

AMERICA'S 250TH SOUTH DAKOTA COMMISSION MINUTES

Jay Vogt Education Room, Cultural Heritage Center

Pierre, South Dakota

October 1, 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, David Grabitske, Catherine Forsch, Nick Harrington

Commissioners present via TEAMS Conference Call:

Peggy Besch, Julie Breu, Mike Derby, Doug Knust, Marshall Michels, Tyler Tordsen

Commissioners absent:

Caleb Finck, Kurt Hackemer, James Hagen, Shane Penfield, Tim Reed, George Seamon, Jeremiah Schneider, Algin Young

Others Present in the Jay Vogt Education Room:

Braeden Kluver (SDSHS), Bob Mercer

Others Present via TEAMS Conference Call:

SDPB

2. Adoption of the Agenda:

- **Frosch made a motion to adopt the agenda. Harrington seconded the motion.** The motion passed unanimously.

3. Approval of Board Minutes:

- **Grabitske made a motion to approve the August 6, 2025, minutes. Seamon seconded the motion.** The motion passed unanimously.

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

None.

5. Updates

- **South Dakota State Fair**
 - Commissioner Besch gave a recap of the State Fair's 250th-themed events, including firework shows, a corn-eating contest, a hot dog-eating contest, a pie-eating contest, an animal calling contest, the most patriotic vendor booth, the most patriotic food booth, the America 250 car classic, and Old Iron Glory antique tractor show. Audience participation in the events was high.
- **Rifle Raffle**

- The ParkWest rifle raffle had 157 tickets remaining out of 250.
- **Dakota Liberty Brew**
 - Platte Creek Brewing was able to line up a distributor and is willing to disseminate the recipe throughout the state.
- **National State Fair**
 - No updates from the national commission.
- **Grit and Glory**
 - The State Museum will be debuting the Grit and Glory exhibit. It will highlight anywhere from 5-7 pivotal days in the United States' history and view them through a South Dakota history lens.
- **Public Speaking Slides**
 - Public speaking slides have been put together for commissioners to use when speaking to various groups around the state.
- **Read 250**
 - Commissioner Seamon was unable to attend the meeting, but word of Read 250 has been spreading, and people are signing up for the challenge.
- **Walk 250**
 - Game, Fish, and Parks released their 2026 park entrance license with a history theme, and GF&P plans on pushing Walk 250 throughout 2026.
- **Legislative Session Reenactor**
 - Thomas Jefferson reenactor Thomas Pitz will be attending the legislative session on January 15th, after which he will attend the SDSHS Legislative Reception. Individual legislators will cover the cost of Mr. Pitz's attendance.
- **Additional comments:**
 - Commissioner Derby asked about a group called US Tour 250 that approached Rapid City's 250 committee and US Tour 250's affiliation. Commissioner Derby also requested that commissioners view the minutes and agenda of the Rapid City 250 Steering Committee's recent meeting & went on to highlight some of their planned events.
 - Nick Harrington provided a follow-up on collaboration between the South Dakota Department of Tribal Relations and South Dakota Game, Fish, and Parks. A guided hike is being planned to take place in the northeastern part of the state this coming spring.

6. Next Meeting:

- The next meeting will be held on December 3rd at 3:00 pm Central Time in the Jay Vogt Education Room.

7. Adjournment:

- **Harrington made a motion to Adjourn. Besch seconded the motion.** The motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 3:34 p.m.

I, Benjamin F. Jones, Director of the South Dakota State Historical Society, declare that these minutes are a true and accurate reflection of the business conducted at the October 1, 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