

County hears EMP Shield update, sets hearing date

BURLINGTON — The Coffey County Commission heard an update on the Lebo facility from EMP Shield, approved several Road and Bridge projects and set a hearing date for a proposed street vacation during its March 16 meeting.

Chairman Mark Petterson presided over the meeting with commissioners Todd Barker, Steve McCurry and Wayne Thomsen present. Commissioner Michael Abendroth was absent. Also attending were County Counselor Wade Bowie II, Payroll and Benefits Coordinator Kacy Peres and several department heads and guests.

EMP Shield board member Rowdy Meyer provided an update on the company's Lebo facility, noting the company has invested approximately \$1.3 million into the building and continues limited production operations there. Meyer said EMP Shield has undergone significant changes in recent years, including financial impacts related to the federal CHIPS Act and evolving industry standards that have required new engineering and product development.

He said the company is currently operating lean while adapting to those changes, adding that while equipment is operating

at the Lebo site, staffing levels remain minimal. Meyer said future employment at the facility will depend on economic conditions and company needs, and he could not provide a timeline for additional hiring.

Commissioners later entered two executive sessions totaling 25 minutes to discuss confidential financial and trade secret information related to EMP Shield. No action was taken following those sessions.

The commission also met in executive session for 10 minutes with County Appraiser Connie Lawrence to discuss personnel

matters related to job performance. No action followed.

Lawrence later reported her office remains in compliance with state guidelines, with a residential median ratio of 91.13 percent, within the required range of 90 to 110 percent. She said about five property valuation appeals had been filed, with a March 31 deadline for additional appeals.

Road and Bridge Superintendent Ryan Durst presented several projects, including plans to improve two intersections near LeRoy. The commission approved seeking bids for a hot mix asphalt project at the California Street and K-58 Hwy. south intersection and at Shetland Road and K-58 Hwy. north intersection. The work will be funded through the Special Highway Improvement Fund.

Durst reported a week-end call-out for a downed tree near 23rd and Kafir roads and outlined improvements planned for the highway department building. The commission approved a quote of \$8,938 from Evergreen to install a canopy over the shop entrance to address water issues.

Additional improvements included approval of up to \$6,675 for interior painting by Sharp Painting and \$15,705.67 for flooring replacement by Edgcomb Flooring. Both projects will be paid from the general fund capital outlay.

In other business, the commission approved a notice of publication for a proposed street vacation involving a portion of Rodney Street in the Hillview Subdivision west of New Strawn. The notice will be published March 26

and April 16, with a public hearing scheduled for April 27 at 10 a.m.

Commissioners held two additional executive sessions later in the meeting, totaling 25 minutes, one related to personnel matters protected by HIPAA and another for attorney-client consultation regarding a county legal issue. No action was taken following either session.

The commission approved two tax abatements totaling \$63.

Two payroll notices were approved for new hires in the Coffey County Sheriff's Office. Shelley Duffy was hired as a part-time assistant cook and Scarlet DeSantiago-Enriquez as a full-time assistant cook. Both positions were approved at a wage of \$18.41 per hour, effective March 9.

The meeting adjourned at 11:41 a.m.

Hunts

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cinnamon rolls, breakfast casserole and more will be served. The Easter bunny will arrive at 10 a.m. This is a freewill donation event.

Gridley City Park, 307 Main St., will be hosting Easter in the Park at 8 a.m. on Saturday, April 4, with a bake sale and breakfast, a petting zoo opening at 9 a.m., and the Easter Bunny arriving at 10 a.m. The community egg hunt will follow.

Lebo
Lebo Branch Library, 327 Ogden St., will be hosting an Easter storytime with the Easter Bunny at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, March 31.

LeRoy
LeRoy Branch Library will be hosting an Easter egg hunt at LeRoy City Park, 700 S. Main St., Saturday, April 4. Registration begins at 2.15 p.m., with the hunt starting at 3 p.m.

New Strawn
New Strawn Community Improvement Organization will be hosting the

Easter egg hunt 10 a.m. Saturday, April 4 at Jones Park, 110 Fourth St.

Waverly
Waverly Booster Club and Homemaker's Club will be hosting the Waverly Easter egg hunt with the Easter Bunny at Waverly City Park, 101 E. First St., at 10 a.m. Saturday, April 4.

Westphalia
Westphalia Lions Club will be hosting their fourth annual Easter egg hunt behind the main building of the Westphalia school, 500 Liberty St., at 4 p.m. Saturday, March 28.

Services

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Christian Church of Burlington, 1401 Cross St., will be hosting an Easter Sunrise at 7 a.m. Sunday, April 5, with breakfast following. Class and worship will be at normal times.

First Baptist Church of Burlington, 1101 N. Fourth St., will be hosting an Easter sunrise service at 7 a.m. Sunday, April 5, with the normal worship service at 10:30 a.m.

House of Praise Community Church, 300 N. 11th St., will be hosting a Passover dinner from 6 to 9 p.m. Wednesday, April 1.

