

NEWS

QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS? Contact Jason Jump at (620) 896-7311 or email jjump@atticaindependent.com

The Arts Center Announces Cast, Crew for Upcoming Production of Steel Magnolias

PRESS RELEASE

The Arts Center recently announced the cast and creative team of its upcoming adult community theatre production – *Steel Magnolias*, by Robert Harling. This well-known story about friendship in a small town explores the power of tight-knit community within the walls of Truvy’s salon.

This local production will run for two nights at the Historic Anthony Theatre on Oct. 17 and 18 at 7 p.m. The creative team includes

Director Alison White, Assistant Director Juliana Whisman and Stage Manager Kristin Gilbo.

The play is nostalgically set in the 1980s and takes place in one location – Truvy’s salon – which is a converted carport next to her home. Truvy’s salon is Chinquapin, Louisiana’s go-to place for a beauty fix with a hearty side of gossip. Along with her overeager assistant Annelle, Truvy pam-pers her small-town clients with hairdos, manicures and all kinds of

unsolicited advice.

Anybody who’s anybody is a regular: There’s the doting M’Lynn and her soon-to-be-married daughter Shelby, the moody Ouiser and the well-to-do widow Clairee. Through witty banter and wise-cracks, this hodgepodge group of women form friendships as strong as steel, which they are forced to lean on when tragedy strikes.

Harling is a native of Louisiana, and based M’Lynn and Shelby on his own mother and sister, as

he was deeply impressed by how the community of women around him pulled together to support his family after his sister’s death. *Steel Magnolias* premiered off Broadway in 1987, and Harling adapted the play for the beloved 1989 film of the same name.

The cast of *Steel Magnolias* includes: Erin Teel as Shelby, Sonya Battin as M’Lynn, Abigail Reeves as Annelle, Robin Ybarra as Truvy, Melinda Ewertz as Clairee and Andi Penwell as Ouiser.

This play shares Shelby’s story about a woman living with diabetes, and because of this important health connection. The Arts Center is proud to partner with the Harper County Health Foundation and Patterson Health Center for several diabetes awareness events. Stay tuned for more information about these events.

Steel Magnolias is presented by special arrangement with Broadway Licensing, LLC, servicing the Dramatists Play Service collection.

HARPER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MINUTES

Aug. 18 Meeting

The Harper County Board of County Commissioners met in regular session. Chairman Waldschmidt called the meeting to order with Commissioners Struble and McCurley. Shonda Larson, Finance Director/Board Assistant, and Ami DeLacerda, County Clerk/Director of HR were also present. Daniel Ward, of Anthony, was also present.

Daniel Ward gave public comment, expressing his opinion that the Sheriff’s Office has slandered him by posting a video on social media of him removing items from the Family Dollar trash bin, and indicating he is doing something illegal in the video. He also claims that his Open Records request was not adequately fulfilled. He is requesting a formal apology from the Sheriff’s Office, and to have the video removed from social media. Commissioner Waldschmidt and Ms. DeLacerda attempted to explain that his request will be passed along to the Sheriff, however, the Sheriff does not report to the County Commissioners. Mr. Ward expressed frustration at this, and was advised by Commissioner McCurley to contact his attorney if he wanted to take further action.

Commissioner McCurley moved to approve the 8/15/2025 payroll in the amount of \$153,063.83; the motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner McCurley moved to approve accounts payable in the amount of \$111,169.37; the motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner McCurley moved to approve the 8/11/2025 Meeting Minutes; the motion passed unanimously.

Mike Bennet and Janet Slankard, Public Works, met with the Board, and answered some fuel billing questions, explaining that fuel from the original tanks were coded and billed differently than current contracted

fuel. They also discussed the 2026 bid/contract process. Commissioner McCurley moved to approve an Inordinate Spending Request to Van Deist Supply in the amount of \$8754.00 for Noxious Weed Chemical; the motion passed unanimously. Commissioner Struble moved to approve the Inordinate Spending Request to CAT Financial in the amount of \$65,940.00 to pay off the Soil Compactor; the motion passed unanimously.

