

FPTPC Board Meeting Minutes

8:00 AM, Wednesday, February 4, 2026

Stanley County Courthouse & Zoom

Board Members present were Casey Cowan, Emily Steber, Scott Deal, Mike Chrysler (Zoom), and Callie Iversen (Zoom).

Others present were Cassidy Blade, Rhea Waldman, Sunny Hannum, and Jess Powell.

Once quorum was reached, the meeting was called to order by Cowan at 8:07 am.

*Motion to approve email meeting minutes from January 7, 2026 made by Iversen.
Second by Deal. Motion carried.*

Financials

Blade provided the financial report. The checking account balance was \$62,777.36 and the money market account balance was \$54,279.32, for a combined total of \$117,056.68.

\$1,408.90 remains earmarked for the fish cleaning station.

Occupancy tax reports showed Pierre down approximately 14% and Fort Pierre down approximately 12% for the month. Overall, Fort Pierre ended the year up approximately 8%.

Fosheim reviewed the future commitments summary, noting that the future commitments for 2026 would be approved at this meeting, so the report will be updated for next meeting.

Motion to accept the financial report made by Iversen. Second by Chrysler. Motion carried.

Blade presented the month's payables, including \$22,822.48 in outstanding invoices in commitments. This total includes \$17,000 for the City of Fort Pierre and \$2,500 for the Oahe Hockey Association for the 2026 commitments. Blade also reviewed internal transfers to be made, including \$5,000 to Future Fort Pierre for operating funds and \$10,000 to be transferred from the money market account to cover increased marketing costs related to the 250th Celebration.

Motion to approve all FPT payables and transfers made by Deal. Second by Chrysler. Motion carried.

Buffalo Legacy | Buffalo Legacy was moved to the top of the agenda due to Waldman being in attendance. Waldman provided an update on the Buffalo Legacy campaign and proposed exterior mural designs for Parkview and the high school that align with the new Wild by Nature campaign. Two quotes were reviewed: \$1,356 for the smaller vertical mural on the side of the high school and \$34,339 for the larger mural installation. Waldman noted the campaign intends to align mural installation with a planned building "facelift," including painting, and expressed interest in completing the work by summer if funding and scheduling allow. Board members discussed timing, coordination with building improvements, and the possibility of multi-year funding commitments. Waldman noted additional partner meetings are scheduled

to clarify timelines, priorities, and available funds. Waldman will return with a more concrete plan and will provide details via email so the board can act between meetings if needed.

New Business

Signature Cards | Board members discussed the need to update bank signature cards at First National Bank for both the Fort Pierre Tourism checking account and the Fort Pierre Tourism Money Market Account following board treasurer transitions. Weisgram will need to sign the appropriate paperwork with First National Bank.

Motion to remove Lindy Geraets from the signature card and add Mike Weisgram as Treasurer and authorized signer to both the Fort Pierre Tourism checking account and the Fort Pierre Tourism Money Market Account made by Steber. Second by Deal. Motion carried.

SD Tourism TAP Grant | Board members discussed the South Dakota Tourism TAP grant reopening for 2026 and the opportunity to apply for promotional marketing support tied to Fort Pierre's 250th efforts and broader event marketing. Blade noted the application window opens March 2 and closes March 31, with award decisions anticipated mid-April and funding disbursed mid-July. Eligible uses discussed included advertising and media costs across multiple channels. Board members discussed coordination to avoid duplicative applications among local entities and agreed it is appropriate for Fort Pierre Tourism to apply given its role promoting multiple events and partners.

Motion to have Realizing Rural pursue the South Dakota Tourism TAP grant application made by Steber. Second by Iversen. Motion carried.

Old Business

Long Distance Trail Feasibility | Blade provided an update on the USDA-funded feasibility study. A kickoff meeting is planned for February with key stakeholders. ISG has begun initial data collection and submitted the first invoice (approximately \$1,200), which will be paid next month and reimbursed by USDA on a reimbursement schedule. Blade noted required administrative items are in progress, including an accessibility plan for the courthouse meeting location, insurance documentation, and securing a fidelity bond through Future Fort Pierre. Blade also noted the kickoff will be held via Teams with a small core group, and tribal engagement will be incorporated as the process advances, including participation from the Native Tourism Alliance.

