

INSIDE:

Jeanie Hart shares a unique pie crust recipe. See page 4.



INSIDE:

The Fort Scott High School Choir held their spring concert. See page 4.

SPORTS:

The Fort Scott High School boys varsity tennis team concluded its regular season Thursday. See page 9.

Public hearings on county zoning expected

BY JASON E. SILVERS
The Fort Scott Tribune

Bourbon County Commissioners on Monday discussed the public hearing process for zoning.

On April 14, commissioners appointed a nine-member zoning advisory board which will assist the commission in developing a zoning resolution. Commissioners also discussed the board’s proposed bylaws, which were to include a change in the number of members on the board.

On Monday, Commissioner David Beerbower said the zoning advisory committee elected a chairman, vice-chairman and secretary during its first meeting April 17. He said the committee is interested in hosting several public hearings.

Commissioner Mika Milburn-Kee asked if the other commissioners would like to host a town hall or public meeting.

“We will be part of the public hearing,” Beerbower

said.

Commission Chairman Brandon Whisenhunt said the hearings will take place in the commission room with commissioners observing and taking notes, letting the public have an open discussion. Beerbower said the committee will bring some times and dates to the commission.

“They want to host it as an independent subcommittee to us,” Beerbower said. “We won’t be involved in it. They’ll host it. The committee wants the commission to sit and listen.”

Beerbower said the bylaws approved by the committee includes one commissioner to attend the committee meetings “as a resource.” He said any commissioner can participate.

“It doesn’t have to be just me if somebody else wants to take a rotation,” he said, adding there will be at least four additional meetings. He said the committee meetings take place at 6:30 p.m. Wednesdays in the commission room.

Other business

- The commission voted to table an application for a

road closure from Bradley Plaster until next week in order to determine if the road is county property and to allow public input.

Plaster has requested the alley between two lots in Hiattville be closed, and has signatures from two landowners who support the closure.

- Commissioners voted to table discussion on human resources until County Clerk Susan Walker could be present. Beerbower said he would like to clarify the direction the county is moving with HR after the March resignation of former commissioner Leroy Kruger, who was the commission’s HR liaison.
- Milburn-Kee said she has reviewed and made adjustments to county handbooks and discussed implementing procedures to “help smooth things out across the board.” She asked other commissioners for “edits, changes and corrections” concerning procedures in the handbook, which is dated 2002.

SEE COUNTY COMMISSION ON PAGE 6

Keystone Award winners



Jason E. Silvers/Tribune photo

Tim and Deb McKenney, owners of Fort Scott Broadcasting – KOMB/KMDO, left, are presented with the Keystone Award during the Fort Scott Area Chamber of Commerce Annual Dinner and Awards Celebration held Thursday, April 24 at the River Room. The Keystone Award honors a person or couple “who has continually been a source of support to his or her community,” according to chamber information. Presenting the award is Chamber President and CEO Lindsay Madison. See more award winners on pages 6 and 8.

Commissioners table action on replacing wrecked sheriff’s vehicle

BY JASON E. SILVERS
The Fort Scott Tribune

Bourbon County Commissioners decided to table a request from Sheriff Bill Martin for the purchase of a new vehicle for the sheriff’s department.

The commission voted to table the matter until next week in order to review the budget and determine funding for the vehicle, which Martin requested to replace a vehicle involved in a two-vehicle accident April 4 in Allen County. Martin presented commissioners with photos of the wrecked vehicle, which is a 2014 with more than 200,000 miles.

“It’s more than likely the vehicle will be totaled out,” he said. “I’m here to ask for some assistance in purchasing a new vehicle so we can get the fleet going again.”

Deputy Isaac Shuler, who is in charge of vehicle maintenance to ensure vehicles are operational, provided commissioners with additional documentation, Martin said.

Martin said the cost of the replacement 2025 vehicle is \$52,450, with the total cost coming to \$66,914 after the

needed equipment is added, including the prisoner transport partition, which Martin said was key in protecting the deputy involved in the accident.

“That’s one of the pieces of equipment that caused the roof not to collapse on the deputy when it rolled several times, the cage that saved him from that,” Martin said.

Other equipment includes lights, sirens, decals, signals and grill guards, Martin said.

