

Wood wants clarification before committing transportation funding to SEK-CAP

CRAWFORD COUNTY COMMISSION MEETING – JULY 17, 2026

BY PHILIP STEVENS
HOMETOWN GIRARD

►► The Crawford County Commission held off Friday on approving additional transportation funding for SEK-CAP, asking for a representative to return Tuesday with more information about how the remaining routes will be supported. Commissioners also authorized repairs to the Judicial Center's fire-suppression system, clarified early-voting locations and scheduled another work session on the proposed 2027 county budget.

County Clerk Lisa Lusker said she had received an invoice from Casey Brown regarding the transportation funding that commissioners discussed during previous commission meetings. The board has already voted to pay for one route with revenue from the county's wind farm fund. Lusker said the county already provides approximately \$15,000 through special funds associated with services for elderly residents and people with intellectual disabilities. Her notes from the previous transportation discussion also reflected a proposed \$25,000 allocation from the wind farm fund.

Commissioner Carl Wood said he was not opposed to supporting the service but wanted a clearer accounting of which routes SEK-CAP would continue funding and which route the county's contribution would preserve.

"I'm looking out for the people that we serve," Wood said.

Commissioners recalled that the transportation program previously operated three routes, but one had already been eliminated. They questioned whether SEK-CAP would fund one route and expect the county to fully fund another, or whether additional financial support was being sought for the remaining services.

Wood also wants to know what funding SEK-CAP has requested from cities, hospitals, businesses and other organizations throughout Crawford County.

"I don't mind funding the one route, but who's

going to fund the other two?" Wood asked.

Lusker said she would ask Brown to attend Tuesday's meeting. No action was taken on the invoice on Friday.

County Counselor Jim Emerson reported that an inspection of the fire-suppression and sprinkler system at the Crawford County Judicial Center identified several repairs and additional testing requirements.

The system's backflow preventer failed and must be repaired and retested. Three gauges need to be replaced, some sprinkler heads must be sent away for testing, and portions of the system's internal piping require inspection.

Emerson said the new inspection company spent approximately five hours examining the system, compared with what he was told had commonly been a roughly 30-minute inspection in the past.

The estimated cost is slightly more than \$6,000, although additional expenses could result if testing identifies problems with the sprinkler heads. Emerson said Aaron Crozier was prepared to oversee the work and had asked whether commissioners wanted him to proceed. Commissioners agreed the repairs should move forward, agreeing that 'it's a safety issue.'

The board did not make a formal motion but directed Emerson to tell Crozier to proceed, provided he was comfortable with the proposed work and contractor.

Wood reported that Road and Bridge employees had discovered problems with a couple of culverts and had incurred some additional costs to address them. The department is also continuing to investigate alternatives to Purple Wave for selling county equipment. Commissioners previously expressed concern that Purple Wave may not allow the county to establish a reserve price, leaving the county at risk of selling equipment for less than it considers acceptable.

Commissioners said at least some competing auction services appear to permit reserve prices. No selection was made on Friday.

Commissioner Bruce Blair asked for County Appraiser Zach Edwards to appear at a future meeting to explain information commissioners have been reviewing during their budget work.

Blair said a county valuation report showed millions of dollars in newly assessed property that did not exist on the previous year's tax rolls. He wants Edwards to explain new construction, expiring exemptions and other factors that affect the county's overall assessed valuation.

"I think this is just as equally as important, because I don't think everyone understands," Blair said. "I don't understand it."

Blair said he did not want to risk inaccurately explaining the figures himself when Edwards is the county's subject-matter expert. Commissioners later said Edwards had agreed to attend the next regular meeting.

Lusker clarified that early in-person voting is available only at the Crawford County Clerk's Office in the Girard courthouse. There is no in-person voting at the Crawford County Judicial Center in Pittsburg.

The Judicial Center does have a secured ballot drop box where voters who received advance ballots by mail may return them. A second ballot drop box is located outside the courthouse in Girard. Lusker said both drop boxes are monitored by cameras.

Early voting at the clerk's office will continue until noon on the Monday before Election Day. Lusker said participation had been relatively low during the first days of voting, although the clerk's office had not yet received many mailed ballots back.

