

NEWS

County . . .

that the previous Friday the county had taken possession of the JCB Hydradig it purchased earlier this year and that going forward Road and Bridge would be using the versatile machine extensively to mow brush.

He told the commissioners that the Hydradig “looks really nice.”

Finally, Christy made Domann aware of a letter he had received regarding the status of the old wood-plank bridge located along Oak Road just north of Fifth Street, southwest of Williamstown. A brief discussion followed, during which the Public Works director talked about KDOT’s bridge inspection schedule and the girders that had been installed to shore up the bridge so that it could potentially support heavier vehicles and, in particular, at least some school buses.

The bridge currently has a weight limit of six tons.

Christy directed the Public Works director to make the reclassification of the bridge a high priority.

The sender of the letter wasn’t identified by the chairman of the board.

Tax appeals

In other business during the board’s weekly meeting at the courthouse in Oskaloosa, County Appraiser Janet Allen reported that her office had received 116 informal appeals from property owners following the mailing of this year’s valuation notices for real property. She said that figure represented less than 1% of the total number of parcels in the county, 15,508.

Allen said 78% of the appeals had already been dealt with by her office.

Asked by Walbridge if the appeals were justified, Allen replied by saying some of them were and some of them weren’t. She mentioned the identification of mold in some structures in explaining her answer.

In response to a question posed by Christy, Allen said one of the appeals might end up going before the state Board of Tax Appeals.

Historical society budget

Representing the Jefferson County Historical Society, Greg Noll, the president of the organization, and Clifford Burk, the treasurer, were on hand for the meeting to formally present the historical society’s budget request for 2026 to the board.

Noll told Christy, Malm, and Walbridge that although the historical society thrives on the money it gets from the county each year, it still struggles “to pay the bills.” He went on to report that the organization had experienced a 300% increase in

the cost to insure the buildings at Old Jefferson Town in Oskaloosa, and added that it also has been facing higher utility costs.

Noll also mentioned the removal of the stately cottonwood trees that had stood relatively close to the John Steuart Curry Boyhood Home and Museum, the Reynolds Building, the Tibbott Building, the Kilgour-Plum Grove Building and Edmonds Chapel, a project that was undertaken to reduce the chances of these structures being damaged by falling limbs and branches.

He reported that he and Burk had “inherited” a maintenance problem in OJT’s historic buildings when they became JCHS officers at the start of the year, and said the two of them had been fixing up things in need of repair. He described the maintenance of the buildings and the grounds encompassing them as a “non-ending job.”

Walbridge wondered whether or not the historical society could obtain insurance coverage at a lower cost through the Kansas County Association Multiline Pool. County Counselor Josh Ney said he would have to look into the matter but ventured to say KCAMP would probably balk at the proposal unless the buildings were included in a formal trust held by the county or the county had a hand in the determination of the JCHS’s officers and board members.

Ney took advantage of the opportunity to mention the Pat Roberts pocket museum near the west entrance to the courthouse, which prompted Noll to tell him and the commissioners that the historical society would eventually like to house the museum at OJT. He said the organization wants to add another building to the pioneer village at some point and use it to display various items that can’t be properly displayed now because of a lack of space. The museum could be put there, he noted.

The historical society is asking the county for \$20,900. Last year it wanted \$20,895 from the county.

Law enforcement center

Asked by Christy about the status of the planned expansion of the Law Enforcement Center in Oskaloosa, Sheriff Jeff Herzig said the concrete for the pad where the new generator will sit had been poured that morning and that the concrete for the slab for the addition itself should be poured “pretty soon.”

As previously reported in the paper, the LEC is to be enlarged through the construction of an addition on the south side of

the building. This addition will include five jail cells reserved for use by inmates with mental health issues or inmates who need to be quarantined for some reason.

Land Bank transfers

On a 3-0 vote, the board authorized Christy to sign a Quit Claim deed transferring two lots from the county to the Jefferson County Land Bank. Those lots are Lot 4 in Block C of the Indian Ridge subdivision and Lot 451 in the Hickory Hills section of Lakeside Village.

The deed was brought forward by Community Development Director Stephan Metzger.

