

# Politicians hear concerns during Czech Fest

BY KAREN BONAR  
Ellsworth County I-R

WILSON — Both politicians who attended the legislative coffee July 26 during the Czech Fest expressed frustration with the most recent budget calendar.

“The house is working on the budget the first week of session. They were going to work right away,” said Sen. Tory Marie Blew, R-Great Bend. “The house did all the work on the budget and the senate had it not two weeks and just passed it out. That’s not due diligence. That’s your taxpaying dollars. The senate did not do its job as a chamber.”

Blew said she voted against the budget because she wasn’t satisfied with the process.

“The house wanted to fund something at \$1 million just so they could have a conversation the senate would fund it at \$1 (in their version of the budget). Why?” she asked. “When you’re talking about negotiations, you’re going to meet in the middle.

“I found it very frustrating we spent a day on commerce committee and the next day we passed it. These are multi-million dollar agencies that we did not spend time on. I was very frustrated on this whole process.

“Our one job is to pass a budget and I do not think the senate did our due diligence.”

Blew acknowledged growing pains exist when formats, such as the legislative calendar, are changed.

“We learn a lot about what to do, not what to do,” she said. “I know appropriations and ways and means are going to start working on the month in September.”

Blew mentioned the legislative session was tightened up on the calendar.

“In the end, they shortened it by counting days we weren’t in session. They also counted a short break. They counted that two weeks as part of the 90 days (of the session),” she said. “Since I’ve been up there, it’s never been done. I just don’t think that’s right. I don’t think it was necessary”

Rep. Troy Waymaster, R-Bunker Hill, said during previous sessions, legislators returned after April 20 when new tax numbers are available.

“What used to happen is we would go on break, new revenue estimates would come in,” he said. “They would also talk about any bills that had a fiscal note. We would come back in the first week of May and discuss all that — analyze the fiscal notes of the bills that



KAREN BONAR/Ellsworth County Independent-Reporter

Rep. Troy Waymaster, R-Bunker Hill, and Sen. Tory Marie Blew, R-Great Bend, listen to concerns during the legislative coffee July 26 during the Czech Fest in Wilson.

have already passed. We couldn’t do that (this year) because we adjourned April 11.”

Waymaster said he served as appropriations chairman for 10 years.

“I’ve been though many different processes in regard to the budget,” he said. “(The) only time we adjourned prior to revenue estimates coming out was in 2020 due to COVID.”

Waymaster said he checked, and was told any financial implications of the budget, which took effect July 1, will be addressed once the legislative session resumes Jan. 12.

“So, we will have to come back and address all these fiscal notes that took effect on July 1 in January and see whether or not it needs to be funded fully, partially or not at all, whatever the case may be,” he said. “That compounds the discussion in regard to the budget.”

Blew said she supports

revisiting the current setup, established by the Kansas Constitution, which sets a maximum length of 90 days, unless two-thirds of the members of each house approve extending the session.

“I would support changing the constitution to get rid of the legislature not only being in session for 90 days,” she said. “That was when the state became a state and farmers were in the legislature and we were in an agriculture session. Why do we have to be in session only 90 days?”

“Every state is different. Personally, I think we should be working longer than 90 days. Right now, we still get phone calls, try to help constituents.”

The calendar will remain the same for 2026.

“House and senate leadership agreed to a two-year calendar, so they’re going to do it again this next year,” Blew

said.

Waymaster said he thinks the 2025 adjournment was too early.

“In my opinion we need to come back the first week in May before we close out the legislative session and before and before the fiscal year starts July 1,” he said.

Education spending was also a hot topic for the morning.

Waymaster said the state currently spends between 51-52 percent of its budget on K-12 education.

“We are putting more and more money into K-12 and they constantly ask for more,” he said.

Waymaster said the state increased its public education funding following the Gannon lawsuit, which was filed in November 2010.

“Since (2013), you have had anywhere from \$100-\$110 million each year go into public education,” he said. “In 2019 there was

an increase to public education based off the CPI. For the last two years, K-12 education has received \$500 million (over two years) more than they would have received and more than the supreme court (required).

“You can try to pull money from other agencies, (but it) is very limited because so much money is going to K-12 education.

“Next year, automatically because of what was agreed upon and sustained by the Kansas Supreme Court, another \$110 million is going to K-12 education. We are more than funding K-12 education. It is not underfunded.”

Patrons in attendance expressed concern about teacher pay, administrative salaries, as well as athletics dominating budgets.