She said turnout could increase because it is an even-numbered election year and the ballot includes the governor's race. "We're hoping it's a good turnout," Lusker said.

The commission approved Suzy Boldrini as Wood's official delegate to the Crawford County Technical Education Center board.

Wood said Boldrini was willing to continue serving for a period of time to help maintain continuity. Lusker

said she would forward the designation paperwork.

During old business, Wood recognized Terry, the retiring manager of Homer Cole Community Center, following a reception held in her honor. Wood said she had done a good job managing the county-owned facility and would be difficult to replace. "Hats off to her," Wood said. "Hope she enjoys her retirement."

Commissioners scheduled another public budget work session for 9 a.m. Tuesday, July 21.

The board has been reviewing individual departmental budgets and countywide revenue and valuation information while developing its proposed 2027 budget. Commissioners said the county does not expect to exceed the revenue-neutral rate and remains on schedule to complete the budget and meet publication and hearing requirements.

Wood thanked county employees and officials for the time they have spent preparing information for the board. "We're turning over every leaf and going through every budget two or three times," Wood said.

Blair noted that commissioners examine budgets closely every year, although this year's process has included livestreamed work sessions and additional financial reports.

Commissioners also confirmed that their detailed review of the proposed county planning and zoning regulations remains scheduled for July 28. County Counselor Jim Emerson and Zoning Administrator May Smith planned to meet Monday to continue preparing the document. Commissioners discussed the possibility of holding a brief walkthrough on July 24 before the formal presentation and review.

The commission entered two executive sessions near the end of the meeting. The first was for 15 minutes to discuss non-elected personnel in the clerk's office with Lusker, Deputy Clerk Randi Ryan and County Counselor Jim Emerson. The second was for 10 minutes under attorney-client privilege regarding Crawford County Mental Health. No resulting action was announced before adjournment.

Events through July 31



Grab & Go Summer Meal Program – Girard Public Library and the Kansas Food Bank will be providing shelf stable meals for children Ages 18 & under.

Wednesdays - June 3rd - July 29th
11:30 am - 12:30 pm

~ Children must be present or a pick up approval must be in place.

~ If the child/children are present during pickup times no sign up is required. BUT if a child will not be present each pick up date, parent/guardian will need to fill out a form prior to picking up.

~ If you are needing a Parent/Guardian Meal Pick Up Approval Form, please stop by the library (anytime during library hours) with all children present to fill out a form.

~ Daycare providers will not be allowed to have a pick up approval form for daycare kids per the Kansas Food Bank rules.

~ Please contact the library if you have any additional questions.

Monthly Game Night – Join us for Game Night at Girard Public Library on **Monday, July 27th from 5:00 pm - 6:00 pm!** We are excited to offer a monthly game night at the library!

~ A variety of board games and card games will be available.

~ You are welcome to bring your own games to enjoy with others.

~ Invite some friends to come along and have fun playing games!

Library Board Meeting – Girard Public Library will have the July meeting on **Tuesday, July 28th at 5:30 pm.** Meeting is open to the public.

New Rotation Books will arrive at Girard Public Library on Friday, July 24th!

~ Rotation books are provided through SEKLS for checkout in addition to our own materials. We receive rotation books 8 times per year - approximately 340-350 books per delivery.

Library Hours

- Monday: 9:30 am - 6:00 pm
- Tuesday - Thursday: 9:30 am - 6:00 pm
- Friday: 9:30 am - 5:00 pm
- Saturday: 9:00 am - 2:30 pm
- Sunday: Closed

New Items at Girard Public Library

The following items are just part of the new items that have been added to our shelves recently. Stop by the library to find out what else we have added.

Adult Fiction

- *Weddings* by Danielle Steel
- *Tourist Season* by Brynne Weaver (Seasons of Carnage #1)

Young Adult Fiction

- *The Last Kids on Earth and the Destructor's Lair* by Max Brallier (Last Kids on Earth #10)

Children's Picture Books

- *This is Ursula* by Nicole Johnson
- *The Princess in Black and the Trick or Treating Trouble* by Shannon Hale (Princess in Black #12)
- *Buzzing Beehive: Minecraft* by Christy Webster
- *Spidey-Cat* by Steve Behling
- *Tractor Mac Parade's Best* by Billy Steers

