Strong City KANSAS
Heart of the Flinthills

The Strong City Council met in regular session on July 14, 2026 at 6:30 p.m. at City Hall. Those present were: Mayor Justin Garr; Council Members Lisa Vega, Antonio Ruiz, Kathleen Lane, Kendra Williams

Bud Burkhart entered the meeting at 6:48 p.m.; City Clerk Yvonne Kirk; Guests Steve Long, Don Britain,

Genevieve Wagers, Matthew Miller from the Chase County Commission. Public Works Director Matt Markley and Attorney Seth Meyer were absent.

Justin called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

Kathleen moved to approve minutes of June 9, 2026. Lisa seconded, motion carried 4-0.

Lisa moved to set the agenda with the addition of Don Britain to 8 e) and moving 11 a) to 12 c)

Kathleen seconded, motion carried 4-0.

Kathleen moved to approve Warrant Register No. 1869. Kendra seconded, motion carried 4-0.

Matthew Miller is resuming the fire station conversation. This is still in the talking phase on the County level. They are waiting for the Council to give ideas. During the July storm, there was standing water in the station again. Drainage is a problem. 3 options are to demo the current location and rebuild to the North on the same lots, they could build on the lot North of the Depot or consolidate to 1 facility in Cottonwood Falls. The County will not start a plan until they have a location. The estimated size would be 130-140' long by 60-80' wide. They will move some trucks to the Cottonwood Falls Station even with a new build. The restrooms were discussed. Safety of kids at the park and vehicle parking is a big concern. Justin asked for a location preference.

Keeping animals other than cat and dogs, and cat and dog ordinance drafts were discussed. As Kathleen worked through these ordinances, she asked Seth previously if a Civil Penalty Ordinance would be prudent. It would allow the Enforcement Officer to decide if a ticket should be issued or if it should go to court. If the person cited does not contest and does not wish to go to court, they could pay the ticket at City Hall and be done. It could prevent some from receiving a criminal infraction. Discussion is needed with Seth to move forward with this topic. If an ordinance is created, it should be shared with the City of Cottonwood Falls and the Sheriff's Office for review.

Lisa moved to approve a bid for demolition of a structure at 202 E. 6th St. and the building permit application for the demolition. Matt will need to let the contractor know when gas and electric is removed and find out when they plan to do the work. Kendra seconded, motion carried 5-0.

Don Britain inquired about the Motor Vehicle Nuisance ordinance enforcement efforts; there is a vehicle close to his rental property that is a danger to children. He also inquired about a couple other vehicles - if they are in the city limits. Staff will check on this.

The 2027 budget was discussed. The mill rate must go up. The impact of that on property owners was discussed. Council asked Yvonne to reach out to Connie and find out if the hearing can be held on August 11th, 2026. The notice of intent to exceed must be sent to Connie on July 20th and the date needs to be included. If the 11th is not a good date, a call for special meeting will be needed. Bud moved to notify the County Clerk of the Intent. Kathleen seconded, motion carried 5-0.

Kathleen moved to ratify approval of floodplain building permit at 516 Walnut St. Kendra seconded, motion carried 5-0.

A spring rider toy at the playground at the City Park was broken and has been removed. An estimate to replace the toy at the cost of $ 3119.85 was presented. Kathleen moved not to replace this unless it can be purchased with a gift or grant. Bud seconded, motion carried 5-0.

Lisa presented radio ads to the Council for 4-H and back to school safety. Kendra moved to approve the purchase of both ads and would like the 4-H ad language to qualify for payment from the tourism fund.

Kathleen seconded, motion carried 4-0 with Lisa abstaining.

Theatre report: The group is working on a plan to purchase the building from the city. There were concerns raised about whether the city would be required to put the sale out for bids. Staff will consult with Seth.

