

County

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working with the treasurer's office to reconcile accounts, clear past vendor balances, and prepare for the November property tax abstract and 2024 tax roll balancing.

Smith said she continues to address differences between the bank and accounts payable systems and has created a "suspense" fund to isolate unresolved discrepancies pending auditor review. She requested that Osage County Treasurer Becky Holmberg receive immediate bank access to streamline daily deposits and reconciliation.

Commissioners informed Smith that BT & Co. would coordinate closely with her office, the treasurer, and clerk to prioritize catch-up accounting tasks.

Commissioners discussed creating standardized voucher forms for bill payments and reviewing whether the CIC software can support digital voucher entry and receipt uploads. Departments will eventually be trained to enter invoices directly into the system, reducing paper forms and redundant scanning. Ney said BT & Co. may assist in developing and

training staff on a modernized process.

The board also discussed Paycor's implementation timeline for biweekly payroll, emphasizing the need for consistent processing and review deadlines. Commissioners agreed the county should approve payroll on Tuesdays, allowing time for department submissions and verification before paychecks are issued Friday. The exact calendar and transition pay cycle will be finalized in coordination with Paycor representatives.

Fran Deters, General Public Transportation, presented the annual KDOT Section 5311 match letter. Commissioners approved a \$145,000 local commitment to support rural transit operations, noting the program reimburses roughly half of monthly costs based on detailed ridership and trip reports.

Engineer Ben Kramer updated the Melvern wastewater treatment facility project. The collection system phase is complete, with a one-year follow-up planned. A KDHE loan facilitated a \$313,555 reduction to the treatment-phase contract via change orders that removed biosolids removal, adjusted dykes,

and reconfigured piping. Commissioners authorized Kuder to sign the agreement with Tri-Star Utilities, Change Order No. 1, and a stormwater Notice of Intent transfer, pending legal review. The treatment phase allows 150 days to substantial completion and 180 days to final, converting operations to a two-cell lagoon system.

Treasurer Holmberg received approval of a \$12,879.75 purchase order to print and mail tax statements. Personnel actions included hiring a full time employee at \$16 per hour effective Nov. 3; wage adjustments for two other employees were approved, both effective Nov. 1. Holmberg advocated for a county-wide graded pay scale to guide future adjustments.

The commission recessed to the Public Building Commission to approve a \$1,750 requisition for guttering at a sheriff's facility. Back in regular session, the board paid the bill and approved a \$51,311.60 purchase order for a 2026 Dodge Pursuit to replace a wrecked unit, funded by lake patrol.

Appraiser Michelle Rooks reported that the state approved an extension to Nov. 15 for required reports and

phase deadlines. Former appraiser Matt Booker will assist through Jan. 1, 2026. Commissioners directed posting an RFP for a four-year county appraiser contract beginning Jan. 1, 2026, requiring Registered Mass Appraiser status and at least three years of mass-appraisal experience. Applications are due by 4 p.m. Friday, Nov. 14, with interviews set for 10 a.m. Tuesday, Nov. 18.

In other action, the commission:

- Approved bills totaling \$214,524.24 for the Oct. 28 session.
- Approved a special event permit for Santa Fe Trail USD 434 to host a fireworks display celebrating the football team's successful season.
- Reviewed meeting minutes from Aug. 5 and Aug. 26, and discussed finalizing outstanding Public Building Commission minutes.
- Scheduled a department head meeting for Nov. 18 to review financial and IT updates, allowing BT & Co. to report progress.
- Agreed to revisit the IT services contract, monitor the rollout of financial consulting services, and continue evaluating internal accounting controls and department workflows.

Wardlow

Continued from 1

area captured Wardlow's vehicle circling the neighborhood several times before stopping near where Harris's vehicle was parked. Wardlow then exited his vehicle, walked toward Harris's location, and sent her text messages. Immediately following the texts,

Wardlow opened fire on Harris's vehicle.

Wardlow fired 17 gunshot rounds into Harris's vehicle, causing it to crash into an occupied residence, nearly killing a person inside the home.

Following the homicide, Wardlow fled to Carbondale, where he was apprehended by the Osage County Sheriff's Office. He was later extradited to Arkansas to stand trial.

Pick'em

Continued from 1

Bills, and the same Houston, Packers, Lions, and Colts picks that tripped up much of the field.

There was a three-way tie for second place, with Will Kerns of Osage City and Ron Shaffer of Burlingame also missing six.

Neu claimed the second-place prize thanks to her tiebreaker guess of 1,110 total points scored across all games. The actual total was 1,042, making her guess the closest to the mark. Kerns guessed 1,135, while Shaffer went with 1,165.

Nearly all contestants stumbled on the Houston, Packers, Lions, and Colts games, proving to be the week's biggest spoilers.

With Week 9 wrapped

up, the season-long competition now turns to the grand prize. The overall winner will be announced in next week's edition.

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