

BISMARCK HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

MEETING MINUTES

January 21, 2026

The Bismarck Historic Preservation Commission met on Wednesday, January 21, 2026, at 3:00 p.m. in the Tom Baker Meeting Room in the City-County Office Building, 221 North 5th Street. The meeting was held in person and via Zoom. Dakota Media Access was present to record the meeting and archive on freetv.org for public viewing.

Commissioners present were Matt Hull, Beth Nodland, Kane Perrin, Amy Sakariassen, John Swanson, Greg Zenker, and Chair Damita Engel.

Staff members present were Annie Hojian – Office Assistant, Daniel Nairn – Planning Director, Lauren Oster – Planner, and Joshua Jyring – Assistant City Attorney.

MEETING INFORMATION

Commissioner Amy Sakariassen was reappointed for a 3-year term. Kane Perrin was introduced and will serve a 3-year term. Oaths of office were signed prior to the start of the meeting.

Elections of officers were completed.

MOTION: A motion was made by Commissioner Nodland to re-elect Damita Engel as chair. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Zenker and with Commissioners Hull, Perrin, Sakariassen, Swanson, Nodland and Zenker voting in favor of the motion, the motion was approved.

MOTION: A motion was made by Commissioner Swanson to re-elect Beth Nodland as vice chair. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Zenker and with Commissioners Hull, Perrin, Sakariassen, Swanson, Zenker, and Chair Engel voting in favor of the motion, the motion was approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comments were made or submitted for the current agenda or prior December 17, 2025, agenda. Chair Engel closed the public comment period.

MINUTES

Chair Engel called for consideration of the minutes of the December 17, 2025, meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission.

MOTION: A motion was made by Commissioner Zenker to approve the minutes of the December 17, 2025, meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Sakariassen and with Commissioners Hull, Nodland, Perrin, Sakariassen, Swanson, Zenker and Chair Engel voting in favor of the motion, the motion was approved.

2024 HISTORIC PRESERVATION FUND GRANT UPDATE

Ms. Oster updated the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) on the South Capitol Survey. No action is recommended.

She also updated the HPC on the Local History Education Resource Kits. Items the subcommittee is currently working on will be ready for HPC review in the next few months. No action is recommended. Commissioner Sakariassen stated the focus for this kit is the 1930s in Bismarck and while reviewing the materials, a discussion was had with Pat Phillips, Bismarck Career Academy, and he is willing to use his students, for a "spatial exercise" to package presentation items in the kits. Mr. Phillips anticipates other students may be able to recreate and record a Bismarck High School radio program from scripts written in the 1930s. This could be included in the education kit.

Ms. Oster provided an update on the Baseball History Brochure Project. Former Commissioner Pursley started work on this project but as he is no longer part of the commission, it would be helpful to identify another commissioner willing to help draft the brochure. Staff recommended identifying a commissioner willing to help draft brochure content, determine a potential quantity of brochures to be printed to facilitate staff obtaining quotes, and provide direction on the selection of a printing company. Commissioner Zenker suggested reaching out to former Commissioner Pursley to ask if he would be willing to finish writing the brochure as he started it and has sports knowledge related to this project. Ms. Oster will make this inquiry. Commissioner Nodland asked if two months is adequate to draft, review, and produce the brochures in order to have them available for the home show. Ms. Oster stated it was not intended for the brochures to be available at the home show. Commissioners discussed documents that are already available and were used when drafting the Bismarck Timeline. Former Commissioner Jackson had written information relating to the history of baseball in Bismarck, and Commissioner Nodland would be willing to work on a brochure draft utilizing this information. HPC will reach out to former Commissioner Jackson regarding photographs to include in the brochure.

Commissioner Hull suggested having brochures available for handout at a Larks game. Commissioner Nodland suggested reviewing how many walking tour maps were printed as she anticipates this brochure being very popular with not only the Larks games, but also with the Sam McQuade Softball Tournament and the community as a whole. \$2000 was allocated for this expense. Ms. Oster stated based on the Highland Acres Walking Tour Map, the cost was approximately \$2500, including additional design costs, for 4,500 printed brochures that were slightly larger than what the typical tri-fold brochure is. She estimates 2,500 brochures can be printed for the \$2000 available. Commissioner Nodland suggested if the Larks had a big event they wanted to hand out the brochures at, that the Larks could be responsible for printing costs. This may also be an option for other teams or agencies within Bismarck that would be interested in handing out a large number of brochures at events. Commissioner Hull suggested a weatherproof holder be installed at the Larks ballpark so brochures would be available at all times. Chair Engel reminded commissioners that once this is created, it is there and funds could be made available in future years for additional orders of brochures.