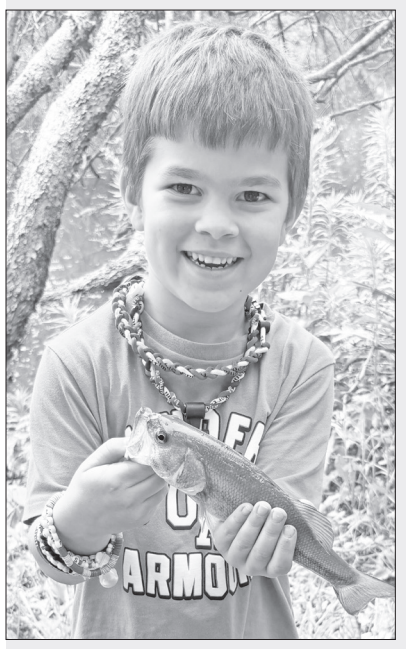
Public Works questions: Does the Council have a timeline in mind for reissuing new tickets for infractions that the applicable ordinance does not give directions on? Attorney consultation is needed; this may fall under the Civil Penalties Ordinance. 2) Budget work sessions. Kathleen suggested that we have them on the agenda quarterly.

Mayor's Report: Justin read Kendra's resignation letter effective at the end of the meeting. Kathleen moved to regretfully accept. Bud seconded, motion carried 4-0 with Kendra abstaining.

Lisa moved to adjourn at 8:43 p.m. Kendra seconded, motion carried 5-0.

Summer Long, Family Fun, Youth Fishing Contest winners announced

The winners will all receive a year's subscription to the award winning Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks Outdoor Magazine, A $100 gift certificate courtesy of What's in Outdoors and the Council Grove Marina, a $25 gift card courtesy of Abby Brinkman, Cabelas in Wichita and more! The five Major Family Winners were selected by pictures, stories and videos.



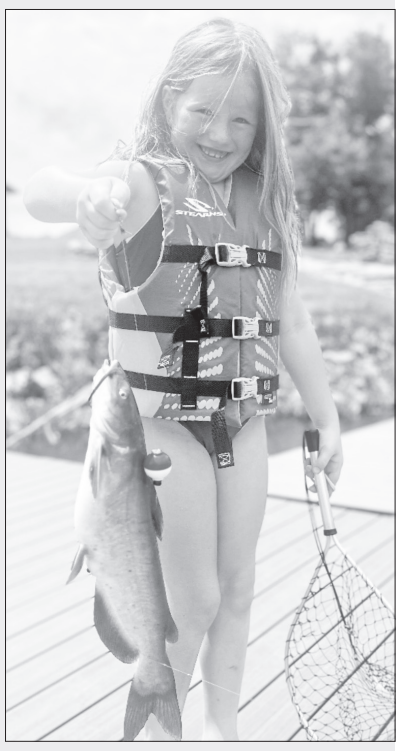
CJ Schuckman, 6 years-old Winner of KDWP Lifetime Hunting and Fishing license

Major Family Winner: Heidi and Ben Bahret - Stories came from Herington Lake, Geary County State Lake, Milford and Morris County Farm Ponds

Major Family Winner: Javin and Mary Jo Brinkman Entries sent in by Ashley Carr

Major Family Winner: Mason and Nellie Chase Emporia

Major Family Winner: Brody and Brooklyn Manbeck Cole Manbeck Video



Major Family Winner: Poppy and Palmer Klingzell, daughters of Abby and Tanner

Pizza Hut fundraiser

(Continued from Page 1)

to the Trace Adkins concert at the Kansas State Fair.

The concert tickets will not be the only prizes available. The PTO also plans to provide other raffle items, while Pizza Hut will offer one winner a year's worth of free buffets. The prize will consist of 52 buffet punches, allowing the winner one free buffet each week for a year.

The Aug. 25 event is intended to give area residents several ways to support the PTO while enjoying an evening at Pizza Hut.

Those wanting a chance at the State Fair concert tickets and other prizes will need to participate in the Aug. 25 fundraiser, when the drawings and special activities will take place.

Livestock Judging Contest at MC Fair

Morris County 4-H members demonstrated their livestock evaluation skills during the Livestock Judging Contest on Monday, July 27th at the 2026 Morris County Fair.

