

# NEWS

COMMENTS, CONCERNS OR QUESTIONS? Contact Stephanie Jump at (620) 532-3151 or email sjump@kconline.com

## HARPER CITY COUNCIL MINUTES February 9 Meeting

Council met in regular session with Mayor Latta in chair.

Eric Barker Present Pat Kerschen Present Doug Murphy Present

Jeff Capps Present Kenneth Leu Present Brande Vogele Present 7:17 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance & Invocation

Motion by Jeff Capps to remove item #7 from executive session to open session. Motion died for lack of a second.

CONSENT AGENDA Minutes of the January 26, 2026 Council Meeting.

Appropriation Ordinance No. 20260209

4th Quarter Treasurer's Report

Motion by Eric Barker second by Ken Leu to approve the consent agenda. Motion carried 5-0.

Public Comment: None

Department Reports:

Police: Sgt. Walter reported the previous two weeks department activity included a responding to a suicidal call and providing a few agency assists.

Fire: Fire Chief Flores reported the department responding to a fender bender. They were still working through issues with dispatch radio issues. Preliminary ISO inspection results were received, there were some discrepancies with a few hydrants and their reported flow rate from the previous inspection, there were deficiencies noted for lack of hydrant testing and routine pump tests. If unresolved Harper's ISO rating will fall from a 3 to a 5 which will impact property insurance rates. The department will have 12-18 months to resolve as much of the deficiencies as they can. He was confident that he had put together a plan that would allow the department to at least maintain an ISO rating of 4.

Public Works: Street Foreman Miller reported the department providing snow removal and spreading salt/sand for slick conditions. They had replaced a bearing in the track loader that had gone out, which slowed down snow removal. The department had assisted on a water leak. A rebar exposure was identified in the north side of the Central/Main intersection and was fixed. His crew was sweeping and grading as time allowed.

Sexton Ryberg reported his assistance with the snow removal. He finished updating the cemetery ledger books. He was preparing to replace the runners underneath the cemetery gazebo. He was filling ruts and leveling graves that had settled.

Water Foreman Snodgrass reported an IT issue with the SCADA system that had been resolved. He had to have the AC unit and generator at the wastewater treatment plant looked at due to malfunctioning, he believed both had been resolved. The department was preparing to install an 8" valve on Ash St. so that they would be able to keep Elkhorn Valley Packing Plant's water on while they replaced the 2" line on west 6th St. with a 6" main.

Council Action/Deliberations:

Mayor Latta to opened up

one sealed bid that had been received for Pickup 9.

Bid 1: Orville Zimmerman \$20,100.00

Motion by Doug Murphy second by Jeff Capps to sell the 1996 Dodge 3500 Grass Rig to Orville Zimmerman in the amount of \$20,100, funds to be received in the Equipment Reserve Fund, refunding funds towards 2025 Chevrolet Silverado. Motion carried 5-0.

Gary Taylor, Water/WW Consultant, was in attendance to meet new city council members. He and Water Foreman Nick Snodgrass reviewed the Water Treatment Plant resin (ion exchange media) evaluation and replacement quote with the governing body. The resin was still in relatively good condition; however, it had met its expected life. The more it ages the less efficient the ion exchange process and the more frequent staff would have to regenerate the vessels. Increased frequency would cause the salt water ponds to fill faster, use more energy and also increase the use of salt for cleaning the resin. They also reported recently discovered water in the leak detection pit between the salt water lagoons at the water treatment plant. The cause was still unknown, it could be rain water getting through the pit's lid or it could indicate a leak in the liner. Foreman Snodgrass would begin pumping out the water the following day and monitor for leaks. Council determined it appropriate to hold off the replacement of the resin until Foreman Snodgrass could identify the cause of the water in the leak detection pit.

Foreman Miller introduced members of the street department to new members of City Council, Frank Kelemete who was his right-hand man for all things street, Brent Teeter who is primary on grading and Chris Sanders who is primary on sweeping. Foreman Miller shared that he was working with the Infrastructure Committee on identifying the next large street project.