In regard to selecting a printing company, Chair Engel stated utilizing the same company that produced prior brochures may be beneficial as the style and theme would be consistent. Commissioner Hull asked if there was a cost benefit to utilizing a local company, and the same company as previous work. Commissioner Zenker confirmed no thresholds are being exceeded, and he recommends staff follow standard practice when obtaining quotes.

Ms. Oster provided an update on the HPC booth at the 2026 Bismarck-Mandan Home Show to be held March 20 and 21, 2026. A portion of remaining funds from both the Local History Education Resources Kit and Baseball History Brochures were earmarked to help facilitate this endeavor. Staff did confirm with the State Historical Society of North Dakota (SHSND) this would be an eligible expense under this grant, as well as producing education materials to provide to attendees of the home show. Content to be created for the event includes banners, signs, and information items/guides to hand out. Commissioners Swanson and Sakariassen, as well as staff, have volunteered to attend this event. Additional commissioners may participate if they choose. Commissioner Perrin volunteered to participate. Chair Engel will also attempt to participate. Staff is confirming the available passes for this event and additional passes can be purchased if needed. No action is recommended.

Commissioner Swanson stated the art students at the Bismarck Career Academy are in search of projects and it may be beneficial for the HPC to seek their services for creation of materials, such as banners.

2025 HISTORIC PRESERVATION FUND GRANT UPDATE

Ms. Oster stated a Class III Intensive Survey of the downtown area, including the current Downtown Historic District, and the area surrounding it was described as a project under this grant. Work on this project is expected to begin in March of 2026. A Request for Proposals (RFP) was issued October 20, 2025. Proposals were received December 19, 2025, and 12 proposals were submitted in response to this RFP. The selection committee reviewed the submitted proposals against the evaluation criteria set forth in the RFP and based on their review, recommends Gray & Pape to conduct the Class III for the Downtown District Survey project. Staff recommended the HPC select Gray & Pape for this project.

Chair Engel recused herself due to a conflict of interest and Vice Chair Nodland led discussion regarding this topic. Commissioner Hull asked if any of the companies submitting proposals, and Gray & Pape, have done any work in North Dakota. His concern is whoever is selected knows what they are doing in North Dakota. They may be knowledgeable for other states they've worked in, but he wants to ensure it is done correctly for our state. Vice Chair Nodland stated on the application there is a section asking if there is a local preference, and the response was "no", however Gray & Pape did articulate in their qualifications a number of projects in North Dakota that they did work on. They also have a local subcontractor. Vice Chair Nodland stated when reviewing the proposals, it was taken into account whether the contractor has done work in North Dakota before and if they are familiar with requirements in our state.

MOTION: A motion was made by Commissioner Zenker to approve the request to select Gray & Pape as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Swanson and with Commissioners Hull, Perrin, Sakariassen, Swanson, Zenker and Vice Chair Nodland voting in favor of the motion, the motion was approved. Chair Engel recused herself from voting.

2026 HISTORIC PRESERVATION FUND GRANT APPLICATION

Ms. Oster stated the application window for the 2026 Historic Preservation Fund Grant for the North Dakota Certified Limited Governments (CLG) is open and has a minimum match requirement of 40% of the project total. Matching funds for this can be cash or in-kind support (donated labor) of staff, commissioners or other representatives within the community. The deadline to apply is

February 20, 2026. The period of performance for the grant runs from October 1, 2025, through September 30, 2028. This was confirmed by the State as there was a typo in the notice of funding. A draft application was included for commission review. Four potential projects were identified, as well as an Administrative Budget. The projects are: Historic Context Study, Historic District Plaques, Historic Building Maintenance Brochures and a National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) Coloring Book. The Historic Context Study requests funding for a consultant to conduct a historic context study of the downtown area to build on the upcoming Class III project as well as support a potential nomination within that area in the future. The request funding for this would be \$27,500 with a match of \$7,689. The Historic District Plaques would be for individually eligible, or contributing, or individually listed properties in downtown Bismarck. Currently there are 11 properties individually listed in the NRHP and 19 properties that are individually eligible/contributing. It is intended that the plaques would include a photo of the historic building, a brief description of its significance and unique features, as well as information relating to its inclusion in the NRHP. The funding request is \$8,800 with a match of \$2,694. A Historic Building Maintenance Brochure would create brochures with information to support common local issues. These may include window reglazing or updating certain features that are very common in our historic districts or homes and also used to support future public outreach opportunities. The funding request would be \$1,500 with a match of \$3,080. The last project is to create coloring books highlighting NRHP in Bismarck and each page would include a brief history of the properties. The funding request for this is \$8,600 with a match of \$2,610. Staff recommended approving the 2026 Historic Preservation Fund Grant Application.

