



Years ago, my youngest was wearing a pink dress or shirt and became completely horrified when some little bird quickly zipped all around her and at her. That was her first interaction with a hummingbird. It's not every year that we see one, but we were lucky enough to see one last year, and this past week, we had quite the visit.

Our breakfast table in the kitchen has a picture window that looks out to a Rose of Sharon bush. My youngest was instantly on her toes after glancing out the window, already moving toward the door as she told me, "Hummingbird!" We crept out the door to watch the beautiful little sighting. While watching it feed from each Rose of Sharon flower, I went in and grabbed my camera. I got a few shots before it zoomed away, only to have it come back again and resume its feeding. That was the pattern: it would feed on the nectar, zoom away, and come back. It paid no attention to my youngest at all as she inched closer to it each time it was feeding.

Finally, my youngest plucked a flower from the bush and held it. She watched in awe as the little hummingbird came and ate from her flower. Wanting to make sure it was well fed before it was on its way, I ran into the house to make

up some sugar water for it. My youngest dipped her flower in the sugar water and again held still, letting the hummingbird approach the flower. It happily ate and then sat right in her hand! Though she was so calm on the outside, her animal-loving heart was ecstatic. A memory she will carry forever, I'm sure.

The two dairy calves are growing in size and personality. Frannie the Jersey is quite evasive, so when we catch her lying down up in the corral, we sneak over and start giving her all the love we can. We even slipped a halter on her for the first time last week. She was not a fan and flopped over on the ground like a typical Jersey. While lying flat with the halter still on, Frannie's mama sniffed her, then paid no more attention to her toddler behavior. We will get more into the habit of getting a halter on her so we can handle her as she grows. The Brown Swiss calf, Flora, is such a doll and much less evasive than the Jersey calf.

We've been milking cows for almost four years now, and each time a cow freshens, we have milked twice a day, morning and evening, no exceptions, for months. With the season we are in right now, the choice to calf share for the first time wasn't easy, but with the kids taking part in more,

it is making life more manageable. Fresh, raw milk matters to us, and we are making it work how we can in each season we are in.

To keep up with the growing calves and homestead life, follow us on Facebook: Vintage at Heart Homestead.

It's about darn time for the heat to let up as fall is here! I'm quite excited to have a pumpkin spice latte on a cool morning this week! Enjoy this healthy version yourself!

**Pumpkin Spice Latte**  
**Ingredients**  
6 ounces brewed coffee  
or 2 shots espresso  
1/2 cup milk of choice  
2 tablespoon pumpkin puree canned or fresh  
1-2 tablespoons maple syrup or sugar, to taste  
1/2 teaspoon pumpkin pie spice  
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract

**Instructions**  
1. Brew 6 oz of your favorite coffee and set aside.  
2. Add the milk, pumpkin puree, maple syrup, and pumpkin spice to a small saucepan and heat over medium heat and whisk just until it begins to bubble around the edges.

3. Blender method: Remove from heat and pour into a blender along with the vanilla and brewed coffee. Blend for 30 seconds or until frothy. Immediately pour into a mug and top with whipped cream and a sprinkle of cinnamon if desired.

4. Immersion blender/frother method: Alternatively, this can be done using an emission blender or milk frother. Add the vanilla to the warm milk mixture and whisk with a milk frother or immersion blender (without the coffee) until frothy and pale. Pour onto hot coffee and enjoy!



### Donation

Shareece Hileman of SunPorch in Smith Center accepts a Smith County Retired School Personnel donation in honor of Ava Lee Maydew who was a long time teacher and a member of the organization. Beccy Isom, state president of the Kansas State Association of Retired School Personnel, presents the donation.

Submitted Photo

### Fitness Court set for relaunch on OSD

Smith County Memorial Hospital (SCMH) and National Fitness Campaign (NFC) are proud to celebrate the relaunch of the Fitness Court® Studio at 921 E. Highway 36 in conjunction with the Settlers Day Color and Prairie Fun Run on Saturday, September 26th at 7:30 AM. The Fun Run will start at the Fitness Court® Studio, bringing the community together for a day of movement, wellness, and celebration.

