

Freedom Friday
Alcoholics Anonymous

Meetings every Friday at 7:00 p.m.
 Come in the west basement of
 Horton First Christian
 Church, 1244 Central Avenue

The first Friday is a "Talking Feather" meeting.
 Third Friday is "Speaker" dinner 6:30pm meeting.
 Meetings will always be held, come rains, snows,
 ice, tornados, fires, floods, and especially on holi-
 days which are stressful times for relapses.
 ALL ARE WELCOME

The Horton Headlight



Remember to set your clocks
 forward an hour at 2a.m. on March 8.

Headlight office is open Fridays 9:00-3:00 phone 785-486-2512 headlight@carsoncomm.com or you may call Susan Higley at her home 785-872-3245

VOLUME 139, NUMBER 12 THURSDAY, MARCH 5, 2026 OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER FOR BROWN COUNTY & THE CITIES OF EVEREST, MUSCOTAH & POWHATTAN 75¢ PER COPY



Pop Up Shop Grand Opening

The Grand Opening for the Pop Up Shop in Horton was held February 7, 2026. A ribbon cutting ceremony with members of Horton's Reinvent Group (pictured left to right) including Micheal Dean, Phil Wiley, Mckenna Boller, Hunter Speer, and Tara Speer and Chamber Representative Jennifer White, were there for this ceremony. The building was full of wonderful homemade goods and other items that could be purchased for home and gift uses. A large crowd came out to shop and to visit. It was wonderful to see so many supporting local business.

2026 Spotlight Auction

It's almost time for the Brown County Free Fairs annual fundraiser spotlight auction. This is the biggest 4-H fundraiser of the year in which area businesses and individuals donate merchandise and services to be auctioned off over KNZA radio on March 16th & 17th. The fliers with this year's items has been delivered to area businesses to make them easy to pick up shopping in Everest, Horton, Hiawatha, and Sabetha.

Remember that you can look at the items on our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/browncountyfair> and on our website www.brown.ksu.edu Express bid numbers are available at the Extension Office in Hiawatha. Returning for 2026 if you are not able to listen in to KNZA for the auction and you have an express bid number you can leave bids on items up till 12 noon on Monday March 16th at the Extension Office 785-742-7871 and a fair board representative will bid for you at the auction.

If you would like more information about the spotlight auction please call 785-742-7871.

Klopper selected to fill Register of Deeds position

Emily Klopper has been selected by the Brown County GOP Precinct Committee to fill the Register of Deeds position that was left open due to the retirement of Nellie Brockhoff. Klopper's appointment will become official after Gov. Kelley's approval.

Brown County Commissioners

Meeting minutes
 By Clerk Nikki Lee
 February 17, 2026

The Board of Brown County Commissioners met in regular session with the following members present: Chairman Lucas Heinen and Commissioner Richard Tesoriero and Commissioner William Pollock. Also present was Brown County Clerk Nicole Lee. County Counselor Austin Parker was present for a portion of the meeting. Chairman Lucas Heinen called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. All recited the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by a prayer led by Commissioner Heinen.

COUNTY PERSONNEL / PUBLIC COMMENT

Commission Comments
 The Commissioners expressed their condolences to the family of former County employee George Bruning.

Executive Session
 Chairman Lucas Heinen requested a 10-minute executive session to discuss non-elected employee duties and compensation.

Motion by Lucas Heinen to recess into executive session for 10 minutes with the three Commissioners, County Counselor Austin Parker, and County Clerk Nicole Lee present for the purpose of discussing duties and compensation of non-elected personnel, to protect the privacy of the employee. The open meeting reconvened in the Commissioner's Room at 3:54 p.m.

Seconded by Richard Tesoriero. Motion carried. No binding action was taken.

Executive Session
 Commissioner Richard Tesoriero requested a 5-minute executive session to discuss non-elected employee duties and performance. Motion by

Lucas Heinen to recess into executive session for 5 minutes with the three Commissioners, County Counselor Austin Parker, and County Clerk Nicole Lee present for the purpose of discussing duties and performance of non-elected personnel, to protect the privacy of the employee. The open meeting reconvened in the Commissioner's Room at 4:01 p.m. Seconded by William Pollock. Motion carried. No binding action was taken.

County Counselor
 County Counselor Austin Parker provided updates on the following items: inmate release form with Amberwell Hospital, modular alternative bridge meeting, and upcoming meeting with the City of Hiawatha to discuss dispatch services.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
 Information Technology Director Dallas Johnson presented a quote in the amount of \$13,509.76 from Oxen Technology to complete the email migration to Microsoft 365 that was included in the 2026 I.T. budget.

Motion by Richard Tesoriero to approve the Oxen quote as presented for the migration project. Seconded by William Pollock.

