

OPINION

BOCC . . .

(Continued from page 1)

place the bridge along Ferguson Road just south of K-16.

According to the Public Works director, on average, 430 vehicles go over that bridge each day.

Domann updated the board on the McCall Drive bridge replacement project, telling the commissioners that the demolition of the old structure had been completed and that two test bores had been done a week earlier to determine the geological conditions at the site prior to the placement of the piers for the new bridge.

Domann reported that there would be a preconstruction meeting that coming Thursday ahead of the planned drilling of four shafts for culverts that are to be put in the ground.

In response to an inquiry from Walbridge, Domann said the Road and Bridge Department would be constructing a new low water crossing along Rawlins Road south of Fairview Road. He said crews would be working on the road itself and giving the nearby ditches some attention in connection with the project.

It was Domann’s thinking that the existing crossing has been off limits to traffic for at least 10 years. “It’s been closed for way too long,” he commented.

According to the Public Works director, the new crossing will be ready for use in about a month.

County Treasurer Douglas

Bond reported that the new Lexmark printers the county recently purchased for his office had been installed and were functioning properly. He went on to remark that things in his office were “returning to normal” following the deadline for property owners to pay the second half of their property taxes for 2024.

County Appraiser Janet Allen informed the board that she and her co-workers had completed the field hearings for this year and were in the process of certifying the valuations for 2025. She told the commissioners that she would furnish them with the numbers for the valuations the following week.

According to Allen, her office held 116 hearings in response to the appealing of valuations by property owners. She said that figure was half the total for 2024.

The county appraiser let the commissioners know that four appeals had been turned over to the state Board of Tax Appeals.

A proposed Consultant Agreement between the county and Blue Valley Consultants LLC, Riley, covering the submission of an application for a Safe Streets and Roads for All grant was approved by the board on a 3-0 vote.

The county will be shelling out \$17,625 to secure the services of Blue Valley Consultants, which will be putting together a Safety Action Plan for possible

improvements to county routes and the possible development of safe alternative routes for travel in Oskaloosa, McLouth, Meriden, and Winchester.

On a 2-0 vote (Christy and Walbridge), the board approved a motion that Malm be permitted to bid on tax-delinquent properties on behalf of the county during the tax sale scheduled for today (this Thursday) and that department heads also be allowed to bid on these properties provided that they still have enough funds at their disposal to do so.

The action was taken on the heels of a 10-minute executive session requested by Walbridge so that he, Christy, Bond and Emergency Manager Keith Jeffers could receive legal advice from County Counselor Josh Ney under the attorney-client privilege exception to the Kansas Open Meetings Act. “Land acquisition” was identified as being the subject that was to be discussed. When the meeting reopened to the public, Christy announced that no binding action had been taken behind closed doors.

Voting 3-0, the board approved a then-unwritten declaration of a State of Local Disaster Emergency for Jefferson County at the request of Jeffers.

The action was taken after Jeffers had briefed the commissioners on the weather forecast for that afternoon and evening in northeast Kansas. He told the trio that the National Weather Service was particularly concerned about the weather the Emporia area and the Manhattan area were expected to experience in the coming hours. He said forecasters were predicting winds of 60 to 70 miles per hour, heavy rain and hail 1.5” to 2.5” in diameter. He also said there would be three rounds of storms.

The declaration will be in effect for 14 days unless the board extends it or terminates it before it is scheduled to expire.

It was the consensus of the board that the budget request for 2026 that had been submitted by Midland Care Connection Inc., Topeka, be tabled for the time being. The agency is asking the county for \$10,000 to help support its Meals on Wheels program.

Mary Luse, the former treasurer of the Jefferson County Historical Society, announced

that the organization would be holding a special event at Old Jefferson Town in Oskaloosa that coming Sunday to remember fallen veterans with a connection to Jefferson County. She then mentioned another special event scheduled for Friday, June 6 at the American Legion post in Oskaloosa, during which author Blake Watson is to be recognized by the historical society.

