

Commissioners discuss effects of city disbandment of fire department

BY BARBARA PROFFITT  
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During the Public Works report at the May 5 meeting Linn County Commissioners heard a brief report on mutual aid agreements for the Linn County Rural Fire Department and what effect the possible disbandment of the Pleasanton Fire Department will have on the county. District 2 Commissioner Alison Hamilton asked Linn

County Rural Fire Chief Randy Hegwald about the current mutual aid agreements he is working on and Hegwald replied that the only one out right now is Pleasanton. Hegwald noted that the city of Pleasanton is currently looking at disbanding their fire department and District 1 Commissioner Jason Hightower asked what the ramifications of that decision would be for his department and the county budget. Hegwald explained that the closure of the Pleasanton fire

department would result in city residents and businesses being assessed the county fire protection tax and that would bring added income to the county on that front that could potentially reduce the mill levy for his department. Hightower then asked if it would affect the Rural Fire Station in Pleasanton as far as equipment needs and Hegwald stated it would not. "The only thing I might ask for is to possibly raise the roster spots for the Pleasanton station from 22 firefighters

to 25. Hamilton then asked about bills that were sent to the city for fire calls and Hegwald explained that the city had asked to see estimates of what a billing would be if the aid agreement were in place and rural fire was the only station to show up on a city call. "Those are just estimates," stated Hegwald. Hamilton requested that Hegwald send those to her as she had received several questions about them. In other matters the com-

missioners: Approved claims in the amount of \$598,856.31 Heard from Interim Public Works Administrator/Road Operations Manager Jessie Walton in regards to the county landfill expansion. Walton reported that the surveyors are at the landfill this week and showed them an overview of what the vertical expansion will be like. Walton then asked permission to send a letter he had sent to Terra Con Engineering on the vertical expansion to KDHE

and then will move forward with looking for a new cell location. Approved a dump assist and waiver of fees application, CD-2025-0005, for 210 S. 3<sup>rd</sup> in Blue Mound. Approved a change order from TerraCon Engineering on the vertical expansion for a berm and drainage in the amount of \$5,742.50. Gave Walton permission to sign two forms on the High-Risk Rural Roads grant for County Road 1095 as well SEE **DISBAND, A2**

Community Days



Pleasanton High School students Derek Brown, Quinton Adams-Morash, Heath McQueen and Riley Hinton dig old mulch out of the General Pleasanton Park garden last week for the school's Community Day. Students dug mulch, added mulch and scraped paint off the floor inside the building among other volunteer chores completed in town.

Blue Mound discusses financing options for water tower project

BY ANGELA K. HOLT  
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Members of the Blue Mound City Council heard from Tom Fingers of Midwest Assistance Program and Joey McLiney from McLiney and Company concerning options for financing the water tower on Monday, May 5, for their regular monthly meeting. The city has received a grant from the water office in the amount of \$517,000. However, this portion is only for the construction of the actual water tower; funding for preliminary work is not included. Interim costs are projected to be between \$200,000 to \$250,000. Fingers stressed that if the city needs to procure funds quickly, certain grant avenues would not be viable, due to application time lines, etc. He also explained interest rates were on the rise in recent weeks, which would effect the

bottom line of any loan rates. Fingers provided handouts on the Rural Water Financing Agency (RWFA), which estimates an interim loan rate at 5.15 percent two-year fixed rate. He noted the percent estimate was as of April 21, 2025. The interim program from RWFA would provide construction financing with a USDA Takeout, and have a fixed rate for the term of construction. Additionally, all costs are included in the lone rate and the interest is capitalized until the end of construction. McLiney, municipal advisor, stated he would act as fiduciary, in the city's best interest. He also recommended interim financing, but was concerned that the provided interest rate was too high. He suggested reviewing private financing options. He stated that funding from the USDA should have a lower interest rate. He continued by telling

the council that they had two paths: revenue bonds, which are secured, or general obligation bonds, which they could pursue at the same time. Fingers counted there were no certainties, and due to time constraints, certain avenues would not be viable. Both Fingers and McLiney agreed that the city could move forward with an interim loan now, and do a flex term loan later on. After further discussion, Fingers went over a proposed resolution with the council. The council then voted and approved Resolution 050525. This will allow the city to move forward with the interim loan through RWFA. Council members then reviewed paperwork with Midwest Engineering, then voted and approved the contract with the company. The council discussed the SEE **WATER TOWER, A2**

New rescue seeks donations to aid startup



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A newly formed dog rescue operating from Mound City is on the lookout for donations to help with their startup. Dirt Road Rescue, a 501C3 organization, was founded



by core members Melayna Johnson, Megan Purvis, Janet Jackson and Samantha Ekwuru, for the sole mission of saving the abandoned, abused, neglected and in-need animals in rural Eastern Kansas, particularly in Linn County. "Basically, our goal is to help with abandonment rescues in the rural areas," said Purvis, adding, "and we also want to raise money to help cover the costs of spaying and neutering so more families can keep their animals." Johnson noted that they do have a chip scanner so animals can be scanned and returned to their owners on the occasional occurrence that the animal is simply lost and not abandoned. "We are not in a position, at this point, to take on owner surrenders," noted Johnson, who explained that the rescue currently operates on a foster care system for the animals it does pick up. Jackson noted they are currently working with other

organizations to help find those foster options and that have facilities to shelter animals that Dirt Road Rescue currently does not offer. "We saw a need and are trying to help fill the gap," said Johnson, "we've all had dogs dumped by our homes and ended up having to take them in temporarily and find them a home." Jackson echoed that issue noting that at one time they had 27 dogs at their rural Mound City home. The rescue is currently looking for crates, carriers, collars, leashes, tie-outs, food and foster homes, as well as monetary donations to help defray the cost of spaying and neutering the animals. The rescue plans to put donation jars up around the area and also has a website, www.dirtroadrescue.org, as well as a Facebook page. They hope to help provide low-cost spay/neuter services and vaccination clinics along with giving back to the SEE **RESCUE, A2**

La Cygne leaders contemplate sales tax adjustment

After bond defeasance, election would be required to alter stated fund focus

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By all appearances, La Cygne voters may not be far away from seeing a ballot proposal to alter the stated focus for one of its two 1-cent city sales taxes. Information at the two regular April council meetings indicate an early payout on bonds for a swimming pool

project and consideration of changing its 1-cent sales tax generation to one that could pay primarily for street improvement. But to do so, said Kevin Cowan, public finance counsel for Gilmore Bell, Kansas City, Mo., would require an election for a new replacement sales tax "that would function as an extension" of the current one. First, however, would be paperwork for defeasance (paying off) the swimming pool revenue bond, which entails the setup of an escrow account for the remaining \$885,119 obligation. Cowan said the bond and its defea- SEE **TAX ADJUSTMENT, A2**

Pleasanton Bingo starts June 9

The Pleasanton Chamber of Commerce is holding their first Bingo night Monday, June 9 from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the Pleasanton Community Center. Cards are \$5 each or three for \$10; a concession stand is available. Bingo coordinators are featuring a special 1940s-vintage bingo machine. No one under 16 is allowed, no alcohol, smoking, vaping or pets allowed.

To contact our staff, see our listing at [www.linncountynews.net](http://www.linncountynews.net)



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