



Sports & Events Authority Advisory Committee
612 N. Main, City Hall - Council Chambers
January 13, 2026

1. Call to Order

Meeting called to order by: Kevin McCardle at 2:00 PM

SEA Advisory Committee members present: Mayor Hanson, Kevin McCardle, Jill Larson, Kevin Nelson, Cory Aadland, Jason Christensen, Dave Sietsema, Bryan Dixon, LaRee Rumbolz, Emily Liedtke, Dave Helleloid, Tim Smith, and Jim Johnston

SEA Advisory Committee members absent: None

Others present: Aaron Hieb and Stephanie Ellwein

2. Presentation of Funding Applications

SEA Grant Application presentations by applicants.

The SEA Advisory Committee reviewed applications for grant funding.

The following applications were presented and considered:

A. Dakota Oyate Challenge

Silas Blaine, via conference phone, spoke on behalf of and presented the *Dakota Oyate Challenge* Grant Application, which is requesting \$10,500 plus (11) comp hotel rooms for 44 room nights for officials.

- Silas shared that the 37th Annual Boys' & 32nd Girls' Dakota Oyate Challenge will be held February 5–7, 2026, at The World's Only Corn Palace. There will (8) boys teams and (8) girls teams playing bracket play for three days. Each team utilizes 20–25 hotel rooms for (3) nights. Along with the basketball tournament, the event offers Hand Games, Archery, and NEW this year, Dakota Language Contest. The grant request will be utilized to offset their list of expenses. Currently, each school pays a \$2,000 entry fee to participate, which is quite high, so they are looking to lower that expense for each school.

B. DWU/Culver's Girls' & Boys' High School Basketball Classic

Jason Christensen spoke on behalf of and presented the *DWU/Culver's Girls & Boys High School Basketball Classic* Grant Application, which is requesting \$5,000.

- Jason shared that the 17th Annual Boys' & 13th Annual Girls' DWU/Culver's Classic will be held February 13–14, 2026, at The World's Only Corn Palace. There will be (9) games each day for a total of 18 games for the classic. The grant request will be utilized to offset their list of expenses and pay their table workers and officials more as well. Any profits/proceeds from the classic goes back into the DWU Men's & Women's Basketball programs to provide scholarships.

C. South Dakota Girls Varsity Hockey State Tournament

Tyler Graham and Kira Tronnes spoke on behalf of and presented the *South Dakota Girls Varsity Hockey State Tournament* Grant Application, which is requesting \$5,000.

- Tyler shared that Mitchell will be hosting the South Dakota Girls Varsity Hockey State Tournament on March 5–7, 2026, at the Mitchell Activities Center. There will be (8) teams, roughly 170 players, from South Dakota competing in the state tournament — Brookings, Sioux Falls, Pierre, Watertown, Rapid City, Sioux Center, Mitchell, and Aberdeen. Teams will be here for (3) nights with games starting at Noon on Thursday, March 5. The grant request will be utilized to rent a replay screen to be set up in the Mitchell Activities Center for the tournament. Any profits and proceeds will go back into the Mitchell Skating & Hockey Association.

D. South Dakota Middle School All-State Band

Tessa Belgum, via conference phone, spoke on behalf of and presented the *South Dakota Middle School All-State Band* Grant Application, which is requesting \$1,000.

- Tessa shared that the SD Middle School All-State Band will be held March 6–7, 2026, at the Mitchell Performing Arts Center. There will be 200 registered students from around the state, which accounts for 71 schools being represented. The grant request will be utilized towards the hospitality room for the band director's, along with items to go in each student's swag bag. They make multiple local purchases at Walmart and County Fair, and many families eat at local restaurants and visit local shops.

E. PowderHorn Ranch Regulators Outlaw Gauntlet Shoot

Troy Bollock spoke on behalf of and presented the *PowderHorn Ranch Regulators Outlaw Gauntlet Shoot* Grant Application, which is requesting \$5,000.

- Troy shared that the 23rd Annual PowderHorn Ranch Regulators shoot will be held June 10-14, 2026, at the Mitchell Gun Club. This year they are estimating 85–95 shooters, with over 90% traveling from more than 100+ miles from Mitchell. The grant request (\$5,000), \$3,000 will be used as cash prizes for the Blast for Cash-Mitchell Sports & Events Authority sponsored shoot and \$2,000 will go towards updating and repairing equipment.

F. South Dakota VFW & Auxiliary Annual Convention

Anna Arnold spoke on behalf of and presented the *South Dakota VFW & Auxiliary Annual Convention* Grant Application, which is requesting \$3,200.