A man named Gary Collins appeared before the board to make it aware of his interest in cleaning up previously-occupied county-owned lots in Lake Shore Estates, Lakewood Hills and Lakeside Village. He told the commissioners that he would take care of the liability insurance he figures the county would expect him to provide and that the county wouldn’t incur any costs were it to allow him to rid the lots of unwanted debris.

“Give me a shot at one (of the improvement districts) and let me show you what I can do,” he remarked at one point. “We (apparently Collins and other helpers) won’t mess around.”

Block T in Lake Shore Estates was mentioned more than once during the discussion that was prompted by Collins’ appearance. The presence of squatters in this improvement district has been an issue in the past year or so.

The board ended up directing Community Development Director Stephan Metzger to identify a couple of lots in Lake Shore Estates Collins can work on at this time. Metzger or someone else in his office will be taking some photographs at these lots before Collins tackles the project and plan to snap some additional pictures after the work has been completed.

By way of a Quit Claim deed, the board transferred 10 lots from the county to the Jefferson County Land Bank on a 3-0 vote. The lots were Lot 6 and Lot 16 in Block E of Lake Shore Estates and Lot 618, Lot 628, Lot 629, Lot 631, Lot 643, Lot 644, Lot 647 and Lot 648 in the Walnut Grove section of Lakeside Village.

After recessing the meeting to allow the commissioners to meet as the directors of the Jefferson County Land Bank, Christy, Malm, and Walbridge accepted two sets of bids on lots in Lakeside Village.

The bids favorably received

by the trio came from Asa Collier of Lawrence and Rikki Whetzel of Raytown, Mo.

Collier was ready to hand over \$500 for Lot 618 in the improvement district, another \$500 for Lot 628, still another \$500 for Lot 629, and half a grand one final time for Lot 631 - \$2,000 all told.

Pre-vote, Collier, who reportedly already owns three nearby lots, told the commissioners that he planned to construct a garage that would include some bedroom space on the lots.

Whetzel was up to shelling out \$500 for Lot 643 in the improvement district, another \$500 for Lot 644, still another \$500 for Lot 647, and half a grand one last time for Lot 648 - \$2,000 all told.

Pre-vote, Whetzel told the commissioners that she intended to build a house on Lots 647 and 648 in the near future and have a house for her son built on Lots 643 and 644 later on.

It was the consensus of the board that a third set of bids, these on Lot 6 and Lot 16 in Block E of Lake Shore Estates, be tabled for the time being because the bidder, Craig Cozadd, 5350 94th Street, Meriden, wasn’t present.

All of the bids were presented to the commissioners for their consideration by Metzger.

The meeting was recessed for roughly 15 minutes to accommodate the business of the Land Bank.

On separate 3-0 votes, the board approved Z2025-03, PR2025-04, Z2025-04, Z2025-05, and DP2025-01.

Z2025-03 encompassed a request from Rodney and Janell Watson to rezone Lot 1 in the CBC Homeland subdivision to facilitate an administrative lot split. The subdivision is located along 130th Street approximately 1,750 feet east of K-4.

Lot 1, a platted lot, covers 10 acres and had been zoned Rural Residential. It now consists of two five-acre parcels, both of which are zoned Suburban Residential.

When the Planning Commission took up the case April 28, it voted 4-0 to recommend to the board that the Watsons’ request be approved.

PR2025-04 encompassed a request from Ralph and Sharon Porter to consider the final plat of Porter Estates, a proposed three-lot subdivision covering 29.21 acres to be located at 2978 Ferguson Road.

Z2025-04 encompassed a request from the Porters to rezone what had been known as the Edwardson Subdivision, shifting it from the Suburban Residential classification to the Rural Residential classification, and to rezone part of an existing tract, switching it from the Rural Residential classification to the Suburban Residential classification.

When the PC handled the case on the 28th, it voted 4-0 to recommend to the board that the Porters’ requests be approved.

