



Sports & Events Authority Advisory Committee
612 N. Main, City Hall - Council Chambers
March 10, 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, Kevin Nelson, Cory Aadland, Jason Christensen, Dave Sietsema, LaRee Rumbolz, Emily Liedtke, Dave Helleloid, Tim Smith, Jim Johnston, and Scott Morgan

SEA Advisory Committee members absent: Jill Larson

Others present: Aaron Hieb, Stephanie Ellwein, and Johanna Allen

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. NAIA Women's Basketball National Championship First & Second Round

Jason Christensen spoke on behalf of and presented the NAIA Women's Basketball National Championship First & Second Round Grant Application, which is requesting \$10,000.

- Jason shared that the NAIA Women's Basketball National Championship First & Second Round will take place Friday, March 13 with (2) games and Saturday, March 14 with (1) game at The World's Only Corn Palace. The following teams are participating: Dakota Wesleyan University, University of St. Francis (Ill.), Eastern Oregon University, and College of the Ozarks (Mo.), with all three teams arriving on Wednesday. Jason shared and reviewed an estimated event budget, highlighting, to host this event, the bid fee is \$12,500, along with additional major expenses for referee costs and hotel rooms for referees and staff. The grant request will go towards these expenses listed on the event budget.

B. Palace City Baseball Association

Jordan Widstrom and Adam Kaus spoke on behalf of and presented the Palace City Baseball Association Grant Application, which is requesting \$15,000.

- **Tabled from the December 2025 meeting.**

- Jordan and Adam shared that Palace City Baseball Association was accepted for both American Legion Baseball affiliation and 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status. Palace City Baseball will consist of 13U, 14U, Junior Legion, and Legion baseball. They are still working to secure and establish a teener and legion tournament for 2026. Mitchell Baseball Association and Palace City Baseball worked an agreement to allow Palace City Baseball hosting rights for the Harve Johnston/Bryan Wilson Memorial Baseball Tournament in June. Mitchell will not be host of the Class 'A' State Youth Tournament until 2027 and 2028. Jordan and Adam reviewed an updated financials breakdown with the committee. Their biggest expense is the umpire's wages for their games and tournaments. Currently, Palace City Baseball Association has secured \$40,800 out of \$70,000 in sponsorship contributions.

C. The 301 Rodz & Ridez Car Show

Jerry Wright spoke on behalf of and presented The 301 Rodz & Ridez Car Show Grant Application, which is requesting \$1,500.

- Jerry shared that The 301 Rodz & Ridez Car Show is a 3-day event and will take place on September 18-20, 2026. Friday, September 18 will be pre-registration along with a cruise night. Saturday is the car show taking place on Main Street. Sunday is a gathering at Hitchcock Park. Last year, the event had 160-200 cars. He estimates between 60-70 hotel room nights. A unique feature is that any car that has been in the event for the past 10 years receives a personal invitation along with a personal 'Thank You' from The 301 Rodz. The grant request will go towards their biggest expenses of advertising and awards.

3. Approval of Minutes

Motion: Motion was made by Dave Sietsema to approve the previous meeting minutes as presented, and seconded by Kevin Nelson. All members voted 'Aye' and the motion passed.

4. Financial Report

Aaron Hieb reviewed the financial report as of March 5, 2026.

Current expenses and award checks that have been written for 2026 are \$61,100.

Current Available Fund Balance of \$88,900.00.

Collections in February 2026 (for January 2026 records) are \$14,670.00 with (1) establishment past due.

The YTD collections for 2026 are \$31,261.00, which equates to 15,631 total room nights sold.

YTD comparisons of room nights sold were: down 13.5% (2,114 room nights sold) from 2025,

down 8.3% (1,303 room nights sold) from 2024, down 4.4% (684 room nights sold) from 2023, down 3.9% from 2022, up 14.0% from 2021, and down 16.5% from 2020.

Motion: Motion was made by Jim Johnston to approve the financial report as presented, and seconded by LaRee Rumbolz. All members voted 'Aye' and the motion passed.

5. Evaluation Forms/Financials/Surveys

Aaron Hieb reviewed the following Evaluation Form(s) w/Financial(s) with the SEA Committee:

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

Palace City 8-Ball Open (November 14-16, 2025)

- The event Exceeded (5) expectations. SEA's support was pivotal to the success of the event, and they are very grateful. The total spectator attendance was approximately 50. The total participants were 88; SD, ND, MN, IA, NE. The estimated number of total hotel room nights was approximately 56. Next year's date: October 2–4, 2026. The funds awarded (\$4,000) were used to pay off operating expenses. Net profit of \$1,492.16, which will be carried over and go towards next year's event.