It was the consensus of the board that a hearing be scheduled for Monday, May 12 to consider a petition to vacate the setbacks identified on the plat for a piece of property located at 11091 46th Street, Perry.

In presenting the petition to the commissioners for their consideration, Metzger said the vacation of the setbacks would eliminate the need for the petitioners, Daniel and Linda Foltz, to have to replat the property sometime in the future.

The property is zoned Suburban Residential.

Motorcycle Awareness Month

Voting 3-0, and at the request of A Brotherhood Against Totalitarian Enactments of Kansas Inc., the board OK’d the proposed issuance of a proclamation designating May as Motorcycle Awareness Month in Jefferson County.

Christy indicated to those present that as a motorcyclist, he was in favor of the proclamation, and he suggested that County Counselor-designate Jonathan Ehrlich, who wasn’t present, also would be in favor of it, implying that he, too, likes to ride a bike every now and then.

The proclamation read as follows:

“Whereas, motorcycle riding has become a popular form of transportation and recreation for a vast and growing number of people in the state of Kansas; and

“Whereas, there is a growing need to promote safety for motorcyclists and cooperation among drivers of all motor vehicles on the road; and

“Whereas, it is especially important that drivers be aware of motorcycles and give them our space and respect on our streets and highways; and

“Whereas, during the month of May, all streets and highway users should unite in the safety of motorcyclists, striving to share the roadways in the state of Kansas.

“Now, therefore, I David Christy, county commissioner of Jefferson County, do hereby proclaim May 2025 as Motorcycle Awareness Month in Jef-

ferson County, Kansas.

“I urge all citizens to join in this observation.”

ABATE of Kansas is headquartered in Perry.

Executive sessions

At the request of Health Department Administrator Crystal VanHoutan, R.N., the commissioners met privately with her for five minutes for the stated purpose of discussing personnel matters relating to non-elected personnel. “Recruitment and retention” was identified as being the subject that was to be discussed.

At the request of Walbridge, the commissioners met privately with Ney for five minutes so that they could be given legal advice under the attorney-client privilege exception to the Kansas Open Meetings Act. “Real estate” was identified as the subject that was to be discussed.

At the request of Christy, the commissioners ultimately met privately with Ney for a total of 19 minutes so that they could be given legal advice under the attorney-client privilege exception to KOMA. “County commission issues” was identified as being the subject that was to be discussed.

The meeting adjourned at 2:11.

PUBLIC NOTICE

(Published in The Oskaloosa Independent April 17, 2025)1t

PUBLIC HEARING BEFORE THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS, JEFFERSON COUNTY, KANSAS

IN RE: PETITION TO VACATE ALL PLATTED SETBACKS AND WESTERMOST FIVE FEET OF THE EASTERN UTILITY EASEMENT ON LOT TWO ROE ADDITION, A SUBDIVISION IN JEFFERSON COUNTY, KANSAS

Notice is hereby given that a public hearing will be held to hear a request by Daniel D Foltz and Linda L Foltz, as petitioners and property owners to vacate all platted setbacks and westernmost five feet of the eastern fifteen-foot utility easement on Lot 2 Roe Addition, a subdivision in Jefferson County, Kansas. The hearing will be held in the County Commission Room at the County Courthouse, 300 Jefferson St., Oskaloosa, Kansas, on May 12, 2025, at 1.30 P.M.

