Chiefs Make Early Splash as NFL Free Agency Frenzy Begins

The NFL's free agency negotiating window opened Monday, setting off a wave of major moves across the league ahead of the official start of free agency Wednesday. Several teams wasted little time making significant changes, including the Kansas City Chiefs, who made a splash to help their offense.

Kansas City signed running back Kenneth Walker III to a three-year, $43.05 million deal, making him the highest-paid free-agent running back ever. The move is expected to give quarterback Patrick Mahomes a stronger ground game after the Chiefs struggled rushing the ball last season.

Chiefs running backs combined for just 1,247 yards and 3.7 yards per carry in 2025, both among the league's lowest totals. Walker rushed for 1,027 yards last season with a 4.6 yards-per-carry average, giving Kansas City a potential workhorse in the backfield. The Chiefs also received good news when star tight end Travis Kelce announced he will return for a 14th season, keeping Mahomes' longtime favorite target in the lineup.

However, the Chiefs did lose key defensive pieces. Cornerback Trent McDuffie was traded to the Los Angeles Rams, while cornerback Jaylen Watson also signed with the Rams and safety Bryan Cook joined the Cincinnati Bengals. Those departures leave defensive coordinator Steve Spagnuolo with significant rebuilding to do in the secondary.

Elsewhere around the league, several teams made major moves. The Las Vegas Raiders were among the most aggressive spenders, signing center Tyler Linderbaum to a three-year, $81 million contract and adding linebackers Quay Walker and Nakobe Dean to strengthen their defense as they prepare for the upcoming draft, where quarterback Fernando Mendoza is expected to be the top overall pick.

The Miami Dolphins made headlines by releasing quarterback Tua Tagovailoa and signing Malik Willis as their new starter. Meanwhile, the Pittsburgh Steelers traded for wide receiver Michael Pittman Jr. from the Indianapolis Colts, giving star receiver DK Metcalf a strong complementary target.

Another notable move saw veteran wide receiver Mike Evans leave the Tampa Bay Buccaneers to sign with the San Francisco 49ers, ending a long run with the team where he became the franchise's all-time leader in catches, yards, and touchdowns.

With the NFL salary cap jumping to $301.2 million this season thanks to the league's massive media rights deal, teams are spending aggressively. And with the free agency period just beginning, more moves are expected as franchises reshape their rosters for the 2026 season.

Right: Kansas City Chiefs QB Patrick Mahomes took to X to celebrate Walker's signing last week.

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Legal Notice
(Published in the Belle Plaine News / Oxford Register on Thursday February 26, 2026, Thursday March 05, 2026 and Thursday March 12, 2026)

SUMNER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
SUMNER COUNTY, KANSAS
INVITATION FOR BIDS
Notice is hereby given that sealed proposals for the construction of pulverized base and asphalt paving work in Sumner County, State of Kansas, said work known as Sumner County Road Improvement Project (W. 50th Road & Milan Road) will be received at the office of the Sumner County Road and Bridge Director located at 500 S. Washington, 3rd Floor, Wellington, Kansas 67152 until 1:30 p.m. on Wednesday, March 25, 2026 and then publicly opened. The project to be constructed is briefly described as follows:
ROAD IMPROVEMENT PROJECT (W. 50TH ROAD & MILAN ROAD)
•
Approximately 2.68 Miles of Manipulation of In-Place Material Subgrade Modification (Cement): 43,147 S.Y.
Aggregate Base (AB-3)(6"): 43,147 S.Y.
HMA Commercial Grade (Class A)(7"): 14,922 Tons
HMA Commercial Grade (Class A)(Surface Course)(2"): 4,264 Tons
GUARANTY REQUIRED: Each proposal must be accompanied by a certified check, cashier's check on a solvent bank or a bid bond executed by corporations authorized to contact as surety in the State of Kansas and made payable to Sumner County, as a guarantee that if awarded the contract, the bidder will enter into a contract and give bond as required. The amount shown should read "Five Percent (5%) of the amount bid."
OTHER SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS: No bidder may withdraw his bid for a period of thirty (30) days after the date of opening bids.
Further information on the work to be done may be obtained by an examination of the plans and specifications on file in the office of the Sumner County Road and Bridge Director.
The plans and specifications document (printed copy or PDF copy) may be obtained from Cook, Flatt & Strobel Engineers, P.A., 2930 SW Woodside Drive, Topeka, Kansas 66614, upon payment of $60.00 (check, credit card, cash is accepted). There will be no refund of the deposit. The plans and specifications document become the property of the prospective bidder and are not returnable. Copies of the plans and specifications document are on file and open for public inspection at the office from which they may be obtained.
All bidders must be prequalified with the Kansas Department of Transportation for the type and amount of work covered under this contract.
The Board of County Commissioners reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and to waive any or all technicalities.
BY ORDER OF THE SUMNER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Legal Notice
(Published in the Belle Plaine News / Oxford Register on Thursday March 12, 2026)