Children's Chapter Books

- *Tuck Everlasting* by Natalie Babbitt
- *Can You Survive the Jungle?: An Interactive Survival Adventure* by Matt Doeden
- *Can You Survive Storm Chasing?: An Interactive Survival Adventure* by Elizabeth Raum
- *Near and Deer* by Sylvia Liu
- *Big Jim Believes* by Dav Pilkey (Dog Man #14)
- *How to Save a Dolphin* by Michelle Schusterman

Children's Nonfiction

- *What Do We Know About the Roswell Incident?* by Ben Hubbard
- *The Funniest Animal Joke Book Ever for Kids* by Alan Katz
- *What Was the Gold Rush?* by Joan Holub

Children's Graphic Novels

- *Max, A Little Axolotl* by Joey Spiotto
- *I Survived the Bombing of Pearl Harbor, 1941* by Lauren Tarshis
- *What Was Built to Be a Ship of Dreams?* by Emmett Nahil

Magazines

- *Consumer Reports* July/August 2026
- *People* July 27, 2026
- *Time* July 27, 2026
- *US Weekly* July 27, 2026

STANDCO
GUTTERING
& More, LLC

5" SEAMLESS GUTTERING, 6"
LEAF GUARD & COMMERCIAL GUTTERING

620-431-8198
Office: 620-449-4389

WATER STREET
APARTMENTS

1 BEDROOM APTS. ~ ELDERLY ~ DISABLED

620-724-8668

MANAGED BY THE GIRARD HOUSING AUTHORITY

The Beach Club
BEING ENERGETIC, ACTIVE, CONNECTED & HAPPY
Located at Girard Senior Center – 221 S Ozark St, Girard KS

Meal program (SEK-AAA)
for Girard seniors 60+
served at 11:30 am.
Suggested donation \$3 per meal.

Mon. July 27- **Herbed Baked Chicken**, Macaroni & Cheese, Broccoli, Dinner Roll

Tues. July 28- **Beef Lasagna**, Italian Blend Veg, Breadstick, Side Salad, Blushing Pears

Wed. July 29- **Biscuits & Gravy**, Sausage Patties, Baby Carrots, Hard Boiled Eggs

Thur. July 30- **Chicken & Noodles**, Vegetable Blend, Dinner Roll

Call 620-724-6073 by Friday before, to order.

Kansas Press Association
Member

HOMETOWN GIRARD
(ISSN 25743996)
is published weekly by Philip Stevens, 141 N 160th Street, Girard, KS 66743. Periodicals Postage Paid at Girard, KS and additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER:
Send address changes to: Hometown Girard, P.O. Box 298, Girard, KS 66743.

Office located at:
141 N 160th St, Girard, KS 66743, Phone: 620-704-5882

Additional Office located at:
104 S Ozark St, Girard, KS 66743, Phone: 620-724-7217

Hometown NEWS
Proudly Serving Crawford County
Girard
www.hometowngirard.com

PUBLISHER / OWNER / EDITOR
Philip Stevens - publisher@hometowngirard.com

REPORTERS / WRITERS
Josie Gronau - (General reporting)
Preston Frazier - (Sports/General reporting)
Abigail Stansbury - (Girard sports)
Lainey Prince - (General reporting)
Ava Dent - (St. Paul area)
Maya Burke - (St. Paul area)
Ron Gates - (Features/Photographer)

LAYOUT & DESIGN / ADVERTISING
Corey Estep - graphics@hometowngirard.com

CONTACT US
Please direct your questions, corrections, submissions and all news items to:
Hometown Girard, PO Box 298, Girard, KS 66743
Email: publisher@hometowngirard.com
Phone: (620) 704-5882

SUBSCRIPTION FORM

Mail form to Hometown Girard, P.O. Box 298, Girard, KS 66743, or Subscribe Online at: **hometowngirard.com**

☐ **Send this as a gift.** (check the box if you want to gift this subscription below)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Birthdays (optional) : _____

Anniversary (optional) : _____

SUBSCRIPTION RATES	1 YEAR	2 YEARS	6 MONTHS
In County (print + eEdition) :	\$90	\$170	\$45
Out of County (print + eEdition) :	\$100	\$190	\$50
eEdition (online only) :	\$80		