Daniel D Foltz and Linda L Foltz
Petitioners



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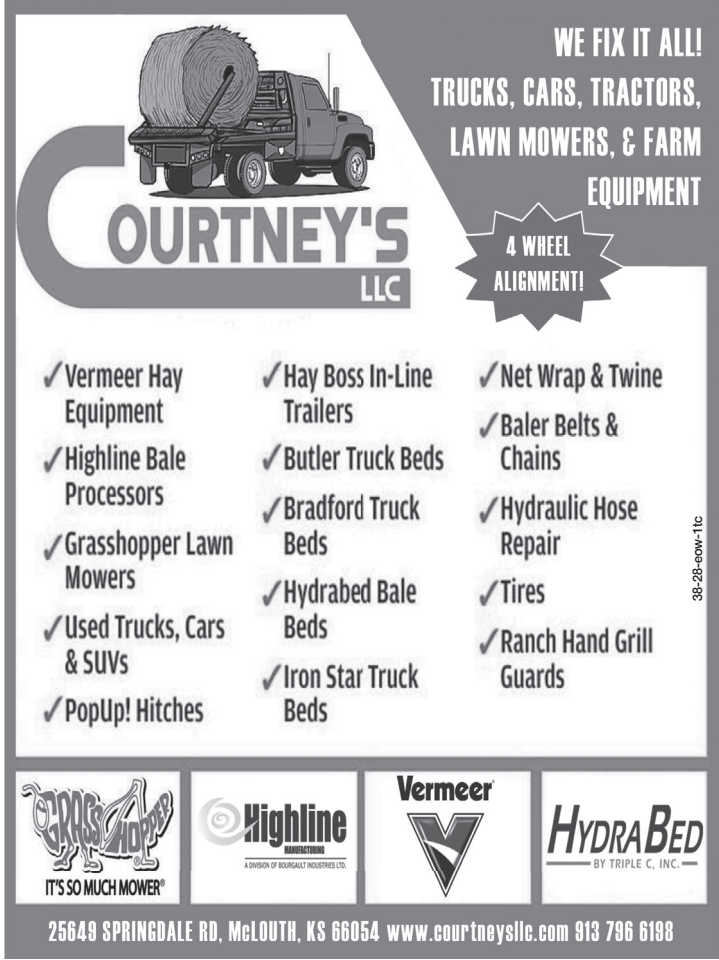
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Heather Roenne

Roenne advances to youth development with Meadowlark

Heather Roenne began serving as the Meadowlark District 4-H youth development extension agent effective April 14.

She will serve the offices in Holton, Oskaloosa, and Seneca, with her primary office being in Oskaloosa.

Roenne earned a bachelor's degree in education from Kansas State University. She has most recently been employed as a 4-H youth development event coordinator for the Meadowlark

District in Oskaloosa.

4-H youth development agents develop and deliver educational programs for school-aged youth. This includes supporting community clubs, out-of-school programs, school enrichment, volunteer management, and outreach to create new program opportunities with new and existing community partners.

Roenne can be contacted via email at hroenne@ksu.edu.

Taylor Insurance Services dba Hegarty-Caplinger Insurance earns Farmers Alliance Advantage Agent designation

The Farmers Alliance Companies have announced that Taylor Insurance Services (dba Hegarty-Caplinger Insurance) has earned the designation of Farmers Alliance Advantage for 2024.

“To qualify as an advantage agent, an agency must exhibit superior professionalism and profitability over five consecutive years. Advantage agents are recognized by Farmers Alliance as the best of the best,” said Farmers Alliance in the announcement. “Reaching this level of distinction reflects this agency’s commitment to their customers and their community.”

The Farmers Alliance Companies, based in McPherson, Kansas, are represented by independent agents. Farmers Alliance was established in 1888 and writes a full range of property and liability insurance for homes, farms, and commercial businesses.

Taylor Insurance Services (dba Hegarty-Caplinger Insurance) is based

in Oskaloosa, Effingham and Atchison. Owned and operated by Dave and Terry Taylor, the agency serves farmers, families and businesses primarily in Northeast Kansas, including Jefferson, Atchison, Doniphan, Brown, Osage, Anderson, Coffey, Lyon, Chase and Franklin counties. They offer a full line of insurance products, including farm, auto, homeowners, crop, commercial, life, disability and annuities. For more information, visit www.TaylorInsuranceKs.com.

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Scholarships Available from JBN Telco and Giant Communications



JBN Telephone and Giant Communications are sponsoring a scholarship for service area students for the 2025-26 academic year.

The applicant should be planning to be a full time undergraduate student at an accredited university, college, or technical school for the 2025-2026 academic year. Current high school seniors and returning undergraduate students are encouraged to apply.

The deadline for applications is April 25, 2025.

The application is posted on the company websites (www.giantcomm.net, www.jbntelco.com) and is available by contacting the companies' Holton office at 800-346-9084.



418 W. 5th St.
Holton, Kan.

