1; PCN 08FG
STRUCTURE AND APPROACH GRADING
Str. No. 07-110-057; Brown County, SD

Sealed Bids will be received by the Brown County Auditor, 25 Market Street, Suite 1, Aberdeen, South Dakota, 57401, (605) 626-7110, until 8:45 AM local time on Tuesday the 29th day of March, 2022 for the above referenced project. Bids shall be prepared and submitted in accordance with the Bidding Documents. Brown County reserves the right to accept or reject any and/or all Bids as set forth in the Bidding Documents.

Bids will be publicly opened and read aloud at or shortly after the time named above. Bids will be reviewed by the Brown County Commission at a subsequent meeting of the Brown County Commissioners.
The Project includes the following Work:
* Removal of existing ±90' Three Span Steel Girder Bridge.

* Installation of proposed 204'-10 5/8" Three Span Prestressed Girder Bridge.

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

Bidding documents may be viewed and obtained at www.questcdn.com by entering QuestCDN project number 8145817. If you need assistance with the website, please contact QuestCDN Customer Support at 952-233-1632 or info@questcdn.com.

A pre-bid conference will not be held.
Bidders shall comply with the Equal Opportunity Clause published at 41 CFR Part 60 and Executive Orders 11246, 11518, and 11625, as amended. This requires Bidders will not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. Requirements are explained further in the specifications.

BY: Cathy McNickle
Brown County Auditor
Published twice at an approximate cost of \$41.40. 20975
PUBLISHING DATES: March 16 and 23, 2022

**Brown County
Spray Insulation
Notice**

NOTICE TO SPRAY INSULATION CONTRACTORS
Notice is hereby given that sealed bids will be received in the Chambers of the Brown County Board of Commissioners at the Brown County Courthouse Annex, 25 Market Street Suite 1, Aberdeen, South Dakota; until the hour of 8:46 A.M on April 5, 2022, at said time and place all bids will be publicly opened, read and considered by the Brown County Board of Commissioners for: Project – Labor and supplies required for either one inch (1") or two inches (2") foam insulation spray on the ceiling of the Beef Barn located on the Brown County Fairground, 400 24th Ave NW, Aberdeen, South Dakota.

Envelopes containing bids shall be addressed to the Brown County Auditor, 25 Market Street Suite 1, Aberdeen, South Dakota 57401 and be marked on the envelope.
"Brown County Fairground Beef Barn Spray Insulation Project" to be opened on April 5, 2022.

PROPOSAL GUARANTY: No proposal will be considered unless accompanied by a certified check, a cashier's check or bank draft, for 5% of the amount of the bid, such check to be issued by either a state or a national bank and payable to Brown County, or in lieu thereof a bid bond for 10% of the amount of the bid, such bond to be issued by a surety company authorized to do business in South Dakota and payable to Brown County.

PERFORMANCE BOND: Brown County will give notice to the successful bidder that the proposal has been accepted and said bidder shall within ten (10) days thereafter enter into a contract with Brown County and furnish a performance bond in an amount equal to the contract price.

The Board of Commissioners reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids that they deem to be in the best interest of Brown County, and to waive any informalities or irregularities therein. Brown County is exempt from all Federal Excise and State Sales Tax.

Copies of the specifications are on file at the Brown County Maintenance, 25 Market Street Suite 1, Aberdeen, South Dakota 57401 and obtained at no charge. Phone: 605-626-7124. (0323.0330)
ATTEST: Cathy McNickle, Brown County Auditor
Published twice at the total approximate cost of \$44.15. 21033

Published once at an approximate cost of \$14.35. 21037

Published once at an approximate cost of \$14.35. 21037

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Decline in freshwater mussels an indicator of poor river and stream health in South Dakota

Julie Bolding

South Dakota News Watch

Nestled in the silt, sand or fine gravel of South Dakota's rivers and streams live some of the state's least appreciated yet most ecologically important creatures — freshwater mussels.

Their names spark the imagination: Fat-mucket, White Heelsplitter, Higgins Eye, Round Pigtoe, Giant Floater, Plain Pocketbook, Fawnsfoot.

Usually hidden beneath the water's surface, mussels do the quiet work of filtering water in South Dakota's rivers and streams, helping other aquatic species such as fish thrive. They are a natural food source for otters, ducks, herons and fish.

Many species of these critical members of freshwater ecosystems may be vanishing within South Dakota. Recent surveys of the state's 14 major river basins — comprising the first comprehensive assessment of living mussel species and their population sizes in South Dakota rivers and streams — found only 17 of the 36 species once known to live in state waters, a 53% decline.