There was discussion about staffing, the upcoming Labor Day holiday, and the option to contract labor on certain projects. Commissioner Struble moved to approve the Inordinate Spending Request to Bedrock Machinery in the amount of \$13,887.00 for an 84” pad foot shell; the motion passed unanimously.

Various road and bridge maintenance needs throughout the county were discussed, along with rock options for roads.

At 9:02 a.m. Commissioner McCurley moved to enter Executive Session. The justification for closing the meeting is to discuss personnel matters of nonelected personnel. The open meeting will resume at 9:07 a.m. in this room. The motion passed unanimously. Mr. Bennett and Ms. DeLacerda remained in the meeting. The regular meeting resumed at 9:07 a.m. with no binding action taken.

Pat Noble with Murphy Tractor met with the Board to discuss lease and purchase options for equipment, and the recent demo of a road grader for the Public Works department. The group discussed going out for bid on new graders.

Heather Struble, Health Dept gave a service update, advising of a reduction in client interactions, fair activities, the annual Preparedness Grant funding, and the Vaxcare program.

There have been three animal bites investigated this month, and sources say that Kansas is still at high risk for West Nile Virus.

At 9:24 a.m., Commissioner Struble moved to enter Executive Session. The justification for closing the meeting is to discuss personnel matters of nonelected personnel. The open meeting will resume at 9:30 a.m. in this room. The motion passed unanimously. Ms. Struble and Ms. DeLacerda remained in the meeting. The regular meeting resumed at 9:30 a.m. with no binding action taken.

The Board and Ms. Struble discussed staffing needs and opted to drop one vacant RN position and use those budgeted wages to increase the remaining RN position and Attendant Care Provider wages.

Shonda Larson, Finance Director/Board Assistant, presented a health reserve transfer for August, which was approved. Commissioner Struble moved to approve July transfers in the amount of \$14,998.456; the motion passed unanimously. Ms. Larson then presented a financial update.

At 9:46 a.m., Commissioner Waldschmidt moved to recess for five minutes; the motion passed unanimously. The meeting reconvened at 9:51 a.m.

Ami DeLacerda, County Clerk/Director of Human Resources, met with the Board. Commissioner Struble moved to approve an Inordinate Spending Request to Amazon in the amount of \$2,499.99 for a desktop scanner for the Clerk’s Office, paid from their Technology fund; the motion passed unanimously. The Board reviewed and approved a 6-month evaluation, and declined an opportunity to shop the Property, Auto and Liability insurance coverage this year. At 10:05 a.m., Commissioner

McCurley moved to enter Executive Session. The justification for closing the meeting is to discuss personnel matters of nonelected personnel. The open meeting will resume at 10:15 a.m. in this room. The motion passed unanimously. Ms. DeLacerda remained in the meeting. At 10:15 a.m., Commissioner Struble moved to extend 10 minutes; the motion passed unanimously. The regular meeting resumed at 10:25 a.m. with no binding action taken.

Richard Raleigh, County Counselor, presented Resolution 2025-11, permitting and regulating the towing of motor vehicles from private property. Commissioner Struble moved to approve the resolution; the motion passed unanimously. Mr. Raleigh also presented Resolution 2025-12 extending a moratorium and suspending certain types of improvements on land within the unincorporated area of Harper County; Commissioner Struble moved to approve the resolution; the motion passed unanimously.

The Board advised Mr. Raleigh of Mr. Ward’s concerns voiced during Public Comment this morning.

The group discussed if it was the Commissioners’ responsibility to attend planning and zoning committee meetings, or if the committee should attend the regular Commissioner meeting instead. Mr. Raleigh expressed the importance of not making decisions, and not allowing the perception that decisions are being made, outside of regular Commission Meetings.

Mr. Raleigh advised that we received confirmation that Flat Ridge V is operational as of last week, and that the company is now owned and operated by Public Service Company of Oklahoma, who will work with Invenergy to ensure a smooth transition.

They have stated they will remit their contribution payment within 30 days and have a decommissioning agreement in place within 15 days. Ms. DeLacerda confirmed that the invoice for transfer payments was submitted last week.