ROAD AND BRIDGE

Keith Grimm and Doug Grimm were present to discuss widening approximately a quarter of the west side of Goldfinch Road south of 270th Street. Grimm would like permission for county residents to complete the project, only asking to possibly use some county equipment and gravel. The County Counselor will provide a Memorandum of Understanding next week or the first week of March. No action was taken.

TAX FORECLOSURE SALE
 The Commission received a status

update on the progress of the tax foreclosure sale from County Attorney Kevin Hill.

PLANNING COMMISSION
 Bill Vonderschmidt discussed the Planning Commission recommendations on Data Centers, Cryptocurrency Mining, and Battery Energy Storage Systems. Vonderschmidt provided information on how other Kansas counties are regulating these issues. County Counselor Austin Parker will provide a six-month Moratorium or Resolution for review next meeting. No action was taken.

KANZA
 Kanza CEO Krista Eylar presented the Commission with the 2025 Annual Report and discussed services the mental health and guidance center offers. Eylar also discussed an application for a candidate to fill the vacant Brown County position on the Kanza Foundation Board.

Motion by Richard Tesoriero to approve appointing Mitchell Romine to the Kanza Board for a term of three years. Seconded by William Pollock. Motion carried.

MINUTES 02-09-2026
 Motion by Richard Tesoriero to approve the February 9, 2026 minutes. Seconded by William Pollock. Motion carried.

REGISTER OF DEEDS
 Motion by Lucas Heinen, that due to the upcoming vacancy in the Office of Register of Deeds, Deputy Register of Deeds Deana Long be appointed Acting Register of Deeds for Brown County, Kansas, effective March 2, 2026, to perform all duties of the office until a successor is appointed by the Governor in accordance with Kansas law. Seconded by Richard Tesoriero. Motion carried.

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Horton City Commission meeting

Unofficial minutes

By Clerk Evva Mayfield
 The Commissioners of the City of Horton Met for a regular meeting on Tuesday, February 17, 2026.

Mayor Stirtion Called the meeting order at 5:15 p.m., and the opening prayer was led by Dan Burns. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all.

Present: Commissioners Josh White, Avery Thornton, Natasha Gladden, Mike Pierce. City Attorney Kevin Hill was also present.

Motion by Commissioner Thornton to adopt the agenda with change of putting the first reading after public comment and have a 5-minute executive session. Second, by Commissioner Pierce. All aye

Motion by Commissioner Thornton to approve the minutes from February 2, 2026, regular meeting. Second, by Commissioner Pierce. All aye

Motion by Commissioner Thornton to approve Appropriation Ordinance # 3899 (Payroll) for \$47,602.26. Seconded, by Commissioner Pierce. All aye

Motion by Commissioner Thornton to approve Appropriation Ordinance # 3900 (Disbursements) for \$107,919.54. Seconded, by Commissioner Pierce. All aye

Public Comments: None

First Reading of Charter Ordinance No. 25

Kevin Hill discussed removing the Commissioners titles which can be done by Charter Ordinance, review and if approved will take effect 61 days after publication to a referendum since it's a Charter Ordinance.

5-minute Executive Session
 Motion by Mayor Bryan Stirtion to go into a 5-minute executive session to discuss non-elected personnel to include the Attorney, Mayor and Commissioners. Seconded by Com-

missioner Gladden, All aye. No action taken

Discussion of Downtown Lighting

Michael Wilburn discussed the street lighting options for downtown and throughout the city.

CDBG Housing Public Hearing

Garrett Nordstrom advised to open public hearing on the smaller project. Mayor to open the CDBG housing public hearing grant for the 305,250 and submit application. Nordstrom advised the city will need action on resolution for authority to apply. Basically stating that they were going to ask for 300,000 and the city's going to match the maximum before paying for an environmental assessment because that has to be done before we can on the grant. It's not required council action after you do that. Motion on the table by Commissioner Pierce to apply for the housing grant. Seconded by Commission Gladden, All aye.

Public Works Updates

Randy Mayfield discussed issue with the PLC Controller at the Sewer Plant and needs to have duct work installed so H2S gas doesn't go into the control box.

Code Enforcement

Andrew Patterson gave update that 45-day structure letters were sent out.

Police Department / Dispatch updates

Chief Entriakin gave an update on the recording equipment that was installed last week. The ERAD program was discussed and was determined to look into other options.

Administrative Updates

Evva Mayfield inquired if campers could move in the Weekend prior to April 1st. Motion by Josh White going forward that if April 1st falls in the week campers can move in weekend

prior and when camping season ends on October 31st. they have the weekend after to move out. Second by Commissioner Pierce, all Aye. Also discussed for public inquiry, if possible, to move in prior to the camping season and pay a pro-rated fee to camp early which the consensus of the commission is that it would not pass. Had notes to inquire about having an auction on available camp spots in March, it was advised that it would have to go in front of the park board.

