



Stevens County Library Storytime tried out the new Hugoton Lions Club Musical Playground at Hugoton City Park July 15. Miss Stacey read "I Got the Rhythm" by Connie Schofield-Morrison and brought a selection of musical instruments for the kids to try out. The kids got time to play on the playground and make beautiful music! Storytime is over for the season, but registration is open for the Fall Session at www.stevenscountylibrary.com/CircleTime



HIGH PLAINS THEATRE

WWW.HIGHPLAINSTHEATRE.COM
618 S MAIN ST, HUGOTON, KS

I CAN ONLY IMAGINE
R12
HUGOTON REC
SAT JULY 25, 2PM

MINIONS
FRI., JULY 31
&
SAT., AUG. 1
7PM

BUY OUT
SPONSOR
Stevens County Healthcare
for the Heartland

JULY 25

PUBLIC NOTICE

(First published in The Hugoton Hermes, Thursday, July 23, 2026)
1t

ORDINANCE NO. 416

An ordinance regulating traffic within the corporate limits of the City of Rolla, Kansas, incorporating by reference the Standard Traffic Ordinance for Kansas Cities, 53rd edition, with certain omissions, changes, and additions; prescribing additional regulations; providing certain penalties and repealing ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict therewith.

Be it Ordained by the Governing Body of the City of Rolla, Kansas:

Section 1. AMENDMENT OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF ROLLA, KANSAS CHAPTER XIV, ARTICLE 1

The Code of the City of Rolla, Kansas Chapter XIV Article 1, is hereby amended to read in its entirety as follows:

14-101. INCORPORATING STANDARD TRAFFIC ORDINANCE. There is hereby incorporated by reference for the purpose of regulating traffic within the corporate limits of the City of Rolla, Kansas, that certain standard traffic ordinance known as the Standard Traffic Ordinance for Kansas Cities, 53rd Edition, prepared and published in book form by the League of Kansas Municipalities, Topeka, Kansas, save and except such articles, sections, parts or portions as are hereafter omitted, deleted, modified, or changed. One copy of said Standard Traffic Ordinance shall be marked or stamped "Official Copy as Adopted by Ordinance No. 416, with all sections or portions thereof intended to be omitted or changed clearly marked to show any such omission or change and to which shall be attached a copy of this ordinance and filed with the city clerk to be open to inspection and available to the public at all reasonable hours. The public attention, municipal

judge, and all administrative departments of the city charged with enforcement of the ordinance shall be supplied, at the cost of the city, such number of official copies of such Standard Traffic Ordinance similarly marked, as may be deemed expedient.

14-102. SAME. AMENDMENTS. Section 114.2 of the Standard Traffic Ordinance for the Kansas Cities, 53rd Edition of 2026 is hereby amended in its entirety to read as follows:

Operation of micro utility trucks within the city limits.

(a) Definition of "micro utility truck." A "micro utility truck" shall mean any motor vehicle which is not less than 48 inches in width, has an overall length, including the bumper, of not more than 144 inches, has an unladen weight, including fuel and fluid, of more than 1,500 pounds and can exceed 40 miles per hour as originally manufactured and is manufactured with a metal cab.

(b) Operation of micro utility trucks; conditions. Micro utility trucks may be operated upon the public highways, streets, roads, and alleys within the corporate limits of the City of Rolla, provided that each of the following conditions is met:

(c) Equipment requirements. Each micro utility truck operated upon the public highways, streets, roads and alleys within the corporate limits of the City of Rolla must be in compliance with all equipment specifications and restrictions set forth in Article 17, Chapter 8 of the Kansas Statutes Annotated, as amended.

(d) Registration with City annual registration fee. Prior to operating or allowing the operation of a micro utility truck upon the public highways, streets, roads,

and alleys within the corporate limits of the City of Rolla, each owner of a micro utility truck shall register the micro utility truck with the City Clerk upon forms to be provided by the City Clerk, and pay an annual registration fee of \$25 for the privilege of operating the micro utility vehicle upon the public highways, streets, roads, and alleys within the corporate limits of the City of Rolla.

(i) Registration period. Each registration period shall coincide with the calendar year.

(ii) Evidence of current registration. Each micro utility truck operated upon the public highways, streets, roads, and alleys within the corporate limits of the City of Rolla shall have prominently displayed such evidence of current registration as the City Clerk shall provide in exchange for payment of the annual registration fee.

(iii) Inspection of the micro utility truck by Rolla Police Department. As a condition of registering any micro utility truck, the owner or the owner's agent shall submit the micro utility truck for inspection by the Rolla Police Department or a designee thereof for the purpose of determining compliance with this Section.

(e) Violations and penalties. Except where otherwise provided, a violation of this Section shall be deemed an ordinance traffic infraction. Upon an entry of a plea of guilty or no contest or upon being convicted of such violation, the penalty imposed shall be in accordance with City law as prescribed by Section 201 of the Standard Traffic Ordinance for the Kansas Cities, Edition of 2026, and any subsequent amendments and reifications thereof, then in effect.

GROUNDWATER

From page 1

which feedyards, dairies, grain elevators, ethanol plants and local agribusinesses were built.⁴

Every gallon pumped from the aquifer creates value multiple times.

The corn grown under center pivots becomes feed. Feed supports feedyards. Feedyards support veterinarians, nutritionists, truck drivers, equipment dealerships, fuel suppliers, grain handlers and meat processors. Irrigated silage and alfalfa support dairies that have become major economic engines across western Kansas. Local banks finance operations built around irrigated agriculture. County governments depend upon tax revenue generated by productive farmland and agricultural businesses.

