

Prosecutors drop vandalism charges for Reflecting Pool damage, blame ‘contractor error’

JANE NORMAN
States Newsroom

WASHINGTON — U.S. Attorney for the District of Columbia Jeanine Pirro moved Friday to dismiss charges against a former Olympian canoeist alleged to have damaged part of the Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool.

Pirro had charged David Hearn, of Bethesda, Maryland, with destruction of property of more than \$1,000 for allegedly vandalizing the newly refinished Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool on June 19. President Donald Trump, who has overseen the multi-million-dollar renovation of the Reflecting Pool, blamed vandals for damage to it.

But in a 20-page motion to dismiss filed by the U.S. attorney’s office, Pirro said her office wouldn’t have sought charges if the Interior Department, which manages the Lincoln Memorial, had initially shared more information about repair work on the Reflecting Pool.

Instead, the department only recently disclosed findings that Pirro said “strongly suggest that a rushed and botched installation by (Atlantic Industrial Coatings), the primary contractor, led to the damage to the lining of the Reflecting Pool.”

That information was not known by prosecutors or the grand jury that returned an indictment of Hearn, she said.

She said it was not until her office “reached out to DOI dozens and dozens of times that DOI slowly started trickling information to USAO-DC. Had DOI been forthcoming with the information clearly in its possession, the government would not have sought a grand jury indictment.”

Pirro related: “Specifically, the newly released documents reveal that work on installing the lining almost immediately fell behind, due to a combination of very rainy and windy weather, repeated failures of testing on the sealing of the expansion joints, and delays in obtaining sealing product at the worksite. The rush to complete the project led to hasty and botched work that was not remediated before the project was finished and the fencing removed.”

Pirro said that “almost immediately after work was initially completed, peeling was observed along the pool perimeter.”

A National Park Service engineer’s June 11, 2026, email “stated that the cause of the damage was contractor error via ‘overspray’; that the peeled lining would not float; and that the peeling would ‘not impact the strength of the liner.’” she said.

“Moreover, the July 20, 2026, inspection

by contractors confirmed that overspray and delamination had occurred, again pointing to contractor error,” Pirro said. “Finally, a recent visual inspection showed damage throughout the Reflecting Pool, even in the middle of the pool, where a vandal would not likely attempt to peel the lining. Given all of this newly discovered information, it is difficult to attribute the widespread damage to the Reflecting Pool to vandalism, let alone to establish that fact beyond a reasonable doubt.”

Hearn on July 9 pleaded not guilty during a brief court hearing and was released on his own recognizance.

His lawyers, Norm Eisen of Democracy Defenders Fund, Mary Dohrmann of the Washington Litigation Group and Steve Levin of Steptoe LLP, said in a statement on Friday night that the government owes Hearn an apology for pursuing the case.

“The Trump administration’s case against Davey Hearn should have never been brought,” they said. “Its dismissal today does not erase the abuse of government power in arresting and charging a patriotic American who did nothing wrong. The government’s approach was ready, fire, aim. The administration owes Mr. Hearn an apology.”

Hearn’s lawyers earlier this week had asked

the judge in the case to release more information from the grand jury.

They wrote in a motion that “the Government’s sole grand-jury witness on damages testified that the property was already damaged before Mr. Hearn allegedly touched it; that the same repairs would have been required regardless of Mr. Hearn’s conduct; and that he could not quantify any loss attributable to that conduct.”

In a June 21 statement on its website, Atlantic Industrial Coatings defended its work on the Reflecting Pool.

“Atlantic Industrial Coatings in conjunction with the US Park Service has identified some areas in the Reflecting Pool that require repairs. These areas are a very small part of the massive 7 acre project, and do not indicate a failure of the liner,” it said.

“These repairs can not be made until the pool is drained. As soon as its feasible for the Park, the pool will be drained and AIC will be back to make those needed repairs as part of the warranty.”

The company did not immediately return a request for comment. The Department of Interior also did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Attorneys for former police chief who led Kansas newspaper raid want to drop him as a client

SHERMAN SMITH
Kansas Reflector

TOPEKA — The attorneys for former Marion Police Chief Gideon Cody have asked the court to withdraw from this criminal case because of a broken relationship between the attorneys and their client.

Cody faces a low-level felony charge of interfering with judicial process and is set to go on trial Aug. 24. He led the police raid on the Marion County Record, the newspaper publisher’s home, and the home of a city councilwoman in August 2023.

Special prosecutors Marc Bennett, of Sedgwick County, and Barry Wilkerson, of Riley County, cleared Cody and other law enforcement officers of wrongdoing in carrying out the raids, even though they were based on a made-up crime and violated both state and federal laws that protect journalists

and their sources. The raids spawned five ongoing federal lawsuits.