The decline of freshwater mussel populations in waterways in South Dakota and across North America is a major concern on several environmental levels.

Freshwater mussels are powerful filter feeders, consuming phytoplankton, algae and even bacteria from rivers and streams while also filtering out particles at rates measured in gallons per day. At least one mussel species can clear lake water of significant amounts of *E. coli*, a bacteria that can cause serious illness in humans. Research continues into their promising abilities to 'treat' manmade contaminants.

Mussels have not been studied as intensively as other animal groups and much remains to be known about them. "Despite uncertainty about the precise value of freshwater mussels, it is clear that they have substantial value to humans, possibly many millions of dollars in individual ecosystems, which should be taken into account in environmental decision making," wrote David L. Strayer, a freshwater ecologist at the Cary Institute of Ecosystem Studies in his article, "What are freshwater mussels worth?"

Experts say the reduction in mussel populations in South Dakota waterways is further evidence of largely poor water quality in a state where 78% of South Dakota stream-miles and 85% of lake acres are considered "impaired" in some way.

Harm to mussels done by humans

Freshwater mussels have been on the decline for two centuries — all for reasons related to the actions of man.

In the late 1800s and for several decades,



The Giant Floater is the most common freshwater mussel found in South Dakota waterways, but mussel species overall are on a decline. Photo: Julie Bolding

mussels were harvested for their pearls and shells from South Dakota waters, including the Big Sioux River. Tuscan, located four miles southwest of Menno, was a center of mussel harvesting, according to a 2009 article in South Dakota Magazine.

Mussels were boiled to open their shells and remove the meat. While some people ate the mussel meat, often it was fed to pigs, or used as catfish bait if rotten. Boxcars filled with tons of shells were shipped by rail to Iowa factories to be made into iridescent buttons. Plastic replaced shell for buttons in the 1950s.

South Dakota's mussel populations have yet to recover from that decimation.

After over-harvesting came land-use changes that altered water quality and stream bed stability, further harming mussel populations.

Accelerating land-use changes — often tied to expansion of agriculture — lead to soil runoff, sedimentation and non-point pollution from manure, fertilizer and pesticides. Water clouded with clay, silt and other particles, including algae, can affect the fish hosts mussels rely on to reproduce. Increased sediment smothers mussels. Pesticides can poison them. Fertilizer runoff causes excessive algae growth that depletes oxygen.

Thirty-six percent of tested water in South Dakota rivers and streams has excessive amounts of total suspended solids, according to the 2020 South Dakota Integrated Report for Surface Water Quality Assessment prepared by the state. Suspended solids, which can include soil particles, can increase turbidity and water temperatures, decrease oxygen levels and generally degrade conditions for fish and other aquatic life.

"Similar to previous reporting periods, nonsupport for fishery/aquatic life uses was caused primarily by total suspended solids from agricultural non-point sources and natural origin," the report states. "Non-point source pollution is the most serious and pervasive threat to the water quality of South Dakota's waters."

The South Dakota Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources and the Department of Game, Fish & Parks have worked for decades with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, farmers, ranchers and other organizations to improve water quality in South Dakota's rivers, streams, lakes and reservoirs.

Farming and ranching organizations say that their members are good stewards of the land on behalf of future generations, and that those who work the land are the "original environmentalists." Many South Dakota landowners participate in conservation efforts, such as the reduction of sediment flowing from the Bad River basin into the Missouri River. But state data tell a story of high levels of agricultural pollution of surface waters.

"While substantial progress has been made toward reducing pollution from point sources such as wastewater and industrial plants after the passage and implementation of the [1972] Clean Water Act, non-point source pollution remains an entrenched problem. NPS pollution is unregulated as agricultural activities are exempt from most of the provisions of the Clean Water Act," the state report says. As of 2019, 78% of



South Dakota State University graduate student Kaylee Faltys and undergraduates Michelle Wilson, Akash Suryavanshi and Daud Talukder gather around the mussels they found in one location during a survey of state mussel populations. The mussels were returned to their underwater homes after the picture was taken. Photo: Courtesy Kaylee Faltys

assessed stream-miles were impaired. *E. coli*, a bacteria living in livestock and wildlife feces, and total suspended solids, which often include materials from soil erosion, were the contaminants in first and second places.

The DANR did not respond when asked in an email if the agency has specific numeric goals for reducing the percentage of impaired waters in South Dakota or reducing the percentage of total suspended solids within specific timeframes.

