Masterson wins in GOP for governor; Holscher prevails in Democratic race

TOPEKA (KAKE) — Republican Ty Masterson rode President Donald Trump's endorsement to victory Tuesday in a volatile and expensive seven-candidate gubernatorial primary, while Democrat Cindy Holscher shrugged off Gov. Laura Kelly's blessing of a rival candidate to win the party's nomination.

Masterson, the Andover president of the Kansas Senate, built an early lead with 42% of the GOP vote as results began rolling in from precincts statewide. He ran away from businessman Phil Sarnecki and Kansas Insurance Commissioner Vicki Schmidt and Secretary of State Scott Schwab. Sarnecki had no previous political experience, Schmidt was vulnerable to attacks for a series of moderate votes on abortion as a member of the Legislature and Schwab never found his footing in a crowded field of conservatives. With incomplete, unofficial results, Sarnecki was at 22%, Schmidt at 14% and Schwab at 11%.

"Tonight belongs to the people of this great state," Masterson said. "Kansans said loud and clear: We want lower taxes, safe communities, educational freedom and an economy that creates opportunity for every family."

Masterson tipped his hat to Trump for "friendship and his support throughout this campaign," invited Republicans who voted for other candidates to "join us" and pledged to be "the governor of every Kansan."

The roster of other Republicans in the race included former Johnson County Commissioner Charlotte O'Hara of Olathe, Nick Reinecker of Inman and Wichita businessperson Stacy Rogers. The large field, diminished slightly by departure of former Gov. Jeff Colyer, consumed millions of dollars in a quest to find the winner.

Democratic ledger

In terms of Democratic voters taking part in selecting a gubernatorial nominee, they made it possible for Holscher and Corson — both state senators from Johnson County — to fulfill expectations for a close race once the polls closed. As the evening wore on, the outcome became clear. Holscher was able to broaden her advantage to 48% as Corson slipped to 39%. The third option, Overland Park Mayor Curt Skoog, earned 13% of the vote.

While Corson secured the outgoing Democratic governor's endorsement and spent heavily on television ads, he struggled to connect with voters concerned about his electability in November. There was a sense among some Democrats that Holscher's mix of public policy positions and a combative campaign style were better suited for challenging the GOP nominee.

Holscher, of Overland Park, offered herself as an anti-establishment candidate dedicated to funding K-12 public education, protecting communities from the data center craze, legalizing cannabis and restraining use of tax breaks to drive economic growth.

"I'm not attached to the establishment. I'm attached to working people," Holscher said. "I'll take on anyone, regardless of party, who stands in the way of lower costs, better schools and a government that works for everyday people. I won't be bought by billionaires, bullied by special interests and insiders, or pressured by the political establishment."

Corson, an attorney who worked at the U.S. Department of Commerce before entering the state Senate, said he was the only Democrat with a strategy for responsibly lowering property taxes. He promised that as governor he would veto "pork" projects thrown into the state budget by the Legislature and reject bills designed to undermine abortion rights affirmed in a statewide vote in 2022.

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City Council

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whether the engineer could participate briefly in the Aug. 11 budget work session to clarify the choices facing the council.

Cemetery project revised

The council voted 4-0 to revise the scope of work previously approved for Greenwood Cemetery.

Jones said city officials met at the cemetery with a representative of Bayer Construction to examine the deteriorating roadways. Instead of milling the entire surface, the contractor recommended milling high areas, patching low areas and applying a seal coat.

The revised work will remain within the previously approved $20,000 cost.

McDonald said the project would provide a short-term improvement, estimated at approximately three to five years, while preserving a base that could be used if the city later completes a more extensive overlay. He said the work should also restore the original width of the cemetery roads, portions of which have been narrowed by grass growing over the pavement edges.

Council approves camera lease

Doug Teetzen and Matt Smith of TCT presented a proposal to replace and consolidate the city's aging security camera systems.

TCT representatives said the city's existing camera hardware is nearly 10 years old, has reached the end of its manufacturer-supported life and is spread among several separate recording systems. Cameras may stop working without city personnel receiving notice, leaving officials unaware of the problem until they attempt to retrieve footage.

The proposed system will connect cameras at city facilities through TCT's private fiber network and store recordings on a centralized recorder located at City Hall. TCT would monitor the equipment, notify the city of problems and replace failed equipment under the lease. The system would not use cloud storage, and the city would retain control of its video data.

Jones said the city currently has 27 cameras at City Hall, the street and water departments, the Recreation Center, swimming pool, Fire Department and Riverwalk. The proposed additions would increase the total to 33 cameras. The system could initially support as many as 70 cameras.

Jones emphasized that the proposal is not a license-plate-reading system. The upgraded software would, however, allow authorized users to search recorded footage using descriptions such as a vehicle color, clothing or an animal.

The three-year lease will cost approximately $1,690 per month, with one-time charges of about $7,195. Jones said the initial expense could be paid from the city's equipment reserve fund, which contains approximately $168,000. The monthly cost would be divided among the departments and facilities using the system.

Council members approved the lease proposal 4-0. TCT representatives estimated installation could begin within four to six weeks.

The council also voted unanimously to accept the city's annual audit as presented at the previous meeting.

During discussion near the end of the meeting, Hartman raised concerns about the community's limited child-care options, particularly for school-age children during the period between the end of summer programs and the beginning of school.

Council members discussed the former American Legion building as one possible community-use location. Jones said the building is owned by the Life Center. McKnight said the owners have expressed interest in seeing the building used for a community purpose, although another organization would likely need to oversee and operate any program.

