

New community board appointments

By McKenna Nease
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Ottawa commissioners appointed new board members to two community boards.

After conducting interviews with many applicants, the Commission said all who applied for the roles were strong applicants.

At the end of the interviews the commission appointed Kelly Whittaker to the Accessibility Advisory Board.

Whittaker moved to Ottawa about 10 years ago from Indiana and serves as the Principal at Ottawa High School, and has been since 2018.

She previously worked as a special education teacher for six years prior to becoming the principal at her first school in Indiana.

In the interview, Whittaker said, “I’ve always had a heart for people that are a little less advantaged from us, whether that’s physically or they have some mental disabilities that cause people to have to think about spaces differently to make sure we’re including them fully in our community.”

“I am a firm believer of giving back,” Whittaker said. “I was raised in a family where you are civically involved within your community and that is not something I have done since living in Ottawa- as being the principal at the

high school is a pretty full time job. I do feel like it’s kind of that season of life, and that time for me to look at a way that I can give back to our community. This is one of those ways I feel like I can do that and offer some expertise.”

For an example of something she would work on if appointed to the board, Whittaker said she would look at the accessibility of city sidewalks and parks and determine what is currently available for community members and look at how it’s working for everybody.

Mayor Pro Tem Clayton asked Whittaker what the biggest need is for the community in terms of making it more accessible as a whole.

Whittaker expressed she doesn’t currently know what the board is working on but she would lean on the board to figure it out and help with their current projects.

The commission also appointed a new member to the Library Board.

They appointed Jo Ann Nowatzke.

Nowatzke is an HR Specialist at USD 290 and has been working there since 2020.

Nowatzke has working in a Human Resources role in the Franklin County area since 1996.

Her and her family have lived in the Franklin County area for about 30



LinkedIn
Kelly Whittaker

years and moved to Ottawa in the early 2000s.

Nowatzke said in her interview with the Commission, “the library has always been essential to our family.”

Her family has used the library for variety of school and boy scout projects.

She discussed seeing the passion her kids have found from reading and expanding their knowledge at the library as inspiring and moving.

“I think that’s why it drives me, because I see libraries as a vital part of the community,” Nowatzke said.

“It’s not just for kids, it’s not just for the elderly, it’s for everybody,” Nowatzke said. “Now, how can we take the library and it’s resources to the next level? I’d like to be a part of that.”

Commissioner Skidmore asked Nowatzke about what the library would be like 20 years from now.

“Not just having books and magazines,” Nowatzke said. The programs, the



McKenna Nease/Ottawa Herald
Two new board members were appointed to community boards in Ottawa.

outreaches, who can we partner with to grow, what opportunities we can do to keep us active, our minds active [and] to keep us

talking to each other. I view that as what we need to be looking at. Do we need new space? Yes, but it can’t just be about the

building, it can’t just be about the books. It’s how are we going to build a community that values it’s library?”

Protecting livestock from predators

By Jason Vance
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Coyotes are the most important predator affecting livestock in the Midwest and the Great Plains.

“Once we get farther north and west there are some grey wolves and mountain lions, but those species don’t tend to impact us much here,” said Kansas State Extension Wildlife Specialist Drew Ricketts. “In parts of the Midwest and southern states we do have black vultures. They tend to mainly be scavengers but they can impact very young livestock.”

Ricketts says to a lesser

extent there are bobcats but dogs, both feral and domestic, are the second most common predator behind coyotes.

Coyotes are more of a problem for sheep and young livestock rather than the larger cattle herd.

“We typically don’t see loss of adult cattle unless there is a complication due to a difficult birth or something like that, then coyotes may be the ultimate cause of death,” Ricketts says. “Probably in a lot of those instances the cow would have died anyway. But far and away it’s young calves and then sheep and goats that are most impacted.”

Because coyotes typically aren’t killing larger cattle most of the time they are scavenging those carcasses. Ricketts says they are very happy to take advantage of those food resources.

“Carcasses of dead calves, dead sheep, dead lambs can attract coyotes from very long distances,” Ricketts said. “We tend to see really high numbers of coyotes around those areas where we have exposed carcass pits or a dead cow in a pasture.”

