

Public comment results in allegations of unethical behavior

BY BARBARA PROFFITT

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Following the approval of claims and adds and abates at the Monday meeting of the Linn County Commissioners, Jason Hightower, Commissioner for District 1, requested a 15-minute session to review the Code of Ethics to be added to the open agenda for the meeting directly ahead of departmental reports. County Counselor Jacklyn Paletta asked if that would be in executive session and Hightower stated it would be in open session. Several other additions were discussed, most being requests for

executive sessions to discuss job descriptions and/or legal matters.

Hightower moved to approve the agenda as amended and it died for lack of a second. Commissioner Alison Hamilton moved to approve the agenda as amended minus the code of ethics portion Hightower had requested. Commissioner Jim Johnson seconded that motion and it carried on a 3-0 vote.

The public comment portion of the April 14 meeting of the Linn County Commissioners meeting began with a resident of Linn County Park and Marina calling out the commissioners on what she viewed as bullying tactics and told them they needed to find

a more constructive way of doing things.

Commissioner Jason Hightower then stated he would go next and used the public comment portion of the meeting to address fellow commissioners Jim Johnson and Alison Hamilton.

Hightower began with the statement, "First, I want to say that this has nothing to do with the decision to fire Shaun West - you had the two votes that you needed to take that action."

West, who was terminated under this leadership; we are a sinking ship with you as our captain," Hightower continued. "Jim, you have bullied people here at this table, bullied them here in

sioner Jim Johnson that had been filed. West, at one point, announced that he had filed a complaint of ouster against Johnson in district court due to the fact that those grievances had not been dealt with during an 11-month period following their filing.

Hightower went on to state, "I don't think it'll surprise anyone that you do not follow the best practices, because that is standard operating procedure for this committee here."

"Nobody can succeed under this leadership; we are a sinking ship with you as our captain," Hightower continued. "Jim, you have bullied people here at this table, bullied them here in

the back room, and tried to manipulate people outside of the meeting, including former Commissioner McCullough."

"Ali, I think some of the people calling you are sent by Jim." Hightower went on, "I've had it happen to me, trying to sell me on an idea that was mostly all Jim and then Jim will call it up and bring it up a few weeks later trying to get my support."

"Jim, I've had reports from some of the people whose information was shared off my personal phone from the KORA report that you and your family confronted them trying to see what we'd talked about and everything that way."

"I bet you were really hop-

ing Danny wouldn't turn over his phone during that KORA request, maybe you two even planned it that way," Hightower continued, "let him fall on the sword so you could go on - very noble of you."

"I've sat up here, trying to work with you for two years," he stated, "while you undermined the decisions made by this commission, as you root for your own side to win; never moved on from being voted down, and continued to attack our employees; inflated our attorney's fees with your constant bombardments; and increased our legal liability with your lack of respect for even the laws that you made."

SEE ALLEGATIONS, A2

Proms capture the evening



JACKIE TAYLOR | LINN COUNTY NEWS

Above, Trenton Broyles escorts Bree Allen to the 2025 Prairie View prom Saturday night. Students and their dates had a perfect evening for the dance and accompanying events. See more photos on Pg. C2.

SUBMITTED PHOTO COURTESY OF PHS

Left, Pleasanton High School prom King Hayden Johnson with Queen Patience Meik were crowned Saturday night at prom. See more photos on Pg. C3.

Parker reinstates local policing

City seeks both chief and codes officer, hires law firm as legal counsel

BY TONY FURSE

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The city of Parker has begun its process of reinstating its police department.

At their monthly meeting Thursday, the council voted unanimously to advertise for a police chief, but not before an earlier failed vote and verbal reservations.

Kari Brandt, council president, had opened with a motion to advertise for a police chief, with parameters of 30 hours monthly at \$22 hourly. Meranda Ellison had seconded, but Gary Earley, Joe Godfrey and Kandice

Higgins all dissented.

Earley said he first wanted more workshops for discussion, with Higgins saying the council "can continue to discuss" but wondering if the city "can go ahead with the ads."

Earley also said he questioned calling the position a 'chief'—"it's just a policeman to me."

