

Stop Scams In Their Tracks!

OPINION

By Mark Schifferdecker
President & CEO, GNBANK, N.A.

►► JUNE 15, 2026 – Every week, customers come into our bank holding a phone with the same worried question: “Is this real?” The message might look like it’s from a trusted business. The phone number might seem legitimate. But too often, it’s the start of a scam. And too often, the clock is already ticking.

In Kansas, fraud is not an abstract problem. In 2024 alone, residents reported almost 15,000 scam incidents totaling more than \$57,000,000 in losses, with a median loss of \$402 per victim. 2025 data has not yet been released, but I’m sure these figures have increased significantly, and we see no sign of fraud slowing down.

Banks like ours take fraud seriously because we see the damage up close. We monitor accounts around the clock, send alerts, and step in quickly when something doesn’t look right. We are very happy to visit with customers if they believe something may be suspicious and they need a second set of eyes to help. Recent national research shows that 96% of Americans find their bank’s fraud alerts valuable, and 9 in 10 agree banks take proactive steps to protect them from fraud. It’s not surprising that consumers trust banks more than any other industry to protect them from scams. However, more measures are needed!

The problem is that many scams begin outside the banking system. Fraudsters use fake social media ads, spoofed phone numbers, and deceptive messages to trick people

before money ever moves. By the time a bank or family member intervenes, the scammer may already have convinced someone to act. That delay is where real harm happens.

That’s why it makes sense to stop scams earlier. More than three-quarters of Americans support tougher rules requiring social media platforms and telecom providers to do more to stop fraud at its source. People want responsibility shared across the system, not placed on consumers alone. They also want action—not excuses.

The SCAM Act helps move us in that direction. It strengthens tools to prevent caller ID spoofing, improves accountability for scam-related social media messages, and helps close gaps scammers rely on. Importantly, it supports fraud prevention without interfering with legitimate alerts that help keep customers safe. It is a practical step that matches the scale of the problem.

Banks will continue doing our part every day. Unfortunately, fraud has become too large and too coordinated for any one sector to tackle alone. Passing the SCAM Act would be one step to help protect families, seniors, and small businesses before scammers ever reach them.

I encourage you to learn more about the SCAM Act by talking with your local banker or visiting with a legislator. And of course, please reach out anytime to me or another one of our officers at GNBANK to discuss more.

Let’s all work together to stop the fraudsters in their tracks!

Mark Schifferdecker
President & CEO

Commission declares local disaster after weekend flooding

CRAWFORD COUNTY COMMISSION MEETING – JUNE 16, 2026

BY PHILIP STEVENS
HOMETOWN GIRARD

►► Crawford County commissioners approved a local disaster emergency declaration on Tuesday June 16, after heavy weekend rainfall caused flooding, road washouts, and other damage across parts of the county.

County Counselor Jim Emerson presented Resolution 2026-023 on behalf of Emergency Manager Quinton Parsons, who was unable to attend the meeting. Emerson said Parsons reported rainfall totals ranging from 4.4 to 4.97 inches from the June 14 storm, resulting in damage to county roads and other property.

The declaration is the county’s first step in documenting storm-related losses and preparing for possible assistance. Residents with storm-related damage were asked to report it through the Crawford County Facebook page or by calling or texting 785-217-7233.

Commissioner Bruce Blair said he had spoken with Parsons and hoped the county may be able to connect the most recent storm damage with damage from the previous heavy rainfall event. Blair said county road crews had spent much of the previous week repairing washouts, particularly in the McCune area, only to see some of the same areas wash out again after the weekend rain.

“We spent all last week, a lot of our guys in most of the McCune, because that’s where most of the damage was at, fixed a bunch of things, and some of those exact ones washed out within two days later,” Blair said.

Blair said road crews are documenting the damage as they make repairs, including taking photos and tracking materials used on storm-related work. He said the documentation will be important if the county is able to seek reimbursement or other assistance.

He also encouraged residents to report private property losses, including agricultural losses, to Parsons. Blair said he was aware of at least one area where livestock had been lost because of high water.