Residents can register for the event here: <https://forms.gle/vxAdYS-Tqau7MqyLV6>

Since its original launch in July 2025, which drew the attention of U.S. Senator Jerry Moran during a tour of the SCMH campus, the Fitness Court® Studio has served as a cornerstone of community health in Smith Center. This relaunch is an opportunity to reconnect the community with the Fitness Court and introduce residents to the full range of digital wellness programming available through the free Fitness Court® App.

"The Fitness Court is more than a place to exercise; it represents the kind of community we want to help build," said Sarah Ragsdale, CEO of Smith County Memorial Hospital. "We want people of every fitness level to feel like there is a place for them to move, grow stronger and take an active role in their health. The Color the Prairie Fun Run with Fitness Court demonstrations brings that vision to life by making wellness something we can pursue together while having a lot of fun."

"Smith County Memorial Hospital and their team of physical therapists have shown what true community partnership looks like. From the original launch to this relaunch, they have done a tremendous job activating the Fitness Court® Studio and championing the health of their community. We are proud to stand alongside them and look forward to seeing Smith Center continue to lead the way," said Mitch Managed, founder of National Fitness Campaign.

The Fitness Court® Studio was developed by SCMH, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas, and NFC to expand free access to high-quality workouts and create equitable access to exercise for communities

across the region.

The event is made possible through the generous support of local community partners, including Tribe Fitness, Smith County Community Foundation, and Smith County Drug and Alcohol Council. The Fitness Court® is the world's best outdoor gym that lets users leverage their own bodyweight to get a complete workout using seven exercise stations.

At the relaunch event, SCMH staff will be on hand to guide community members through the Fitness Court® Studio and demonstrate how to digitally activate the Fitness Court® App, which provides access to a full workout library, guided video tutorials, and health tracking tools. Participants are encouraged to download the free Fitness Court® App and explore the Fitness Court Trainer Program, which offers ACE-certified training and continuing education credits for those interested in leading workouts and programming at the Fitness Court.

Created for adults of all abilities aged 14+, the Fitness Court® Studio workouts are adaptable for all fitness levels, allowing participants to move at their own pace. Smith County Memorial Hospital is one of 15+ Campaign Partners building a network of Fitness Courts across the state, with the help of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas.

Residents are invited to join the Old Settlers' Day Color and Prairie Fun Run on September 26th, beginning at the Fitness Court® Studio at 921 E. Highway 36. SCMH staff will be available throughout the event to guide participants through the Fitness Court and the Fitness Court® App.

To learn more or to pre-register, visit [www.scmhks.org/funrun](http://www.scmhks.org/funrun). Participants are also welcome to register the day of the event starting at 7:00 a.m. Color run and walk events include a ¾ mile kids' dash, 2-mile walk, 5K run or walk, and 10K run. The kids' dash is \$15. All

other events are \$25. All finishers receive a custom race medal. Fitness Court demonstrations are free to attend. For more information, call or text Shannon Rogers at Smith County Memorial Hospital at 785-376-7171.

#### About Smith County Memorial Hospital

Smith County Memorial Hospital (SCMH) is a caring and community-oriented health system based in North Central Kansas, where every patient is treated like family. Built on a nearly 70-year legacy that began with the historic Ingleboro Mansion, SCMH has been evolving to meet modern needs, relocating to its current leading-edge facility on Highway 36 in 2018. Guided by a mission "to set the standard of excellence in healthcare for North Central Kansas," SCMH's compassionate team delivers physical, mental, and spiritual care through close, personal relationships in a small-town setting. Under CEO Sarah Ragsdale's leadership, the hospital is committed to doing the right thing every day: empowering patients, developing staff, practicing stewardship, and engaging with the community to foster vibrant health for all.

#### About National Fitness Campaign

Founded in San Francisco in 1979, National Fitness Campaign is a wellness consulting firm that provides programs and services to cities, schools, and sponsors. Our mission is to build healthy communities nationwide. The campaign delivers an integrated wellness initiative centered around the Fitness Court® — the world's best outdoor gym. National Fitness Campaign is preparing to welcome its 750th healthy community as it continues to grow the country's largest public-private partnership in support of wellness, with the goal of building a Fitness Court® within a 10-minute bike ride of every American. Learn more about National Fitness Campaign at [nationalfitnesscampaign.com](http://nationalfitnesscampaign.com) and follow along on Instagram, Facebook, and LinkedIn.