“That’s why I need assistance to move forward with purchasing,” he said.

The new vehicle is a “turnkey vehicle ready to move down the road” after radios are installed and the radars are field tested as a radar head was exposed to the rain. The in-car camera system will also be field tested as the “forward-facing” camera on the roof was also exposed to the elements and “will probably need to be replaced,” Martin said.

“Some additional equipment needs to be checked on,” he said.

Martin said he has contacted the county’s insurance carrier, the Kansas County Association Multi-line Pool (KCAMP), but has not yet filed a formal

report. He said he received the accident report April 17.

“I still have to itemize a list of what’s been damaged. That will be done soon,” he said.

Martin said insurance funds would help the county offset the cost of the new vehicle, but how much money is received will depend on the outcome of negotiations between KCAMP and the other insurance provider involved.

“I still need to move forward with the purchase of a vehicle to get a vehicle back on the road,” he said.

He requested the county pay for the vehicle with a plan to be reimbursed through insurance.

“I would like to get every dime from the insurance,” he said. “It becomes a civil issue between both of them.”

County Counselor Bob Johnson said the new vehicle will “likely” be more expensive than the value of the damaged vehicle.

“There’s also a possible subrogation claim because the deputy surely wasn’t at fault from what I know about it,” Johnson said. “The young lady who hit him I think ran the stop sign and her dog jumped in her lap.”

Subrogation is defined as the legal right of an insurance company to take on the rights of its insured policyholder and pursue a claim against a third party who caused the damage for which the insurance company paid.

Johnson said the accident occurred in Allen County and “luckily” the deputy was not hurt. He said he sent copies of photos of the truck to commissioners and the county clerk.

“We will get money from insurance, and perhaps money from the lady’s insurance for a subrogation claim,” he said. “I haven’t talked to the sheriff, but he wants to replace the truck and when the money comes in later it can refurbish the account you take the money out to buy the truck now, I assume.”

Commissioner Mika Milburn-Kee asked if it was “unreasonable” to find a used vehicle at a similar value for what insurance will provide.

“We’re not going to get anything from that truck,” Martin said of the 2014 vehicle. “You’re getting pennies on the dollar for that vehicle.”

Martin said the reimbursement value would

“possibly” be \$25,000 to \$30,000. He said the vehicle replacement schedule for his department would be discussed during talks on the 2026 budget.

“I’m looking at replacing at least two or three vehicles on the patrol side and two or three vehicles on the jail side,” he said.

Milburn-Kee asked if the vehicle to be replaced could take the place of one of those vehicles. Martin said it could, but a vehicle would still need to be replaced and he needs additional vehicles.

“He can’t wait until the 2026 budget is what he’s saying,” Beerbower said.

“If we were going to ask for six vehicles on the 2026 budget, maybe we can ask for five instead,” Milburn-Kee said.

“If we replace this one, that’s one less for 2026,” Beerbower said.

Johnson said the sheriff must have a certain amount of vehicles for his deputies.

“Unfortunately, the wreck happened,” he said. “It’s a good thing he wasn’t hurt. You really don’t have much choice. I mean you do, I guess, but nobody asked to be in a wreck.”

Martin said the finances or reimbursements that are

sent to the sheriff’s office or county to cover the loss of the vehicle and equipment will “automatically” go back to the county.

“Whatever budget it comes out of, the funds will be reimbursed with that money,” he said.

Whisenhunt asked if Martin had funds to put toward the cost of the vehicle, and whether he needed the county to cover a portion or all of the expense.

“It’s going to have to cover all until I can figure out what’s going on with my budget right now,” Martin said. “It’s pretty much in the red at the first of the year.”

Martin said the only piece of equipment that could be reused is the radio system, which has been tested. He said the siren box and speaker were exposed during impact. He said the light bar was “completely ripped off the truck.”

Commissioners, Johnson and Martin discussed county funds that could potentially be used for the purchase, as well as the county’s current financial status. There was also some discussion on a replacement schedule and maintenance for sheriff’s vehicles.

WEATHER

A slight chance of showers, then a chance of showers and thunderstorms after 1pm. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 67. East wind around 10 mph. Chance of precipitation is 40%.

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