Z2025-05 encompassed a re-

quest from Don and Mary Hurd to rezone part of an existing tract to facilitate the creation of a seven-lot subdivision covering 160.41 acres at 2926 Linn Road. Lot 1 will continue to be zoned Agricultural, while Lot 2, Lot 3, Lot 4, Lot 5, Lot 6 and Lot 7 will now be zoned Suburban Residential.

When the PC dealt with the case on the 28th, it voted 3-1 to recommend to the board that the Hurds’ request be approved. According to the Memorandum Metzger made available to the paper, the PC member who cast the dissenting vote wanted to see the existing tract preserved and was concerned about the possibility that the creation of Lots 2-7 could adversely impact traffic along 31st Street.

In a related matter, by consensus the board approved the preliminary plat for the Hurds’ subdivision, Pork Chop Hill.

DP2025-01 encompassed a request from Lonita Kress to amend the current Development Plan for Kress Kennels, 2422 Union Road, Lawrence, to allow for the removal of two open-sided carports that are to be replaced by an enclosed, climate-controlled structure measuring 18’ x 65’.

When the PC looked at the case on the 28th, it voted 4-0 to recommend to the board that Kress’ request be approved.

Voting 3-0, the board OK’d the proposed issuance of a ce-real malt beverage license to the Heart of America Antique Steam Engine and Model Association for the 2025 McLouth Threshing Bee. It also authorized Christy to sign the license on behalf of the governing body.

The proposed issuance of a new county credit card to Angela Cloyd was OK’d by the board on a 3-0 vote. Christy was authorized to sign the necessary paperwork on behalf of the board.

Cloyd works for Auxiliary Services.

Finally, Christy and Walbridge informally decided (i.e., no vote was taken) that the board wouldn’t meet the following week.

Executive Sessions

At the request of Metzger, the commissioners met privately with him and County Counselor-designate Jonathan Ehrlich for five minutes so that the client group could be given legal advice under the attorney-client privilege exception to KOMA. “Contracts” was identified as being the subject that was to be discussed. Afterward, Christy announced that no binding was taken.

At the request of Christy, the commissioners ultimately met privately with Ney and Ehrlich for a total of 25 minutes so that they could be given legal advice under the attorney-client privilege exception to KOMA. “Inter-agency issues” was identified as being the subject that was to be discussed. Afterward, Christy announced that no binding action was taken.

The meeting adjourned at 2:55.

Local students choose alternate path to graduation

Kansas Connections Academy, a tuition-free, online public school serving students in grades K-12, celebrated the school’s 212 graduating high school seniors in a ceremony on May 16.

Students, family, friends, and faculty gathered both in person and online to honor the Class of 2025 at Johnson County Community College for the commencement.

Kansas Connections Academy’s Class of 2025 consists of graduates from many cities and towns across the state, including Andover, Chanute, Kansas City and more. Among the graduating class, 44% plan to attend two- or four-year colleges or universities, including Brigham Young University, Kansas State University, Marquette University, New York University Tisch School of the Arts, and the University of Kansas. Additionally, 23% plan to enter the workforce, 22% plan to receive vocational training, and 5% plan to serve in the military or take a gap year. The graduates were collectively awarded more than \$2.3 million in scholarship funds.

“We are so grateful for the contributions these bright young students have made in our community,” said Laura Hochman, principal at Kansas Connections Academy. “This year’s graduating class has demonstrated a passion for learning and we’re proud of the confident, capable individuals they’ve become. While we will miss them here at school, they will always be a part of Kansas Connections Academy, and we can’t wait to see what the next chapter holds.”

Those receiving honors from Jefferson County are Madeline Forant, Nortonville, and Isabella Meyer, Oskaloosa.

Enrollment for the 2025-2026 school year is open for students in grades K-12. Families interested in Kansas Connections Academy are encouraged to attend an online information session to learn more, ask questions, and discover if virtual school is the right fit for their student.