In response to questioning about the position's title, Mayor Jason Webber said that, in the past when he served in that position, he started out as a 'marshal,' "but in the end I was police chief." He suggested that the council approve running

ads for a chief, interview and choose.

"Do a motion like that to get the ball rolling," Webber said. "Then sit down at a workshop with that chief" he said after Jeff Deane, city attorney, said that details could be negotiable following a hiring.

With that, Earley motioned and Higgins seconded to run police-search advertising.

"Hopefully, we'll get more than one person applying," Earley said.

In other public safety business, the council unanimously agreed also to run advertising for a part-time

SEE POLICING, A2

Two charged following vehicular incident in Parker

BY BARBARA PROFFITT

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Charges were recently filed in Linn County District Court in two separate, but related, cases that resulted from an incident that took place in Parker on March 31.

According to arrest reports and documents filed in case LN-2025-CR-000043 against Chazz Oman, the defendant possessed a photograph of a female under the age of 18 that allegedly shows that child in the nude and was threatening to post said photo online.

That threat resulted in the second defendant, Keidan Williams, charged in case LN-2025-CR000044, allegedly attacking Oman with what is being described by court documents and arrest reports as a deadly weapon, i.e. his vehicle. Documents in Williams case state that he allegedly tried to intentionally kill Oman by attempting to run him down with his car. Arrest reports state that Oman was able to get out of the way; however, Williams's vehicle did hit Oman's vehicle.

Oman is charged with one count of possession of sexual exploitation of a child under the age of 18. That charge, a severity level five person felony, carries a 31 to 136 month sentencing range to be served in prison and/or a fine of up to \$300,000 with 24 months of post-release supervision required.

Williams is charged with several counts:

Count I - attempted murder in the second degree. This charge is a severity level 3 person felony and carries a sentencing range of 55 to 247 months in prison and/or a fine of up to \$300,000 with 36 months of post-release supervision.

Count II - criminal damage to property, value 1,000 to \$25,000. This carries a sentencing range of five to 17 months in prison and a possible fine of up to \$100,000.

Count III - no proof of insurance, a class B misdemeanor which carries a sentencing range of up to six months in jail.

Count IV - Expired or no registration, an unclassified misdemeanor which carries a sentencing range of no less SEE CHARGED, A2

Prescott council opts to list properties

BY ANNE JACKSON

The April 14, 2025 meeting of Prescott City council opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

There was no food pantry report.

In old business, the insurance bill, has now been paid. The city has not heard back from the Baptist Church about them buying 116 W. 3rd Street. Selling city properties generated a short discussion. The community center can no longer be rented out because the weather will be too hot for use without the air conditioner. Mayor Kevin Wood said that if the city gets to a point where it can no longer pay its bills, it becomes "unincorporated" and is taken over by the county and the state. A motion was made and passed to ask a realtor to list the community center and the land next to it in an attempt

SEE PROPERTIES, A2

Pleasanton approves zoning request

New 4-plex coming

BY JACKIE TAYLOR

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The Pleasanton City Council supported a zoning change approved by the Pleasanton Planning and Zoning Commission Monday night; a new four-plex was approved after zoning changed from RB-1 to RB-2.

The location at 12<sup>th</sup> and Orange Streets, east of the

curve where Linn County Liquor is located, will be the location with the property to be built by Greg and Sherri Gentry. Resolution 458 to allow the zoning change and subsequent construction project was approved 4-1 with Councilwoman Rochelle Shreckhise abstaining from the vote.

The council heard from Ryan and Nicole Cariberen concerning their request to be added to the Pleasanton Ball Association checking account. Nicole Cariberen said she

was now the treasurer for the association, a position that had been vacant for two years, and told the council she had no access to the checking account to reconcile it, get deposit slips, etc.

She said the ball association pays for the uniforms, does the fund raisers, etc. but runs the funds through the city to have access to its tax-exempt status.

Discussion centered on one signature on a checking

SEE ZONING, A3

To contact our staff, see our listing at www.linncountynews.net

DEATHS

Sandra Kay Crooks  
Richard Lee Keaton

Linda Ann Pruitt  
Anna Louise Stites

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