Commissioner Struble moved to accept the transfer of ownership of Flat Ridge IV & V from Invenergy to American Electric Power, operated by Public Service company of Oklahoma, to be approved upon receipt of transfer payments as provided in the planning and zoning provisions; the motion passed unanimously.

At 10:53 a.m., Commissioner Struble moved to enter Executive Session. The justification for closing the meeting is to discuss personnel matters of nonelected personnel. The open meeting will resume at 11:10 a.m. in this room. The motion passed unanimously. Mr. Raleigh and Ms. DeLacerda remained in the meeting. The regular meeting resumed at 11:10 a.m. with no binding action taken.

Commissioner McCurley contacted the Government Relations representative with American Electric Power, and will share their General Counsel contact information with Mr. Raleigh.

The group discussed the 2026 Budget, and set the budget hearing for September 15th during the regular Commission meeting.

As there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:53 a.m. The next regular meeting will be held on Monday, August 25th at 8:30 a.m. in the Commissioner Room at the Harper County Courthouse.

ATTEST:
APPROVED:
Ami DeLacerda,
County Clerk
Brian Waldschmidt,
Chairman

HARPER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MINUTES

Aug. 11 Meeting

The Harper County Board of County Commissioners met in regular session. Chairman Waldschmidt called the meeting to order with Commissioners Struble and Mccurley.

Shonda Larson, Finance Director/Board Assistant, and Ami Delacerda, County Clerk/Director of HR were also present.

Mike Bennet and Janet Slankard, Public Works, met with the Board and reviewed road maintenance progress and areas in need of attention. The Federal Fund Exchange Request for reimbursement is complete, with the County submitting a total of

\$362,252.89 in expenses, and anticipating a \$51,350.00 reimbursement. Commissioner Struble moved to sign the document; the motion passed unanimously. Commissioner Struble moved to approve an Inordinate Spending Request to J&A Materials in the amount of \$29,192.00 for two loads of 36" pipe; the motion passed unanimously. The group also discussed alternative vendor options. The Board considered and declined a request from a private citizen to purchase pipe from the County.

The Board requested information on rocking the mail routes, bus routes and high traffic roads, as an option to decrease future maintenance requirements.

Kevin Alexander, Harper County Community Foundation, met with the Board and presented the requested grant award history. The Board previously expressed concerns with the USD Endowment funding and requested confir-

mation that the 10% endowment made by the County is being used appropriately and only for public projects. They discussed budget history, pointing out that the county has either cut or held their budget consistently from year to year, while other entities consistently increase theirs and also are awarded funding through the Foundation.

Jennifer Wolff, Dept on Aging/Public Transportation met with the Board, gave her month end report and presented two travel requests, both approved. She informed the Board that a local church had recently donated funds to the Public Transportation program, and discussed the recent decrease in commodities program numbers due to the State scheduling adjustments. She advised them that a local Home School group had collaborated with the Extension Office to plant and maintain the flower beds at the Harper Senior Center. Ms. Wolff also updated the Board about the Senior Meals and Tuesdays Together programs and an upcoming effort sponsored by The Arts Center, Harper County Health Foundation, and the Department on Aging to use the upcoming Steel Magnolias performance to increase diabetes awareness.

Commissioner Struble inquired if there was a need to budget for Anthony meals in 2026, to which Ms. Wolff advised that the State has successfully absorbed the meal programs previously run by Everful. She also stated her preference to allow the State to run it as long as they are willing to do so, in an effort

to ensure it remains in place. The group discussed current and anticipated trends for the meals and transportation programs, with Ms. Wolff advising that both programs are seeing an increase in utilization. She also indicated that there is funding from KDOT she does not anticipate ending anytime soon. She also noted that the AED installed at the Harper Senior Center was procured by the private Senior Group that meets regularly at the Center, and notified the Board of the upcoming Paddle Poker Run at the lake on September 13th.

At 9:48 a.m. Commissioner Struble moved to enter Executive Session. The justification for closing the meeting is to discuss personnel matters of nonelected personnel. The open meeting will resume at 10:05 a.m. in this room. The motion passed unanimously. Christina Cintron, Dispatch Director/EM, Josh Teel, IT/Building & Grounds, Jan Harding, EMS, and Ms. Delacerda remained in the meeting. The regular meeting resumed at 10:03 a.m. with no binding action taken.

