



Pierre/Ft. Pierre Historic Preservation Commission
December 2025 Minutes

*December 16, 2025, meeting at Pierre City Hall, 2301 Patron Parkway, Pierre, SD 57501
Meeting called to Order by President Buscher at 12:03pm.*

In Attendance

Commission Members: Kelli Buscher, President; Donna Leslie, Treasurer; Robert Kean, Secretary; Larry Eliason, Shirley Swanson, Ted Spencer

COMMISSION MEMBER CONFLICT OF INTEREST NOTIFICATION: None noted.

Guests: George Allen

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD: Mr. Allen expressed interest in learning more about the Commission’s activities in the Pierre/Ft. Pierre communities.

Meeting working documents were referred to and reviewed including the Sully County Talking Trails tour brochure, additional financial information and accompanying notes.

Commission Members Volunteer Hours were recorded.

Volunteer Hours: SHPO Grant Year: September 22, 2025 – November 18, 2025 = 60.25
Calendar Year: January 1, 2025 – November 18, 2025 = 428.75

Approval of Minutes

The November 18, 2025, Commission Minutes were reviewed and there being no further additions or corrections, Shirley Swanson moved, Ted Spencer seconded, that the Pierre/Ft. Pierre Historic Preservation Commission (PFPHPC) November 18, 2025, Minutes be approved as presented.

MOTION PASSED

Financial Planning Document Review

Commission Treasurer Leslie reviewed the PFPHPC Financial Planning Document dated December 15, 2025, and accompanying materials provided to the Commission prior to the meeting including updates from the November financial planning document covering the completion of the Ft. Pierre Chouteau sign project, educational booklet printing and the recorded accumulated voluntary hours. In addition, Treasurer Leslie reviewed the additional information that will be recorded on the revised Financial Planning Document format

to set out more clearly the amount of resources available to expend less the amounts of pending/approved expenditures.

Old Business: Booklet Printing Update

President Buscher reported the request for additional printing of the driving tour, historic homes and Lewis & Clark Schuler booklets, approved at the November meeting, was submitted to the printer. Printing completion date is not yet available. Members discussed checking to ensure the Commission's booklets are up to date on its website.

Cedar Hill Cemetery Update

No further information regarding material ready to be incorporated into a publication. Contact with the Ft. Pierre Cedar Hill Cemetery Board on the status of the material is pending.

Steamboat Signage Update

Commission Member Eliason reported on his search for a steamboat informational sign along the Missouri River as it passes Steamboat Park. He noted an informational sign relating to the steamboat history of the area is located on the bike path near the causeway. Pictures of steamboat activity accompanied the narrative. The sign is part of a group of signs about Lewis & Clark and Pierre flooding. After discussion, it was agreed that the current information provided about steamboat activity in the Pierre/Ft. Pierre areas is sufficient at this time.

New Business: Talking Trails

Commission Member Eliason shared information on a "Talking Trails" program featuring points and stories of interest in Sully County. The Commission listened to the segment on the history of Agar, SD. The ensuing discussion covered several ideas the Commission may consider pursuing once further details regarding topic selection/research, writing, narrating, preparation deadlines and actual pre and post-production/maintenance costs were better understood. The Cedar Hill Cemetery and points of interest in the Pierre – Ft. Pierre Driving Tour booklet were two examples discussed. Commission Member Swanson will investigate the costs and contractual considerations involved to work with the Talking Trails commercial venture.

Future Projects Discussion

Commission Members discussed several potential projects to be undertaken and completed during the current budget cycle. Each item discussed will require further development to ascertain the scope of the final product, approval of costs and timelines for completion. The projects selected for further inquiry and Commission Member(s) leading the effort, where established, are as follows:

John C. Waldron Marker: The memorial plaque commemorating Lt. Cmdr. John C. Waldron's heroic engagement at the Battle of Midway (June 4-7, 1942) was dedicated in 2002. Exposure to the elements over the years has had an impact. With the dedication of a new bridge across the Missouri and relocation of the memorial during relandscaping of the area, interest has been raised regarding the need to and method of refurbishing the plaque. Commission Member Kean will investigate locating expertise to do the work and potential costs involved with the work.

- Dr. Brad Tennant: The Commission has assisted in co-sponsoring Dr. Brad Tennant presentations in conjunction with the Tales on the River summer speakers program in Pierre/Ft. Pierre. The Commission would consider assisting again during this funding cycle with the Tales on the River program or other suitable co-sponsoring entity. Commission Member Kean will contact Dr. Tennant regarding his interest and range of potential presentation topics.
- Cedar Hill Cemetery: The Commission has a longstanding interest in assisting in developing the rich history of the Cedar Hill Cemetery and maintenance of the site. The cemetery lends itself to a variety of methods to provide information including booklet, self-guided walking tours and a kiosk. Renewed interest in the cemetery in the last several years resulted in the appointment of the Ft. Pierre Cedar Hill Cemetery Board and additional collection of data, surveys, further refined site locations, and anecdotal information. Commission Members will contact the Cedar Hill Cemetery Board to discuss accessing material for publication and dissemination.
- Pierre Airport History: Aviation development in Pierre is very interesting and includes a multitude of interrelated events including a fly-in by Charles Lindburg, location of an Army Airforce training unit and support facilities, and the development of private and public commercial air service. Commission Member Spencer will explore this area and liaison with municipal airport staff and others to review the available material, research items of interest, and prepare a display. It is anticipated that suitable space would be available at the airport public terminal for maximum exposure.
- Pierre Street Store Fronts: Downtown Pierre Street has a unique feature due to the periodic flooding of the Missouri River prior to the construction of the Missouri mainstem dam system. To lessen the flooding's impact, the street level was raised. As a result, several current buildings on the block have former store fronts that are now below street level. Some are accessible. Seattle, Washington had the same experience to deal with tidal flooding and have turned this feature into a tourist attraction. Commission President Buscher will explore this topic to gauge interest and viability.
- Speakers at Schools: Commission Members discussed sponsoring speakers to present at the community schools on a variety of appropriate history topics. Presentation formats discussed included a variety of styles including impersonators/reenactors. Commission Members interested in this effort will explore options including availability and costs.

As information is acquired, Commission Members will report back to the Commission through an agenda item.

Other Business:

No further business was offered.

Meeting Adjourned

Meeting adjourned at 12:58pm.

NEXT MEETING DATE: January 20, 2026, at 12pm noon at the Pierre City Hall
2301 Patron Parkway, Pierre, SD 57501.

PIERRE – FT. PIERRE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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