

COUNCIL GROVE

153

Years

SANTA FE TRAIL

REPUBLICAN

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Briefly...

The Council Grove Republican staff would like to thank those on the election board and all poll workers who invested their time to enable the polls to be open for 12 hours for voting and then the time it took to tally results.

Local Grain Prices

(Provided by Agri Trails Coop)

Corn	\$3.95
Milo	\$3.70
Soybeans	\$10.80
Wheat	\$6.86
Oats	\$1.00

Reservoir Lake Level

Normal elevation	1274.00
Current elevation	1273.60

THREE-DAY

WEATHER

FORECAST

Corps of Engineers Readings,

Council Grove Reservoir

High and low

temperatures for the

24-hour period

ending this morning were

78 and 69, with the

8:00 am reading 71°.

There was .23 inch of rain

Friday: A 60% chance for

rain. Gradually clearing,

high 90. South wind 5-10

mph. Clear, low 71. South

wind around 5 mph.

Saturday: Sunny, high 92.

South wind around 10

mph. Mostly clear, low

74.

Sunday: Mostly sunny,

high 94. South wind 10-

15 mph with gusts to 20

mph. Mostly clear, low

76.

NATIONAL

GARAGE

SALE DAY

AUGUST 8, 2026

FRIDAY

FORECAST

High 90

Low 71

8

10499

02579

4

Alderman retires after 40 years; Roe-Blythe purchases dental practice

by Jan Sciacca

Longtime Council Grove dentist Dr. Don Alderman is retiring after 40 years of serving area patients, with Dr. Katie Roe-Blythe purchasing his practice at 111 W. Main St.

The sale is scheduled to close Friday, Aug. 7. Alderman's final day of work, Thursday, Aug. 6, comes exactly 40 years after he began his dental career in Council Grove on Aug. 6, 1986.



Dr. Katie Roe-Blythe

The Council Grove Republican learned of the transition details during phone conversations with Don and Jill Alderman and Roe-Blythe.

Roe-Blythe, often referred to as Dr. Katie, will begin seeing patients in Council Grove on Monday, Aug.

10. The office will operate as Hometown Dental and will be open 8 a.m. – 5 p.m., Monday through Wednesday. Roe-Blythe also owns Hometown Dental in Herington, where she will continue seeing patients Thursday and Friday.

Having two locations will allow Roe-Blythe to provide additional options for patients. She said Council Grove patients who experience an emergency outside the local office's Monday-through-Wednesday schedule may be able to receive care at the Herington location on Thursday or Friday.

Roe-Blythe plans to contact patients already scheduled at the Council Grove office after the transfer is completed and she receives access to the practice. She said patients may continue with their appointments, reschedule or arrange an opportunity to meet her before receiving treatment.

"The transition is always tough, so I think that just giving grace both ways will go a long way," Roe-Blythe said.

Michael Gilliam, the office's hygienist will remain with the practice. Kathy Worrell, Alderman's dental assistant, also plans to stay during a transition period before retiring.

Roe-Blythe is a 2016 graduate of Herington High School. She attended the University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Dentistry and graduated in 2024. In addition to operating her Herington practice, she has worked at Konza Prairie Community Health Center.

Roe-Blythe is married to Tyler Blythe. They are expecting and will

welcome their first child into the family in November.

The professional relationship between Roe-Blythe and Alderman began before she graduated from dental school. Roe-Blythe contacted dentists in the area to introduce herself and seek professional guidance as she prepared to return to the region.

She said she knew she planned to establish herself in Herington but believed the size of the community could eventually require her to operate a second location. She and Alderman remained in contact during the following two years.

Roe-Blythe said Alderman provided mentorship and assistance even though she did not work in his office.

"He's been so helpful," she said.

Roe-Blythe said operating a practice in Council Grove had been one of her goals. Growing up in Herington, she was familiar with Council Grove and had observed the community's support for its local businesses and services.

The purchase allows the dental office to remain locally operated while continuing to serve Alderman's established patients.

Roe-Blythe said her goal is to preserve the approach to patient care that Alderman maintained during his four decades in practice.

