

County Commission to look into resident use of out-of-state tags

BY LESLIE FOX
Contributing Writer

The Montgomery County Board of Commissioners met for their regular meeting on Monday, August 18. They met to discuss participation in the Neighborhood Revitalization program, property taxes, the Arnold Group wage study, the KDOT cost-share program, Road and Bridge projects and the Sheriff's Tax Sale.

Daniel Owen, Montgomery County resident, came forward to discuss his participation in the Neighborhood Revitalization program. He had been paying his property taxes with his home loan. Once the home loan was paid off, the company did not inform the County Treasurer or Owen that he would be responsible for the taxes moving forward. This resulted in his property taxes becoming delinquent. Once notified, he caught his taxes up to date immediately. He requested that the Commission reinstate his property in the Neighborhood Revitalization program since he had become disqualified through no fault of his own. Melody Kikkert, County Appraiser, recommended that it be noted that he is okay to continue according to the program. "They weren't really delinquent because the mortgage company never made us aware that there was a release," she stated. The Commissioners noted.

Max Williams, Montgomery County resident, drew the attention of the Commission to Kansas residents who are driving with Oklahoma tags. He stated that he sees many Kansas residents with Okla-

homa auto tags and recommended that this needs to be addressed. "Do you realize how much money we are losing?" he asked. Chair Mike Cordray said that he would talk to Ron Wade, Sheriff. Commissioner Robert Bever said they would also speak to the County Attorney about the issue. Nancy Clubine, County Treasurer, stated that the City of Coffeyville did receive a grant a few years back which allowed them to hire someone specifically to address this issue. They did until the grant ran out.

Then Williams asked when the budget hearing will be. Ami Standridge, County Clerk, responded that it is scheduled for September 15 at 9:00 a.m. He asked if the budget could be reduced. Commissioner Bever assured him that it has been reduced. Williams stated that if there was a 6% increase in property tax evaluations then he expects that there needs to be a 6% decrease in the Revenue Neutral Rate.

Jonathan Booe, County Administrator, came forward to discuss the wage study from the Arnold Group. "The one that was done for 2021-2022 was never formally adopted for us to follow. Therefore, the pay scale maintenance and the following of the wage study with the grades and the alignment all kind of fell off track. This would ensure that we stay on that track moving forward and with that several resolutions that were passed years ago talking about the starting rates for specific department heads and elected officials. Formally

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Cherryvale City Council talk Comp Plan

BY LESLIE FOX
Contributing Writer

The Cherryvale City Council met for their regular meeting on Monday, August 18 at 6:00 p.m. They met to discuss the public hearing for the Revenue Neutral Rate, a workshop for the Comprehensive Plan, Public Works equipment and the Fire Department's electrical system.

The Council received a thank you letter from the Ada and J. W. Porter for supporting the Cherryvale Youth Fair. Council-member Steve Strickland thanked those working in the heat, "I just want to say that I see you guys mowing and working every day out in the heat. You guys are going a great job." Council-member Devin Conner expressed his gratitude also.

Karen Davis, City Clerk, requested permission to set a date and time for a public hearing to exceed the Revenue Neutral Rate. She recommended scheduling the hearing for Tuesday, September 2 at 6:00 p.m. Conner motioned to accept. Council-member Norman Johnson seconded. The motion carried.

Michael Hall, Cherryvale City Administrator, requested permission to set the date and time for a Comprehensive Plan workshop. He recommended September 2 at 5:00 p.m. "They are starting to send me a lot of drafts. They are going to review this information with you guys and also give you guys a draft product," he explained. Hall expects that the final draft of the plan will not be completed before November. Johnson motioned. Council-member Curtis Whittley

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ONE COOL COOLDOWN



The Independence Fire Department pumper truck provided the IHS football team with a much needed cooldown after the first day of practice Monday evening. The engine was able to sit well outside the stadium wall, extending the ladder far enough to reach past the track and onto the field. The cool water was welcome after spending most of the late afternoon reconditioning after a summer off. **Courtesy Photo**

ICC Board of Trustees vote to not exceed RNR

BY BREA SANFORD
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The Independence Community College Board of Trustees met for their regular meeting Monday evening to discuss the ADOPT grant bids, to go over a handful of program reviews and to publish the FY 2026-2026 Budget. The group adopted the consent agenda for the evening after Chair Dr. Cynthia Sherwood noted a correction to the minutes that had been made after the first draft was published. Accounts payable were also accepted as presented.

In new business, Sarah Owen, Director of Library, spoke to the Board regarding the purchase of services and equipment via an ADOPT grant in the amount of \$300,000. Owen stated that those funds went directly to purchasing laptops for IHS ICC Now students, as well as Pell grant eligible students and computer carts to store campus laptops in. Thanks to the grant through the Kansas Department of Commerce, the college was able to secure 458 Lenovo ThinkBook 14 Gen 7 laptops with GPS locating software. The seven carts the college was able to purchase through Uline for a total of \$5840.23. Owen stated that some of the carts would remain in the library, but the fair majority of them will go out to the classrooms on campus as needed. The Board unanimously approved the purchase of the laptops and carts.

Also approved was the reinstatement of the last 1-year warranty on the college's printers for \$15,691. President Dr. Jonathan Sadhoo spoke on the subject, stating that the printers come with one year of on-site, full-service coverage and warranty protection. It covers the 13 commercial printer units that ICC has throughout the campus. The average cost to replace one of the units is \$15,000 plus and the coverage provides a free replacement if the printer is deemed irreparable. The Board approved.

Sadhoo continued on, asking the Board to approve the FY 2025-2026 budget, noting that if approved, ICC's budget would not be exceeding the Revenue Neutral Rate. Sadhoo pointed out that the budget is just a hair below the RNR at 33.760. Trustee Patricia Snyder noted she was glad that they had settled on this version of the budget, stating "It's nice being one of the only two taxing districts that came in under the Revenue Neutral Rate this year." The Board voted unanimously to approve the budget as published.

ICC Vice President for Academic Affairs, Taylor Crashaw, spoke next regarding program reviews for the following classes: Accounting, Biology, Bookkeeping and Office Management, Cosmetology, English, Math and Science and Theatre. She invited representatives of each program to the podium to

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PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

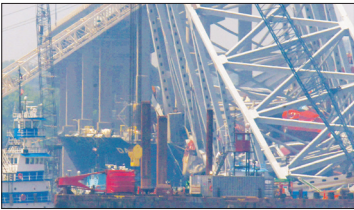


Despite the late afternoon heat, the Independence Middle School football team ran circuits and practiced hard during their first day of practice of the season Monday evening. Between water breaks, the kids were busy learning the ins and outs of the sport under the watchful eye of coaches and assistants. **Brea Sanford | Staff Photo**



Three Royals homer as Kansas City wins 4th straight and narrows gap in AL wild-card race

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Ship explosion causes fire near Francis Scott Key Bridge collapse site

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