

AMERICA'S 250TH SOUTH DAKOTA COMMISSION MINUTES

Jay Vogt Education Room, Cultural Heritage Center

Pierre, South Dakota

June 4, 2025

1. Call to Order:

A meeting of the South Dakota America's 250th Commission was called to order at 3:03 p.m. by Commission Chairman Benjamin Jones. A quorum was present.

Commissioners present in the Jay Vogt Education Room:

Benjamin F. Jones and David Grabitske

Commissioners present via TEAMS Conference Call:

Peggy Besch, Caleb Fink, Nicole Schneider representing Algin Young, Catherine Forsch, Doug Knust, Marshall Michels, Shane Penfield

Commissioners absent:

Julie Breu, Kurt Hackemer, James Hagen, Tim Reed, Kevin Robling, George Seamon, Tyler Tordsen, Jeremiah Schneider

Others Present in the Jay Vogt Education Room:

Braeden Kluver (SDSHS)

Others Present via TEAMS Conference Call:

SDPB, Kevin Larsen (SDSHS)

2. Adoption of the Agenda:

- **A motion was made by Forsch to adopt the agenda. Besch seconded the motion.** The motion passed unanimously.

3. Approval of Board Minutes:

- **Forsch made a motion to approve the April 2, 2025, minutes with corrections. Besch seconded the motion.** The motion passed unanimously.

4. Public Comment: (SDCL 1-25-1):

None.

5. ParkWest Arms Rifle Raffle:

- Jones informed the commission of a fundraising opportunity in partnership with ParkWest Arms of Sturgis to raffle a donated custom rifle to celebrate America's 250th. 250 tickets would be available for purchase for \$100 each. The South Dakota Historical Society Foundation will register the raffle with the Secretary of State and host the ticket sales on their website. The winner will be drawn electronically. Up to \$1000 of the proceeds will go to

pay for custom engraving. Commissioner Besch asked about a date for the tickets to be sold by and the Commission's role in ticket sales. Jones aims to have the raffle drawing done on November 2nd (South Dakota Statehood Day), which would allow ParkWest the time necessary to complete the rifle before July 4th, 2026. Tickets will be promoted during the Sturgis Rally and State Fair, as well as by commissioners, flyers, and on the Foundation and the SD America's 250th websites. Commissioners do not have a set sales goal, although their promotion of the raffle is encouraged. **Besch made a motion to collaborate with ParkWest Arms of Sturgis and the South Dakota Historical Society Foundation on the raffle of an SD-10 model rifle. The proceeds to be used to promote the Commission's activities to educators and the public. Fink seconded the motion.** The motion passed unanimously.

6. State Fair – Supplies:

- Chairman Jones asked the commission to consider the purchase of promotional and educational material to be used at the South Dakota State Fair. Items include modified copies of the Declaration of Independence and feather pens. Commissioner Forsch inquired about the commission's current fund balance. Jones informed the commissioner that the current balance is \$4,749. **Fink made a motion to approve the purchase of up to \$1,000 worth of supplies. Michels seconded the motion.** The motion passed unanimously.

7. State Time Capsule:

- Commissioner Grabitske was able to talk with Nick Harrington of Game, Fish & Parks about the creation of a state time capsule. It was proposed to create five time capsules, one in each corner of the state and one along the river. They would be buried at State Parks with significant dates in the future. GF&P has agreed to purchase the capsules. Items donated by the public for the time capsules would be collected and appraised by the South Dakota State Historical Society. Ceremonies for the burial of the time capsules would be sometime in late summer/early fall.

8. Committee Assignments

- Chairman Jones reminded the commissioners of the previously decided committee assignments. Jones asked commissioners to refresh themselves on their committees. Commissioner Forsch gave an update on the Partnership Committee. The South Dakota Municipal League asked to move the commission's article to July.

9. Updates

- Read 250 – No update
- SD Civics Bee – Jones alerted the commission to the first statewide civics bee being hosted by the South Dakota Chamber of Commerce & Industry. Chairman Jones and Commissioner Hackemer are judging at the event.

- Partner Town Hall – The first SD America’s 250 Partner Town Hall was held on May 5th. Over thirty partners attended. Jones encouraged commissioners to attend.
- July 28th-30th National Convening – The National America 250 commission is hosting their States and Territories Convening on July 28th -30th.
- July 8th National Declaration of Independence Reading – Other states have been planning low-entry, high-engagement events that people across the country can participate in. Jones highlighted the National Potluck that the Utah commission is pushing. The Hawaii Commission is advocating for a National Declaration of Independence Reading. Jones has reached out to SDPB to see how to livestream or record the reading.
- Additional Comments- South Dakota had a second-place winner for the America’s Field Trip competition.

10. Next Meeting:

- The next meeting will be held August 6th at 3:00 pm Central Time in the Jay Vogt Education Room.

11. Adjournment:

- **Finck made the motion for Adjournment. Grabitske seconded the motion.** The motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 3:38 p.m.

I, Benjamin F. Jones, Director of the South Dakota State Historical Society, declare that these minutes are true and an accurate reflection of the business conducted at the June 4, 2025, meeting of the America’s 250th South Dakota Commission.

Benjamin F. Jones, Ph.D.

State Historian and Director

South Dakota State Historical Society

Braeden Kluver

Assistant to the State Historian

South Dakota State Historical Society