Sexton Ryberg shared that he was focused on routine maintenance and upkeep at the cemetery with no major projects in progress.

Water Foreman Snodgrass also introduced the second member of the water/wastewater department, Brandon Zibell. Wastewater's primary focus for the year was to get the wastewater treatment plant and components on the SCADA system with the water system to assist in catching alarms before they are problematic. Along with the 6th St. water main replacement, they needed to have the VFD at Well #6 replaced and both towers needed to have their mixers replaced. The valve that was installed at the standpipe a few years prior by a contractor was still leaking at times, but they believed they had a more permanent solution that would not require the valve to be replaced.

Department heads will be in attendance to introduce themselves and employees to new city council members and provide a summary of on-going

or upcoming projects in their respective departments.

Madison Stratton, Utility Billing Clerk/Customer Service Clerk, shared her that beyond customer service and utility billing she also served as the municipal court clerk, processed diversions for the city attorney, created service orders and provided administrative support for the water/wastewater department.

Councilwoman Vogele arrived at 7:17 p.m. Street Foreman Randy Miller will be in attendance to discuss the repair versus replacement of the 2017 Kubota Track Loader. Council was in favor of replacing the track loader but requested Foreman Miller explore what trade-in value a Bobcat or Caterpillar dealer might offer for the 2017 Kubota and report back at the next meeting.

Mayor Latta to contacted Geri Webber, owner of 703 W. 11th St., via telephone for further discussion related to the structure condemned and ordered removed. She informed Council that she had contracted with Tim Rinke (Rinke Construction) to demolition of the dangerous structure at 703 W. 11th St. She would then install a flag as a veteran memorial that would be dedicated on July 4th. Mayor Latta requested that Mrs. Webber have Mr. Rinke contact City Hall and confirm that he had agreed to demolish the structure. She agreed.

Motion by Doug Murphy second by Pat Kerschen to engage with Lindburg Vogele Pierce Faris, Chartered, for auditing services for the financial statements ending December 31, 2025. Motion carried 6-0.

Councilman Kerschen requested that prior to the 2026 audit, staff issue request for proposals for auditing services for the three years.

Motion by Ken Leu second by Eric Barker to recess into executive session pursuant to the K.S.A. 75-4319(b)(6) exception for the discussion of the acquisition of real property, the open meeting to resume in the city council chambers at 8:30 p.m. with City Administrator Cooperrider, Sexton Stan Ryberg, and City Building Inspector Edye

Leslie being invited in. Motion carried 6-0.

Out of executive session at 8:30 p.m.

Motion by Doug Murphy second by Pat Kerschen to recess back into executive session pursuant to the K.S.A. 75-4319(b)(6) exception for the discussion of the acquisition of real property, the open meeting to resume in the city council chambers at 9:00 p.m. with City Administrator Cooperrider, Sexton Stan Ryberg, and City Building Inspector Edye

Inspector Edye Leslie being invited in. Motion carried 6-0.

Out of executive session at 9:00 p.m.

Motion by Brande Vogele second by Doug Murphy to recess back into executive session pursuant to the K.S.A. 75-4319(b)(6) exception for the discussion of the acquisition of real property, the open meeting to resume in the city council chambers at 9:30

p.m. with City Administrator Cooperrider, Sexton Stan Ryberg, and City Building Inspector Edye Leslie being invited in. Motion carried 6-0.

Out of executive session at 9:30 p.m. Mayor Latta announced no official action was taken while in executive session.

Admin. Report: 2025 year-end tax filings had been completed, Low-to-Moderate Income surveys that were required to qualify the community to apply for a CDBG grant

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## HARPER COUNTY JAIL

Feb. 26: Thomas G. Whisnant, 61, domestic battery, release date N/A, \$5,000 bond.

Feb. 26: Sarah Kathleen Michelle Pearce, 43, possession of opiate stimulant and possession of drug paraphernalia, release date N/A, \$10,000 bond.