“The State of Kansas

does not dictate the salaries for our teachers. That is up to local school boards,” Waymaster said. “What irritates me the most is a lot of those decisions come down from the superintendent, down to the board. There was an increase to the superintendent salaries, but not the teachers. I told my wife, ‘Why didn’t you increase pay to teachers?’ (She said) ‘It was a request by the superintendent.’”

Blew said boards should take an active role in decision-making.

“I’d be interested ... do board members know how the funding formula works?” she asked. “(School funding) shouldn’t be so complicated.”

Waymaster said the state spends about \$6 billion on education.

“Some legislators are like, ‘We don’t have any say on what goes on.’ Some feel like there’s no accountability,” he said. “We would rather have school boards do that than have the state step in.”

Blew said she was previously a teacher, and she said constituents in Great Bend experience a similar frustration.

“People don’t mind paying a little more property taxes to go to teacher salaries,” she said. “A couple years ago they spent over a quarter of a million on two busses for athletics. We don’t have a bus route.”

*Editor’s note: The forum also discussed funding for public television. The I-R staff is working on a story about the topic for a future edition.*

## 2026 City of Kanopolis RNR & Budget Hearing

(First Published in the Ellsworth County Independent/Reporter, July 31, 2025)

2026

NOTICE OF HEARING TO EXCEED REVENUE NEUTRAL RATE AND BUDGET HEARING

The governing body of  
City of Kanopolis

will meet on September 9, 2025 at 5:30 at Kanopolis City Hall for the purpose of hearing and answering objections of taxpayers relating to the proposed use of all funds, the amount of ad valorem tax and the Revenue Neutral Rate.

Detailed budget information is available at Kanopolis City Hall and will be available at this hearing.

BUDGET SUMMARY

Proposed Budget 2026 Expenditures and Amount of Current Year Estimate for 2025 Ad Valorem Tax establish the maximum limits of the 2026 budget.

Estimated Tax Rate is subject to change depending on the final assessed valuation.

	Prior Year Actual for 2024	Current Year Estimate for 2025		Proposed Budget for 2026			
FUND	Expenditures	Actual Tax Rate*	Expenditures	Actual Tax Rate*	Budget Authority for Expenditures	Amount of 2025 Ad Valorem Tax	Proposed Estimated Tax Rate*
General	286,720	38.482	237,655	35.882	324,355	115,363	36.065
Debt Service							
Library	8,823	4.895	9,500	4.564	38,650	14,600	4.564
Noxious Weed	204	0.085	200	0.079	1,940	252	0.079
Recreation		0.124	500	0.116	3,020	370	0.116
Employee Benefits	21,898	5.772	22,000	5.382	47,200	17,216	5.382
Cemetery	50	0.903	100	0.842	29,900	2,694	0.842
Special Highway			2,000		34,255		
Solid Waste Utility	50,446		49,930			59,294	
Water Utility	201,798		177,715		227,007		
Sewer Utility	134,710		54,056		108,240		
Sewer Utility Revolving	5,878		5,879				
Non-Budgeted Funds	116,484						
Totals	827,011	50.261	559,535	46.865	873,861	150,495	47.048
					Revenue Neutral Rate**		
					43.418		
Less: Transfers	32,000		6,556		5,000		
Net Expenditure	795,011		552,979		868,861		
Total Tax Levied	139,229		139,229		XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX		
Assessed Valuation	2,770,113		2,970,856		3,198,776		
Outstanding Indebtedness,							
January 1,	2023	2024	2025				
G.O. Bonds	1,504,499	1,476,992	1,449,037				
Revenue Bonds	0	0	0				
Other	16,794	182,495	168,025				
Lease Purchase Principal	0	0	0				
Total	1,521,293	1,659,487	1,617,062				
*Tax rates are expressed in mills							
** Revenue Neutral Rate as defined by KSA 79-2988							
City of Kanopolis							
City Official Title: City Clerk							

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## 2024 Ellsworth County Delinquent Tax List