Josh Teel, IT/Building & Grounds remained in the meeting, explaining the purpose of the "Star Link" service located at the Landfill to the Board.

At 10:06 a.m. Commissioner Waldschmidt moved for a five minute recess; the motion passed unanimously. The meeting reconvened at 10:09 a.m.

Joe Pennycuff, County Appraiser, met with the Board and presented documentation reflecting that the County is 93% in compliance with State valuation requirements, stating

that many of the projects were already in process when he became employed. Mr. Pennycuff advised the group of a meeting with a landowner to discuss upcoming

SOTA hearings and past valuation concerns. He reminded the Board that the next Planning and Zoning Meeting, scheduled for August 19th at 7:00, will be held at the

Harper Senior Center. Commissioner Mccurley stated that she had received a message over the weekend from a taxpayer requesting the Commissioners be present at this meeting, not only to listen in on the pending Dog Bleeding Special Use Permit conversation, but also to provide input into the Comprehensive Plan document update. Ms. Mccurley stated that she plans to attend as an audience member. The group discussed the necessity of sending out an agenda if another Commissioner were to also attend.

Commissioner Waldschmidt inquired about parcels being categorized as Recreational Agriculture use. The discussion continued about these parcels actually being used for agricultural purposes, rather than recreational purposes, and the loss of access to land for true agricultural purposes. He then asked if out-of-state landowners should receive the agriculture tax benefit if they aren't actually using the land for agriculture purposes. Commissioner Mccurley inquired how he would differentiate from one landowner to another.

Discussion turned to the proposed dog bleeding facility, and how that land is and will

be zoned, if the project is allowed to move forward.

At 10:28 am, Commissioner Struble moved to enter Executive Session. The justification for closing the meeting is to discuss personnel matters of nonelected personnel. The open meeting will resume at 10:35 a.m. in this room. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Pennycuff and Ms. Delacerda remained in the meeting. The regular meeting resumed at 10:35 a.m. with no binding action taken.

Mr. Pennycuff asked the Board if they had made a decision on his request to increase the Zoning stipend from \$5,000.00 per year to \$15,000.00. The Board stated that they had not made a decision.

Richard Raleigh, County Counselor, met with the Board and discussed progress on the Flat Ridge IV & V sale and accompanying paperwork. He is waiting to hear back from his contact, hasn't received formal notice of the change and transfer and is working on drafting a resolution. The group also noted that the Funding Agreement between Harper County and the Harper County Community Foundation has not been finalized. Commissioner Mccurley requested this be completed.

Brett Traffas, Newberry Family Auto, met with the Board to request a Private Tow Resolution, allowing him to dispose of a towed vehicle if the owner does not claim it within a certain period of time. Mr. Raleigh will draft a Resolution to present to the Board on Monday.

Ami Delacerda, County

Clerk/Human Resources, met with the Board. The group discussed the 2025-2026 Group Benefit Renewal, deciding to renew the FCMI/BCBS Health option, the BCBS Dental, Advance Insurance Group Term Life Insurance, and Humana Vision Insurance. They also agreed to a 25% premium for the Part Time Benefit plan effective 10/1/2025. Commissioner Struble moved to rescind the motion to approve the real estate abatement from the 8/4/2025 meeting and approve the corrected real estate abatement submitted, resulting in a \$510.44 refund; the motions passed unanimously.

Shonda Larson, Finance Director, met with the Board to continue the budget discussion, including potential pay scale adjustments, and other options. They opted to maintain the current Zoning Administrator stipend of \$5,000.00 per year.

Commissioner Mccurley moved to approve accounts payable in the amount of \$76,964.70; the motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Mccurley moved to approve the 8/4/2025 meeting minutes; the motion passed unanimously.

As there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:45 p.m. The next regular meeting will be held on Monday, August 18th at 8:30 a.m. in the Commissioner Room at the Harper County Courthouse.

ATTEST:
Ami Delacerda, County Clerk
APPROVED:
Brian Waldschmidt, Chairman