The criminal charge stems from Cody telling a witness, after the raids became the topic of intense scrutiny, to delete text messages that could give someone the wrong idea about the nature of their relationship. If convicted, because he has no criminal history, Cody’s sentence would be presumptive probation.

On Wednesday, Wichita defense attorneys Sal Intagliata and Audra Asher filed a motion to withdraw from the case.

“Effective assistance of counsel has been undermined by a breakdown in the attorney-client relationship and attorney-client communication,” they wrote.

They requested a hearing on their motion. A motion hearing for the case was already scheduled for Aug. 5.

If the attorneys are allowed to withdraw, Cody’s trial could be delayed for a second time. It previously was set for Feb. 2.



Reflector photo

Former Marion Police Chief Gideon Cody enters the Marion County Courthouse on Oct. 7, 2024, with attorney Sal Intagliata for his first appearance in a low-level felony case.

DEADLINES ARE NOON ON WEDNESDAY & FRIDAY BEFORE PUBLICATION

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LEGALS

(First published in The Chanute Tribune Tuesday, August 4, 2026)

PUBLIC NOTICE 2026–2030 COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 30-DAY PUBLIC REVIEW AND COMMENT PERIOD

The Southeast Kansas Regional Planning Commission (SEKRPC) announces the availability of the draft **2026–2030 Southeast Kansas Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)** for public review and comment.

The CEDS is a regional economic development plan prepared in accordance with the requirements of the U.S. Economic Development Administration. It evaluates current economic conditions, identifies regional strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, and establishes goals, strategies, and priority actions to guide economic development throughout Southeast Kansas.

Comment period
August 4 through September 3, 2026

Draft available
www.sekrpc.org and at the SEKRPC office

The draft may be reviewed electronically at www.sekrpc.org. A printed copy is available for review at the SEKRPC office, 20 South Highland Avenue, Chanute, Kansas, during regular business hours. A personal hard copy may also be requested for the cost of \$0.25 per black-and-white page plus actual mailing cost.

Members of the public, local governments, economic development organizations, businesses, educational institutions, nonprofit organizations, and other interested parties are invited to submit written comments.

Written comments must be received by 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, September 3, 2026, and may be submitted:

By email to: director@sekrpc.org
By mail to: SEKRPC, Attn: 2026 CEDS Comments, 20 South Highland Avenue, Chanute, KS 66720

All comments received during the public-comment period will be reviewed and considered before the CEDS is finalized and submitted to the U.S. Economic Development Administration.

Questions, requests for a printed copy, or requests for reasonable accommodation may be directed to Carey Spoon, Executive Director, at director@sekrpc.org or 620-431-0080.

LEGAL

(First published in the Parsons Sun Tuesday, August 4, 2026)

Notice of Intent to Exceed Revenue Neutral Rate and Budget Hearing

The governing body of Labette County, Kansas, will meet on September 14, 2026, at 9:00 A.M. in the County Commission Room in the Courthouse for the purpose of hearing and answering objections of taxpayers relating to the proposed use of all funds and the amount of ad valorem tax and the Revenue Neutral Rate.

Detailed budget information is available at the 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 slight change depending on final assessed valuations.

FUND	Prior Year Actual for 2026	Actual Tax Rate*	Current Year Estimate for 2026	Budget Authority for Expenditures	Amount of 2026 Ad Valorem Tax	Proposed Est. Tax Rate
General	8,755,254	34.941	16,175,264	34,910	10,428,639	31.626
Special Purpose Funds:						
Administrative/General Maintenance	44,000	0.352	76,307	0.352	80,984	0.367
Emergency Phone Equipment	115,000	0.920	175,000	0.920	175,000	0.920
Health	400,361	0.479	588,483	0.479	653,774	0.529
Health Care Services	1,006,899	0.830	1,500,000	0.830	1,500,000	0.830
Infrastructure/Utilities	128,416	0.708	177,000	0.708	177,000	0.687
Juvare Health	438,000	3.605	450,000	3.605	450,000	3.186
Neonatal Ward	128,100	0.557	187,497	0.557	185,309	0.788
Neonatal Ward Capital Outlay	0	0	100,000	0	0	0
Road and Bridge	4,888,603	20.055	4,858,117	18,392	5,031,664	3,847,241
Special District	360	0.001	360	0.001	360	0.001
Special Bridge	211,326	1.000	251,601	1.000	604,463	1.000
Special Parks and Recreation	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tourism & Convention Promotion	4,000	0.000	6,000	0.000	6,000	0.000
Non-Budgeted Funds A	48,312					
Non-Budgeted Funds B	1,382,633					
Non-Budgeted Funds C	9,609					
Non-Budgeted Funds D	439,493					
Non-Budgeted Funds E	264,113					
Non-Budgeted Funds F	1,065,644					
Non-Budgeted Funds G	1,352					
Totals	18,213,118	58.428	37,656,177	58.182	18,577,637	3,871,824
Less: Transfers	655,777		100,000		0	
Net Expenditure	17,557,341		37,556,177		18,577,637	3,871,824
Total Tax Levied	9,039,793		9,039,793		9,039,793	
Assessed Valuation	167,213,197		167,213,197		167,213,197	