OFFICIAL NOTICE
TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN AND TO ALL PERSONS INTERESTED: NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that on, **April 8, 2026 at 7:00 P.M.,** the Sumner County Planning Commission, at the Raymond Frye Complex, 320 N. Jefferson, Wellington, Kansas, will consider the following applications:
CASE NUMBERS: 05PC-26 & 06PC-26
APPLICATION BY: Michael & Debra Russell
REQUESTS: Zone Change from "A-C" Agricultural Commercial to "G-1" Recreation District & Conditional Use
PURPOSE: Venue Facility (weddings, reunions, lodging & other large events)
LEGAL DESCRIPTION: A tract of land situated in the East half of the Southeast Quarter of Section 23, Township 32 South, Range 1 East of the 6th P. M., Sumner County, Kansas, prepared by Raleigh M. Kroupa PS #1749 on January 20 th , 2026 being more particularly described as follows: Beginning at the Southwest Corner of said East Half; thence North 02 degrees, 11 minutes, 11 seconds West (assumed), along the West Line of said East Half, a distance of 1100.00 feet; thence North 87 degrees, 48 minutes, 49 seconds East, perpendicular to said West Line, a distance of 375.00 feet; thence South 00 degrees, 09 minutes, 00 seconds East, a distance of 130.00 feet; thence South 80 degrees, 04 minutes, 20 seconds East, a distance of 396.00 feet; thence South 02 degrees, 57 minutes, 00 seconds West, a distance of 212.00 feet; thence South 87 degrees, 48 minutes, 49 seconds West, perpendicular to said West Line, a distance of 567.00 feet; thence South 07 degrees, 10 minutes, 24 seconds West, a distance of 686.17 feet to a point on the South Line of said East Half; thence South 88 degrees, 58 minutes, 00 seconds West, along said South Line, a distance of 60.00 feet to the point of beginning. Containing 7.61 acres, more or less.
TRACT CONTAINS: 7.61 acres more or less
LOCATION: 1100 block of E 30 th St S & S Oliver Rd - Entry access proposed to be off 30 th St S.
AS PROVIDED in the Zoning Regulations of Sumner County, Kansas, that the above applications will be discussed and considered by the Planning Commission. All persons interested in said matter will be heard at this time concerning their views, wishes, and any protest against any of the provisions of the proposed **ZONE CHANGE & CONDITIONAL USE** applications will be considered by the Planning Commission and may be continued without further notice. If you desire to have your opinion considered by the Planning Commission, you will need to be present at the scheduled meeting, in person or by legal representative.
The South Door will be unlocked fifteen (15) minutes prior to the meeting.
SIGNED, this March 2, 2026
Barry Fleming /S/ Director
BF/mt

Legal Notice
(Published in the Belle Plaine News / Oxford Register on Thursday March 12, 2026)

OFFICIAL NOTICE
TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN AND TO ALL PERSONS INTERESTED:
SUMNER COUNTY BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS AGENDA April 8, 2026, 6:30 P.M. Raymond Frye Complex 320 N Jefferson, Wellington, Kansas
A. CALL MEETING TO ORDER.
B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.
C. ROLL CALL OF BOARD MEMBERS.
D. APPROVAL OF AGENDA.
E. APPROVAL OF MINUTES.
F. PRESENTATION OF REQUESTS AND PETITIONS.
G. REPORTS OF STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES.
H. REPORTS OF BOARD OFFICERS AND RELATED PERSONNEL.
I. NOTICES AND COMMUNICATIONS.
J. OLD BUSINESS.
K. NEW BUSINESS.
Election of Officers
Bylaws Review
L. ITEMS TO BE PLACED ON NEXT AGENDA.
M. ADJOURNMENT.
The Front (South) door will be unlocked fifteen (15) minutes prior to the meeting.
DATE: March 2, 2026
PREPARED BY: M. Templeton
APPROVED BY: B. Fleming /S/

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Answer to Puzzle on page 9

Answer to Sudoku Puzzle on page 9

3	4	6	9	5	7	1	2	8
8	7	9	3	2	1	6	4	5
5	1	2	4	6	8	3	7	9
4	8	1	6	7	3	5	9	2
9	6	5	2	1	4	7	8	3
2	3	7	5	8	9	4	6	1
6	5	4	8	3	2	9	1	7
7	2	3	1	9	6	8	5	4
1	9	8	7	4	5	2	3	6

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