



Early Deadline

Due to the Thursday, Dec. 25 Christmas holiday, *The Horton Headlight* deadline for news/ads is Friday, Dec. 19, by 3:00 p.m.

The Horton Headlight

Headlight office is open Fridays 9:00-3:00 phone 785-486-2512 headlight@carsoncomm.com or you may call Susan Higley at her home 785-872-3245



VOLUME 139, NUMBER 2

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2025

OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER FOR BROWN COUNTY & THE CITIES OF EVEREST, MUSCOTAH & POWHATTAN

75¢ PER COPY



Pictured L to R: Kaydece Fultz, Ayden Powell, Audrey Brown, Harrison Bare, Tessa McAlexander, Quinton Allison. Photo Credit - Steve Caplinger.

ACCHS King & Queen of Mats

Submitted by Noelle Walters

Atchison County Community Junior Senior High School is pleased to announce the candidates for 2025-26 King and Queen of Mats. Queen candidates are Audrey Brown, daughter of Angie & Donnie Brown; Kaydece Fultz, daughter of Estacia & James Sinclair; and Tessa McAlexander, daughter of Jennifer & Justin McAlexander. King candidates are Quinton Allison, son of Elise Allison and Travis Allison; Harrison Bare, son of Emily & James Bare; and Ayden Powell, son of Gretchen Powell and Robert Powell. The crowning ceremony will take place Thursday, December 18, 2025, in the ACCJSHS Gym, at 5:30 p.m., prior to the home wrestling Dinner Dual.

Donations received at Sheriff's Office

By John Merchant

For many years we were blessed to have had an individual donate to the Sheriff's office with the requirement of giving to those in need. Working through local advocates, families in need are suggested and then assisted by the generosity of this anonymous Santa. His only stipulation was that no one was to know where the donations came from. He wanted those who were struggling to have a helping hand, especially during the holidays. He passed away several years ago and his angels have since carried on the tradition. Today, we were presented with an abundance of food, toys, mittens, hats as well as money for gift cards. Over the years, many families throughout the county have benefitted from the kindness and benevolence of this family. We are very thankful to have people in our county that deeply care about others throughout the year. The only stipulation is this selfless act is to be passed on to others down the road, when and if families can afford to do so.

Brown County Commissioners

Unofficial minutes
By Clerk Nikki Lee
December 1, 2025

The Board of Brown County Commissioners met in regular session with the following members present: Chairman Lucas Heinen, Commissioner William Pollock and Commissioner Richard Tesoriero. Also present was Brown County Clerk Nicole Lee. County Counselor Austin Parker was present for a portion of the meeting. Lucas Heinen opened the meeting at 1:00 p.m.

All recited the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by a prayer led by Commissioner Heinen.

COUNTY PERSONNEL / PUBLIC COMMENT

Road and Bridge
Road and Bridge Secretary Tami Lehmkuhl presented information regarding alternative road maintenance options from Vance Brothers.

Commission Discussion
The County Commissioners discussed the following items: employee background checks, transferring 2026 KCAMP property insurance savings into Capital Improvement fund, and field drainage into County road ditches.

MINUTES 11-26-2025
Motion by Richard Tesoriero to approve the November 26, 2025 minutes. Seconded by William Pollock. Motion carried.

PROPERTY TAX INFORMATION
Tax Accountant Jennifer Will-

iams presented information regarding property appraisals and fair market value.

COUNTY COUNSELOR
County Counselor Austin Parker provided updates on coordinating a meeting with Hiawatha Amberwell to discuss primary care, alternative bridges, and road maintenance.

PERSONNEL FORM
Motion by Lucas Heinen to approve revised New Hire Data Sheet as presented. Seconded by Richard Tesoriero. Motion carried.

KCAMP INSURANCE
Motion by Lucas Heinen to renew Brown County's KCAMP policy with the deductible option of \$25,000/\$50,000 and keep all County buildings covered at an estimated cost of \$194,163. Seconded by Richard Tesoriero. Motion carried.

NRP DISCUSSION
Brown County Clerk Nicole Lee presented the Commission with a draft renewal of Brown County's Neighborhood Revitalization Plan. Brown County Appraiser Steve Markham was present to discuss possible revisions.

RESOLUTION 2025-21
Motion by Lucas Heinen to approve Resolution 2025-21 Neighborhood Revitalization Notice, which sets a public hearing to consider renewing the Brown County Neighborhood Revitalization Plan. Seconded by Richard Tesoriero. Motion carried.

