

Fort Sisseton Commission Meeting
February 24, 2026
Minutes
Noon in Library/Schoolhouse

The Fort Sisseton Commission met February 24, 2026. The meeting was called to order at 12:15pm. Commission members present were Doug Eidahl, G. Todd Garry, Bill Hoskins, Rosie Smith, Jim Patrick, and Casey Weismantel. GFP personnel were Al Nedved, Willy Collignon, Rebecca Hedlund, Ali Tonsfeldt, and Becky Wade. Meghan Ward was present on the phone. Minutes taken by Connie Leschisin.

AGENDA ITEMS

REVIEW OF THE MINUTES

MOTION BY Bill SECOND BY Casey TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING AS TYPED. PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

TREASURER REPORT

The Treasurer report was presented. The report is missing some items from the Chuckwagon, Farm to Table and August Ghost Investigation. These funds need to be wire transferred.

The Foundation will issue receipts for true donations and will not be charging for the funds raised by the Commission.

MOTION BY Todd SECOND BY Casey TO APPROVE THE TREASUREER REPORT AS TYPED. PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

INTRODUCTIONS

Ali introduced Meghan Ward who is interning. She will be working on grant writing, online programs, and creating a website for new employees.

Ali introduced Becky Wade who will coordinate with the Commission on their fundraising work.

OLD BUSINESS

Past Event Recap: Farm to Table event profited \$5,678.62 and will be done again around August 8, 2026. Suggest that each Commissioner bring an auction item to the July meeting. Todd will talk to Darren Waldner as a potential provider of produce.

Dave Schrader August Ghost Investigations went well and netted \$5,000. Plan to repeat in August 2026 with plans to include his partners.

Harvest Festival 2025 was damp and windy, so the kites did not fly. Ideas for 2026 include a catapult and bee keeper.

2025 Haunted Fort net income was \$1,255.70. The campground was full again.

2025 Frontier Christmas was canceled primarily due to weather.

Overall, 2025 visitation was down. Typically, 130-150 events annually, but only 98 held in 2025.

Update provided on hiring new Conservation Tech. Interviews will be this Thursday.

2025/2026 Projects:

Hospital roof is complete except for painting widows walk.

Boardwalk project – sections built are in parking lot. May 17th is the new completion date.

Sewer system project- pipe replaced from lift station to South Barracks. In future trees will be planted further into parade ground due to impacts on buildings.

Residence is now occupied. It will be re-sided in the summer.

Asbestos Cleanup in Library/Schoolhouse is complete.

Future Projects:

Windows in OQ and Carpenter/Blacksmith building.

Update Electrical in Dr. Residence Cellar.

Adjutant Building internal work.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No Public Comment.

NEW BUSINESS

2026 Events:

Discovery Thursday every third Thursday of the month.

Mini Lecture Series with topics that focus on nature, the Fort and history

High Plains Rendezvous June 20-28th will be doing public classes the first week.

Midwest Women's Motorcycle Club July 17-19 will have a chuckwagon lunch at the Fort.

Immersion Tour April 23-24th.

Historical Festival June 6-8th. Discussed sponsorship, some chuckwagon people want to retire,

Humanities Council grant for speakers is gone.

The 50th Fort Sisseton Historical Festival will be in 2027. Ali is looking for a committee to help plan special events (Bill volunteered). Ideas include Buckhorn rodeo and shooters, FAD increased events, SD US Army Band, and the US Calvary from Kansas has asked.

Discussed changes in fees to be presented to the GFP Commission. This would include items like Festival camping fee, rental fee for S.B., and ghost investigation fees.

Master Plan/Visitor Center: Doug presented some ideas based on past experiences that would get the Master Plan efforts more focused and moving forward. A separate committee was suggested to work on details. Members interested include Doug, Bruce, Rosie, Todd, and perhaps JoAnn. Al provided feedback on state funding such as special appropriations, bonding, and the possibility of paying some items within the whole package.

MOTION TO ADJOURN BY Casey SECOND BY Bill. PASSED UNANIMOUSLY at 3 pm.

Next meetings: April 28, July 28, and September 29, 2026.