"The technical and financial assistance currently available is not sufficient to solve all NPS pollution issues in the state. Landowners need to understand the non-point source issues and how their activities contribute to NPS pollution. Educating the public about NPS pollution issues may prompt landowners to voluntarily implement activities that control NPS pollution. The continuation of existing activities coupled with the addition of innovative new programs may reduce non-point source pollution in South Dakota," the state report says.

After poor water quality come physical barriers. Thousands of impoundments on tributaries restrict the natural volume and velocity of water that mussels need to reproduce. "Even dams as low as 1 meter in height have been found to inhibit the distribution of mussels as they can create unnatural sedimentation and flow regimes as well as cause barriers to fish host locality and movement, thus inhibiting the ability for successful mussel recruitment," Faltys writes.

Perched culverts and other blockages to mussel larvae movement need to be adjusted so that mussel larvae and host fish can move beyond short stream segments. "It's important to maintain that connectivity," says Rich Biske, resilient waters director for the Nature Conservancy in South Dakota, North Dakota and Minnesota.

The increasing spread of invasive zebra mussels add to the threats to native mussels as the invaders move up South Dakota's navigable waterways and into lakes. These non-native, proliferating mussels prefer attaching to live mussels over empty shells or stones. Many zebra mussels can team up to keep a single native mussel from opening up to feed or reproduce. In great numbers, they deplete the phytoplankton native mussels need for food.

Continues on next page

Studies find evidence of clear declines

Measuring and cataloging the mussel population in South Dakota waterways was an arduous and time-consuming but critically important process that is necessary to understand where mussels exist and why they are dying off.

During 2014 and 2015, Kaylee Faltys and her research team waded in streams, feeling the muck for mussels with their bare hands at 202 sites within the 14 major river basins across the state. Faltys earned her master's degree in biology at South Dakota State University by leading the first statewide assessment of mussel species and their populations.

Researchers did not wear gloves as they felt stream bottoms with their hands, reaching as deep as four inches into silt. "Snapping turtles definitely were a concern. At one of the sites we even had carp jumping out of the water at us," Faltys said.

Besides, gloves would get in the way. "Once you feel a mussel, you know it's a mussel. Whereas if you have gloves on, it could just be a rock."

The more exciting scientific work started when they pulled mussels out of the water.

"When we did find mussels ... we were pretty thrilled when we found them," Faltys said, noting that mussels were found at only 44 of the 202 sites searched.

The work involved identifying the species, measuring the mussel's dimensions, photographing it and returning the animal to its original location, right-side up. "We made sure not to put them upside-down or they'd suffocate," she says. "We would actually go put them back in the sediment."

When a mussel species was abundant in an area, an individual mussel could be selected for on-campus research. This mussel would be separated from its shell and preserved in ethanol.

Although they did not go to river or stream segments too deep to wade, the shallower waters where they looked were tributaries to those deep waters and reasonable places to search. Searching in deeper waters wouldn't have provided additional species and would have required scuba diving equipment and multiple licenses, she says.

After visiting the 202 sites, Faltys produced a grim tally: only 15 species of 36 anticipated species were found, 11 as live specimens and four in the form of recently used whole or half-shells. Of the 202 survey sites, only 91 total sites had live or empty-shell evidence of mussels. No evidence of mussels was found at 111 of the sites, more than half.

A silver lining appeared later in 2016, when Faltys and her colleagues separately assessed population sizes at the 44 locations with living mussels. A live Spike mussel and a half-shell of the Ellipse mussel were discovered, the first time each species has been found in South Dakota. Two additional known native species also were found in 2016: a Plain Pocketbook and a Fawnsfoot, bringing the study total to 17 out of 36.



Non-point pollution, including from agricultural runoff, is a significant cause of poor water quality in many South Dakota waterways and is detrimental to populations of freshwater mussels. Photo: News Watch file

Faltys made a point in 2016 of surveying seven locations previously surveyed by other researchers between 1975 and 2005. She found a decline in the number of the mussel species at five sites. The number of species increased at the sixth site and stayed the same at the seventh.

Faltys also found a decline of overall species richness or diversity. About 63% of the mussels found in the statewide survey were Giant Floaters and 10% were White Heelsplitters. Both species have glochidia, or baby mussels, that can survive in impounded waters and attach to any fish. This indicated that other species with more specific habitat requirements and fish hosts may be severely reduced in numbers or have vanished from South Dakota.

"This stark decline in species richness may suggest that habitat conditions in South Dakotan streams and rivers are degrading, possibly due to a variety of factors such as land-use changes, impoundments, habitat destruction and host fish availability," she said.

