

NEWS

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

Harper Fire Chief Works on Policies, Procedures

BY JASON JUMP
Editor

Harper Fire Chief Calvin Flores presented a rough draft of a new policies and procedures manual for the fire department to the city council on Monday night.

The HFD has been working for decades on policies that were never officially adopted by the city council. Flores was tasked with coming up with a new document by the city council's personnel committee.

Flores was asked to work with his command staff to generate the new document and then present it back to the council for ultimate approval. The fire chief was asked Monday night if anyone helped him put the proposal together, and Flores told the council members he was the only one that had worked on the project. He said he needs to get the document in front of his command staff for feedback and then bring the revised copy to the council at a future date.

Harper Mayor Eric Latta said the council needed to have the finalized document ready to review at the April 13 meeting, but Councilman Doug Murphy said setting a hard deadline could look as though the council was trying to "force" the new policies and procedures down the throat of the department.

Flores did say there has already been some push back on the project.

The fire chief said this process has been going on for a year now. He told council members he was going to

meet with his command staff in the next week or so to get their feedback.

"I need to add a lot more to it (the manual), but this is a good — I feel this is a good starting point," Flores said.

Latta said he thought it was "an excellent starting point."

The mayor asked what kind of feedback he has received to date. Flores told the council the officers would need to meet a "certain criteria" for certification purposes and he was told that was "too much" for a volunteer fire department.

"I've said this before, that emergency service personnel — they don't like things to change, and they don't like things to stay the same," Flores said. "So this was a culture shock to a lot of them."

The fire chief said it was nothing his department couldn't work through with some different ideas and different approaches.

Former fire chief and longtime City Councilman Ken Leu said the new policies and procedures were "not too much."

"The thing he's got together here is pretty mild. It's really mild. It's not a tough deal," he said. "It's not a social organization. It's got to be a professional. Calvin is trying to get it there, and that's probably some push back on that."

Leu said the only things he saw in the proposal that might be an issue had to do with budgeting and classes. He said the time frame for classes could use some tweaking. He said it could

also be a budget issue if the volunteers have to stay overnight for a class, but again something that can be worked through moving forward.

The former fire chief also mentioned a clause in the proposal about firefighters being repaid for time they had to take off from work to cover a fire or event.

"It's not bad to pay people's salaries if they have to clock out...if they're not being paid (by their employer)," Leu said. "That's coming, but I think that's something we're going to have to work out, especially with (City Administrator) Tiffany (Cooperrider). You can't budget for that."

Leu said there is no way to come up with the number of hours the department would have to cover for volunteers that lose wages while out volunteering for the fire department.

City Administrator Tiffany Cooperrider said she understood the new manual was a culture shock, but she felt like offering to pay lost wages was a "compromise," but she did agree it would be something very difficult to budget for on a yearly basis, because "you never know how many fires you are going to have and when they're going to occur."

Cooperrider said the department does, however, struggle to get volunteers during the daytime hours due to employment issues. She said it would be nice for the city to start tracking the lost wages to have an idea.

Councilman Jeff Capps asked if most of the local



FILE PHOTO

Harper Fire Chief Calvin Flores presented a rough draft for new policies for the Harper Fire Department during Monday night's meeting to city councilmembers.

employers were "good about letting them go?"

"Not unless they clock out," Cooperrider said.

She said the city of Harper is the only employer she knows of that still covers the wages of employees volunteering for the fire department.

Police Chief Tom Burns agreed. He told council members that back in the day businesses were good about letting their people off to volunteer, but that is not the case today.

Councilman Pat Kerschen said he never had an issue with it.

"They just took off, and I knew if there was a fire I was paying them," he said. "I thought it was for my protection any way."

Once the discussion was concluded it was decided that Flores had until the

April 27 council meeting to bring the document back to the board with any revisions. That agenda item would be placed in front of fire department appointments during the same meeting.

The Harper mayor said he personally would like to see some kind of "credit" system implemented where credits were distributed for ongoing education, as well as credits from the number of fires a volunteer attends.

"That could include credits for the different things that they could be doing around the fire station that right now Calvin has got to do," Latta said. "Because right now he's the only one picking up the ball on this without any help from the rest of the staff."

Latta said there would need to be "so many" credits accumulated in order to

qualify for officer positions moving forward.

"Calvin is almost overwhelmed with a lot of this, and he gets no help from fire committee," the mayor said.

Murphy said if someone wants to be part of the command staff some "minimum requirements" need to be met. He also said if the group wants to give feedback they need to make themselves available to the chief.

Flores told council members he would like to visit with his department volunteers and get feedback and then visit again with the personnel committee prior to presenting the document to the council for a final review on Monday, April 27.

Murphy said he was more than happy to help sell the new policies and procedures in any way he could in the coming days.

POOL

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Leu said if you just look at the revenue the city needs to double the fees, because the city is losing money each year on the pool.

Barker said it cost the city more than \$30,000 last summer just to get the pool open. That did not even take into consideration the normal losses the city incurs on the facility.

The council floated the idea of just allowing Harper kids to utilize the pool for free, but ultimately decided against that proposal due to the difficulty the pool staff would have in determining where each participant lived.