Contestants evaluated classes of market hogs, market lambs, market goats, breeding gilts, and market steers, ranking the animals from best to least desirable based on their quality. The contest teaches youth to carefully observe livestock, make informed decisions, and confidently explain their reasoning.

Results of the 2026 Morris County Fair Livestock Judging Contest are as follows:

Junior Division

C. Macy
I. Carson
E. Effland

Additional placings: L. Thibo-deaux, J. Loomis, G. Longren, R. Baseley, and S. Bowling.

Intermediate Division

L. Bunn
A. Schrader
J. Lautt

Additional placings: A. Butler, M. Thibodeaux, D. Bowling, D. Bowling, E. Womack, J. Engel, N. Effland, A. Corgill, K. Bracebridge, K. Baseley, R. Romme, C. Shearer, and K. Platz.

Senior Division

L. Mayer
Co. Andres
L. Bunn

Additional placings: Ca. Andres, H. Nielsen, D. Nielsen, K. Platz, N. Effland, H. Lange, M. Romme, K. Wilson, L. Olsen, R. Mayer, and C. Prince.

L. Mayer was named the Overall High Individual of the 2026 Morris County Fair Livestock Judging Contest. In recognition of this achievement, Mayer was awarded a $100 scholarship to be used toward attendance at Kansas State University.

Place those unwanted items in the Republican classifieds, call 620-767-5123 or email: cgnews@cgtelco.net

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NOTICE OF BUDGET HEARING

2027

The governing body of
Fire District No. 5
Morris County
will meet on August 24th, 2026 at 10:00 a.m. at Morris County Courthouse, 501 West Main St., Council Grove 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.

	Prior Year Actual 2025		Current Year Estimate for 2026		Proposed Budget Year for 2027		
FUND	Expenditures	Actual Tax Rate*	Expenditures	Actual Tax Rate*	Budget Authority for Expenditures	Amount of 2026 Ad Valorem Tax	Proposed Estimated Tax Rate*
General	13,586	6.832	30,000	6.842	65,715	22,207	6.622
Debt Service							
Totals	13,586	6.832	30,000	6.842	65,715	22,207	6.622
						*Revenue Neutral Rate***	*6.622*
Less: Transfers	0		0		0		
Net Expenditures	13,586		30,000		65,715		
Total Tax Levied	22,201		22,204		xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx		
Assessed Valuation	3,249,346		3,245,078		3,353,360		

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*

Wanda Platz

NOTICE OF BUDGET HEARING

2027

The governing body of
Vista Del Lago Improvement District
Morris County
will meet on August 24th, 2026 at 4:30PM at Morris County Courthouse, 501 West Main Street, Council Grove 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.

	Prior Year Actual 2025		Current Year Estimate for 2026		Proposed Budget Year for 2027		
FUND	Expenditures	Actual Tax Rate*	Expenditures	Actual Tax Rate*	Budget Authority for Expenditures	Amount of 2026 Ad Valorem Tax	Proposed Estimated Tax Rate*
General	2,315	3.212	2,275	3.073	28,019	655	2.982
Debt Service							
Totals	2,315	3.212	2,275	3.073	28,019	655	2.982
						*Revenue Neutral Rate***	*2.983*
Less: Transfers	0		0		0		
Net Expenditures	2,315		2,275		28,019		
Total Tax Levied	655		655		xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx		
Assessed Valuation	203,957		213,172		219,617		

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*

Kenley Hickman

The governing body of Unified School District 397 will meet on the 14th day of September 2026 at 6:45 PM at 2374 310th Street, Room 111, Lost Springs, KS 66859 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. Detailed budget information, including budget profile, building needs assessment and Board state assessments review is available at District Office on the district website and will be available at this hearing.
The Amount of 2026 Tax to be Levied and Expenditures (published below) establish the maximum limits of the 2026-2027 Budget. The 'Est. Tax Rate' (column 7), shown for comparative purposes, is subject to slight change depending on final assessed valuation.