Commissioner Hull asked what the standard grant fund amount awarded has been over the years. Ms. Oster stated funds granted have ranged between \$20,000 to approximately \$35,000 or \$36,000. The notice of funding for this specific grant application had a total of \$82,000 available for 8 CLGs in North Dakota, however not all CLGs will apply and not all CLGs received the project funding the applied for.

Commissioner Nodland stated in the grant document that was sent, there is a link to the National Park Service website that shows examples of what other cities and CLGs have received. This project was developed to utilize information the consultant will present April 2, 2027, so that the Downtown District Project continues to grow. A very thorough history of Bismarck will be created and can be used for many projects in the future. Commissioner Nodland requested an amendment be made. On page 20, in regard to the proposed timeline, it was assumed work had to be completed by October 2027, but it does not have to be done until 2028. The grant proposal dates, starting with the July 15 date, should have the year changed to 2028.

MOTION: A motion was made by Commissioner Sakariassen to approve the 2026 Historic Preservation Fund Grant Application, with an amendment to the dates starting from July 15, 2027 forward, to be changed to 2028. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Swanson. This motion was withdrawn.

Commissioner Swanson suggested utilizing students from the Bismarck Career Academy to help design and create coloring books. Commissioner Nodland believes we should also continue to work with local artists as it is currently written. Commissioners discussed writing this as "student groups and the arts community" to allow inclusion of all interested artists.

Chair Engel asked for clarification as to where the district plaques will be mounted. Ms. Oster has spoken with members of the Downtowners and they have had interest from property owners about placing a plaque on the building. If the plaque were to be placed in the public right-of-way,

additional approvals may be required from Engineering, and it may create issues regarding the sidewalk component as some areas are wider than others. Commissioner Nodland questioned if the plaques would need to go through Downtown Design Review. Commissioner Zenker stated due to the location, there are limitations on size and other specifications. Once this is researched, and a design concept is created, it would need to go through Downtown Design Review for approval. Ms. Oster stated provisions within the zoning ordinance do exist that call out exclusions for signs, plaques included, and should a review be necessary, it would go through the administrative sign review process. Commissioner Swanson brought attention to the need to design the plaques and feels this may not have been sufficiently explained as to how this will be accomplished. Ms. Oster clarified the plaque design would ultimately be a written description on the significance of the building and typically this information is already included within the nomination, along with a historic photograph of the building. It is believed no outside artistic design would be necessary and therefore this was not included in the proposal. Commissioner Hull stated the idea is the plaque would include the original building name, a photograph, and few paragraphs about the building. This would be a standard design that can easily be created. At most, he believes a graphic designer may be needed only to create the layout. Chair Engel stated the text may need to be reviewed by SHPO and the Park Service. Commissioner Nodland asked what material will be used to fabricate the plaque. Ms. Oster found a Bismarck connection to a company that can make an aluminum plaque in Hood River, Oregon. Based on information regarding outdoor National Registry signs that have been created in other places, the prices ranged from \$400 to \$1800 depending on design, size, and installation costs. The price presented to commissioners is a mid-range price.

An amendment in wording regarding the National Register coloring books is requested changing it from "artists" to "local groups". An amendment was also requested for the dates.

MOTION: A motion was made by Commissioner Hull to approve the 2026 Historic Preservation Fund Grant Application with amendments. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Swanson and with Commissioners Hull, Nodland, Perrin, Sakariassen, Swanson, Zenker, and Chair Engel voting in favor of the motion, the motion was approved.

OTHER BUSINESS

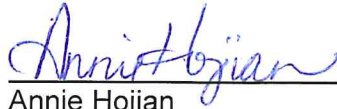
Commissioner Zenker brought attention to the City of Bismarck's social media post regarding the addition of an original 1926 firetruck that was recently brought back to Bismarck and encouraged commissioners to check it out.

Chair Engel asked if the application process for the Historic Preservation Award was still open. Ms. Oster did confirm that it is, and will be open until March 30, 2026.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chair Engel declared the meeting of the Bismarck Historic Preservation Commission adjourned at 3:50 p.m. to meet again on February 18, 2026, at 3:00 p.m. in the Tom Baker Meeting Room.

Respectfully Submitted,



Annie Hojian
Recording Secretary



Damita Engel
Chair