

**SOUTH DAKOTA STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MINUTES  
Century Room, Deadwood City Hall  
Deadwood, South Dakota  
May 7, 2025**

**Call to Order:**

The meeting of the South Dakota State Historical Society Board of Trustees was called to order at 1:30 p.m. Mountain Time by President Tom Hulbert in the Century Room of Deadwood City Hall, Deadwood, South Dakota. A quorum was present.

**Board members present in the Century Room:**

Tom Hulbert, William Pearson, Michelle Dennis, John Fowler, Robert Kolbe, Francis Whitebird

**Board members present via TEAMS Conference Call:**

Lura Roti, David Grettler, Brian Sandvig, David Patterson

**Board members absent:**

Jon Lauck

**State Historical Society Staff Present:**

Benjamin F. Jones, Braeden Kluver, Garry Guan, Liz Almlie, Katherine Lamie, Cassie Vogt, Elizabeth Edwards, Maddie Ferrell, Dedra Birzer, David Grabitske, Kevin Larsen

**State Historical Society Staff Present via TEAMS Conference Call:**

Chelle Somsen, Katy Schmidt

**Others Present in the Century Room:**

Laurie Cox, Kevin Kuchenbecker, Molly Brown, Vicki Dar, Charles Eagleson

**Others Present via TEAMS Conference Call:**

SDPB, Alex Halbach

**Welcome and Announcements:**

President Tom Hurlbert led in the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by a welcome to the members of the board, staff of the Historical Society, and guests.

### **Adoption of the Agenda**

**A motion was made by Fowler to adopt the agenda, Kolbe seconded the motion.** The motion carried unanimously.

### **Approval of Board Minutes:**

The December 13, 2024, minutes of the Board of Trustees meeting were mailed and posted digitally for board members before the meeting. **Fowler made a motion to approve the minutes, Pearson seconded the motion.** The motion carried unanimously.

### **Welcome to Deadwood:**

Deadwood Mayor Charlie Struble-Mook and Kevin Kuchenbecker extended a warm welcome to the Board of Trustees and all those attending the South Dakota State Historical Society's 2025 History Conference.

### **Public Comment: (SDCL 1-25-1):**

None.

### **State and Review Board:**

The board began the duties of the State Review Board to evaluate the National Register Nominations.

### **National Register Nominations, presented by Liz Almlie:**

- Stoppel Hotel and Hot Mineral Baths, Midland, Haakon County. The nomination is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A: Health/Medicine. After discussion, **a motion was made to table the nomination until the July 11<sup>th</sup> meeting, with corrections being made to the boundaries of the listing by Hurlbert. The motion was seconded by Grettler.** The motion carried unanimously.
- Effting Grocery Store, Sioux Falls, Minnehaha County. The nomination is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A: Commerce. After discussion, **a motion was made to table the nomination until the July 11<sup>th</sup> meeting, with corrections being made to the boundaries of the listing as well as the addition of historic photos to the nomination by Hurlbert. The motion was seconded by Fowler.** The motion carried unanimously.
- Mettler Cattle Barn, Menno, Hutchinson County. The nomination is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A: Agriculture and Criterion C: Architecture. After discussion, **a motion was made to approve the Mettler Cattle Barn's nomination**

**by Dennis. The motion was seconded by Fowler.** The motion carried unanimously, with Kolbe abstaining.

#### **Deadwood Fund Grant Applications, presented by Liz Almlie:**

- A presentation was given with a recommendation to approve four out of the eleven Deadwood Fund Grant Applications. After discussion, **a motion to approve the recommendations was made by Kolbe, seconded by Roti.** The motion carried unanimously. The approved grants include the Davison County Courthouse (\$20,000), Fort Pierre Congregational (\$11,000), Mettler Barn – Menno (\$15,000), and Point of Rocks – Pringle (\$15,000).

#### **Archaeology Deaccessions**

- Cassie Vogt briefed the board on deaccession requests of forty-seven Native American remains held on behalf of the United States Army Corps of Engineers to comply with the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act. A brief recess (2:45-2:55 p.m.) was called to allow members to study the deaccession forms. **A motion was made to approve the Archaeology Deaccessions by Dennis. The motion was seconded by Pearson.** The motion carried unanimously, with Sandvig abstaining.