- Anna shared that the 97th Annual SD VFW State Convention will be held June 11–14, 2026, at the Highland Conference Center. There will be veterans traveling from all over South Dakota with approximately 94% of the attendance coming from 100+ miles from Mitchell. This event usually generates 50–100 room nights along with over 275 attendees during the annual banquet on Saturday night. Mitchell SEA has supported and awarded the event \$3,130 in 2022 and 2023. The grant request will be utilized for facility and hotel costs at the Highland Conference Center.

3. Approval of Minutes

Motion: Motion was made by Bryan Dixon to approve the previous meeting minutes as presented, and seconded by Jason Christensen. All members voted 'Aye' and the motion passed.

4. Financial Report

Aaron Hieb reviewed the financial report as of January 7, 2026.

Final expenses and award checks that have been written for 2025 are \$155,450.

Revenue for 2026, designated by the BID #4 Board, is \$150,000 with a supplemental carryover of the remaining 2025 balance of \$39,190.

Current expenses and award checks that have been written for 2026 are \$12,000 (Special Olympics State Basketball Tournament).

Current Available Fund Balance of \$138,000.00.

Collections in October (for September records) are \$32,058.00 with all collected. Collections in November (for October records) are \$33,768.00 with all collected. Collections in December (for November records) are \$26,444.00 with (1) establishment past due.

The YTD collections for 2025 are \$325,791.00, which equates to 162,896 total room nights sold.

YTD comparisons of room nights sold were: up 1.5% (2,429 room nights sold) from 2024, up 3.6% (5,858 room nights sold) from 2023, down 0.1% (215 room nights sold) from 2022, up 2.6% from 2021, up 23.1% from 2020, and up 2.1% from 2019.

Motion: Motion was made by Cory Aadland to approve the financial report as presented, and seconded by Kevin Nelson. All members voted 'Aye' and the motion passed.

5. Evaluation Forms/Financials/Surveys

Aaron Hieb reviewed the following Evaluation Form(s) w/Financials, Christmas Note, and Thank You Card with the SEA Committee:

A. Evaluation Form(s) w/Financial(s)

USA Men's Slowpitch Softball "D" State Tournament (August 9-10, 2025)

- The event was Above (4) expectations. Would the SEA cover the field usage costs in future years? The total spectator attendance was 100. The total participants were 14 teams; Sioux Falls, Aberdeen, Mitchell, Rapid City, Watertown, Pierre. The estimated number of total hotel room nights was 40. Next year's date: Aberdeen, SD, August 8-9, 2026. The funds awarded (\$2,000) went to the USA SD Men's Slowpitch Association to cover the umpire and hotel room fees. No profit.
 - The committee requested that Aaron Hieb reach out to Joe Wenzel and talk with him about providing a more detailed Revenue & Expense Report, since most, if not all the revenue generated from hosting a state softball tournament goes back to the state association, making it difficult for the local association to make a profit.

301 Rodz & Ridez Car Show (September 19–21, 2025)

- The event was Above (4) expectations. The total spectator attendance was 3,500. The total participants were 118; SD, ND, MN, WY, NE, WI. The estimated number of total hotel room nights was 100. Next year's date: Mitchell Main Street — September 18–20, 2026. The funds awarded (\$1,000) were used to purchase the awards. Net profit of \$5,090.00, which will go towards next year's event.

Palace City Kiwanis Half Marathon, 10K, & 5K (October 4–5, 2025)

- The event Met (3) expectations. Assistance with promoting the event is welcomed. We want to grow the run. The total spectator attendance was 150. The total participants were 191 registered runners — 106 Half, 36 10K, 49 5K - SD, IA, NJ, NC, TX, CO, WI, KY, MN, NE, IN. The estimated number of total hotel room nights was 14. Next year's date: October 3-4, 2026. The funds awarded (\$750) were used towards offsetting the costs of advertising, timing system, and medals. Net profit of \$8,462.57, which will be used towards funding our children's program in the Mitchell area, including the new Story Walk, scholarships, baseball tournament, Woodlot Park updates, and more.