“If you have a property loss or something that resulted from the flooding, then he needs to know that,” Blair said. “It helps us to get these funds, hopefully.”

Commissioner Carl Wood said county crews were out Saturday night and again early Sunday morning, placing barricades and responding to storm conditions. He said the situation could have been worse for residents, but crews still had trees down and flooded roads to monitor.

“My hat’s off to all the road and bridge people,” Wood said.

The flood-damage discussion followed an earlier public-comment exchange about road maintenance in rural areas. A resident questioned whether the county planned to

change its approach to maintaining gravel roads, saying some areas lack proper crowns and drainage, and that water is running down roads before reaching ditches.

Blair said recent rains created an unusual situation in which some areas received six to nine inches of rain in only a few hours during the earlier storm system. He said the county had been repairing washouts and then had to return to many areas after additional rain.

Blair and the resident disagreed over the best way to maintain rural roads, particularly whether crews should cut road shoulders and pull material back onto the roadway. Blair said that approach may have worked in the past, but expectations among rural residents have changed. He said many residents no longer want mud and grass pulled into the roadway, and the county receives complaints when roads become muddy.

“I’m trying to explain why we do certain things the way we do it,” Blair said.

Blair also said rural roads face different pressures than they did years ago, particularly from heavier agricultural traffic. He said many farmers now use fully loaded semis instead of smaller grain trucks, creating more wear on gravel roads.

“We can’t keep up with the traffic and what it does to the road,” Blair said.

The resident also asked about the county’s ongoing zoning work and when the process would be completed. Blair said consultant Josh Albin is expected to present information July 7 or July 10, depending on scheduling, and said the county’s moratorium would remain in place until commissioners have the matter figured out.

Later in the meeting, Wood raised additional concerns about the timing of the zoning process.

Emerson said Albin is expected to have a draft available June 23, with a possible presentation or recommendation in early July. Wood said he was concerned commissioners may not have enough time to study the full document and consider whether all of the proposed changes are right for Crawford County.

“I cannot understand why we’re putting all this together,” Wood said. “It just seems like we’re trying to get a push, not we, to get everything done here and out of here by August 1.”

Emerson said commissioners could take more time if needed. He said much of the document is expected to remain similar to previous versions, but he also said he hoped any changes would be clearly noted so commissioners would not have to reread the entire document line by line.

County Clerk Lisa Lusker also brought commissioners a request connected to the Kansas State Fair and the upcoming 250th celebration. Lusker said the fair is asking counties to participate in a large

Kansas county map exhibit that will be installed on the floor of the newly renovated Bison Arena. She said counties are being invited to contribute items representing their community’s character and strengths, such as agricultural products, natural resources, industrial or manufacturing highlights, and cultural, historical, or economic identifiers.

Commissioners agreed that the request should be passed along to Explore Crawford County, which is better positioned to identify items that represent Crawford County.

Commissioners also held a public hearing on vacating a portion of South Walnut Street in the Original Town of Opolis. Emerson said the request involved a platted street area that does not landlock any property. He said the county had received no comments against the request.

After opening the hearing, commissioners received no public comment and voted to close the hearing. They then approved Resolution 2026-022 vacating the street.

Emerson said there are still many platted streets and alleys across the county that exist on paper but are not being used. Some, he said, are located in areas that are now pastures or fields.

“It is amazing how many platted areas there are that are pastures right now,” Emerson said. “You’d never know that it was a mining town.”

Commissioners also approved moving forward with a notice of intent to vacate streets and alleys in South Bradford. Emerson said the property owner had requested the action after earlier vacations were completed in the same area. He said the affected areas include unopened streets and alleys located in a field, and no property would be landlocked.

Wood asked how the vacated property would be divided among adjoining landowners. Emerson said streets are generally split between adjoining property owners, though there can be exceptions, including boundary streets and situations where one owner owns both sides.

