

## Osage County Commission approves comprehensive plan

LYNDON — The Osage County Commission met on the evening of June 24, to address critical local governance issues, including the adoption of the county’s comprehensive land use plan, payroll adjustments, and infrastructure funding. Commissioners Les Holman and Heather Kuder were present in person, while Brandon Smith participated remotely by phone. County Clerk Michelle Morris was present as well, and County Counselor Josh Ney was available via phone, if needed.

Public comments set the tone

for the meeting, with residents focusing heavily on land use policies, particularly concerning renewable energy projects. Jim Foster, a Carbondale resident, expressed concerns about leases issued by NextEra Energy for green power projects, arguing that they stripped landowners and regulators of control. He criticized the Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) program, calling it a “pie crust promise” that could collapse if project names changed, leaving the county without anticipated revenue. Foster also emphasized the need for greater

township involvement in land use planning, and highlighted the lack of funding for maintaining roads near a power transfer station, which sees heavy truck traffic. Another Carbondale resident, Diane Hen?, supported the approval of the comprehensive plan presented on June 17, asserting that it addressed many of the concerns raised by Foster. Joe Hyde, a resident from south of Osage City, opposed a proposed solar farm spanning 20,000 acres, citing its potential to disrupt ranching, farming and wildlife, as well as

environmental issues like water runoff, hail damage to panels, and the challenge of disposing non-recyclable solar panels after their 30-year lifespan. The centerpiece of the meeting was the discussion and adoption of the county’s comprehensive plan under unfinished business. The commission reviewed proposed amendments to the plan, which had been in development for over two years and was presented on June 17. Smith proposed two specific changes: First, amending Page 15 to clarify that Olivet pur-

chases water from Rural Water District No. 3, not from wells, ensuring accurate representation of water sourcing; and second, removing bullet point five on Page 84, which encouraged waste stream reduction through recycling promotion. Smith argued that the county’s recycling program was costly, as it involved transporting materials to a separate dump, and removing the bullet point would not preclude private recycling efforts, but would avoid committing the county

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## Saturday in the Park



Children had a blast playing in foam produced by the “Ultimate Foam Truck” Saturday during Scranton’s annual summer event.

## Scranton kicks off summer with community event

SCRANTON — The Scranton community celebrated its annual Saturday in the Park celebration June 28. The event included inflatables, a petting zoo, a mini train, a silent

auction, vendors and food trucks. Other activities throughout the day were a cake walk, a cornhole tournament, a foam party, and a parade. Live music was provided by

Keith Wells & The Tonky Stompers, and the fireworks show, courtesy of the Scranton Fire Department, was the grand finale of the evening. See additional photos | 12



The Osage County Sheriff’s Office has announced the addition of Lieutenant Fred Nech (center) to its leadership team, which includes Undersheriff Scott Brenner (left) and Sheriff Chris Wells (right). Nech brings over 33 years of experience, including more than two decades as the Osage City Police Chief.

## Burlingame USD 454 Board approves insurance proposal

BURLINGAME — A special meeting of the Burlingame USD 454 Board of Education was held Monday, where the Board approved the KICS insurance proposal of \$96,365 for the 2025-2026 school year. Board members present were Melissa Droege, Audrey Ross, Chrissie Atchison, Pam Masters, Krista Rowley and Jamie Bowman. Also in attendance were Marcy Cassidy, school superintendent, and Christi Droege, board clerk. The Board also approved payment of the warrants as presented,

the supplemental employment of Christina McFarlane as junior high cheer sponsor and Jeff Slater as junior high girls’ head basketball coach; the administrative recommendation to re-employ classified staff members for the 2025-2026 school year as presented; and the end-of-the-year expenditures and transfers for the year ending June 30, 2025. In addition, the Board approved the calendar change of the Feb. 12, 2026, parent-teacher conferences to be moved to Feb. 9, 2026.

## Osage City, Osage County Fair kicks off July 9

OSAGE CITY — The Osage City, Osage County Fair is Wednesday, July 9, through Saturday, July 12. In addition to the parade, carnival rides, vendor booths, and the Lions Club food stand, the fair will also feature baby races, an ‘80s night party, a homemade ice cream social, bingo, a beer garden, a hot dog eating contest, a band, and a fireworks show. See Page 6 for more information. The parade will begin at 6:30 p.m. Friday, July 11, in the downtown business district. Jim and Dena Paul have been chosen to serve as the 2025 Mr. and Mrs.

Osage City in the parade. Jim moved to Osage City when he was in fourth grade, and Dena came to the community when she was in first grade. Both graduated from Osage City High School. Following graduation, they left the community, and returned to Osage City in 1996. They have two children, Kady Carson (Josh) and Tracer Paul (Miranda), and two granddaughters, 3-year-old Delilah and 5-month-old Blair. Dena is the principal at Osage City Elementary School, and has been involved in creating opportunities for elementary school students to



Jim and Dena Paul were named Mr. and Mrs. Osage City for this year’s Osage City, Osage County Fair Parade.

develop leadership skills through K-Kids and Cubs programs, and in encouraging dads to volunteer at school through the Watch D.O.G.S. program. Jim is a tile setter, with 30 years of experience transforming homes, mainly in the Topeka area. He is also on the Osage County Fair Board and has been instrumental in bringing the carnival back to the Osage City, Osage County Fair. The Pauls’ hobbies include spending time with family, playing golf, and attending sporting activities. This year’s parade marshal is Jeanette Stromgren, an Atchison



Jeanette Stromgren has been named parade marshal.

native, who graduated from Highland Community College and Emporia State University with degrees in elementary

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