	2024 -	2025	2026
Outstanding Indebtedness, Jan. 1,	-	-	-
General Obligation Bonds	-	-	-
Revenue Bonds	-	-	-
Other Debt	141,837	111,506	80,834
Lease Purchase Principal	1,837,527	1,056,898	1,434,853
Totals	1,979,364	1,168,404	1,515,687

* Tax rates are expressed in mills.
** Revenue Neutral Rate as defined by KSA 79-2088

Gena Anderson
Labette County Clerk

Labette County
Notice of Budget Hearing
The governing body of
Labette County
will meet on September 8, 2026 at 7:00 PM at Hugo Spicker's, 15575 Elk Road, Chanute for the purpose of hearing and answering objections of taxpayers relating to the proposed use of all funds and the amount of ad valorem tax. Detailed budget information is available at Neosho County Clerk's Office and will be available at this hearing.

Fund	Prior Year Actual 2025	Current Year Estimate 2026	Budget Authority for Expenditures	Amount of 2026 Ad Valorem Tax	Proposed Estimated Tax Rate*
General	6,588	0.527	7,950	0.525	32.981
Fire Protection	28,144	3.619	36,200	3.600	216,125
Special Machinery					
Totals	34,732	4.146	44,150	4.125	249,106

Less: Transfers 0
Net Expenditure 34,732
Total Tax Levied 32,500
Total Assessed Valuation 7,965,083
Township Assessed Valuation Only

* Tax rates are expressed in mills.
** Revenue Neutral Rate as defined by KSA 79-2088

Ron Flowers
Treasurer

HELP WANTED

The City of Chanute is accepting applications for a Substitute School Crossing Guard. Minimum age 21, salary range: \$23.00-\$46.00 per work day. Must be dependable, alert, in good health and get along well with children and the public. For a complete job description and/or to apply online go to www.chanute.org Position open until filled. EOE/M/F/D/V

LEGAL

(First published in The Chanute Tribune Tuesday, August 4, 2026)

DISTRICT COURT, NEOSHO COUNTY, KANSAS CIVIL DEPARTMENT

COMMUNITY NATIONAL BANK & TRUST, Plaintiff,
v.
JONATHON B. WILMOT, UNKNOWN SPOUSE OF JONATHON B. WILMOT, et al. Defendants.

CASE NO. NOC-2026-CV-000069
TITLE INVOLVING REAL ESTATE
Pursuant to K.S.A. Chapter 61

NOTICE OF SUIT

THE STATE OF KANSAS TO:

JONATHON B. WILMOT, UNKNOWN SPOUSE OF JONATHON B. WILMOT, ALL UNKNOWN PARTIES and all other persons who are or may be concerned: You are hereby notified that a Petition for Foreclosure has been filed in the District Court of Neosho County, Kansas, by Community National Bank and Trust, praying for foreclosure of certain real property described as follows:

A tract in the Southeast Quarter of Section 30, Township 27 South, Range 18 East of the 6th P.M., Neosho County, Kansas, described as: Beginning at a point on the North line of said Southeast Quarter being 400.00 feet West of the Northeast corner of the West half of said Southeast Quarter; said point also being the Northwest corner of the parent tract as described in Deed Book 222, Page 308; thence South 01°50'00" East along the West line of the parent tract, 304.50 feet; thence North 88°56'05" East, 150.40 feet; thence North 01°04'40" East, 306.91 feet to the North line of said Southeast quarter; thence South 88°10'00" West along said line, 166.00 feet to the point of beginning. Commonly known as 1707 W. 14th St., Chanute, KS 66720.

and you are required to plead to the Petition on or before the 15th day of September 2026 in the District Court of Neosho County, Kansas. If you fail to plead, judgment and decree will be entered in due course upon said Petition.

Respectfully Submitted:
/s/ Creath L. Pollak
Creath L. Pollak, #21681
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August 4, 11, 18

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