	Code 99 Line	2024-2025 Actual: Actual Expenditures (1)	Actual Tax Rate* (2)	2025-2026 Actual: Actual Expenditures (3)	Actual Tax Rate* (4)	2026-2027 Proposed Budget: Budgeted Expenditures (5)	Amount of 2026 Tax to be Levied (6)	Est. Tax Rate* (7)
OPERATING General	06	4,118,841	20.000	4,402,320	20.000	4,181,284	724,752	20.000
Supplemental General (LOB)	08	921,903	13.558	879,669	11.536	924,572	442,125	11.014
SPECIAL REVENUE Federal Funds	07	81,535	0.000	85,790	0.000	77,146	0	0.000
Preschool-Aified At-Risk	11	9,608		10,153		15,000		
At-Risk Education Fund	13	266,909		303,673		308,333		
Virtual Education	15	843,432		858,976		741,550		
Capital Outlay	16	2,727,236	5.989	749,895	7.994	937,990	321,126	8.000
Driver Training	18	3,815	0.000	3,128	0.000	8,550	0	0.000
Food Service	24	186,138		174,896		208,519		
Professional Development	26	20,159		10,963		84,267		
Special Education	30	930,951		842,403		1,086,077		
Career and Postsecondary Education	34	212,663	0.000	183,731	0.000	253,077	0	0.000
Gifts and Grants	35	180,260		356,620		225,676		
Special Reserve Fund	47	0		0		371,168		
KPERS Special Retirement Contribution	51	315,408		314,883				
Textbook & Student Material Revolving	55	533		3,463				
Activity Fund	56	29,189	0.000	43,868	0.000		0	0.000
TOTAL USD EXPENDITURES	100	10,848,580	39.547	9,224,431	39.530	9,423,209	1,488,003	39.014
Less: Transfers	105	2,239,433		2,315,174		1,942,209		
NET USO EXPENDITURES	110	8 609 147		6 909 257		7 481 000		
TOTAL USO TAXES LEVIED	115	1,426,794		1,454,703		1,488,003		

1. *Sponsoring District Only*
Tax Rates are expressed in Mills

	Code 99 Line	2024-2025 Actual: Actual Expenditures (1)	Actual Tax Rate* (2)	2025-2026 Actual: Actual Expenditures (3)	Actual Tax Rate* (4)	2026-2027 Proposed Budget: Budgeted Expenditures (5)	Amount of 2026 Tax to be Levied (6)	Est. Tax Rate* (7)
TOTAL TAXES LEVIED	125	$1,426,794		$1,454,703		$1,488,003		
Assessed Valuation - General Fund	128	$34,276,529		$34,905,140		$36,237,589		
Assessed Valuation - All Other Funds	130	$37,921,915		$38,740,345		$40,140,714		
Assessed Valuation - Caoital Outlay	129	$37,921,915		$38,740,345		$40,140,7141		

*Tax Rates are expressed in Mills

Eric Carlson — Board President
Marianne Kehm — Clerk of the Board

Exceeding Revenue Neutral for the 2026-2027 School Year
The governing body of Unified School District 397 will meet on the 14th day of September 2026 at 6:40 P.M. at 2374 310th Street, Room 111, Lost Springs, KS 66859 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.
Detailed budget information, including budget profile, is available at District Office and will be available at this hearing.

Revenue Neutral

	2025-2026: Actual Taxes Levied (1)	Actual Tax Rate (2)	Revenue Neutral Taxes (3)	Revenue Neutral Tax Rate (4)	2026-2027: Proposed Taxes to be Levied (5)	Proposed Tax Rate (6)
General	$698,103	20.000	$698,117	19.265	$724,752	20.000
ALL OTHER FUNDS						
Supplemental General (LOB)	$446,909	11.536	$446,927	11.134	$442,125	11.014
Capital Outlay	$309,691	7.994	$309,686	7.715	$321,126	8.000

Revenue Neutral Calculation

Total Taxes Levied Including General Fund	$1,454,703	39,530	$1,454,730	38,114	$1,488,003	39.014
Total Taxes Levied Excludina General Fund	$756,600	19,530	$756,613	18.849	$763,251	19.014

Eric Carlson — Board President
Marianne Kehm — Clerk of the Board

Notice of Hearing 2026-2027 Budget