

What’s the Word?

REGENERATION

BY DAVID WOODS

►► This past summer, we installed some new generators at the ranch. They are designed to start automatically during an electrical outage and supply power. They don't supplement or change the existing power because there is none. Instead, the generators produce new power on their own. They regenerate dead, powerless electrical lines.

There is a distinct difference between enhancement or reformation and regeneration. Regeneration creates something new, while reformation attempts to alter what already exists.

The Bible has much to say about this very important subject. It says that man is physically alive, but he is spiritually dead in his trespasses and sins until he is made spiritually alive, that is, regenerated by Jesus (Ephesians 2:1).

Jesus discusses this regeneration with Nicodemus, telling him, 'Except a man be born again, regenerated, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God.' (John 3:3-7). Regeneration is an absolute necessity to go to heaven, and the only means of this regeneration is through faith in Jesus Christ and his gospel, which states he died for our sins, was buried, and rose again (1 Corinthians 15:3-4).

Regeneration, not reformation, brings salvation because we are not saved by our works but by God's grace and our faith in Him (Ephesians 2:8-9). We are not saved by any works of righteousness we have done, but according to His mercy, He saved us through the regeneration and renewing work of the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:5).

We don't need renovation, reformation, or reorganization; we need regeneration and renewal.

Want to have a word?

David Woods is the lay pastor at First Baptist Church in Girard, KS. You can reach him at 620-238-0797.

County reviews insurance fund, bridge bid, storage building RFP

CRAWFORD COUNTY COMMISSION MEETING – AUGUST 29

BY PHILIP STEVENS
HOMETOWN GIRARD

►► The Crawford County Commission met on Friday, August 29, at the courthouse in Girard, with Commissioners Bruce Blair, Tom Moody, and Carl Wood present, along with County Clerk Lisa Lusker and County Counselor Jim Emerson.

Commissioners approved the consent agenda and signed motions from the August 26 meeting before turning to new business.

During public comment, county resident Tim Viets questioned the status of the county's comprehensive plan survey and pressed commissioners on how and when decisions will be made regarding renewable energy projects. Viets raised his concern about the late publication of survey advertisements and the uncertainty created for companies interested in developing wind energy in the county. Commissioners reiterated that survey

results will be presented by consultant Josh Albin at the September 19 meeting and said those findings will guide zoning considerations and decisions about the existing moratorium on wind projects.

Road and Bridge Coordinator Alyssa Edwards presented the low bid for a bridge project, awarded to B&B. The contract allows 65 working days for construction, with an additional 20 days for site cleanup. Penalties of \$600 per day will apply if the bridge remains closed past the deadline, and \$300 per day if it remains open but unfinished. Commissioners approved the bid.

County Counselor Jim Emerson delivered a risk management and health insurance update. He reported the county received a quarterly drug rebate of nearly \$100,000, which boosted the fund balance to about \$1.8 million before deposit. With reserves equivalent

to five to six months of expenses, Emerson said the county is in a stronger position than in past years when funds ran short and transfers were needed. He added that upcoming Blue Cross renewal numbers could benefit from the improved claims trend.

Emerson also requested a work session on September 9 to review a draft per diem policy for county travel. He then presented a revised request for proposals (RFP) for a storage building project, scaled back from earlier plans. The RFP is set for one month of advertisement, with bids due October 2 and to be opened at the October 3 commission meeting.

In commissioner updates, Blair reported road work would soon begin on 200th Street between the airport and 4th Street, warning residents of possible closures. Wood discussed the potential for the county to move toward a purchasing card system that could provide

rebates on expenditures, replacing scattered department cards. Moody noted equipment use at district shops and the possibility of repurposing existing tractors.

The commission entered a 15-minute executive session with Emerson to discuss legal matters involving the coroner's office.

Future business announced includes a presentation from Jasmine Kyle of the SEK Humane Society at the September 2 meeting to request county financial assistance, and a September 16 work session with Colin Holthaus of KWORC regarding worker's compensation. Commissioners also reminded the public that the courthouse will be closed Monday, September 1, in observance of Labor Day.

The meeting adjourned without further business.

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SEK Humane Society pleads for county funding to avoid closure

CRAWFORD COUNTY COMMISSION MEETING – SEPTEMBER 2

BY PHILIP STEVENS
HOMETOWN GIRARD

►► The Southeast Kansas Humane Society asked Crawford County Commissioners on Tuesday for \$30,000 a month in county funding, warning that without it the shelter will close at the end of this year.