Kathryn Stevenson, Prop Addr: 3.5 Acres 21/16/06 Twp-Empire, \$172.40  
Henry Stoltenberg, Prop Addr: 305 County Rd 67450 City-Holyrood, \$894.30  
Henry Stoltenberg, Prop Addr: 304 E Santa Fe Ave 67450 City-Holyrood, \$215.64  
Billy R Stone Jr, Prop Addr: 312 S Colorado St 67454 City-Kanopolis, \$1,118.32  
Lawrence Swisher Jr, Prop Addr: 323 W Wichita 67459 City-Lorraine, \$9.75  
Lawrence Swisher Jr, Prop Addr: Lots 13-19, Blk 32 67459 City-Lorraine, \$11.89  
James & Beverly Taylor, Prop Addr: 400 E 8 th St 67439 City-Ellsworth, \$1,902.83  
Carol Teeter, Prop Addr: 2915 Ave W 67464 Twp-Langley, \$990.10  
Terina Templeton, Prop Addr: 225 22nd St 67490 City-Wilson, \$205.48  
Terina Templeton, Prop Addr: 2207 Ave C 67490 City-Wilson, \$296.49  
Robert Thille, Prop Addr: 100 N Kansas St 67454 City-Kanopolis, \$76.36  
Mark Towery, Prop Addr: 1315 Spring St 67439 City-Ellsworth, \$1,659.76  
James & Barbara Tyree, Prop Addr: 435 S 5 th Rd 67490 Twp-Wilson, \$1,363.92  
Cade S Uhl, Prop Addr: 207 N Lincoln 67439 City-Ellsworth, \$1,193.19  
Dawn Urbanek, Prop Addr: 1009 Prospect St 67439 City-Ellsworth, \$985.75  
Frank & Sheila Vasquez, Prop Addr: 509 N Charles St 67450 City-Holyrood, \$528.27  
Frank & Sheila Vasquez, Prop Addr: 111 E Santa Fe Ave 67450 City-Holyrood, \$215.30  
Frank & Sheila Vasquez, Prop Addr: 105 E Santa Fe Ave 67450 City-Holyrood, \$120.07  
Frank Vasquez, Prop Addr: 209 S Smith 67450 City-Holyrood, \$295.86  
Ronnie & Neva Vaughn, Prop Addr: 318 N Main St 67450 City-Holyrood, \$88.52  
Glenn R III & Cerenia Vessey, Prop Addr: 307 E Santa Fe Ave 67450 City-Holyrood, \$163.82  
Glenn R III & Cerenia Vessey, Prop Addr: 103 S Barbeck St 67450 City-Holyrood, \$522.28  
Glenn R III & Cerenia Vessey, Prop Addr: 107 S Barbeck St 67450 City-Holyrood, \$1,155.79

Michael & Caresse Vetter, Prop Addr: 201 Ricky Rd 67425 Twp-Empire, \$238.59  
Charles D Jr & Ellaine Vopat, Prop Addr: 1297 Ave E 67439 Twp-Columbia, \$771.08  
Charles D Jr & Ellaine Vopat, Prop Addr: 1465 Ave E 67439 Twp-Sherman, \$335.53  
Jonathan & Mary Walker, Prop Addr: 105 S Kansas St 67454 City-Kanopolis, \$4,378.82  
Larry & Mable Walker, Prop Addr: Hwy 111 67439 Twp-Clear Creek, \$459.52  
Mary Jo Watkins & Anna Barrett, Prop Addr: 1011 W 12 th St 67439 City-Ellsworth, \$1,182.05  
Mary Jo Watkins, Prop Addr: 1001 W 11 th St 67439 City-Ellsworth, \$40.08  
Mary Jo Watkins, Prop Addr: W Nassau Ave 67450 Twp-Valley, \$193.06  
Carol J Weis Rev Trust, Prop Addr: 103 E 3 rd St 67454 City-Kanopolis, \$1,223.60  
Jereme Whelan, Prop Addr: 2286 29 th Rd 67464 Twp-Langley, \$1,372.72  
Brad & Diana Whiteside, Prop Addr: 2012 Ave D 67490 Twp-Wilson, \$1,288.65  
Brad & Diana Whiteside, Prop Addr: 2016 Ave D 67490 City-Wilson, \$902.32  
Thomas & Lori Wikoff, Prop Addr: 2945 Ave J 67425 Twp-Carneiro, \$961.38  
Thomas & Lori Wikoff, Prop Addr: 2788 Ave K 67439 Twp-Carneiro, \$1,685.42  
Lance Wiles, Prop Addr: 925 Ave L 67439 Twp-Black Wolf, \$786.42  
Jonathan Wimer & Renae Wimer-Ruoff, Prop Addr: Ave F 67439 Twp-Columbia, \$276.87  
Roxanne Witter, Prop Addr: 418 S Illinois St 67454 City-Kanopolis, \$1,833.29  
Kristyne V Yenkey Trust, Prop Addr: Hwy 141 67464 Twp-Empire, \$1,335.26  
Randall & Denise Zajic, Prop Addr: 322 N Main St 67450 City-Holyrood, \$60.85  
Patrick Zurava, Prop Addr: 109 W A St 67454 City-Kanopolis, \$215.60  
1883 Investments Inc, Prop Addr: 300 Kingsley St 67439 City-Ellsworth 5,226.61  
Grand Total \$443,363.36

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