"We're going to continue Dr. Alderman's legacy and really try to keep everything in Council Grove and keep all the patients treated like family," Roe-Blythe said. "That's our whole goal at Hometown Dental."

Card shower planned for Carol Cooper

Carol Cooper will celebrate her 85th birthday on Saturday, August 15. Cards can be sent to her at PO Box 91, Alta Vista, KS 66845.

MC Commission: courthouse to receive public wi-fi

The Morris County Commissioner meeting was called to order on Tuesday, July 28th, 2026, at 9:00 a.m. Commissioners Jim Barber, David Fox and Wayne Kohler were present. Chelsey Schmidt, County Clerk, and Bill Kassebaum, County Counselor, were present.

Others present: Billy Kryger- Pastor Berean Baptist Church

Commissioner Kohler (Fox) moved to approve minutes from the July 21st, 2026, Commission Meeting. Motion carried.

Commissioner Fox (Kohler) moved to approve payroll liabilities as presented; in the total amount of \$149,117.96. Motion carried.

Commissioner Kohler (Fox) moved to approve the accounts payable vouchers as presented; in the total amount of \$267,216.62. Motion carried. The breakdown by fund is as follows:

General: \$14,325.94
Road & Bridge: \$12,156.65
Noxious Weed: \$3,891.32
Solid Waste: \$1,152.50
Capital Improvement: \$2,640.21
Bond & Interest: \$233,050.00

Discussion was held regarding I.T. re-cabling for the courthouse servers. Great Plains Computers & Networking, the county's contracted I.T. provider, is recommending updating the cabling to CAT6. While this work is being done it would be an

(See Commissioners, Page 2)

410 E. Main dispute moves to Board of Zoning Appeals

by Jan Sciacca

The Council Grove Board of Zoning Appeals will consider a dispute Aug. 12 involving the proposed redevelopment of 410 E. Main St., where the property owner and contractor are challenging the city's denial of a building permit.

The appeal raises questions about whether the connected property constitutes one structure or two, whether revised plans qualify for the city's mixed-occupancy exception and how the permit application was handled after it was submitted Nov. 20, 2025. The matter has also attracted attention because the contractor, Ryan McDonald of Sage Homes LLC, serves as mayor of Council Grove. McDonald did not purchase the property and was hired by owner Tim Walsh after the sale was completed.

The public hearing will begin at 6 p.m. Wednesday, Aug. 12, at Council Grove City Hall, 205 Union St. The property is legally described as Lots 15 through 17 of Block 23 in Barths Addition.

According to the hearing notice, McDonald and Sage Homes are appealing the building official's determination that the property consists of two structures rather than one. The appeal also challenges the city's application of the mixed-occupancy exception contained in Section 16-201(b) of the Council Grove Code.

Walsh, a resident of Ringwood, New Jersey, purchased the commercially zoned property, which formerly operated as a bar and restaurant. According to information provided to the Council Grove Republican, Walsh intended to remodel the property for use as a private hunting lodge and residence for himself, relatives and friends.

The appeal is not a request to change the property's zoning classification. The property would remain in the city's business district. Instead, the board is being asked to decide whether the proposed project is allowed under the existing mixed-occupancy provision and whether the connected portions of the property qualify as a single structure.

The original building permit application, dated Nov. 20, 2025, listed the proposed use as "Residence." It described the project as a "complete interior remodel into a private residence," along with a new south elevation and a covered porch on the west elevation.

The application identified the project as an alteration to a 3,105-square-foot building and listed the estimated value of the work at \$275,000. The copy provided to the Republican does not contain a permit number, approval date, permit fee or signature showing that a permit was approved.