Basketball Action

The HHS Charger basketball teams traveled to Pleasant Ridge on Friday night, December 12th.

The scores from the night's action were:

JV girls- Horton 23, Pleasant Ridge 28

JV boys-Horton 27, Pleasant Ridge 35

Varsity Girls-Horton 54 and Pleasant Ridge 33

Varsity Boys-Horton 25, Pleasant Ridge 37.

The hearing is scheduled for 9:00 A.M. Wednesday, December 31, 2025 in the County Commission Room of the Brown County Courthouse.

COMMISSION WORK SESSION

Motion by Lucas Heinen to hold a Work Session in the Commissioner's Room 1:00 p.m. on Thursday, December 4, 2025. Seconded by Richard Tesoriero. Motion carried.

Motion by Richard Tesoriero to adjourn. Seconded by William Pollock. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 3:22 p.m.

WORK SESSION—DECEMBER 4, 2025

The Brown County Commissioners convened for a work session at 1:00 p.m. on December 4, 2025, at the Brown County Courthouse with the following members present: Chairman Lucas Heinen, Commissioner Richard Tesoriero, and Commissioner William Pollock. Also present was County Clerk Nicole Lee. Others present for portions of the meeting were: B.J. Spiker, John Merchant, Steve Markham, Tami Lehmkuhl, Bettis Asphalt—Colton Miller, Vance Brothers—Howie Snyder and Chris Lubbers. Topics discussed included public interactions, code of conduct, microsuffacing, portable asphalt plant sight, snow removal process, and building insurance. No action was taken. The work session adjourned at 3:34 p.m.

Brown Co. District Court

CRIMINAL

Status Conference on Todd Anthony Cain, Merrill, KS., has been scheduled for Jan. 14. He is charged with distribution of methamphetamine, a drug severity level 4 felony; possession of drug paraphernalia, a class B nonperson misdemeanor; and transporting an open container of alcohol, an unclassified misdemeanor.

Status Conference on Gilbert L. Allen, Hiawatha, KS., has been scheduled for Jan. 14. He is charged with possession of methamphetamine, a drug severity level 5 felony and possession of drug paraphernalia, a class B nonperson misdemeanor.

Arraignment on Carolyn Joyce Sigmon, Horton, KS., has been scheduled for Jan. 14. She is charged with possession of marijuana, a class A nonperson misdemeanor and possession of drug paraphernalia, a class B nonperson misdemeanor.

Status Conference on Jonathan Lee Ivers, Jr., Ponca City, OK., was held and has been continued to Jan. 21. He is charged with possession of a controlled substance, a drug severity level 5 felony; possession of marijuana, a class B nonperson misde-

continued on page 4



Snoball Friday Night

HHS will host their winter royalty this Friday, December 19th during the halftime of the Varsity boys game against Oskaloosa. Games start at 4PM.

Candidates include: Victoria Jelks, daughter of Ivy Stone and Ezekiel Jelks; Austynn Wenger, daughter of Mindy Galietti and Dusty Wenger; Kara Coversup, sister of Lindsey Parker and Granddaughter of Frank Parker; Austin Gaskell, son of Pam & Karl Gaskell; Cooper Strube, son of Michelle & Greg Strube; Ellis Goben, son of Summer & Chad Goben.

USD 430 School Board minutes

Unofficial minutes

By Clerk Melanie Schmitt
South Brown County, USD 430
522 Central Ave
Horton, KS 66439
Regular Board of Education Meeting
6:00 PM (Wednesday, December 10, 2025)

Minutes are not official until approved at the next regular board meeting.

Opening Items
The meeting was called to order by President Jason Selland at 6:00 PM

Prayer & Pledge of Allegiance led by Jason Selland

Reading of the USD 430 Mission Statement by Rex Lockwood

Roll Call - Present: Jason Selland, Jim Becker, Shelby Rice, Rex Lockwood, Sarah Stirtion, Jon Boller, and Kate Ross.

Others: Superintendent Dr. Rebecca Kramer, Board Clerk Melanie Schmitt, EMS Principal Travis Torkelson, HHS Principal Larry Mill, and HES Principal Dawn Chase.

Public Relations
Board Comments - Sarah thanked Mrs. Woods and the three students who attended the KASB conference in Wichita. Our district was well presented. Shelby and the board thanked Sarah for her time on the board.