MAYOR

Bryan Stirtion discussed attending a community meeting regarding a community calendar and will get more information about Energy efficiency and downtown revitalization public safety for lights. Changing voice prompt up front and adding voicemail set up for the code enforcement officer is needed. A couple of loads of red shale is needed for the ball fields was discussed and public constituents wanted to commend Officer Spain for keeping a hold of the main traffic through to a minimum.

Commissioner

Josh White advised park board wants to know about removing the fence at the basketball court at the pool and wants to know about replacing the back courts at the pool basketball court.

Commissioner

Avery Thornton had someone ask about the leaning of the tornado siren pole.

Commissioner

Natasha Gladden No report

Commissioner

Michael Pierce wants to look into a T-Mobile hometown grant for the lighting downtown.

Motion by Commissioner Pierce to adjourn the meeting at 7:26 p.m. Seconded by Commissioner Thornton. All aye

HHS Basketball Action

The HHS Chargers closed out their regular season against Troy. The JV girls from Troy outscored the Lady Chargers 15 to 4 and the Troy JV boys came out on top with a score of 43 to 32. In varsity action the varsity girls from Troy scored 59 and the Lady Chargers scored 50. In varsity boy's action the Chargers came up short 58 to 77.

In Girls Sub state Action on Thursday, February 26th, The Lady Chargers faced the Lady Dragons from Valley Falls and came out with a win 54 to 40 in the quarterfinals. Their next action will be March 3rd.

Brown County District Court

Compiled by Melanie Davis, Headlight reporter

CRIMINAL

Status Conference on Connor Wenger has been continued to Mar. 25. He is charged with two counts of aggravated internet trading in child pornography, an off grid felony; and three counts of exploitation of a child, a level 5 person felony.

First appearance hearing on Madison R Capaz has been scheduled for Mar. 25. She is charged with possession of marijuana, a class B nonperson misdemeanor; and possession of drug paraphernalia, a class B nonperson misdemeanor.

Status Conference hearing on Christopher Michael Speckhals, Hiawatha, Kansas, has been scheduled for Apr. 15. He has been charged with criminal threat, a level 9 nonperson felony; domestic battery, a class B person misdemeanor; and criminal damage to property, a class B nonperson misdemeanor.

Status Conference on Gavin Mwela, Hiawatha, KS., has been scheduled for Mar. 4. he has been charged with aggravated endangering a child, a level 9 person felony; two counts of battery, a class B person misdemeanor; disorderly conduct, a class C misdemeanor; and reckless driving, an unclassified nonperson misdemeanor.

Arraignment on Hannah Jean Pennington, has been scheduled for Mar. 4. She is charged with posses-

sion of marijuana, a class B nonperson misdemeanor; and possession of drug paraphernalia, a class B nonperson misdemeanor.

Arraignment on Blake Alan Kaler was held and has been continued to Mar. 2. He is charged with aggravated assault, a level 7 felony; criminal deprivation of property, a class A nonperson misdemeanor; possession of marijuana, a class B nonperson misdemeanor; possession of drug paraphernalia, a class B nonperson misdemeanor; and unlawfully possession of cigarettes or tobacco product while under the legal age, an infraction.

Arraignment on Nathan Joseph Boardman, Lawrence, KS., was held and has been continued to Apr. 15. He is charged with violation of a protective order, a class A person misdemeanor.

Arraignment on Paul Gill Muriada, Hiawatha, KS., has been scheduled for Feb. 23. He is charged with criminal threat, a level 9 person felony; interference with Law Enforcement Officer, a level 9 non-person felony; and disorderly conduct, a class C misdemeanor.

Diversion status hearing on Carlton Brewer, has been scheduled for Mar. 4. He is charged with possession of marijuana, a class B nonperson misdemeanor and possession

of drug paraphernalia, a class B nonperson misdemeanor.

Status Conference on Todd Anthony Cain, Merrill, KS., has been continued to Apr. 14. He is charged with distribution of methamphetamine, a drug severity level 4 felony; possession of drug paraphernalia, a class B nonperson misdemeanor; and transporting an open container of alcohol, an unclassified misdemeanor.

Status Conference on Gilbert L. Allen, Hiawatha, KS., has been continued to Mar. 4. He is charged with possession of methamphetamine, a drug severity level 5 felony and possession of drug paraphernalia, a class B nonperson misdemeanor.

LIMITED

A case was filed by the City of Horton, KS., plaintiff, against Micheal G. Koelliker, defendant.

A case has been filed by Stormont-Vail Healthcare, Inc., plaintiff, against Erin E J Taff, defendant.

A case has been filed by Velocity Investments, LLC., plaintiff, against Joni Sheldon, defendant.

A case has been filed by Citibank, N.A., plaintiff, against Barbara C. Pederson, defendant.

A case has been filed by Midland Credit Management, Inc., plaintiff, against Kindra Moyer, defendant.

A case has been filed by LVNV Funding, LLC., plaintiff, against Kevin Beckmann, defendant.