A 2019 study by Katherine Wollman, an SDSU master's student in wildlife and fisheries science, checked freshwater mussel populations in 116 East River lakes and reservoirs, finding just seven native species and two invasive ones, the zebra mussel and Asian clam.

Like Faltys' study of rivers and streams, the predominant species at 76% of specimens found, was the widely adaptable Giant Floater.

"They're hardy," Faltys says of Giant Floaters. "They're the most generalist species you'll find. We'd find those in some of the nastiest streams. You would never imagine mussels would be in there. They just live anywhere, thankfully."

Faltys' and Wollman's studies were funded by the Game, Fish and Parks Department and the South Dakota Agricultural Experiment Station. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service also helped fund Faltys' study.

Freshwater mussels species vulnerable to decline

Freshwater mussels (Latin name Bivalvia: Unionidae) are ancient creatures, believed to have originated in East and Southeast Asia during the Jurassic period and to have expanded into North America in the Cretaceous, when dinosaurs still roamed the continent.

While saltwater mussels are considered a seafood delicacy, freshwater mussels are not so tasty. One critic has compared their flavor to dirt.

Scientists think the ancestors of today's mussels moved into freshwater rivers and streams created as the last glacier scoured eastern South Dakota 10,000 years ago, dragging mussels from warmer waters upstream. Glaciation gave us the diagonal form of today's Missouri River, the James River basin, and our small lakes in the far northeastern part of the state. West River was not similarly glaciated, and freshwater mussel species are fewer.

The U.S. and Canada have the most diverse populations of freshwater mussel species in the world, with 301 total species, according to NatureServe Explorer, an online biodiversity database. But a January 2021 NatureServe analysis shows 63% of freshwater mussel species are vulnerable, imperiled or critically imperiled, second only to freshwater snails. In comparison, 40% of amphibian, 34% of freshwater and anadromous fish, 17% of mammal and 13% of bird species are at similar risk. As of January 2022, NatureServe listed 25 North American freshwater mussels as extinct, with eight declared gone from the earth by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service last October.

Freshwater mussels reproduce in complex ways, which in turn complicates their conservation. Because they anchor themselves in the substrate, they require a moving host and usually flowing water to genetically diversify and carry larvae



SDSU student researcher Kaylee Faltys records mussel data in the field during her study of freshwater mussel populations in more than 200 sites within state waterways in 2014 and 2015. Photo: Courtesy Kaylee Faltys

away to new locations.

This is generally accomplished by a male mussel releasing sperm into moving water; these are taken up by a nearby female through an intake siphon. The female broods fertilized eggs in her gills until they mature to microscopic glochidia. Glochidia are released from her gills and must attach to the fins or gills of fish.

Some mussel species will settle for any fish, while others only reproduce with the help of a specific species. If glochidia attach to the wrong fish, that fish's immune system kills the baby mussel. After glochidia hitch a ride on an appropriate fish, they stay attached for a few weeks to a month, then drop off. They must alight on suitable substrate to burrow and begin growing in their new homes. In the right location and conditions, some species of freshwater mussels can live for more than 100 years.

Conditions in North America hundreds of years ago were ideal for the creation of large and concentrated assemblages of mussels: adequate food, only natural sedimentation and relatively stable stream beds. Miles-long assemblages of multiple species of mussels were created, paving river bottoms like cobblestones. Their combined consumption of phytoplankton, algae, bacteria, fine and dissolved organic materials and compounds kept freshwater streams clear and contributed to a natural balance that benefitted fish and other aquatic species.

In South Dakota, the most diverse and abundant assemblages were and continue to be east of the Missouri River. Those conditions changed with the arrival of European settlers and the use of most of South Dakota's land to cultivate row crops and raise livestock.

Extinction a real potential outcome

The Higgins Eye, Winged Mapleleaf and Scaleshell are native mussels listed as federally endangered, meaning they are endangered throughout the nation. None of these was found in Faltys' surveys of South Dakota waterways. The Winged Mapleleaf and Mapleleaf are two distinct species.

The latest state GFP Wildlife Action Plan lists the Higgins Eye and Scaleshell as in need of conservation but not as threatened or endangered within state borders. The Creek Heelsplitter, Elktoe, Hickorynut, Mapleleaf, Pimpleback, Rock Pocketbook and Yellow Sandshell mussels also are listed by the state as in need of conservation.

The state list's omission is puzzling. A study by Anthony Ricciardi and Joseph B. Rasmussen, published more than 20 years ago in Conservation Biology, stated that no other group of North American land, marine or freshwater animals is going extinct as fast as mussels.