South Dakota Fire Instructors Conference (January 10-11, 2026)

- The event met (3) expectations. The total participants were 130; all across South Dakota. The estimated number of total hotel room nights was 150. Next year's date: Unsure. The funds awarded (\$4,800) were used to cover the cost of the instructor along with other associated costs. Net profit of \$12,982.08.

SDMEA South Dakota Middle School All-State Jazz Band (January 30-31, 2026)

- The event was Above (4) expectations. SEA support was greatly appreciated. The total spectator attendance was 190. The total participants were 38. The estimated number of total hotel room nights was 50. Next year's date: January 29-30, 2027 in Mitchell, SD. The funds awarded (\$1,500) were used to pay for guest directors. Net profit of \$240.39, which will go to the SDMEA to continued putting on these events.

6. Other Items

Aaron Hieb shared the following information with the SEA Committee:

A. Update and Review of Playeasy

No events have been secured through the platform yet.

Active conversations with the following event organizations:

- American Junior Golf Association

- Royal Events Cheer & Dance Championship

Aaron also shared and provided an update on the SEA Promotional Coupon that is being distributed to SEA events. Currently, there are (14) local businesses that have taken the time to register and SIGN UP so they have ADMIN access to their specific local business profile micro-site.

- Area Community Theatre (ACT)
- Blarney's Sports Bar & Grill
- Bradley's Pub & Grille
- Cattleman's Club Steakhouse
- Culver's
- Main Street Mercantile
- Mitchell Chamber of Commerce
- Pizza Ranch
- Subway
- The Mitchell Indigenous Archaeological Site & Museum
- The Vault Clothing Co.
- The World's Only Corn Palace
- Triple Play Pawn
- Waterin Hole

Aaron shared the Activity Leaderboard from the past 30 days, which takes into consideration EVENTS and DESTINATIONS *Unique Users* and *Page Views*

- Mitchell Sports & Events Authority was currently ranked 5th and spent a month or so at #1
- The DWU/Culver's Girl & Boys High School Basketball Classic was also ranked within the top 5.

Last of all, Aaron shared that the Mitchell Sports & Events Authority was selected as a destination in Playeasy to assist in the rollout of the new feature, AI Compass. Compass is powered entirely by context in our profile - the stronger, more intentional content - the more accurate and strategic the responses will be to the user.

B. Upcoming SEA Events

- [Comedy Night presented by CVMA 30-2](#) (March 21)
 - The Masonic Hall
- [Special Olympics South Dakota State Basketball Tournament](#) (March 27-29)
 - DWU/MHS
- [Knights of Columbus Special Olympics State Basketball Banquet](#) (March 28)
 - John Paul II
- [Lucky Devils Adult Hockey Tournament](#) (April 10-12)
 - Mitchell Activities Center
- [North Dakota Country Fest-Your Town Tour](#) (April 11)

- The World's Only Corn Palace
- [DWU Spring Golf Invitational](#) (April 12-13)
 - Lakeview Municipal Golf Course

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

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

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

8. Approval of Funding Applications

NAIA Women's Basketball National Championship First & Second Round

Date: March 13–14, 2026; **Contact:** Jason Christensen; **Grant Request:** \$10,000

- **Motion:** Motion was made by Kevin McCardle to award \$10,000, and seconded by Tim Smith. (10) members voted 'Aye' and the motion passed.
- **Abstain:** Jason Christensen and Dave Sietsema abstained from voting.

Palace City Baseball Association

Date: May, June, & July 2026; **Contact:** Adam Kaus; **Grant Request:** \$15,000

- **Tabled from December 2025 meeting**
- **Motion:** Motion was made by Dave Helleloid to award a total of \$7,500 (\$2,500 for each tournament (3) that Palace City Baseball is planning to host in 2026) and contingent on, if a tournament is not hosted, the respective awarded funding per tournament, will be returned to the SEA, and seconded by Scott Morgan. All members voted 'Aye' and the motion passed.

The 301 Rodz & Ridez Car Show

Date: September 18-20, 2026; **Contact:** KayLynn Bren; **Grant Request:** \$1,500

- **Motion:** Motion was made by Jason Christensen to award \$1,500, and seconded by Kevin Nelson. All members voted 'Aye' and the motion passed.

9. Next Meeting Date

Kevin McCardle shared the next meeting date of Tuesday, April 14, 2026, at 2 PM — City Hall, Council Chambers.

10. Adjournment

Brief discussion about Airbnb's and VRBO's being considered as part of the BID #4 District and contributing to the \$2.00 per room per night hotel occupancy tax collections in Mitchell, SD.

Meeting adjourned by: Kevin McCardle at 3:19 PM