For more information on Kansas Connections Academy, visit [www.kansasconnection-academy.com](http://www.kansasconnection-academy.com) or call 1-833-591-0251.

PUBLIC NOTICE

(Published in The Oskaloosa Independent May 29, 2025)1t **RESOLUTION NO. 2025-02**

A RESOLUTION CLOSING CERTAIN STREETS, LIMITING PARKING IN CERTAIN PLACES AND ALLOWING PARKING OF CERTAIN TRAVEL TRAILERS, HEAVY TRUCKS AND TRAILERS DURING OLD SETTLERS’ REUNION ON JUNE 19, 2025 THROUGH JUNE 21, 2025.

WHEREAS, the City Council desires to support the celebration of Old Settlers’ Reunion around the city square from JUNE 19, 2025 through JUNE 21, 2025; AND

WHEREAS, it is necessary for the safety and protection of the citizens attending the Old Settlers’ Reunion to close certain streets during the Old Settlers’ Reunion from JUNE 19, 2025 through JUNE 21, 2025; AND

WHEREAS, it is necessary to limit parking in certain places around the city square; AND

WHEREAS, it is necessary to allow certain travel trailers, heavy trucks and trailers to park on certain streets of the City of Oskaloosa to allow for the providing of service during the event.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE CITY OF OSKALOOSA, KANSAS: THAT FROM 12:00 P.M. (NOON) ON JUNE 16, 2025 THROUGH 2:00 A.M. ON JUNE 22, 2025, THE FOLLOWING STREETS WILL BE CLOSED TO THROUGH TRAFFIC:

Liberty Street from Jefferson Street to Washington Street on the East half of said street, more or less, AND the North half of the West half of said street, more or less; AND

Liberty Street from Washington Street North one half-block to the alley between Washington Street and Hamilton Street; AND

Washington Street from Delaware Street West to Union Street; AND

Delaware Street from Jefferson Street to Washington Street on the West half of said street, more or less; AND

Further, the East half of Delaware Street from Jefferson Street to Washington Street, more or less, shall be closed after 5:00 p.m. on each day from JUNE 19, 2025 through JUNE 21, 2025; AND

Washington Street from Cherokee Street to Delaware Street on the South half of said street, more or less, shall be closed on each day from JUNE 19, 2025 through JUNE 21, 2025 from 7:00 am to 4:00 p.m.; AND

Washington Street, in its entirety, from Cherokee Street to Delaware Street shall be closed after 4:00 p.m. on each day from

JUNE 19, 2025 through JUNE 21, 2025; AND

Washington Street, in its entirety, from Cherokee Street to Delaware Street shall be closed all of JUNE 21, 2025; AND

Delaware Street from Washington Street north to the Alley entrance shall be closed from 5:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. on JUNE 19, 2025, through JUNE 21, 2025 and all of JUNE 21, 2025.

THE PARKING OF CERTAIN TRAVEL TRAILERS, HEAVY TRUCKS AND TRAILERS ASSOCIATED WITH THE OLD SETTLERS’ REUNION IS ALLOWED ON THE FOLLOWING STREETS FROM 12:00 P.M. (NOON) JUNE 16, 2025 THROUGH 2:00 A.M. JUNE 22, 2025;

Liberty Street from Jefferson Street to Washington Street on the East half of said street, more or less, AND the North half of the West half of said street, more or less; AND

Liberty Street from Washington Street North one half block to the alley between Washington Street and Hamilton Street; AND

Washington Street from Delaware Street West to Union Street; AND

Delaware Street from Jefferson Street to Washington Street on the West half of said street, more or less; AND

Further, the East half of Delaware Street from Jefferson Street to Washington Street, more or less, shall be closed after 5:00 p.m. on each day from JUNE 19, 2025 through JUNE 21, 2025; AND

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Washington Street, in its entirety, from Cherokee Street to Delaware Street shall be closed after 4:00 p.m. on each day from JUNE 19, 2025 through JUNE 21, 2025; AND

Washington Street, in its entirety, from Cherokee Street to Delaware Street shall be closed all of JUNE 21, 2025; AND

Delaware Street from Washington Street north to the Alley entrance shall be closed from 5:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. on JUNE 19, 2025, through JUNE 21, 2025 and all of JUNE 21, 2025.