"This [overall decline in freshwater fauna] is compelling evidence that North American freshwater biodiversity is diminishing as rapidly as that of some of the most stressed terrestrial ecosystems [tropical rainforests]. Although

Continues on next page

larger absolute numbers of species are at risk in the tropics, the elimination of even a few species in temperate habitats can promote further extinctions and disrupt ecosystem functioning," the authors wrote.

The state Wildlife Action Plan does categorize eight of the nine mussels in need of conservation as "critically imperiled" and "especially vulnerable to extinction." The ninth, Mapleleaf, is "imperiled because of rarity" and "very vulnerable to extinction." Those categorizations mean South Dakota's "conservation goal is to improve the species' abundance and distribution," the plan says.

Of these nine mussels, Faltys found only the Mapleleaf.

In contrast, the state lists five fish as endangered and four more as threatened. The endangered fish are the banded killfish, blacknose shiner, finescale dace, pallid sturgeon and sicklefin chub. The state-listed threatened fish are the longnose sucker, northern pearl dace, northern redbelly dace and sturgeon chub. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service lists the pallid sturgeon and Topeka shiner as endangered, and the shovelnose sturgeon as threatened.

Of the state-listed endangered or threatened fish species, at least five inhabit clear streams that also are mussels' natural habitat: the blacknose shiner, finescale dace, longnose sucker, northern pearl dace, and northern redbelly dace. Nine additional fish are listed as being between extremely rare or vulnerable to extinction and very rare, found abundantly in only some locations or vulnerable to extinction.

In the South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks Commission's 2020 biennial review of the threatened and endangered species list, mussels are mentioned only once, under State Wildlife Grant Accomplishments, in a 2008 study that sampled Minnesota River tributaries in South Dakota for their compositions of fish, mussel and other aquatic invertebrate species, with an emphasis on identifying rare species.

Experts: more action needed to protect mussels

Since Faltys' study was published, the state's only specific action to protect freshwater mussels has been a 2020 state administrative rule that bans commercial and noncommercial harvesting of freshwater mussels. State regulations allow people to pick up empty mussel shells, but not those of endangered or threatened species.

Chelsey Pasbrig, a GFP aquatic biologist, said in an email that her agency is concerned about the decline of freshwater mussel populations in South Dakota, and it is aware they are among the most endangered animals in North America.

"GFP has begun collaborations with other states to explore the option for augmenting populations with propagated individuals; however, this is in its infancy" she wrote. "Kaylee Faltys' study provided us a snapshot of the status of freshwater mussels in South Dakota; however, future research and monitoring is likely needed."

Pasbrig added that no current mussel monitoring efforts are underway in South Dakota.

"Unfortunately, the professor at SDSU who could assist with this expertise is since retired, therefore future monitoring and research efforts have not continued at this time. There are endless questions that exist regarding the status of freshwater mussels in S.D. and across the country; however, limited resources both financially and staffing exist," she wrote.

Since at least 1995, the GFP also has sponsored mussel research by a retired University of Sioux Falls faculty member and a retired departmental wildlife biologist, among others.

Pasbrig says the department currently addresses water quality issues that may be contributing to decreased mussel abundance

and diversity through the Conservation Reserve Program, the James River and Big Sioux River Conservation Reserve Enhancement programs, the EPA 319 non-point source watershed projects and riparian buffer programs. The state agency also recently expanded its private lands habitat program and aquatic habitat program, which partner with landowners and other conservation entities to improve habitat, Pasbrig says.

GFP did not respond to follow-up questions asking for figures on the net numbers of additional landowners and acres in the expanded private lands habitat and aquatic habitat programs. A request for the number of stream miles of riparian buffers created in the last several years also was not answered, but previous reporting by News Watch has showed that state efforts to encourage implementation of agricultural buffer strips has been extremely slow to catch on.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service declined to comment on its role in monitoring and protecting freshwater mussels in South Dakota at this time.

Faltys and others have called for further research and monitoring of freshwater mussel populations in South Dakota.

"Our research ... suggests that the statewide unionid structure is changing quickly, thus adequate conservation strategies are needed for the future survival of this group," Faltys said.

Biske, of the Nature Conservancy, agrees that "more can be done" in South Dakota to monitor and conserve existing freshwater mussel populations

But under the two major federal acts pertaining to water, the Clean Water Act and Safe Drinking Water Act, individual and groups of South Dakotans do not have the right to take legal action against ag-related nonpoint source polluters, says David Ganje an Aberdeen native who practices natural resource and commercial law in South Dakota.

However, when endangered species are involved, government entities have the right to intervene to protect the endangered species, although this is rarely done, he said.