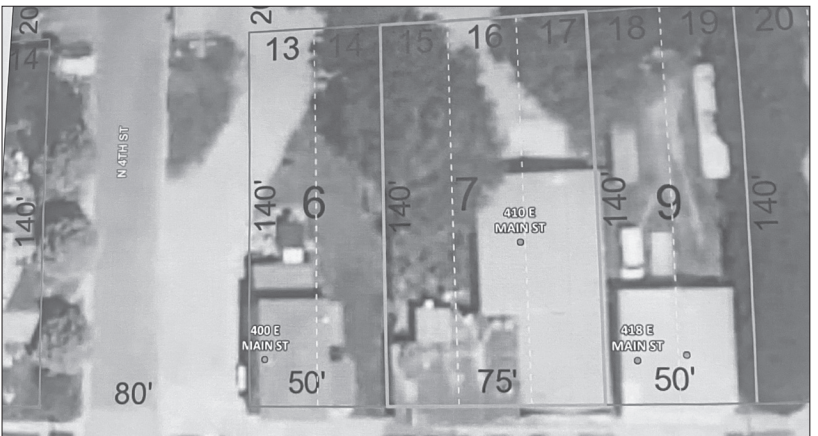
Passersby have been wondering what the status of 410 E. Main is since a stop work order was issued on March 13, 2026.

A stop-work order was issued March 13, 2026, 113 days after the application date. City Inspector James Masters directed work to stop because no permits had been approved or issued.

The order instructed that work cease on the "entire structure." It stated that work could resume after plans prepared by a registered design professional were submitted and reviewed and the necessary permits were issued.

The records provided to the newspaper do not include written notification from the city identifying permit or zoning deficiencies before the March 13 stop-work order. City Inspector James Masters, however, said he verbally raised both issues with McDonald well before that date.

Masters said his first conversation with McDonald about the zoning issue and the need for design drawings occurred Dec. 5, 2025, when Masters conducted an under-the-concrete plumbing inspection at the property.



An aerial view of 410 E. Main (middle of the photo) shows the intermingling of rooflines. City inspectors view the property as two buildings while Sage Homes, the contractor for owner Tim Walsh views the site as one building.

Records trace ownership of 410 E. Main to 1991

by Jan Sciacca

As discussion surrounding 410 E. Main St. prompts questions about who has owned the property through the years, research by the Council Grove Republican found the following ownership history for Lots 15, 16 and 17.

The lots are numbered from west to east with 17 being the farthest east lot.

Bruce H. Fair acquired Lots 15 and 16 from Kenneth Duane Miller and his spouse on May 22, 1991. Fair then purchased Lot 17 from Dallas R. Picolet on Oct. 2, 1991, bringing all three lots under the same ownership.

Fair conveyed Lots 15, 16 and 17 to Roy Shade on April 1, 1998. Shade transferred the property to Route 56 BBQ LLC on Dec. 6, 2001, and Route 56 BBQ conveyed it back to Shade and his spouse on Jan. 24, 2002.

Shade transferred the property to Alvin W. Spiker on Feb. 2, 2004. The property was sold at public sale to James Prudence on April 14, 2005, before Prudence conveyed it back to Spiker on Jan. 24, 2006.

Spiker transferred the property to Farmers & Drovers Bank on Dec. 10, 2010. The bank conveyed it to Shawndean B. Read on Oct. 31, 2012.

The estate of Shawndean Burdett Read transferred the property to Jason R. Morningstar on July 11, 2016. Morningstar and his spouse conveyed it to Michael H. Callison on May 26, 2020.

Callison transferred ownership of Lots 15, 16 and 17 to Tim Walsh on April 3, 2025. Walsh is the current owner of the property.

The records show that the three lots have remained under common ownership since Fair acquired Lot 17 in October 1991.

Masters said he told McDonald that the business district did not allow new residential construction and that design drawings would be required.

Masters said the issues were discussed again during a January meeting with McDonald and City Administrator Nick Jones. According to Masters, those involved decided to wait until Darren Emery began working for the city so Emery could review the project and make the final determination.

The city issued a formal written denial May 8, 169 days after the original application was submitted.

In the denial, City Inspector Darren Emery wrote that the original application proposed a private residence, which the city determined was not a permitted use in the business zoning district. Emery also wrote that subsequently submitted plans depicting mixed occupancy did not resolve the issue.

Emery told the Republican that he began working in the city inspection office in early March. Because Masters was working in Council Grove only one day a week at the time, Emery said Jones participated in some of the project's early conversations with McDonald.

The city cited Section 16-201(b),

(See 410 E. Main, Page 2)