The closed streets are reserved for the Old Settlers’ committee to issue booth permits during the celebration and for the Midland Carnival. The enforcement shall be immediate towing and a fine. This resolution shall be effective upon the passage and approval of the Governing Body as approved by law.

John Norman, Mayor  
ATTEST:  
Patty A. Hamm, City Clerk

PUBLIC NOTICE

(Published in The Oskaloosa Independent May 29, 2025)1t

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**

Notice is hereby given that a Public Hearing by the Jefferson County Planning Commission will be held at 7:00 P.M. on June 23, 2025, both in person and remotely at the Jefferson County Courthouse at 300 Jefferson Street, Oskaloosa, Kansas.

Said hearing will be before the Jefferson County Planning Commission, for the purpose of hearing all interested parties relative to the following requests:

Z2025-07 – A request by Rodney & Dynelle Kessler and Jerry & Janet Kessler as property owners and applicants for a Zoning Change from RR – Rural Residential to SR – Suburban Residential on a portion of existing tracts, located along the east side of Buck Creek Rd. between 13th St. and 17th St., 1702 and 1757 Robb Ln, Perry, KS, and

PR2025-07 – A request by Harry Van Nest as property owner and applicant for a Final Plat of Animal Acres Subdivision for the purpose of creating one lot, approximately 38.40 acres, located along the east side of Republic Road between 46th St. and 37th St., Oskaloosa, KS, and

Z2025-08 – A request by Jacob and Chelsy Wessel as property owners and applicants for a Zoning Change from RR – Rural Residential to AG - Agricultural of an existing tract, located north of the intersection of 150th and Geary Rd, 8832 150th St., Valley Falls, KS, and

CU2025-01 – A request by STC Towers, LLC as applicants and Tim & Marla Bailey as property owners to consider a Conditional Use Permit application for a Telecommunications Tower on portions of an existing tract, generally located on the west side of Osage Rd. between 82nd St. and 94th St., Oskaloosa, KS, and

loosa, KS, and

CU2025-02 – A request by Diamond Communications as applicants and Melynda Swoyer as property owner to consider a Conditional Use Permit application for a Telecommunications Tower on portions of an existing tract, generally located on the south side of Hickory Point Rd. between Rawlins Rd. and Saline Rd. Winchester, KS.

Public comments or questions regarding the cases may be submitted ahead of the meeting. Comments and questions must be received by 12 pm on Friday, June 13, 2025. Please provide correspondence electronically using the following link [jfcountyks.com/905](http://jfcountyks.com/905) and then select the relevant case number.

All reports and a link to join the meeting will be posted online at [jfcountyks.com/905](http://jfcountyks.com/905) no later than close of business on Wednesday, June 18, 2025. Reports will include information about each case, submitted applications, proposed plats, the complete legal description of the tracts, and maps of the rezoning areas. Paper copies can be provided by the Jefferson County Community Development Office upon request.

The Planning Commission may continue consideration of this matter at the conclusion of the public hearing to a future date without further notice.

In accordance with the provisions of the ADA, every attempt will be made to accommodate the needs of persons with disabilities. If you have a disability and require assistance during public hearings held before the Planning Commission, please contact this office at (785) 403-0000 ext. 3 or email Stephan Metzger at [smetzger@jfcoun-tyks.com](mailto:smetzger@jfcoun-tyks.com).

JEFFERSON COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION  
/s/ Matt Scherer III  
Matt Scherer III, Secretary

T H E O S K A L O O S A

**Independent**

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The Official Newspaper of Jefferson County  
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