McDonald also reported that he planned to meet with Bobby Alexander and hoped to have a proposal concerning signs for city recreation facilities by the council's next meeting.

The council then adjourned.

SUPPORT LOCAL BUSINESS

NOTICE OF BUDGET HEARING

The governing body of
Drainage District # 2
Chase County
will meet on August 20, 2026 at 10:00 AM at Chase County Court House, County Clerk's office for the purpose of hearing and answering objections of taxpayers relating to the proposed use of all funds and the amount of tax to levied.
Detailed budget information is available at Chase County Clerk's office and will be available at this hearing.

BUDGET SUMMARY

Proposed Budget 2027 Expenditures and Amount of 2026 Ad Valorem Tax establish the maximum limits of the 2027 budget. Estimated Tax Rate is subject to change depending on the final assessed valuation.

FUND	Prior Year Actual 2025 Expenditures	Prior Year Actual 2025 Actual Tax Rate*	Current Year Estimate for 2026 Expenditures	Current Year Estimate for 2026 Actual Tax Rate*	Proposed Budget Year for 2027 Budget Authority for Expenditures	Proposed Budget Year for 2027 Amount of 2026 Ad Valorem Tax	Proposed Budget Year for 2027 Proposed Estimated Tax Rate*
General	148	3.875	2,800	3.679	16,900	2,542	3.388
Totals	148	3.875	2,800	3.679	16,900	2,542	3.388
						Revenue Neutral Rate**	3.388
Less: Transfers	0		0		0		
Net Expenditures	148		2,800		16,900		
Total Tax Levied	2,542		2,542		xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx		
Assessed Valuation	656,088		690,936		750,250		

*Tax rates are expressed in mills.
***Revenue Neutral Rate as defined by KSA 79-2988*

Kevin Hannigan

NOTICE OF BUDGET HEARING

2027

The governing body of
Highland Cemetery District
Morris County
will meet on August 17th, 2026 at 10:00 a.m. at 1727 South 1600 Rd., Wilsey for the purpose of hearing and answering objections of taxpayers relating to the proposed use of all funds and the amount of tax to levied.
Detailed budget information is available at Morris County Clerk's Office and will be available at this hearing.

BUDGET SUMMARY

Proposed Budget 2027 Expenditures and Amount of 2026 Ad Valorem Tax establish the maximum limits of the 2027 budget. Estimated Tax Rate is subject to change depending on the final assessed valuation.

FUND	Prior Year Actual 2025 Expenditures	Prior Year Actual 2025 Actual Tax Rate*	Current Year Estimate for 2026 Expenditures	Current Year Estimate for 2026 Actual Tax Rate*	Proposed Budget Year for 2027 Budget Authority for Expenditures	Proposed Budget Year for 2027 Amount of 2026 Ad Valorem Tax	Proposed Budget Year for 2027 Proposed Estimated Tax Rate*
General	1,814	2.678	1,965	2.656	5,889	1,800	2.539
Debt Service							
Totals	1,814	2.678	1,965	2.656	5,889	1,800	2.539
						Revenue Neutral Rate**	2.539
Less: Transfers	0		0		0		
Net Expenditures	1,814		1,965		5,889		
Total Tax Levied	1,800		1,799		xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx		
Assessed Valuation	671,896		677,481		708,817		

Outstanding Indebtedness, Jan 1,	2024	2025	2026
G.O. Bonds	0	0	0
Revenue Bonds	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0
Lease Pur. Princ.	0	0	0
Total	0	0	0

*Tax rates are expressed in mills.
***Revenue Neutral Rate as defined by KSA 79-2988*

Greg Geiswein

NOTICE OF HEARING TO EXCEED REVENUE NEUTRAL RATE AND BUDGET HEARING

The governing body of
Flint Hills District #13
Chase
will meet on September 9, 2026 at 6:30 P.M. at Pendergraft 4-H Building Cottonwood Falls, Kansas for the purpose of hearing and answering objections of taxpayers relating to the proposed use of all funds and the amount of tax to be levied and Revenue Neutral Rate.
Detailed budget information is avaiable at Flint Hills District - Cottonwood Falls Office and will be available at this hearing.

SUPPORTING COUNTIES
Chase (home county) Morris

BUDGET SUMMARY

Proposed Budget 2027 Expenditures and Amount of Current Year Estimate for 2026 Ad Valorem Tax establish the maximum limits of the 2027 budget. Estimated Tax Rate is subject to change depending on the final assessed valuation.

FUND	Prior Year Actual 2025 Expenditures	Prior Year Actual 2025 Actual Tax Rate*	Current Year Estimate for 2026 Expenditures	Current Year Estimate for 2026 Actual Tax Rate*	Proposed Budget Year for 2027 Budget Authority for Expenditures	Proposed Budget Year for 2027 Amount of 2026 Ad Valorem Tax	Proposed Budget Year for 2027 Proposed Estimated Tax Rate*
General	447,399	1.395	614,000	1.624	655,750	303,449	1.700
Debt Service							
Totals	447,399	1.395	614,000	1.624	655,750	303,449	1.700
						Revenue Neutral Rate**	1.547
Less: Transfers	0		0		0		
Net Expenditures	447,399		614,000		655,750		
Total Tax Levied	226,788		276,093		xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx		
Assessed Valuation:	162,551,089		170,033,960		178,530,070		

Outstanding Indebtedness, Jan 1,	2024	2025	2026
G.O. Bonds	0	0	0
Revenue Bonds	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0
Lease Pur. Princ.	0	0	0
Total	0	0	0

*Tax rates are expressed in mills.
***Revenue Neutral Rate as defined by KSA 79-2988*

Randy Peterson Board Chair

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