In old business, commissioners discussed a bridge project involving the City of Pittsburg. Blair said the city is generally supportive, but the county needs a more formal commitment. He said existing plans for the bridge, originally prepared many years ago, can be updated for \$21,400, which he said is substantially less than starting the plans from scratch.

Blair said he plans to meet with city representatives and county staff to determine how to move forward, including how costs and payments would be handled.

Commissioners also discussed scheduling a work session with Tim Dawsey. Lusker said she had contacted Dawsey, who indicated he is available

in July. Blair said he believes the county should hear from him and may consider a letter of support, saying the matter involves bringing business and jobs to Crawford County. A date is expected to be announced at a future meeting.

The commission also addressed county technology needs after a work session earlier in the morning. IT Director Brandon Spaur presented a quote for a new county server. Spaur said the county had discussed servers in November, but the latest quote had increased, in part because of demand associated with data centers.

Spaur said the proposed server would be up to date, include a warranty and include support for converting the county’s current server system. The total cost presented was \$38,976.81.

Commissioners authorized the chairman to sign the quote and place the order to lock in the price. Commissioners said acting sooner could prevent additional cost increases.

Wood also asked Spaur to look into possible grants or options for a backup generator, at least for the IT department’s servers. Wood said a full courthouse generator may be a future goal, but a smaller dedicated system could help protect the county’s technology infrastructure.

Spaur said the county’s current battery backups provide about 20 minutes before servers shut down. He said he would look into the idea and also mentioned a state grant connected to a disaster recovery server.

After the discussion, commissioners went into executive session for 15 minutes with Spaur and Emerson to discuss county IT system security measures. No action was announced afterward.

Commissioners held two other executive sessions during the meeting. Early in the meeting, they recessed for 15 minutes with Sheriff Billy Tomasi, Adam Harrison, and Emerson. No action was announced after the session.

Commissioners approved the consent agenda at the beginning of the meeting, including approval of the June 12 minutes. They also reviewed and signed motions from the previous meeting.

Future business includes an 8:30 a.m. June 23 work session on the bridge project, a 9 a.m. June 23 budget work session with Maintenance Director Aaron Crozier and a 9:30 a.m. June 23 budget work session with County Attorney Reina Probert. Commissioners also have a 9 a.m. June 26 work session with Bukaty to discuss insurance, a 10 a.m. June 30 public hearing on vacating a platted street and alley in the Town of Dunkirk, and a tentative 9 a.m. July 7 overall budget work session, provided it does not conflict with Albin’s zoning presentation.

The courthouse will be closed on Friday June 19, in observance of the Juneteenth holiday.

Vacation Bible Schools

Open Door Mission – Arcadia

- 201 N Kansas St, Arcadia, KS
- June 17th-19th, 2:00 to 4:00 pm

Trinity Lutheran Church – Girard

- 109 W St John St, Girard, KS
- June 22-26, 8:45 am – 12:00 noon
- Trinity Lutheran Church invites you to join us at Tropical Trek, where kids learn how Jesus seeks them and all people. He is the Son of Man, who came to save the lost!
- Children age 4 through 8th grade are invited to come enjoy Bible stories, activities, music, crafts, games, snacks, and more.
- Register now online at www.trinitygirard.org/vbs. Registration may also be done at 8 am on June 22nd at Trinity Lutheran Church.

Trinity Baptist Church – Pittsburg

- 301 E Washington St, Pittsburg, KS
- June 22-26, 5:30 – 8:30 pm

LifeTrack Church - Frontenac

- 1068 N 69 Hwy, Frontenac, KS
- July 19 -23
- “Illuminate, Be The Light!”
- Facebook Event Here:
- <https://www.facebook.com/share/18Vp3NEbE9/?mibextid=wwXlfr>
- Parents can sign kids up here:
- <https://lifetrackchurch.com/lifetrack-kids>

New Life Baptist Church - Franklin

- 102 S Highway 69, Franklin, KS
- July 15-17
- Sign up via the website to Journey through the Emerald Crossing and learn about our great Shepherd in Psalm 23.
- <https://newlifefranklin.org/>

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