The challenge facing the region is that the aquifer supporting that activity is declining.

Groundwater development accelerated throughout western Kansas during the 1950s and 1960s as irrigation technology allowed producers to transform semi-arid land into highly productive cropland. The result was extraordinary economic growth. Yet the Ogallala Aquifer replenishes very slowly, and for decades withdrawals have exceeded recharge across much of southwest Kansas. Kansas Geological Survey analyses show portions of the region have experienced groundwater declines exceeding 100 feet since irrigation development began.⁵

Supporters of the proposed LEMA argue the region can no longer ignore those realities.

According to GMD3 modeling, implementation of the proposed action plan could leave approximately 4.8 million additional acre-feet of groundwater in storage over the next 60 years when compared to continuing current trends.³

An acre-foot is enough water to cover one acre of land one foot deep. It equals approximately 325,851 gallons. In practical terms, 4.8 million acre-feet represents roughly 1.56 trillion gallons of water.

Spread across six decades, that equates to approximately 80,000 acre-feet—or more than 26 billion gallons—preserved annually.

For supporters of the proposal, those figures represent the possibility of extending the life of the aquifer for future generations. For critics, the numbers raise questions about what level of economic

sacrifice may be required to achieve those gains.

The debate becomes even more complex when considering who depends upon the aquifer. Agriculture is the most visible user of groundwater, but it is not the only one.

For many rural residents, the Ogallala Aquifer is not merely an agricultural resource. It is drinking water.

According to the Kansas Geological Survey, approximately 70 percent of Kansans depend on groundwater for drinking water, and in rural areas that percentage rises substantially.⁶ For thousands of families scattered across western Kansas, the same aquifer supplying irrigation systems also fills kitchen faucets, showers, livestock tanks and household wells.

That reality is often overshadowed by discussions of crop yields and irrigation allocations.

A weakening irrigation well may reduce crop production. A failing domestic well threatens something more basic: the ability of a family to remain in their home.

As groundwater levels decline, some rural residents have already faced increasing pumping costs, deeper well installations and concerns regarding long-term water availability. While most domestic wells require far less water than irrigation systems, they remain dependent upon the same underground resource.

The LEMA debate therefore reaches far beyond agriculture.

It affects producers attempting to maintain profitable operations.

It affects feedyards and dairies dependent upon irrigated feed supplies.

It affects local governments whose tax bases are tied to productive agricultural land.

It affects schools, hospitals and businesses supported by agricultural activity.

And it affects rural families whose daily lives depend upon groundwater flowing from a wellhead into their homes.

There is also another consequence that few people consider.

Irrigation changes the climate.

Research throughout the Great Plains has shown that large-scale irrigation increases evapotranspiration, returning water to the atmosphere through plants and soil. Scientists have documented increases in humidity and moderation

of summertime temperatures across heavily irrigated portions of the High Plains. In some areas, irrigation has become significant enough to influence local weather conditions.⁷

The landscape, the economy and even the atmosphere of southwest Kansas have adapted to the presence of groundwater.

The central question facing the region is not whether groundwater conservation is necessary. Few observers dispute that groundwater levels have declined significantly.

The question is how conservation can be achieved without undermining the economic system that groundwater created.

For nearly seventy years, southwest Kansas has converted groundwater stored beneath the plains into crops, cattle, milk, jobs, tax revenue and economic growth.

The proposed GMD3 LEMA represents an attempt to slow that conversion and preserve more of the remaining resource for future generations.

Whether that effort succeeds may determine not only the future of the Ogallala Aquifer, but the future shape of southwest Kansas itself.

Because this story is not ultimately about water. It is about everything water built.

Sources

1. Kansas Department of Agriculture, Groundwater Management District Priority Area Requirements.
2. Kansas Water Resources Consulting, "GMD3 Moves Toward District-Wide LEMA Plan," March 2026.
3. Southwest Kansas Groundwater Management District No. 3 Draft Action Plan, 2026.
4. USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service, 2022 Census of Agriculture County Profiles for Finney, Ford, Grant, Gray, Haskell, Kearny, Meade, Morton, Seward, Stanton and Stevens Counties.
5. Kansas Geological Survey, GMD3 SmartPLAN Priority Areas Report and Status of the High Plains Aquifer in Kansas.
6. Kansas Geological Survey, Groundwater Resources and Domestic Water Supply Publications.
7. University of Nebraska and Great Plains Irrigation-climate research regarding evapotranspiration and localized climate modification.

Round Up the Red, White & Blue at the Stevens Co. Fair!

Plan Now to be part of the Stevens County Fair Parade Monday, July 27

starting at 5:30 p.m.

City Park
Line-up 5:00 p.m. - Judging 4:30 p.m.

You are Invited to participate in the Fair Parade.

The parade consists of actual floats, commercial vehicles, fire engines, police cars, groups of individuals walking, politicians in convertibles, motorcyclists, hopefully horse and carriages, etc

The Overall Float Winner will take home \$100.00, Second Place is \$50.00, Third is \$25.00 & Division Winners are \$20.00 up to \$30.00 reimbursement for Float Builders. In order to be eligible for prize money, open class floats must be pre-entered by Friday, July 26. Divisions: Commercial, Organization/Club or Junior (any organized youth group or individuals of High School Age or younger) Floats are judged on Beauty, Originality, Workmanship & Adherence to Theme

For More Information or an Entry Form contact Kristen Farnum 620-453-0933 or email kfarnumfamily@aol.com