



GOVERNMENT

Commissioner's Desk



By Duane Morris,
Ottawa County Commissioner,
District #3

Please remember this is NOT an official documentation of the minutes, it is meant to be an informative synopsis of County Commissioner activities from my perspective. If you want more information on a subject I mention here I encourage you to read the full minutes of the meetings elsewhere in the newspaper or online at www.ottawacounty.org

I sincerely hope everyone had a joyous Christmas with family and friends. I wish you the best year possible in 2026. As I get older good health comes up higher on my New Year wish list. It's a great time to give seri-

ous thought to what you really want and where you want to be at the end of 2026 not just a list of broken new year's resolutions on February first.

My first item of business is to welcome Jason Gipson to the Ottawa County Staff! Jason will be our new Emergency Management Director. Marie Ballou has done an outstanding job for the last 15 years (I believe). Marie is retiring January 24. Best wishes to her and Marvin as their new adventures unfold!

We discussed the Kansas Natural Resource Coalition and consensus was not to renew membership. The discussion turned to NaCo (National Association of Counties), but no decision was made. I have been receiving their newsletter this past year and they seem to be a good source of information about what's happening in Washington, DC. They advocate and lobby for local governments on the federal level.

Truette McQueen, Appraiser, discussed the GIS (Geographic Information System) mapping contract from Kimball Mapping Services. The contract and the cost is the same as last year. The courthouse will be closed

to the public at noon on New Year's Eve, December 31st. This will allow staff time to get the year 2026 closed out.

Several items are on the radar for 2026 including joint meetings with city councils across the county to get a joint vision of what we see Ottawa County looking like 5 years maybe 10 or more years in the future. How can we work together to make it happen?

There has been interest in purchasing the Blue Store in downtown Minneapolis and I would like to see a decision made and move forward with developing that facility. My thoughts revolve around what is best for the community and still reflect the wishes of the Wedel family. They have entrusted a historical landmark full of memories to us!

Last on my list is to announce the winners of the Choose Ottawa County gift cards for the month of December: Gabe Davidson of the Sheriff's Department and Casey Ahlquist of the County Attorney's Office. Many thanks for doing what you do for Ottawa County!

Thank you for the opportunity to serve you!

Rep. Derek Schmidt Welcomes The Kansas City Chiefs To Kansas

On December 22, 2025, Congressman Derek Schmidt (KS-02) released the following statement regarding the Kansas City Chiefs announcement to move to Kansas:

"Keeping the Chiefs in Kansas City is a victory for our region that will reward generations to come. Welcome to Kansas! Go Chiefs!"

Tracking Dogs

By Jordan Kiel, KDWP
I have been looking all over and can't find the deer I shot. Can I use dogs to look for it? Yes, but there are some rules you must follow while doing so. If you are tracking the deer with dogs, each dog must be on a leash at all times. This is so we don't have dogs running down crippled or injured deer and killing them. They are meant for the recovery of the animal, not the taking of it. Second, if you are tracking it outside of shooting hours you cannot carry a method of take. That means you can't have a weapon on you to kill the deer with. If you are tracking the deer during legal hours you can only have the method of take your permit allows. In other words, you can't carry a rifle or pistol while you are tracking a deer you shot with your bow on an archery permit. Thirdly, if you have buddies tagging along to help track, they need to have a valid Kansas hunting license. If you would like to read the regulations pertaining to this, they are in our hunting regulation booklet in the big game section. If you have any questions, please feel free to email me at: jordan.keil@ks.gov

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(First published in The Minneapolis Messenger on January 1, 2026)

NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING OF THE OTTAWA COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

To all qualified electors residing within the boundaries of the Ottawa County Conservation District, notice is hereby given that pursuant to K.S.A. 2-1907, as amended, on the 14th day of January 2026, at 6 p.m., an annual meeting of the Ottawa County Conservation District will be held at the Golden Wheel Senior Center, 114 S. Concord, Minneapolis, KS 67467.

The meeting agenda shall include the following business items:

ONE:
The supervisors of the Ottawa County Conservation District shall make full and due report of their activities and financial affairs since the last annual meeting.

TWO:
The supervisors shall conduct an election by secret ballot of qualified electors there present, of two supervisors to serve for a term of three years from the date of said meeting.

The term of Tyrel Owens and Brody Buzzard is expiring.

All in the county of Ottawa, in the State of Kansas.