St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church, 212 E. Juniatta, will be hosting an Easter Vigil at 8:30 p.m. Saturday, April 4, and will have an Easter Mass at 11 a.m. Sunday, April 5.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 518 Jason St., will be hosting a potluck lunch at 11 a.m. to be held at the church to begin Palm week Saturday, March 28. On Sunday, March 29, a one-hour Easter celebration will be held during sacrament meeting beginning at 10 a.m. Families are encouraged to discuss in their homes how they can make the following week sacred by remembering Christ. The

weekend of Easter Sunday, the General Conference will be broadcasting from Salt Lake City. Everyone is invited to participate by viewing the conference as it is streamed over various platforms including churchofjesuschrist.org.

The Well Family Church will be hosting their Easter service in the 4-H building at Kelley Park, 605 Third St., at 9 a.m. Sunday, April 5. Breakfast is followed by a worship service at 10:30 a.m. and an egg hunt at noon. They will also hold Children's Church in Kelley Hall, 625 Third St., at 11 a.m.

Trinity Lutheran Church, 902 Kennedy St., will be hosting a Good Friday service at 7 p.m. Friday, April 3, and a sunrise Easter service at 6:45 a.m. Sunday, April 5, followed by an Easter service at 9 a.m.

Gridley
Gridley United Methodist Church, 517 Atherly St., will be hosting a prayer partner breakfast at 9:30 a.m. Sunday, March 29.

Lebo
Lebo United Methodist Church, 201 W. Fourth St., will be hosting an Easter Carnival at 10:30 a.m. Saturday, April 4.

LeRoy
LeRoy Christian Church,

603 S. East St., will be hosting a Good Friday service at 7 p.m. Friday, April 3.

Waverly
Holy Week at Waverly Baptist Church, 512 Pearson Ave., will have a Maundy Thursday worship service with music and scripture reading 7 p.m. Thursday, April 2. The Palm Sunday Service will be 10 a.m. Sunday, March 29. They will also be hosting an Easter egg hunt and scavenger hunt following breakfast, with an Easter Worship service at 10 a.m. on Sunday, April 5.

St. Joseph Catholic Church, 508 Pearson Ave., will be hosting an Easter Mass at 7:30 a.m. Sunday, April 5.

Prairie View Church, 1904 Reaper Rd., will be hosting an Easter Sunrise service at 7 a.m. Sunday, April 5. Refreshments will be provided.

Westphalia
St. Teresa of Avila Catholic Church, 404 Garrison Ave., will be hosting an Easter Mass at 9:15 a.m. Sunday, April 5.

St. John Lutheran Church of Aliceville, 114 Second St., will be hosting a Good Friday service at 7 p.m. on Friday, April 3, and a regular bible study at 9 a.m., followed by an Easter service at 10 a.m. Sunday, April 5.

Daniel Hawkins, a Republican, and Democrat Dinah Sykes have filed for insurance commissioner.

Bradley Barrett has filed as a Republican for the Kansas House District 76 seat, and Destry Brown has filed as a Republican for State Board of Education District 9.

No candidates have filed for state treasurer.

The filing deadline for local, state and federal offices is noon June 1. The Coffey County primary election is scheduled for Aug. 4.

New Strawn council renews insurance, tables drainage matter

Mark Petterson
Managing Editor

NEW STRAWN — The New Strawn City Council approved the city's annual insurance renewal, authorized several maintenance projects and voted to halt further legal action related to the Seneca Circle drainage issue during its March 12 meeting.

Mayor Jeanne Haas presided. Council members Stephanie Baker, Dan Haller, Ty Skillman and Deb Stuke were present. Butch Gilkison was absent. Also attending were Maintenance Operator Steven Dwight, City Attorney Philip Wright, City Clerk Lana Johnson and Code Enforcement Officer Ray Wards. Jim Weeks and Coffey County Commissioner Wayne Thom-

sen were also present. Kimberly Skillman-Robrahn of TrustPoint Insurance presented the city's 2026-27 insurance proposal. She said most building values remained unchanged while business personal property values increased about 4%. She also reviewed coverage areas including wind and hail protection, equipment coverage, employee benefits, cyber liability and workers compensation.

The council approved the TrustPoint proposal with a total annual premium of \$41,349, an increase of just under \$2,000, or about 5%, from the previous year. Skillman-Robrahn said the city's general liability remained flat and auto coverage decreased slightly. She noted the city's favorable claims

history in the Kansas municipal safety group continues to benefit New Strawn, with more than \$22,000 in dividends returned to the city over the past six years. She expects to return next month with another dividend payment.

Drainage issues involving Seneca Circle were discussed. Gary Haehn was unable to attend the meeting, but Haas said he had requested a special meeting with the council regarding the matter. During public comment, Weeks criticized what he described as the city's handling of the issue and urged the council to consider a simpler solution.

Later in the meeting, the council entered executive

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Election

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and Terry Romig, Rock Creek Township.

No Democratic precinct committee candidates have filed to date.

At the federal and state level, several candidates have filed for the 2026 election.

For U.S. Senate, Democrats Jason Hart and Michael Soetaert have filed, along with Republican incumbent Roger Marshall.

In the U.S. House District 2 race, Republicans Derek Schmidt and Chad E. Young have filed.

For governor and lieutenant governor, Stacy L. Rogers and Michael W. Smith have filed as a Republican ticket.

In the secretary of state race, Democrats Jennifer Day and Samuel Lane have filed, along with Republicans Pat Proctor and Ken Rahjes.

For attorney general, Democrat Chris Mann and Republican Kris Kobach have filed.

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