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Pictured, left to right: Steve Webster, Ty Racette, Jon Shaver, Mike Myrick and Mike Marzolf.

Area Referee Crew Gears Up for Another Year

Have Whistles.....Will Travel

BY: C. TABLER

With a combined 117 years of officiating football, the Jon Shaver Football Officiating Crew has enough experience that few coaches question them. Maybe a fan or two will, but the crew says “that goes with the territory.”

Jon Shaver wears the white hat and has 38 years of experience. Mike Marzolf is the Linesman (Chains) and has 25 years of experience. Mike Myrick has 24 years experience and is the Line Judge. Steve Webster has 16 years experience and is the Umpire and Ty Racette is the Back Judge and has 14 years experience. This five-man team has been together for 15 years, a unique thing in Kansas football officiating.

Shaver and Racette reside in Larned and the other three team members live in Great Bend so they usually all travel together in Shaver’s van which they have dubbed “The Mystery Machine.” Perhaps it is a mystery that it keeps running!

The crew works games from Central Kansas to the Colorado state line, from Nebraska to Oklahoma. Lots of travel time lends itself to lots of time for discussion. They’ve solved nearly every problem the world presents on those trips but most of the time on the way to games they talk football, go over new state rules but not a lot of officiating. As the fivesome are all great friends, rides home are times for enjoyment with each other.

This crew is known for focusing on the mechanics of officiating. Being in the right place at the right time is important. Trust is important and that has come from working together these past fifteen years. Because they have worked together for so many years they don’t have to meet and “discuss” much following a play or a penalty call. There is a lot of non-verbal communication between this veteran crew, both during and after plays.

The Shaver Crew is qualified for both 11-Man and 8-Man football and usually have both on their schedule every year. The field for the two is different and some rules may change but they move from one to the other with skill.

Game officials are a shortage in most of Kansas and crews like the Shaver Crew are rare and greatly appreciated by high school athletic directors and coaches and, especially, by the Kansas State High School Activities Association.

The team regularly works games in Phillipsburg, Beloit and Scott City which means they’ve got to have their gear in the van and ready to go by 2:00pm for a 2-3 hour drive because they like to be at the game site by 5:30pm for a 7:00 kickoff. They like to take their time getting ready and they know it relieves stress on athletic directors at schools, knowing that their officiating crew is there.

Following is the 2025 schedule for this veteran officiating crew:

Date	School	Distance	Departure Time
9/5	Minneola at Kiowa Co	55 miles	4:15
9/12	Halstead at Pratt	60 miles	4:15
9/19	SE of Saline at Beloit	120 miles	3:15
9/26	SW Heights at Hoisington	40 miles	4:30
10/3	TMP at Smith Center	130 miles	2:30
10/10	Hutch Trinity at Ellinwood	40 miles	4:30
10/17	Phillipsburg at Norton	150 miles	2:00
10/24	Colby at Scott City	120 miles	3:00

see REFEREE page 8

Joint Planning Commission Approves Solar Project

Public Hearing Held Tuesday at Courthouse

BY: C. TABLER

Tuesday evening in the lounge at the Pawnee County Courthouse the Pawnee County Joint Planning Commission held a public hearing on the applications for Conditional Use Permits (CUP) for the solar project proposed in Keysville Township.

Pawnee County Attorney, Douglas McNett, gave a brief report on the various legalities of the meeting, the project and how it would affect the County from a tax basis. Following that, Mike Roth, representing Tenaska Corporation of Omaha, Nebraska, presented a powerpoint explanation of the details of the proposed project that comprised two parts that needed Planning Commission approval. First, Kinsley Solar, LLC for a 150-megawatt solar photovoltaic generation facility to be constructed on the proper-



Crowd listens to information at Planning Commission Meeting.

ty and, secondly, Kinsley Storage Project, LLC-50-megawatt battery energy storage system.

Roth pointed out that the project would encompass approximately 2,500 acres in Keysville Township and that the project, if approved, would begin in late 2026 or early 2027 and would be operational by 2028. It is

expected that the solar farm would last approximately 35 years at which time the equipment would be removed and land would be returned to its original status.

Roth also pointed out that Tenaska would be investing about \$290 million and that see SOLAR page 8

City Council August Meeting Covers A Variety of Subjects

BY JUDI TABLER

The City Council met on Monday evening, August 4, at the City Building.

SPECIAL RECOGNITION

Interim Chief of Police, TJ Hearn, and the City took this occasion to formally recognize Police Sergeant Samuel Sullivan for his promotion to the rank of Police Sergeant, and to commend him for his dedication to the City of Larned. Sullivan has been a member of the Larned Police Department since February 2022. In 2025, he was honored with the Life Saving Award in recognition of his life-saving response when he administered the Heimlich maneuver to dislodge an obstruction in a person’s throat in March of 2024.

OLD BUSINESS

a. Welcome Inn. The director from the Welcome Inn attended the City Council Meeting on Monday evening to provide an update on the Welcome Inn and its services to Larned and Pawnee County.

In February, the city voted to waive the cost of city utilities for the Welcome Inn for a period of six months. There is no doubt that the Welcome Inn has challenges as the Federal Government shifts its priorities; communities must step up to strengthen local social services, ensuring continued access to essential



Sergeant Samuel Sullivan and Interim Police Chief TJ Hearn

care, nutrition, and quality-of-life programming. The Council received an update on the Welcome Inn and its services to the county. The Council expressed the importance of the Welcome Inn and its contribution to the well-being of the elderly in Pawnee County. The Council decided to continue waiving the cost of utilities through March 2026, after which they will review the waiver. At this time, the Council also agreed to continue to allocate the yearly funds, by giving the Welcome Inn the rest of the 2025 allocation, which amounts to \$12,000. The motion was made and seconded with the full approval of the Council.

b. The Christmas Decoration Committee addressed the need for electrical power to run the

animated Christmas light ground displays, which will be set up at the Pawnee County Courthouse and the Veterans Memorial. There was discussion and questions regarding the installation. The issue was tabled until the next meeting, when the Council can hear more direction for the project.

NEW BUSINESS

a. Art Show Venue. Dody Burke is seeking the use of the City Hall for the 2025 Art Show” Larned Spotlight on Art-Big Time Art, Small Town Glow.” This art show endeavor has previously been held at the Hillside location, but is no longer available since the sale of the property. She is asking the City see COUNCIL page 8

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