Director Jasmine Kyle told commissioners the shelter, which has operated since 1973 on 560th Avenue in Pittsburg, can no longer rely on donations alone. "Without sustainable monthly funding from the county, we are looking to be forced to be shut down by the end of December of 2025," Kyle said. The director framed their request as a public health risk. "This would leave our county without any animal sheltering services, placing thousands of animals at risk and the well-being of our residents at risk."

Kyle said shelter software records show that 93.8 percent of animals brought in during the past four years came from Crawford County. She noted that adoption numbers nearly matched intake numbers each year, which she called "the dream for any animal shelter."

The organization, she said, has struggled as donations declined after a peak of \$582,000 in 2021. "Donations have dropped significantly, falling to just \$94,000 in 2024 and only \$18,000 received in the first five months of this year," Kyle said. According to her, it is because their donor base is older and is drying up as donors die

off. "Our donor base is literally dying off. It's why some of these shelters are having to close down."

She described the request as an investment in public safety and health, citing concerns over stray animals, disease, and dog bites if the shelter were forced to close. "It's not just about the animals," she said. "This is about public safety, public health, and protecting our county's future."

Sabina Brackett, president of the shelter's board of directors, told commissioners the nonprofit employs 11 workers, three of them full-time, but cannot offer health benefits. "We're still nowhere close to what they can go get at Starbucks, what they can earn at Walmart. Those places give benefits. We cannot afford benefits," Brackett said.

Brackett explained that the full-time staff receive only vacation, sick time, and 20 hours of paid time off per year for mental health needs. "Animal shelters have a very high turnaround. You see some tragedies, unfortunately, out there. Just like with nurses and vets and doctors, usually our turnaround is three months. We're very lucky to have some staff who have been here longer."

The shelter charges adoption fees of \$65 for dogs and \$45 for cats, which Brackett said is kept low to encourage local adoptions. "In this area, nobody's going to pay \$200 for a dog," she said. "For us to cover our rates, it would need to be hundreds of dollars per animal, and

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– **Jasmine Kyle**, Director, SEK Humane Society

you're not going to get adoptions at that point."

Commissioners listened but reminded Kyle and Brackett that the county's 2026 budget was finalized two weeks earlier. "That's not to say that we can't look at it and try to figure something out to help you," Chairman Tom Moody said. "I don't know that we'll be able to get to where you're at, but we can definitely talk and discuss."

Commissioner Carl Wood encouraged the organization to continue working with the county's grant writer, though Kyle responded that grants generally favor larger shelters in more populated areas. "A grant's not going to save us," she said. "Because come January, we're still going to have this \$30,000 a month that we're going to have to spend out, but we're not going to have the funds to do it."

Kyle added that the shelter will stop accepting new animals this week

in order to focus on finding homes for those already in its care. "With us only having a quarter left of this year, our focus now has to shift drastically to our already full shelter, getting those tenants out," she said.

In other business, County Clerk Lisa Lusker presented the August clerk's report, which was approved. Commissioners also discussed specifications for a planned storage building and received an update on boiler replacement plans at the Judicial Center.

Future business includes a September 9 work session on a per diem policy, a September 16 session with KWORC on workers' compensation, and a September 19 session with Joshua Albin regarding the county's comprehensive plan survey.

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CFSEK Opens 2025 Women’s Health Fund Grant Cycle

PRESS RELEASE
Community Foundation of Southeast Kansas

►► Since 2007, the Community Foundation of Southeast Kansas (CFSEK) has hosted the annual Rita J. Bicknell (RJB) Women's Health Fund grant cycle, supporting projects dedicated to bettering the lives of women in Southeast Kansas. Since inception, the Women's Health Fund

grant cycle has awarded over \$503,000 to projects across Southeast Kansas!

The WHF grant cycle has two applications: the Circle of Friends application is for funding up to \$2,000, while the Women's Giving Circle application is for funding over \$2,000.

"The Rita J. Bicknell Women's Health Fund shows what's possible when caring individuals come together to make a real difference," said Devin

Gorman, CFSEK Executive Director. "The enthusiasm and commitment from RJB members have been instrumental in advancing women's healthcare in our region."

Applications are available at SoutheastKansas.org/Grant-App. For more information about RJB membership, and for lists of previous recipient projects, visit SoutheastKansas.org/WHF.

Applications for the 2025 Women's Health Fund grant cycle are available online via CFSEK's portal until midnight on September 30th. Questions regarding the grant applications should be directed to CFSEK Program Coordinator Kara Mishmash at SoutheastKansas.org/Contact/Kara.

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