Boots & Roots: 4th of July Event Grant | Blade reported that five applications were received for the Boots & Roots: 4th of July Event Grant. Funding is recommended for the Fort Pierre Fire Department (\$2,500 for increased fireworks), the Historic Sculpture Committee (\$2,500 for sculpture-related programming and potential unveiling activities), and Drifters (\$2,500 for live music and expanded programming). The Stanley County Fairgrounds application is proposed to be deferred to the next event grant cycle, which is currently open, pending submission of outstanding required project reporting from 2025. Board members discussed that \$7,500 of the \$10,000 allocated for this grant round would be awarded under the current recommendations. The remaining \$2,500 will be determined at a later date and may be applied toward regular event grants or additional marketing support. No motion was taken at this time.

Tourism Conference | Blade reported she was unable to attend due to a medical issue. Steber shared key takeaways, noting continued value in print publications and rack card distribution for an older tourism demographic, while also emphasizing the importance of improving website content. Steber also noted a particular interest in “pre-built” itineraries that support modern search and AI-driven results. Board members discussed mixed reactions to QR-code dependent processes among older audiences and reinforced the need for an approach that bridges print, in-person discovery, and digital planning.

Executive Director Report

Blade reported ongoing coordination with ISG and administrative tasks related to the USDA project. She also noted the marketing committee entered into a 2026 photography contract with Katie Mauch to capture Fort Pierre throughout the year, and discussed the upcoming grant cycles. The regular event grant round opened February 1 and is due March 15, with decisions anticipated by April 15. The community beautification grants are being updated and will open in May or June.

Marketing Committee Update

Blade shared updated marketing metrics, noting Facebook recorded 11,100 views (up 248% month-over-month) and the website recorded 376 unique visits (up 46%), driven largely by paid advertising for the Boots & Roots Fourth of July Event Grant. Blade noted that another paid ad is currently running to promote the regular event grant application period. Blade also reported the marketing committee meeting focused primarily on the Boots & Roots: 4th of July Event Grant review and finalizing the 2026 photography contract. No additional marketing committee actions were brought forward.

Committee Reports

Future Fort Pierre | Cowan reported that Future Fort Pierre continues to support the USDA feasibility study and related compliance requirements. The Future Fort Pierre board did not meet this month due to the absence of a quorum. No additional action was requested.

City of Fort Pierre | Powell reported business as usual for the City of Fort Pierre. He noted there is no official update at this time regarding the proposed hotel project discussed in recent months and that due diligence and site negotiations are believed to be ongoing. He also reported discussion regarding the possible formation of an additional hotel-specific Business Improvement District (BID), under which individual motels would operate their own BID to support property maintenance and improvements through a separate occupancy assessment. The concept remains in the early discussion phase.

Fort Pierre Development Corporation | Hannum reported that the former Capital Journal building has been sold to Forum Communications, with a meeting scheduled for February 10. She noted ongoing downtown committee efforts, including a February 5 meeting with City staff to discuss flags and flowers on downtown light poles and potential 250th-themed flags through the Daughters of the American Revolution. Hannum also reported that South Dakota News Watch will meet on February 5 regarding 250th planning. She noted continued work on Housing Opportunity Fund grant compliance for the Sixth Avenue housing development, with paperwork due in April and title insurance in progress. She added that the sculpture committee plans to meet next week to coordinate sculpture unveilings around fairgrounds events.

Fort Pierre Chamber | No report was provided, as Kramme was not in attendance.

Stanley County Fairgrounds | Deal reported he attended the state high school rodeo winter meeting in Rapid City and confirmed planning is underway for another year. He noted the event will come up for bids later this year and that construction/building activity has begun at the fairgrounds for improvements.

Missouri River Tourism | No report was provided, as Bruzelius was not in attendance.

Public Comment

Iversen shared that, due to Fort Pierre Tourism grant funding support, the Moose has started exterior renovation work. She estimated completion by mid-April. Staff noted the need to ensure this commitment is reflected in the future commitments tracking.

Upcoming Meetings

1. FPTPC Executive Committee Meeting | 8:30 AM, Wednesday, February 25, 2026, Zoom
2. FPTPC Board Meeting | 8:00 AM, Wednesday, March 4, 2026, Stanley County Court House and Zoom

Meeting adjourned at 9:04am.