



Steve Jacob, left, and Lauren Reinhold sit for a Big First candidate forum on Saturday at the Lawrence Public Library. Rep. Tracey Mann did not attend.

Two ‘Big First’ candidates speak on issues at forum

Affordability, immigration and Iran were topics of the day

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The invitation was sent, but the chair was empty. About 70 people showed up at the Lawrence Public Library on Saturday to hear Lauren Reinhold and Steve Jacob make their case for why voters should pick them to replace Tracey Mann, the Republican incumbent representing Kansas’ 1st Congressional District. Mann, as expected, did not attend.

Though Mann declined to attend the forum — a spokesman told the Journal-World on Wednesday that the congressman had “other meetings



People listen at the candidate forum Saturday.

scheduled” but did not elaborate — the Lawrence-Douglas County Chapter of Women for Kansas, which hosted the event, still saved him a seat

at the table. Only in place of Mann, organizers taped a stick with his face to his chair. Reinhold, a Democrat, and Jacob, a Libertarian,

VOTER’S GUIDE

Look for the Lawrence Journal-World voter’s guide in Wednesday’s newspaper. Early voting for the Nov. 3 midterm elections also begins Wednesday.

Today is the last day to register to vote. Find out more at dgcoks.gov/county-clerk/voting-and-elections.

talked about affordability, immigration and foreign policy, among other issues. The two candidates are trying to break a decades-long Republican grip on the 1st Congressional

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Hilltop had been losing money for at least 2 years, records show

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Operating losses at Hilltop Child Development Center were approaching \$1 million in the last two years, yet more than \$1 million in reserves remained in Hilltop accounts that potentially could help the struggling center, financial records show.

The documents reviewed by the Journal-World are the most detailed look yet at the finances for the nonprofit childcare center that is slated to close at the end of the month after nearly 55 years of serving KU and area families.

The University of Kansas-affiliated nonprofit has been operating in the red for at least the past two years, according to the records, which included the audited financial statements for the fiscal year ending in June 2025 and an unaudited statement for the year ending June 2026.

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City to weigh if new Costco should be a part of STAR Bond district

Developer wants to use its captured taxes for entertainment venues

TOWN TALK

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Tuesday’s Lawrence City Commission meeting could be a pivotal one for developer Phil Bundy’s 1059 and Beacon Landing STAR bond projects — and for the city’s future finances.

No, the commission won’t be voting yet on whether to establish that incentive district, which could help the Wichita developer build a destination cycling arena, a flight training center and other attractions. But it will be asked to resolve one of the biggest questions around the proposed district: whether Costco should be a part of it.

The new Costco store, which opens on Oct. 29, isn’t affiliated with Bundy’s group, and it won’t be affected by the district one way or another. What would be affected are the sales taxes it generates and where they go.

STAR bonds are a tool from the state of Kansas that can use sales tax revenue to finance entertainment- and tourism-related developments. They are more powerful than other types of development incentives because they can capture state sales taxes, and the state charges more sales tax than local governments do.

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City deserved more than an empty chair from congressman

Chad Lawhorn

OPINION

I’m pretty sure I would have been annoyed if Congressman Tracey Mann had shown up for Saturday’s candidate forum in Lawrence.

I suspect it would have been a scene of much drama and protest. The boos, the chants, the interruptions while he tried to speak and other such tactics that have become common fodder for social media feeds whenever a politician from one party ends up in a room of people from the other party.

Don’t get me wrong, I

like a honk-for-fill-in-the blank event as much as the next guy. The same for the sidewalk protests that give me a multitude of signs to look at while I’m driving or walking by. But the meeting takeovers, I find them annoying. They strike me as people who don’t understand either the art of leverage or persuasion. They often overplay their hand and just come off as rude.

Political discourse in America needs lots of things, but more rudeness isn’t one of them.

So, I was prepared to be annoyed because, while I don’t know for sure such a takeover would have happened, I think there was a decent chance of it. Of course,



An attendee holds a sign that reads “Where is Tracey?!!” during a candidate forum at the Lawrence Public Library on Saturday. Rep. Tracey Mann, the Republican incumbent, did not attend.

Mann, a Republican who represents Lawrence and its awkward place in the 1st Congressional District, didn’t show up for the candidate forum at the Lawrence Public Library, hosted by the local

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