#### **Museum Deaccessions**

- David Grabitske briefed the board on the deaccession of sixteen dresses and fifteen accessories, which included wedding dresses to be transferred to various museums and Miss South Dakota items being transferred to the South Dakota Hall of Fame. **A motion was made to approve the Museum Deaccessions by Kolbe. The motion was seconded by Roti.** The motion carried unanimously.

#### **Administrator Reports –**

- Archives – Somsen had no changes to her report, adding that the Archives staff have been busy moving collections into the Cultural Heritage Center.
- Archeology – Vogt had no changes to her report. Vogt mentioned that the archaeology staff have been busy preparing for the South Dakota State Historical Society's Annual History Conference.
- Foundation – Forsch had no changes to her report. Forsch encouraged members to attend Deadwood After Hours during the conference.
- Museum – Grabitske had no changes to his report. Grabitske also noted the ongoing movement of collections back into the Cultural Heritage Center.
- Research and Publishing – Birzer had no changes to her report. Birzer notified members that *The Gateway to the Hills* by David Wolf was released on May 6.
- Historic Preservation – Guan had numerous updates that occurred after board packets had been sent out. Updates include new personnel (Maddie Ferrell and Elizabeth Edwards), both federal and state funding challenges, changes to the 2025 Archaeology Camp, the dedication of a statue to Wong Fee Lee in Deadwood, a staff visit to Lower Brule Sioux Tribe THPO, a historic building demolished in Blunt, and insurance issues with Oahe Chapel.
- Administration – Jones updated the board on the election results with Katherine Molnar, Aaron Mayer, Michele Christian, and Lura Roti being elected to the board. Hurlbert and Fowler were reappointed by Governor Rhoden to the board. Jones praised the collaboration

between the South Dakota State Historical Society Press and the South Dakota Symphony Orchestra to celebrate *Giants in the Earth*. Jones gave updates regarding America 250, including the success of Two Lights for Tomorrow and the first South Dakota America 250 partner town hall that had taken place on May 6. Finally, Jones recommended that the board set a Deadwood fund balance based on the comfort level of the board during the July 11 meeting.

### **Elections/Appointments/Awards:**

#### **Elections**

- Jones noted that the terms of the President and Vice President had expired. Trustee Officer elections to be held during the July 11 meeting.

#### **Certificates of Recognition**

- Roti asked the Board to recognize and congratulate Greg Neitzert, Gail Fossum-Shea & Craig Fossum, and Rich Merkouris for their contributions to South Dakota's History.
- Hurlbert and the Awards Committee asked the board to recognize and congratulate all the nominees for the Governor's Award for History.
- Hurlbert asked the board to recognize and congratulate Robert Christenson for his contribution to South Dakota's history.

#### **Awards**

- Jones presented the departing Board of Trustees members (Dennis, Patterson, and Winter) with replica Jefferson Peace Medals as a sign of appreciation.

### **Closing Comments**

- Kolbe had raised several items for the board to consider before the next meeting.
  - Who speaks for the historical society?
  - Do all employees live in Pierre? If not, why not?
  - Trustee Bio's
  - Historical Society growth
  - Degradation of digital material
  - Woke, CRT, and DEI
  - Membership increases
- Whitebird brought up the importance of American Indian representation in history and cultural preservation.

**Next Meeting:**

- The next meeting will be held July 11<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 am Central Time / 8:00 am Mountain time in the Jay Vogt Education Room, Cultural Heritage Center.

**Adjournment:**

**Pearson made the motion for Adjournment. Dennis seconded the motion.** The motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 3:52 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 May 7, 2025, meeting of the South Dakota State Historical Society Board of Trustees.

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Benjamin F. Jones, Ph.D.  
State Historian and Director  
South Dakota State Historical  
Society

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Braeden Kluver  
Assistant to the State Historian  
South Dakota State Historical  
Society