No Public Comments

Approval of Agenda

Approval of Consent Agenda

A. Minutes - November 12, 2025

B. Bills

C. Financial Reports

D. Impact Aid Summary

E. IPP's

F. Gifts & Grants - Brown County Assoc. of Retired Teachers - \$13.50 Donation to Backpack food for students

G. New Hires - HHS Asst. Boys Basketball, Ethan Miller

Motion by Sarah Stirtion to approve the Agenda and Consent Agenda as presented. Second by Rex Lockwood. Motion passed 7-0.

Special Presentations

A. NEK Fall League Honors - Volleyball - Bobbi Becker - 1st Team

Kara CoversUp - 2nd Team
Kirsten Smith - 1st Team
Ellah Stirtion - 1st Team

Football - Wyatt Chartier - 1st Team Defense, 2nd Team Offense

Austin Gaskell - Honorable Mention Defense
Lucas Oaks - Honorable Mention Offense

Cross Country - Raelynn Blanton - 1st Team

Thatcher Strube - 1st Team
Aiden Jamvold - 2nd Team

B. Design Challenge with Kansas Judicial Center

Students attended (teacher recommendation), * Group winners--

William Allen, 10
Rebecca Anderson, 11
Cienna Bruna, 9
Dacey Callahan, 12
Kori Calls Him, 10
Leighton Compton, 9
Tori Jelks*, 12
Tiffin Lanter*, 9
Ben Selland, 12
Cooper Strube, 12

Aubrey Thomas*, 12
Carter Thorpe, 12
Dani White, 11

Reports

A. Superintendent Report - Dr. Kramer updated the board on enrollment. We are currently at 563 students. Brown County Sheriff's Office received the Kansas State 911 Board Critical Facility Floorplan Mapping Grant Program, funded by the Kansas Legislature. The program provides standardized indoor GIS mapping of critical facilities to enhance emergency response, planning, and situational awareness across the state at no cost to Public Safety Answering Points. Part of these funds will be used to map our Middle School and High School buildings. Dr. Kramer presented Sarah Stirtion with a USD 430 Lifetime event pass.

B. Administrator Reports can be found within the agenda

C. Special Education Report can be found within the agenda

Discussion Items

A. KASB Policy Updates - These policies were presented to the board for review for adoption next month.

B. 26-27 District Calendar - This was presented to the board for review and approval next month.

C. Board Self-Evaluation was conducted

Action Items

A. Brown County Neighborhood Revitalization Plan

Motion by Rex Lockwood to approve the resolution to consider the adoption of a Neighborhood Revitalization Plan. Second by Shelby Rice. Motion passed 7-0.

B. Early Graduation Request

Motion by Rex Lockwood to ap-

prove the Superintendent's recommendation to approve the early graduation of the student noted in the executive content. Seconded by Kate Ross. Motion passed 7-0.

Executive Session

A. Discuss confidential student records and graduation requirements

Motion by Rex Lockwood to go into executive session for 7 minutes at 7:08 PM to discuss confidential students' records and graduation requirements pursuant to the exception relating to actions adversely or favorably affecting a student under KOMA. Seconded by Kate Ross. Motion passed 7-0. Dr. Kramer was in attendance.

The board returned to regular session in the board room at 7:15 PM

B. Superintendent Evaluation

Motion by Jon Boller to go into executive session for 5 minutes at 7:15 PM to discuss the Superintendent's evaluation pursuant to non-elected personnel exception under KOMA. Seconded by Shelby Rice. Motion passed 7-0.

The board returned to regular session in the board room at 7:20 PM.

Motion by Jim Becker to go into executive session for 2 minutes at 7:20 PM to discuss the Superintendent's evaluation pursuant to non-elected personnel exception under KOMA. Seconded by Jon Boller. Motion passed 7-0.

The board returned to regular session in the board room at 7:22 PM.

Motion by Jon Boller to go into executive session for 2 minutes at 7:22 PM to discuss the Superintendent's evaluation pursuant to non-elected personnel exception under KOMA. Seconded by Shelby Rice. Motion passed 7-0.

The board returned to regular session in the board room at 7:24 PM.

Action Items Following Executive Session

Motion by Jim Becker to approve the Superintendent's recommendation to grant a waiver of the local graduation requirements for the student discussed in executive session, allowing the student to graduate upon meeting the state minimum requirements. Seconded by Shelby Rice. Motion passed 7-0.

Adjournment

Motion by Sarah Stirtion to adjourn the meeting at 7:26 PM. Seconded by Kate Ross. Motion passed 7-0.