City Administrator Tiffany Cooperrider just asked the council to consider making its decision based on consistency. She said

asking high school-aged lifeguards to keep track of which day was free and which day wasn't was too much. If the council was going to allow for a free day it needed to be one day a week for the entire season for ease of management.

Capps said night swims are the largest revenue generators for the city pool. One thing that could help make those even more successful is changing the current lights, which attract so many bugs it makes it even hard to see there is a pool there from the outside, to yellow LED lights, which are said to cut bug traffic in half.

The council members liked that idea. The board said they could approach the Transient Tax Committee about making a donation of transient tax dollars to help offset some of the revenue and/or expenses of the free Monday swims, and the new lights and transition costs.

MINUTES

• From Page 2

sioner Waldschmidt moved for a 5 minute recess; the motion passed unanimously. The regular meeting resumed at 10:59 a.m.

At 11:00 a.m., Commissioner Struble moved to enter Executive Session. The justification for closing the meeting is to discuss personnel matters of nonemployed personnel. The open meeting will resume at 11:10 a.m. in this room; the motion passed unanimously. Ms. DeLacerda remained in the meeting. At 11:10 a.m., Commissioner Struble moved to extend the

Executive Session for 5 minutes; the motion passed unanimously. The regular meeting resumed at 11:15 a.m., with no binding action taken.

Mr. Teel, returned to the meeting, and advised that it would cost \$4,000 to concrete the flower bed in front of the Anthony EMS station. The Board requested he put the project up for bid.

The Board approved Ms. Larson's request to send a letter of support from Harper County Community Development to Patterson Health Center, to send with their Congressionally Directed Spending request.

The Board discussed

attending the Harper County Republican Party interviews for the open County Attorney position, and it was determined that Commissioners McCurley and Struble, and Ms. DeLacerda would attend.

As there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:20 a.m. The next regular meeting will be held on Monday, March 23rd at 8:30 a.m. in the Commissioner Room at the Harper County Courthouse.

ATTEST:
APPROVED:
Ami DeLacerda,
County Clerk
Melinda McCurley,
Chairman

PUZZLE ANSWERS



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LEGAL NOTICE

(Published in The Harper Advocate on Thursday, March 19, 2026) 3t

Millsap & Singer, LLC
8900 Indian Creek Parkway, Suite 180
Overland Park, KS 66210
(913) 339-9132
(913) 339-9045 (fax)

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF Harper County,
KANSAS CIVIL DEPARTMENT

PrimeLending, A PlainsCapital Company
Plaintiff,
vs.

Marlene Christensen, Jane Doe, John Doe, and United States Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, et al.,
Defendants

Case No. HP-2026-CV-000002

Court No.

Title to Real Estate Involved
Pursuant to K.S.A. §60

NOTICE OF SUIT

STATE OF KANSAS to the above named Defendants and The Unknown Heirs, executors, devisees, trustees, creditors, and assigns of any deceased defendants; the unknown spouses of any defendants; the unknown officers, successors, trustees, creditors and assigns of any defendants that are existing, dissolved or dormant corporations; the unknown executors, administrators, devisees, trustees, creditors, successors and assigns of any defendants that are or were partners or in partnership; and the unknown guardians, conservators and trust-

ees of any defendants that are minors or are under any legal disability and all other person who are or may be concerned:

You are hereby notified that a Petition has been filed in the District Court of Harper County, Kansas by PrimeLending, A PlainsCapital Company, praying to foreclose a mortgage on the following described real estate:

TRACT 1: LOTS 9 AND 12, BLOCK 74, ORIGINAL CITY OF ANTHONY, HARPER COUNTY, KANSAS. TRACT 2: LOT 8, BLOCK 74, ORIGINAL CITY OF ANTHONY, HARPER COUNTY, KANSAS. Parcel ID No. / Tax ID No. 1372502017005000;137250201700600. Commonly known as 318 S Pennsylvania Ave, Anthony, KS 67003 ("the Property") MS 231717

and all those defendants who have not otherwise been served are required to plead to the Petition on or before April 29, 2026 in the District Court of Harper County, Kansas. If you fail to plead, judgment and decree will be entered in due course upon the request of plaintiff.

MILLSAP & SINGER, LLC
By:

Dwayne A. Duncan, #27533
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(636) 537-0067 (fax)
ATTORNEY FOR PLAINTIFF
MS 231717.466095 KJFC

PUBLIC NOTICE

(First published in The Harper Advocate on Thursday, March 12, 2026) 4t

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP): 2026-02 DEMOLITION OF DANGEROUS STRUCTURE 604 OAK ST. HARPER, KS

The City of Harper is accepting sealed bids for the demolition of the dangerous structure located at 604 Oak St. Harper, KS. The successful bidder will be responsible for the demolition and removal of the structure, foundation and all other concrete on the lot except for city sidewalks, and the safe disconnection and capping of existing utilities where applicable. The successful bidder is responsible for following all applicable federal, state and local laws related to demolition of structures. 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.city-ofharper.com. All proposals must be SEALED and clearly marked "RFP 2026-02 DANGEROUS STRUCTURE - 604 OAK ST." Sealed bids will be received until April 13, 2026 at 5:00 p.m. at City Hall, and opened publicly at the regularly scheduled council meeting on April 13, 2026, 2026 at 6:30 p.m.

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