Feb. 28: Larry Joe Netahla, 79, domestic battery, released March 1, bond N/A.

Feb. 28: John Virgil Niavez, 31, domestic battery and possession of THC, release date N/A, bond N/A.

March 1: James Louis Davis, 45, held for Pawnee County, release date N/A, \$10,000 bond.

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Andrew Piester, OD  
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620-532-3154

Andrew Piester, OD  
In Harper on Thursdays  
214 W. Main / Harper, KS 67058  
Call 620-896-7000 for appt.

## NEWS BRIEFS

### COUNTY PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION AVAILABLE

The Public Transportation Service assists all Harper County residents of any age to stay independent with accessible transportation to work, medical appointments, shopping, errands, Patterson Health Center and locations less than 70 miles. Hours of operation: 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Equal access is provided to the public. Out of county rides need to be scheduled 24 hours in advance and the bus returns for Harper County by 3 p.m. at the latest. Call (620) 842-5104 for ride reservations and rates. First come, first served. Advance reservations are recommended.

## HARPER SENIOR MEALS

March 9: Chicken alfredo, garlic bread, steamed broccoli, pineapple, milk

March 10: BBQ meatballs, ranch potatoes, steamed carrots, Watergate salad, milk

March 11: Pork enchiladas, Spanish rice, refried beans, blueberries, milk

March 12: Salisbury steak, hashbrown casserole, peaches, lemon bar, milk

March 13: Breakfast casserole, sliced tomatoes, fruit, milk

Please order/cancel by 1 p.m. the day prior. Call (620) 896-2063 for reservations.

Your news goes where you go 24/7!

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**GUN RAFFLE**

Proceeds benefit the St. Joan of Arc Knights of Columbus Danville, Kansas

Raffle held Friday, March 13 at the Fish Fry. Winners need not be present to win.

**\$10 EACH**

Henry Golden Boy .22 Lever-Action Rifle

**MOLITOR ANGUS RANCH**

47th Annual Production Sale

**Saturday, March 21, 2026**

**1 PM at the Ranch**

5 miles north and 2 1/2 west of Zenda, KS or 9 miles west, 9 miles south and 2 1/2 west of Kingman, KS

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DAR Propel T085 - 2 sons  
DAR Buckaroo 3461 - 5 sons  
LD Dually 0161 - 10 sons  
Deepe WW SF Incredible 261 - 10 sons  
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All cattle sell free of all known genetic defects. Free delivery on 3 or more lots within 300 miles.

**MOLITOR ANGUS RANCH**

Contact: Mike Molitor  
Mike - Cell 620-243-3081  
11558 S.W. 90th St.  
Zenda, KS 67159  
molangus@onlinezenda.net

## PUBLIC NOTICE

(First published in The Harper Advocate on Thursday, Feb. 26, 2026) 4t

### REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP): 2026-01 HEALTH NUISANCE (TALL GRASS/WEEDS) MOWING

The City of Harper is accepting sealed bids for the mowing of properties found to be in violation of the City of Harper's health nuisance codes, commonly referred to as Tall Grass/Weed Violations. The contract will be for the 2026 Summer Mowing Season (April - October). For a full list of requirements, bid documents can be picked up at City Hall 201 W. Main St. Harper, KS 67058 or downloaded from the city's website: www.cityofharper.com. Sealed bids will be received until March 23, 2026 at 5:00 p.m. at City Hall, and opened publicly at the regularly scheduled council meeting on March 23, 2026 at 6:30 p.m. The successful bidder will be coordinating efforts with the Chief of Police.

The **arts center** is proud to present

**THE WIZARD of Oz**

YOUTH EDITION

Friday, March 6th at 7 pm & Saturday, March 7th at 2 pm & 7 pm at the Historic Anthony Theatre

Tickets available at the box office & online at <https://ovr.show/theartscenterpresentshewizardofoz>

the **Harper Advocate**

(USPS #235-740)

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