B. Christmas Note & Thank You Card

- PowderHorn Ranch Regulators
- Miller Lite Palace City 8-ball Open

6. Other Items

Aaron Hieb shared and reviewed the following items with the SEA Committee:

A. Update and Review of Playeasy

- No events have been secured yet.
- Playeasy Activity Leaderboard
 - Top 1 & 2 Trending Events (out of 1,337)
 - Hoop City Classic
 - Midwest Miracles Classic
 - Top 1 Trending Destinations (out of 320)
 - Mitchell Sports & Events Authority
 - Top 1 Trending Facility (out of 15,734)
 - The World's Only Corn Palace
- Continue to reach out to local businesses and gauge their interest in utilizing the Playeasy Community Collaboration feature, which sends an email inviting the store owner/manager to create an account to have ADMIN access to their local business profile micro-site. Once they have ADMIN access, they will be able to manage only their local business profile and create SEA event-specific promotions or general promotion campaigns that are available for those events that are awarded SEA funding. Once these promotions are created, Aaron will distribute "Ear of Corn" coupons to SEA-funded organizations that they will share with those participating local businesses to receive their promotion.
 - Local business profiles:
 - Blarney's
 - Bradley's
 - Culver's
 - Main Street Mercantile
 - Subway
 - Triple Play Pawn
 - Waterin' Hole
- Aaron also shared that the Mitchell Sports & Events Authority is going to be featured in the *Playeasy Thought Leader* series, which will highlight the successes and what's working well on the platform.

B. Upcoming SEA Events

- [Palace Ice Festival](#) (January 16–18)
 - Mitchell Activities Center
- [Girls' Hanson Classic](#) (January 17)
 - The World's Only Corn Palace
- [Dakota Riptide Sprint Invite](#) (January 17–18)
 - Mitchell Recreation Center & Indoor Aquatic Center
- [Boys' Hanson Classic](#) (January 24)
 - The World's Only Corn Palace
- [South Dakota Middle School All-State Jazz Band](#) (January 30–31)

- Mitchell Performing Arts Center

Complete list of events – [MITCHELL CHAMBER EVENTS CALENDAR](#) & [Mitchell SD Events Facebook](#)

***BOLD – Awarded Sports & Events Authority Grant funding.**

7. Executive Session in accordance with SDCL 9-34-19: Discussion of confidential trade secrets, commercial, or financial information.

Motion: Dave Sietsema made a motion to go into Executive Session, and was seconded by Bryan Dixon. All members voted 'Aye' and the motion passed.

8. Approval of Funding Applications

Dakota Oyate Challenge

Date: February 5-7, 2026; **Contact:** Silas Blaine; **Grant Request:** \$10,500

- *The DOC board kindly requests (11) Comp rooms (Wednesday Night-Saturday Night) = 44 room nights for basketball officials for the 2026 DOC Tournament to assist with expenses.*
 - **Motion:** Motion was made by Jim Johnston to award \$7,000, and seconded by Bryan Dixon. (12) members voted 'Aye' and the motion passed.
 - **Abstain:** Dave Sietsema abstained from voting.

DWU/Culver's Girls' & Boys' High School Basketball Classic

Date: February 13–14, 2026; **Contact:** Jason Christensen; **Grant Request:** \$5,000

- **Motion:** Motion was made by Bryan Dixon to award \$5,000, and seconded by Emily Liedtke. (12) members voted 'Aye' and the motion passed.
- **Abstain:** Jason Christensen abstained from voting.

South Dakota Girls Varsity Hockey State Tournament

Date: March 5–7, 2026; **Contact:** Darcy Sabers; **Grant Request:** \$5,000

- **Motion:** Motion was made by LaRee Rumbolz to award \$5,000, and seconded by Dave Helleloid. All members voted 'Aye' and the motion passed.

South Dakota Middle School All-State Band

Date: March 6-7, 2026; **Contact:** Tessa Beglum; **Grant Request:** \$1,000

- **Motion:** Motion was made by Cory Aadland to award \$2,000, and seconded by Dave Helleloid. All members voted 'Aye' and the motion passed.

PowderHorn Ranch Regulators Outlaw Gauntlet Shoot

Date: June 10-14, 2026; **Contact:** Diane Royalty; **Grant Request:** \$5,000

- **Motion:** Motion was made by Bryan Dixon to award \$5,000, and seconded by LaRee Rumbolz. All members voted 'Aye' and the motion passed.

South Dakota VFW & Auxiliary Annual Convention

Date: June 11-14, 2026; **Contact:** Anna Arnold; **Grant Request:** \$3,200

- **Motion:** Motion was made by Kevin Nelson to award \$3,200, and seconded by Dave Sietsema. All members voted 'Aye' and the motion passed.

9. Next Meeting Date

Kevin McCardle shared the next meeting date of Wednesday, February 11, 2026, at 2 PM — City Hall, Council Chambers.

10. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned by: Kevin McCardle at 3:17 PM