Prairie Striders™ Running Club
BROOKINGS, SD EST. 1969

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Tuesday, Sept. 1, 2026

Noon, Mills Construction, 1311 S. Main Ave., and via Teams at:

Present: Dave Graves, president; Jay Larsen, treasurer; Trevor Penning, webmaster; Matt Buenger, Brett Pettigrew
Present via Teams: Shari Landmark

1. Approved **July 7 minutes** for posting on website.

2. Discussed the **McCrory Garden Path Project**, which will create a paved trail and a hard surface clay/small pebbles trail that will go through two and a half kilometers of the arboretum. This includes a SDSU Cross Country training trail.

   Jay Larsen noted the project is estimated at $1.1 to $1.4 million with bids to go out this fall and the work to be completed by the start of classes in August 2027. Funding sources include a $600,000 federal alternative transportation grant and $150,000 from the SDSU Students' Association. By a unanimous voice vote, the club opted to donate $500.

   Larsen noted that this project aligns with the club's aim to promote recreational fitness. The trails will have open access with some soft lighting for night use.

3. A **Prairie Striders Fall Leaf Run** using that trail also was discussed. The event would be during the school week promoting use of the trail by SDSU students and others, Larsen said.

   He said, "We would provide publicity (Wellness Center-work with Shari Landmark, Collegian and posters, have refreshments, and provide information to support McCrory Gardens, Wellness Center, and Prairie Striders (membership information). Timing would be on your own."

   Discussion was favorable, but the run a year away and dependent on the paths being completed, no action was taken.

Race director reports

• **Run for Fun Brookings** — July 8, 15, 22, 29 — Average attendance was 60, Katie Jones was in charge this year with assistance from Kati Merkley. Predictor races also held 7/29.
• **Jack 15** — Sept. 19 — Dave Graves reported a flood of 50 registrations in the last four days (deadline for early bird pricing) has pushed entries to 137 after being quite slow earlier. Still some volunteer positions to fill, but doing well overall and sponsor support has been good. Wellness Center is overseeing the kids run at 10:45 a.m.
• **Brookings Marathon** — Oct. 3 — Matt Buenger reported total are down, about mid-200 at this point. More volunteers are needed. Anderson Race Management will time Oct. 3 races with the club timing the Scotty Roberts 5k Oct. 2.
• **Hobo Day 5K** — Oct. 24 — Randy Hanson was absent, but TJ Carlson shared earlier that registration will open soon and that planning is underway.

Miscellaneous

1. **Newsletter update** — Dave Graves — November

2. **Donations** — $250 provided Jackrabbit Track & Field for golf tournament.

3. **Offer from Derek Ettel, Sioux Falls —** *Facebook message 7/27: "*Now that I have gone into fulltime coaching, I find I have more time to invest in the running community. Maybe that's leading a clinic, giving a talk, helping with workouts, race prep, or anything else that may be of need." There were no suggestions at our meeting.

Future discussions

- Recognizing our Long-time members with a decal or other item as a thank-you for their commitment to the Prairie Striders. The letter will highlight what their support provided: Prairie Striders races, race equipment (saving over $1,000 for timing many races), free runs (Arbor Day and Turkey Day), scholarships, buying needed items for SDSU and local area high schools, fitness research, SDSU Briggs Library Prairie Striders Collection and volunteering at events.

- Preparing for the Prairie Striders 60th anniversary (Sept. 12, 2029).

- Ask Rod DeHaven if he has specific lower cost items or projects the Prairie Striders may help.

- Membership

Next meeting – Oct. 6*.*