



9/11 families aim to prove Saudi link

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Argus Leader

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Sioux Falls Council OKs budget

Approval comes after amendments added restoring pool and library hours

Trevor J. Mitchell
Sioux Falls Argus Leader
USA TODAY NETWORK

The Sioux Falls City Council approved the city’s \$775 million budget for 2026, after making a number of amendments that blunted some of the most contentious service reductions that Mayor Paul TenHaken had proposed to

head off the effects of coming property tax reform. And while not every vote was unanimous, what has at times been a tense process over the past few months of the budget season seemed to end on a fairly even-keeled note. Councilor Curt Soehl kicked off the amendments by proposing that \$500,000 be kept out of the housing

fund — for now. He emphasized he’d be happy to see the funds approved, once a plan for the usage of the money, which will be coming from liquor license bid revenue, was in place. Councilor Miranda Basye then asked to increase the Siouxland Libraries budget by \$270,000 to maintain current operating hours. “We have a lot of folks who are accessing the libraries in the evenings,” Basye said. Director of Finance Shawn Pritchett said they’d likely look to find other ways to save money in the library budget.

Similarly, Councilor David Barranco moved that \$75,000 be allocated to allow for the city’s outdoor pools to remain open through Aug. 16, 2026, asking that the costs be offset by existing funds to avoid requiring more funds. Councilor Rich Merkouris was the only person who voted against the amendment, saying that while he supported pools, he was concerned about the lack of a confirmed place where \$75,000 would be cut elsewhere in the budget of the parks department.

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Turning Point USA founder Charlie Kirk speaks at a Utah Valley University event in Orem, Utah, on Sept. 10. TRENT NELSON/THE SALT LAKE TRIBUNE VIA REUTERS

Turning Point founder Kirk is killed in Utah

‘Person of interest’ questioned, released after activist was shot

N’dea Yancey-Bragg, Joey Garrison, Josh Meyer, Aysha Bagchi, Dinah Voyles Pulver, Bart Jansen, Swapna Venugopal Ramaswamy and Michael Loria
USA TODAY

Conservative activist and Turning Point USA cofounder Charlie Kirk died after being shot in the neck during an event at Utah Valley University in Orem, Utah, on Sept. 10. He was 31. “It is with a heavy heart that we confirm that Charles James Kirk has been murdered by a gunshot,” stated Turning Point USA, the non-profit organization Kirk cofounded, in a social media post just before 6 p.m. EDT. “May he be received into the merciful arms of our loving Savior, who suffered and died for Charlie.” After several hours of questions about the shooter, FBI Director Kash Patel confirmed on social media that “the subject for the horrific shooting today that took the life of Charlie Kirk is now in custody.” He later said the “subject in custody” had been released after an interrogation by law

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South Dakota leaders react after Kirk dies in shooting

Angela George
Sioux Falls Argus Leader
USA TODAY NETWORK

South Dakota political leaders are offering their prayers after conservative activist Charlie Kirk was fatally shot Sept. 10 while speaking at a college campus in Utah. Kirk, 31, was speaking at Utah Valley University in Orem, Utah, when he was shot in the neck during a question-and-answer session with students. “Charlie Kirk was a good man, a great American and a true voice for Freedom,” South Dakota Gov. Larry Rhoden said. “Please join Sandy and me in praying for his family.” The governor’s office announced the lowering of flags as well. President Donald Trump issued a statement on Truth Social following reports of the shooting. “We must all pray for Charlie Kirk, who has been shot. A great guy from top to bottom. GOD BLESS HIM!” Trump said.

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Trump-China trade dispute raises anxiety for SD soybean farmers

Seth Tupper
South Dakota Searchlight

RAPID CITY — Jerry Schmitz is rarely at a loss for words about soybeans. But when asked if farmers have faith in a good outcome from the Trump administration’s trade standoff with China, his gaze shifted and his brow creased momentarily as he thought about the best way to answer. “Hope might be the better word over faith,” he said. Schmitz, of rural Vermillion, is the executive director of the South Dakota Soybean Association and the South Dakota Soybean Checkoff. A checkoff is a fee that’s collected from soybean sales and used for research and promotion of the crop. During and after a roundtable discussion Saturday at the Central States Fairgrounds hosted by a nonprofit called Farmers for Free Trade, Schmitz expressed concerns about the effects of trade disputes on farmers. About 60% of soybeans grown in South Dakota are exported, with China formerly buying about 30%, Schmitz said. China imports soybeans largely for livestock feed to meet the growing demand for meat among its 1.4 billion people.

Now the country is boycotting purchases of U.S. soybeans in retaliation for tariffs on Chinese goods imposed recently by Republican President Donald Trump. “There is not a bushel sold to China right now, and we’re about to harvest,” Schmitz said. Trump has said he’s wielding tariffs — taxes on imported goods — as a negotiating tool to correct trade imbalances with other countries. The Chinese boycott has reduced demand for U.S. soybeans, which has influenced prices. Soybeans sold for about \$10.50 per bushel one year ago in South Dakota, but are now \$1 to \$1.50 lower, and there are fears of further declines without a China trade deal. Another participant in Saturday’s roundtable, South Dakota Republican Congressman Dusty Johnson, put the impact of lower prices in perspective. Noting that South Dakota farmers raise nearly 250 million bushels of

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