Individual states do have the power to regulate non-point source pollution and protect wildlife, should their policymakers choose to do so. South Dakota law states that both South Dakota's waters and wildlife are the property of all South Dakota residents.

Ganje points to Wisconsin as a state that manages non-point source pollution well, with a published 5-year, 110-page plan. Wisconsin's approach results in better surface water quality, despite intensive farming and industrial activity. Its most recent report states that 83% of its waters are healthy, 13% are impaired and 4% are being restored. South Dakota's corresponding numbers are almost reversed: 78% of stream-miles are impaired in some way, while only 22% are healthy. Lake acres are 85% impaired and only 9% healthy.

Wisconsin also has a strategy to reduce phosphorus and nitrogen pollution from fertilizer applications.

"If over time those parties in society [agricultural, manufacturing, construction industries] are put in the limelight, invited to meetings, having the DENR/DANR sit down with them and say 'What can we do as a group? What should we do? These numbers are getting worse and worse and worse.' You know, there might even be some press that shows up to some of those meetings. That's how you change this stuff," Ganje said.

The Nature Conservancy, which works to conserve 900,000 acres in South Dakota and the two neighboring states, is looking at how it can help streams in good condition stay that way by promoting soil-healthy agricultural practices such as no-till, reduced till, cover crops, buffer strips and adding rotations of small grains and hay to fields usually planted with corn or soybeans.

Faltys says options for conservation could



SDSU student researcher Michelle Wilson feels for mussels in the Belle Fourche River during a statewide survey of freshwater mussel species and their population sizes in 2014-2015. Photo: Courtesy Kaylee Faltys

include propagating young mussels of existing species and releasing them into streams with small populations, reintroducing species that once lived in certain streams, restoring mussel populations to historic levels and creating easements that would increase buffer zones to reduce sedimentation.

She identified the Big Sioux, James and Minnesota river basins as areas of high mussel diversity that would be optimal sites for mussel conservation. She recommends focusing on the Whetstone River in Roberts and Grant counties, Bios de Sioux River in Roberts County, Medary and Six Mile creeks in Brookings County, Split Rock Creek in Minnehaha County, Shue Creek in Beadle County, Lone Branch Creek in Hutchinson County, Cottonwood Creek in Jackson County and the James River in Hanson County.

Areas Faltys listed as high priorities overlap with South Dakota GFP Aquatic Conservation Opportunity Areas. These areas are diverse aquatic habitats, low in human-caused stressors and have some public ownership.

Standardized surveys of South Dakota freshwater mussel populations should be done, and the public needs to be educated about freshwater mussel conservation, Wollman said. "Expressing why we do not want invasive species, like zebra mussels, is important, but there is currently minimal effort expended to provide information regarding species we are trying to protect."

One ray of hope for additional funding to protect wildlife in need of conservation is the bipartisan Recovering America's Wildlife Act of 2021. Pasbrig calls it "a potential game changer for state and tribal wildlife agencies" that would help the agency implement portions of its Wildlife Action Plan for the state's 104 species of greatest conservation need, including the nine freshwater mussel species.

But U.S. Sen. John Thune, R-South Dakota, expressed hesitation in 2018 about an earlier version of the law, saying he favors additional funding for wildlife preservation but wants to know more about where the money is coming from and where it will go. All three members of the state's congressional delegation were called in January 2022 and asked for their positions on the recovering wildlife act. Staff members in the office of U.S. Sen. Mike Rounds and Rep. Dusty Johnson responded but did not provide official stances on the act.

"If conservation efforts keep going, I have hope," Faltys says of mussels' chances of avoiding extinction in South Dakota. "I think that South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks, they do have an awareness of this, and they do want to conserve the species there."

What the Nature Conservancy advocates in South Dakota is to "ensure we don't lose those populations that we have," Biske said. "We can't afford to lose any more."

— This article was produced by South Dakota News Watch, a non-profit journalism organization located online at SDNewsWatch.org.

ABOUT JULIE BOLDING

Julie Bolding is a freelance writer for South Dakota News Watch. Bolding works as a registered nurse in Sioux Falls and previously worked at the South Dakota Department of Transportation, State Archives and the Sioux Falls Argus Leader.



There are many jobs to be done after a long winter. People in the city, town and country all do spring cleaning and chores based on their needs. **Read the clues to fill in the crossword with chores. How many of these jobs have you seen people doing? How many did you help to do?** (Hint: use a pencil to fill in the clues below first. This is tricky!)