### Smith Center City Council Meeting Minutes

#### I. Call to Order

Bryce Wiehl opened the meeting at 6:00 p.m. on Monday, August 10, 2026, at the Srader Building.

#### Attendance

Governing Body Members: Tracy Kingsbury, Chris Cole, Ty Wallgren and Everett Mansholt.

Others: Bryce Wiehl, Melissa Colby, Rick Hileman, Jamie Marshall, Kim Phelps, Brittany Niles, Joshua Niles, Brett Decker, Gene Herndon, Valerie Haskett, Joe Stansbury, Tiffany Mansholt, Kevin Lauman, Jeff Albert and Tabitha Owen

#### II. Consent Agenda

Following review, a motion was made by Wallgren, seconded by Kingsbury, to approve the previous meetings' minutes. Motion carried. Mansholt then made a motion to approve the Vouchers and Receipts as presented. Wallgren seconded the motion and carried the motion.

#### III. Previous/ Ongoing Business

a. No ongoing business

#### IV. New Business

a. Core and Main Estimate – Colby presented to the council a bid from Core and Main to replace the outdated water reading software as well as reading devices. The estimate for the software shows a 3% increase as the years progress, starting at \$3,995.00. However, if the city were to wait until the new year to proceed the cost would be \$10,000.00 and the company would consider the city new customers. The price for half of the new devices would be \$40,066.44 to purchase in 2026 and the other half would be purchased in 2027. It was the general census of the council to also get a quote from

Neptune and to table the topic for 30 days.

b. Bright Beginnings Fund Request – Niles presented the council with a letter from Bright Beginnings Childhood Development Center requesting monetary donations for the center. Following a discussion, it was the general census of the council to not take any action on that request at this time.

c. Smith Estates Offer- The council was then presented with an offer from the owners at Smith Estates to purchase the facility for \$1.2 million.

The council did not show any interest in the purchase of the facility and no action was taken.

City of Smith Center Council takes recess for Smith Center Recreation Commission Budget Hearing at 6:15 P.M.

City Council is back in session at 6:18 P.M.

New Business Continued

d. Midway and Trinity Ag Propane Contracts - Following a review of the two bids submitted from Midway Coop and Trinity Ag, a motion was made by Kingsbury to contract 1000 gallons with Midway Coop at \$1.49 per gallon. The motion was seconded by Wallgren and the motion carried. Cole states that we should alternate contracts between the two companies annually, the council agrees and will exercise that option next year.

#### V. Department Reports/Committee & Board Reports

a. Police Department- Chief Marshall updated the council on the repairs to the 2013 Dodge Charger being completed. Marshall also states that the Police De-

partment will be receiving two bids, one from Top Shelf Lumber and the other from Center Glass to replace the steel door at the department. Mansholt asks the officers to make sure they are monitoring around the schools now that school is back in session. The officers agree. Marshall also states there have been complaints regarding the electric company using their larger trucks to drive on newly updated roads and the citizens' concern for wear and tear. Following a discussion, the council agreed to investigate the complaint.

b. Treasurer- Nothing to report.

c. Hileman- Rick reports to the council that the lift pump at the shop is in Wichita for repairs and was looking into any warranties.

City of Smith Center Council takes recess for the City of Smith Center Revenue Neutral and Budget Hearing at 6:30 P.M.

At 6:30 p.m. Mayor Wiehl opened the Revenue Neutral Rate Hearing. Discussion was held on how the RNR is established, and the rate proposed for 2027. A motion was made by Wallgren, seconded by Cole, to adopt Resolution 2026-4 to levy a property tax rate exceeding the revenue neutral rate. Motion carried.

The budget hearing commenced with the floor open for questions and comments. Following discussion, a motion was made by Wallgren, seconded by Kingsbury, to approve the 2027 budget as presented. Motion carried.

Department Reports/ Committee & Board Reports Continued

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