Managing dead livestock, disposing of carcasses and burying them rather than leaving them in a pasture where calving, lambing or

kidding is happening is a really important non-lethal predator strategy.

Ricketts says in addition to carcass management, frequently checking livestock is important.

“Managing sheep and goats is more time intensive than managing large ruminants like cattle,” Ricketts said. “We need to do things like pen those sheep and goats at night to protect them from predators.”

Night penning is best accomplished by bringing them into a smaller enclosure, where fencing is usually woven wire with small squares and ideally it would have some sort of

electrification to it.

With the night penning guard animals can be used as another form of non-lethal control.

Studies have shown that lethal control is going to be most effective when it is not used as a preventative measure but as a response to livestock losses. Ricketts says that while most coyotes are scavengers when it comes to livestock, some do lose their fear of being around people and become

bold enough to take advantage of that livestock resource and they learn how to kill the larger prey item.

“Once they start killing livestock then we really have to remove those animals to stop that,” Ricketts said. “When those loses start that is when we do need think about those lethal control methods in addition to the non-lethal stuff we should be doing all the time.”

CALENDAR

CONTINUED FROM A4

Dancing with a 30 minute lesson at Wellsville Baptist Church, 217 Main St., Wellsville.

May 10
9:30 a.m. Mothers Day Breakfast at Westminster Presbyterian Church, 401 W. 13th St., Ottawa. In Roberts Hall.

May 11
No events.

May 12
12-1 p.m. Brown Bag Books at the Ottawa Library, 105 S. Hickory St., Ottawa. Geared towards adults to discuss

authors and books and get a sneak peek at the new books at the library.

May 13
6-7:45 p.m. Play intermediate chess with other players at the Ottawa Library, 105 S. Hickory St., Ottawa. Geared toward players 12 years and older with some chess experience.

May 14
8:30 a.m. Franklin County Commission Meeting at the Commission Chambers, 1418 S. Main St., Ottawa.

11 a.m.- 1 p.m. Women’s Cancer Support Group at the Ottawa Recreation Commission, 705 W. 15th St., Ottawa.

1 p.m.- 2 p.m. Hope Bus Food

Pantry with AdventHealth Ottawa, 219 Jefferson St., Pomona.

4-7 p.m. Open Art Jam at The Collective Heart, 204 S. Main St., Ottawa. Collaborate and connect with other crafters and artists. Bring your own crafting supplies.

4 p.m. Ottawa City Commission Meeting at City Hall, 101 S. Hickory St., Ottawa.

5:30- 6:30 p.m. Small Business Seminar at the Ottawa Area Chamber of Commerce, 109 E. 2nd St., Ottawa. Partnered with KU Small Business Development Center, the chamber leads a session on e-commerce and business growth.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

City of Garnett, Kansas, Comprehensive Plan

The City of Garnett requests proposals from qualified consultants or firms to review city comprehensive plan and develop comprehensive plan for the City. The new, updated plan will provide vision, goals, objectives, and policies to guide the City's development and redevelopment for the next 20 to 25 years. The plan will guide the City Commission, Planning and Zoning Commission, staff, developers, property owners, and residents on the appropriate growth and redevelopment for the City. The updated plan will integrate all aspects of urban development, including demographics, land use, public facilities and infrastructure, transportation, environmental, and economic growth recommendations. A critical component of the plan will be setting a vision for the City's development and redevelopment, including areas in the City and possible annexation land. The vision component will need to analyze existing and future infrastructure needs and how technology will play a role in community outreach and City operations. The qualified consultant will need to take a creative and innovative approach to reviewing the needs of the community, while obtaining public input about the plan. The planning process shall develop a comprehensive vision for the City, business opportunities, amenities and programs, as well as complement the recently-completed parks plan.

SUBMITTAL DEADLINE
One (1) electronic copy in PDF format, in accordance with this RFP, will be accepted **no later than 3:00 PM CST on May 30, 2025** and shall be submitted via the following email address: dwilson@garnettks.net

Full document and information are available at www.simplygarnett.com.

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