It's Time for... Spring Cleaning

- _____ messy closets
- _____ your warmer weather clothes that have been in storage
- _____ seeds so you can watch things grow
- _____ flowers to give the house some color
- _____ sidewalks that have gathered sand and dirt
- _____ fences that have been damaged during the winter
- _____ out your house with a fresh crisp breeze
- _____ storm windows with screens
- _____ driveways so that we can move cars about easily
- _____ the overgrown grass on the lawn
- _____ weeds from the garden
- _____ the furniture in your room for a new look
- _____ the dust out of rugs
- _____ soot from the chimney
- _____ the overgrown bushes
- wash and _____ the car
- _____ clean the dirty carpet
- _____ laundry to dry on a clothesline

Wow! Look what I'm finding under your bed!

It's that time of year when we can open the windows and freshen everything!

A good spring cleaning after winter is almost a pleasure to complete. Then, once our homes are in order, we are ready for sunny, warm summer.

Yikes!

Have you ever heard of "slang"? It is a way of talking that is a little different from the standard English in books. For example, if I say, "Boy, we really cleaned up at the garage sale," I am telling you that we made a lot of money, not that I put away all the things we had for sale.

Can you match these slang expressions to their meanings?

1. clean sweep	<input type="radio"/>	A. to stay out of trouble
2. clean out	<input type="radio"/>	B. to win everything
3. clean hands	<input type="radio"/>	C. innocent, has done nothing wrong
4. come clean	<input type="radio"/>	D. to take everything, empty
5. keep one's nose clean	<input type="radio"/>	E. confess, tell the whole story

Can You Clean Up These Messes?

How many of these DUST KITTIES did I find under your bed? Look around the whole page. Put your answer in the biggest bubble.

- What things might you use to clean up? Can you find these items in the scrub brush and circle them?
- | | | | | | | | |
|----------------|-----------------------|-------|-----------------------|--------|-----------------------|---------|-----------------------|
| vacuum cleaner | <input type="radio"/> | brush | <input type="radio"/> | ladder | <input type="radio"/> | rake | <input type="radio"/> |
| paper towels | <input type="radio"/> | pail | <input type="radio"/> | broom | <input type="radio"/> | mop | <input type="radio"/> |
| trash barrel | <input type="radio"/> | soap | <input type="radio"/> | water | <input type="radio"/> | hose | <input type="radio"/> |
| hedge clippers | <input type="radio"/> | wax | <input type="radio"/> | rag | <input type="radio"/> | sponges | <input type="radio"/> |

SOAP

Busting Dust!

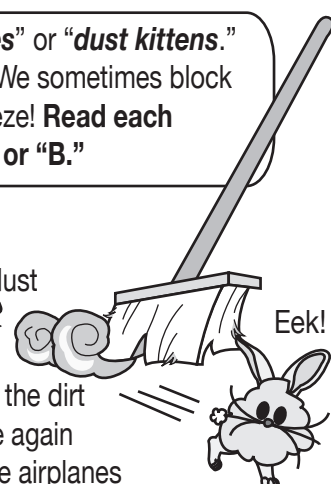


Little, fluffy, grey balls of dust found under the couch or behind the door are called "**dust bunnies**" or "**dust kittens**." We are usually made up of skin cells, hair and tiny pieces of dirt. To people, we can be a nuisance. We sometimes block air filters, get into computers or just gather together under your furniture. We can make people sneeze! **Read each numbered word or phrase below. Next, choose the correct definition by circling the letter "A" or "B."**

- dust
- dust bunnies
- an item is "collecting dust"
- the flies "bit the dust"
- the lead runner left the others "in the dust"
- I'm going to "dust off" my hobby box
- when she works she "makes the dust fly"

- | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| A. tiny pieces of dirt, skin, hair | B. tiny flower seeds |
| A. bunnies that clean your house | B. little clumps of fluffy, grey dust |
| A. isn't being used anymore | B. putting dust into a bag |
| A. died | B. ate dust for their lunch |
| A. was far ahead of the others | B. knocked other runners into the dirt |
| A. put the box into the closet | B. take it out of storage to use again |
| A. she works with lots of energy | B. the dust balls jump into little airplanes |

or



Dear EarthTalk: What exactly is gravity energy storage and why are some environmentalists so bullish on it?

-- James McIntosh, New York, NY

Gravity energy storage, whereby engineers harness the energy in gravitational forces by connecting the momentum generated to the electric grid, is a relatively new technology that could serve to revolutionize energy storage given its low carbon footprint and engineering simplicity. Pilot programs to test the technology and bring it to scale are already underway in Switzerland, Scotland and the United States. Environmentalists are bullish about the technology as a way to bolster energy reserves beyond intermittent clean energy sources like solar and wind, and to have a better way to store energy than in costly and environmentally problematic lithium-ion batteries.