By Tyrel Owens, Chairperson
Ottawa County Conservation District

Attest:
Shannon Myer
District Manager

(First published in The Minneapolis Messenger on December 25, 2025)

IN THE TWENTY-EIGHTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT
DISTRICT COURT, OTTAWA COUNTY, KANSAS
PROBATE DEPARTMENT

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF)
JOYCE LOUISE SHOEMAKER, DECEASED) Case No. OT-2025-PR-000029
Pursuant to K.S.A. Chapter 59

NOTICE OF HEARING

THE STATE OF KANSAS TO ALL PERSONS CONCERNED:

You are notified that a Petition has been filed in this Court by Gwyn L. Schuler, a daughter and one of the heirs of Joyce Louise Shoemaker, deceased, requesting:

Descent be determined of the following described real estate situated in Ottawa County, Kansas:

The West Half of the Southwest Quarter (W½SW¼) of Section Thirty-two (32), Township Eleven (11) South, Range Three (3) West of the Sixth (6th) Principal Meridian, Ottawa County, Kansas; LESS All that part of the Southwest quarter of Section 32, Township 11 South, Range 3 West of the 6th P.M., Ottawa County, Kansas, lying North and West of the centerline of Battle Creek;

and of all personal property and other Kansas real estate owned by Decedent at the time of death. And that such property and all personal property and other Kansas real estate owned by the Decedent at the time of death be assigned pursuant to the laws of intestate succession.

You are required to file your written defenses to the Petition on or before January 20, 2026 at 10:00 am in the city of Minneapolis in Ottawa County, Kansas, at which time and place the cause will be heard. Should you fail to file your written defenses, judgment and decree will be entered in due course upon the Petition.

Gwyn L. Schuler, Petitioner

SUBMITTED BY:
Cody Branham, #27183
ADAMS JONES LAW FIRM, P.A.
1635 N. Waterfront Parkway, Suite 200
Wichita, KS 67206-6623
Phone: (316) 265-8591 / Fax: (316) 265-9719
cbranham@adamsjones.com
Attorneys for Petitioner

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(First published in The Minneapolis Messenger on January 1, 2026)

ALLEN & ASSOCIATES LAW, LLC
212 North Concord
Minneapolis, Kansas 67467
(785) 392-2105
r.comfort@att.net

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF OTTAWA COUNTY, KANSAS

MATTHEW VILLAPANDO)
Plaintiff,)
vs.) Case No. 25 CV 31
MATTHEW DUTTON)
ROBERT ANDERSON)
HEARTLAND CREDIT UNION)
CARI FRIESEN)
KANSAS DEPARTMENT OF)
REVENUE AND KANSAS HIGHWAY PATROL))
Defendant)

NOTICE OF SUIT
(Pursuant to K.S.A. Chapter 60-307)

THE STATE OF KANSAS TO:

Any interested party

You are hereby notified that on the 23rd day of December, 2025, a Petition to Quiet Title to Personal Property, specifically a 2014 Ford Flex SUV VIN#2FMGK5D88EB07021 was filed in the District Court of Ottawa County, Kansas, by Matthew Villapando, praying for judgment against the above-named defendant and any interested party.

You are hereby required to plead to said Petition on or before the 14th day of February, 2026, at 10:00 o'clock a.m., in said Court, at the Ottawa County Courthouse, 307 North Concord, Minneapolis, Kansas. Should you fail to plead therein, judgment and decree will be entered in due course on said Petition.

/s/ Matthew Villapando
Matthew Villapando, Plaintiff

PREPARED AND APPROVED BY:

ALLEN & ASSOCIATES LAW, LLC.
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J. R. Allen
Attorney for Plaintiff

(First published in The Minneapolis Messenger on January 1, 2026)

IN THE 28th JUDICIAL DISTRICT
DISTRICT COURT OF Ottawa COUNTY, KANSAS

IN THE MATTER OF THE PETITION OF

Ashly JoAnn Doering Present Name Case No. OT-2025-CV-30
Ashly JoAnn Forshee Div. No. _____
New Name _____

PURSUANT TO K.S.A. CHAPTER 60

NOTICE OF HEARING - PUBLICATION

THE STATE OF KANSAS TO ALL WHO ARE OR MAY BE CONCERNED:

You are hereby notified that Ashly JoAnn Doering [Petitioner's Full Name], filed a Petition in the above court on the 20th day of January 2025, requesting a judgment and order changing his/her name from Ashly JoAnn Doering to Ashly JoAnn Forshee.

The Petition will be heard in Ottawa County District Court, 307 N Concord [Court address], Minneapolis [City], Kansas, on the 20 day of January, 2026, at 10:00 a.m. p.m.

If you have any objection to the requested name change, you are required to file a responsive pleading on or before March 1st, 2026 [Insert date at least 41 days after first publication] in this court or appear at the hearing and object to the requested name change. If you fail to act, judgment and order will be entered upon the Petition as requested by Petitioner.

Petitioner, Pro Se
Name (Print): Ashly JoAnn Doering
Address 1: _____
Address 2: _____
City, State, Zip: Minneapolis KS 67467
Telephone Number: _____

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