So far researchers have isolated two different techniques for harvesting gravity energy. One employs a tower to drop weights from above, harnessing the momentum generated by the gravitational force during the fall. Another uses mineshafts filled with water to float and drop weights.

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Both types of processes extract energy from electrical sensors attached to the weights generating momentum and pass it directly to the power grid. Typically, about 20 percent of the energy created during a concrete block's fall is needed to power the weights back up to the top.

Unlike solar and wind power, gravity energy storage isn't dependent on the sun to shine or the wind to blow for the generation of electricity. Herein lies the great green promise of this new technology since energy can be generated steadily but without the inevitability of pollution from fossil fuels. Besides substituting for fossil fuels, gravity storage can also replace batteries as a way to supply electricity locally and/or back to the grid. This is good news for environmentalists who decry the uptick in lithium mining to supply precious metals for the lithium-ion battery makers. Likewise, the more energy we can derive from the constant renewable source of gravity energy means that much less fossil-fuel derived power we need.

While gravity energy may be green and cheap at scale, developers of the technology face great hurdles to making it publicly available. One major issue is policymakers' fear of novelty: It's hard to rewire a system built around fossil fuels. New plants would have to be built. Paying for both the plants and the infrastructure surrounding them would involve replacing existing systems and structures.

But in the end, fossil fuels will ultimately cost us more. Indeed, our addiction to fossil fuels has already resulted in air pollution, rising atmospheric temperatures, contaminated landscapes and even damaged human health.

It may seem strange at first glance that gravity alone can generate so much energy. Yet these simple mechanical operations generate a vast promise for new advancements in energy production that dwarf previous advancements. This innovative discovery may prove to be a sea change regarding the way we generate and store energy moving forward—if only we can build it out to scale.



Switzerland-based Energy Vault is one of the companies developing prototype gravity energy storage solutions that could someday replace batteries as a way to hold onto energy and dole it out as needed for use on days when intermittent renewables (solar, wind) aren't cutting it in a post-fossil-fuel world.

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Historic Impact of Public Health

Life expectancy is a measure commonly considered when it comes to the overall health of a population. In this day and age, when most of us think about which medical interventions are most important to increase life expectancy, we probably think about things like treatment of cancer, interventions to treat heart attacks, or surgeries for life threatening illnesses. While those things are all important, their overall impact on a population's life expectancy pales in comparison to the prevention of infectious disease.

Average life expectancy around the world has doubled in the last two hundred years, from about 40 years to 80 years, with the bulk of that change occurring long before we had effective cancer treatment or cardiac catheterization. Before the 20th century, infant and childhood death was extremely common due to infections spread by contaminated water and food. It is estimated that through most of human history nearly half of children died before adulthood, almost entirely due to infections.

Armed with the new knowledge of germ theory, societies in the late 1800's began instituting early public health interventions such as sewage management, water treatment, milk pasteurization, and garbage collection, which resulted in rapid decreases in death from food and water borne infections, and thus increased population wide life expectancy.

Later, widespread use of vaccines for many fatal diseases led to enormous improvements in the health and longevity of populations across the globe. Try to imagine a world in which almost everyone is affected by the death of children due to polio, measles, smallpox, tetanus, the list goes on. That these deaths are now extremely rare or eliminated altogether is nothing short of a modern miracle, and we ought not take it for granted.

Antibiotic use has exploded since the discovery of penicillin in 1928, and the proper use of antibiotics continues to help us prevent early death due to infections that might have been fatal left untreated. Modern science has led to effective treatments for even the most challenging infections such as tuberculosis and HIV.

Modern medicine uses abundant, wonderful technologies and treatments which help us extend lives and reduce suffering of our individual patients. But statistically, no fancy new development is likely to have the quantitative impact on human society that compares to those early public health measures. As a society, we would be careless to forget the worth of our public health institutions which have helped us thrive and double our average life expectancy.

Kelly Evans-Hullinger, M.D. is part of The Prairie Doc® team of physicians and currently practices internal medicine in Brookings, South Dakota. Follow The Prairie Doc® at www.prairiedoc.org and on Facebook featuring On Call with the Prairie Doc® a medical Q&A show celebrating its twentieth season of truthful, tested, and timely medical information, broadcast on SDPB and streaming live on Facebook most Thursdays at 7 p.m. central.



Kelly Evans-Hullinger, MD