

# OPINION

QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS? Contact Stephanie Jump at (620) 532-3151 or email sjump@kconline.com

## Whole Grain Soul

By Bernie Sheahan

I'm in California just now, at our childhood home.

It's stunning beautiful. I grew up just 33 miles from the ocean, over a mountain and through a redwood forest to get there. (A trade-off; I always envied my Kansas cousins with their nearness to the family farm and each other.) I've always been partial to the prairie—which is why I live on it now—and guess what? We have prairies in California. In California's Central Valley, they grow Hard Red Winter Wheat, and that's the kind we love, yes?

The kind my great-great uncle Ed McKenna grew in the 1870s and beyond. If it weren't for old Uncle Ed, we wouldn't be here. Stop me if you've heard this: my grandpa Billy Sheahan's brother Felix had TB and the Illinois doctor said "Get to drier land." And his ma, Bridget McKenna Sheahan said, "Begorra. My favorite uncle's in Kansas. Off we go." And so they did, which is why I'm part of the fourth generation in our family (fifth, including Uncle Ed) to have a deed in the Kingman County Courthouse.

If, for some reason, the very thought of California irks you, or causes you to think I escaped/am a refugee (heard that), I'd encourage you to reconsider. I'm pretty sure you'd feel right at home if you were picked up and plopped down in California's breadbasket.

"California is home to all but one of the nation's top 10 agricultural counties...and accounts for 10.9 percent of all agricultural output in the U.S." I looked that up.

In 1888, when old Uncle Ed was growing his crop near Willowdale, there was wheat harvested in California, on 3 million acres. With 42 million bushels, California was the #2 wheat producing state in the nation. Most was on huge ranches, some of which approached a million acres in size.

Not for long. From 1886 to 1913 California wheat production fell from three millions acres to just 380,000. An 87% drop, if I did the math right (don't count on it). Why? A combination of factors: soil exhaustion, low farm prices, and increased irrigation plus better transportation to Eastern markets meant that fruits, nuts and vegetables made for a lucrative back-up plan.

Enjoying your lettuce, strawberries and almonds? Spinach, olives, avocados? Oranges, cherries, prunes? (Oh, and wine. Let's not forget wine.) There used to be wheat in them there fields. But hey—we've got enough wheat in Kansas for everybody, don't we?

They knocked down a prune orchard in San Jose to build our subdivision in 1966. Till I was in college there was a cherry orchard across the street. They were all over what you think of as Sili-

con Valley, and right about now they'd be in glorious pink blooms.

Wait a doggone minute—I was a history major! I just now remembered that before the Santa Clara Valley had eight million fruit trees—kid you not—the Valley floor was hardly anything but dry-farmed wheat. Which means, in the 1850s and '60s, before the prune orchards, before the suburban home, our Sheahan property was planted in golden wheat. All one-tenth of an acre of it.

Gives me a whole new view of the places I call home. I was raised on a wheat farm, by gosh. At least it was, once upon a time. I don't know for sure if this particular 5,000-square foot spot was sown in grain, but let's say it was. As the Sheahan family motto goes, "Why let the truth get in the way of a good story?"

I'm a farm girl! Kind of. In my mind. And in my heart, most of all. There are wheat fields in County Kerry, Ireland, home of the Sheahans. And on the Azores island of Graciosa, where the Avilas, my mama's people, are from.

So that's what it is. Wheat, sown in my soul, Ireland to the Azores, California to Kansas.

I may not have grown up plowing a 5423-square foot wheat field, but my soul was raised on the golden grain, on two continents. That's home, you know. And there's no place like it.

## OPINION

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this way: The tax is collected based on the value of the land, not the value of the improvements upon it. Land that is in the downtown areas of a city or town is worth more than the land on the edges of the city or town, and both are worth more than rural land far away from a city or town.

By taxing the land rather than improvements, property owners are encouraged to improve properties, knowing their taxes won't be impacted. A person sitting on a parcel of land and doing nothing with that parcel is encouraged to either develop it as appropriate or sell the land to somebody who will.

A switch that goes away from taxing all improvements to just taxing the land,

though, might be a bit jarring for people. Therefore, I would suggest the best approach is to go with a split-rate tax system, which has been adopted in some Pennsylvania cities.

In those cases, a certain ratio is utilized to determine tax collected based on land value versus improvement value, with the ratio emphasizing land over improvements. For example, Harrisburg, Pa.,

currently taxes land at six times the rate of buildings.

Whatever ratio is utilized, though, the point is when you tax something that is volatile, it's difficult to keep taxes on that from going up, despite your best efforts to avoid it.

It's time to rethink the taxation system entirely — and taxing based on what is more stable is likely to do a lot more to address taxation concerns.



## CITY OF KINGMAN LAND BANK MINUTES

Feb. 12 Meeting

**CALL TO ORDER:** Chairperson Winsor called the Kingman Land Bank Board of Directors meeting to order at 7:37pm. Directors Wollen, McFarland, Kaufman, and Arensdorf were also present.

**Consent Agenda:** The consent agenda includes:

1. Agenda: 2/12/2026
2. Minutes: 1/8/2026
3. Minutes: 1/22/2026

• Motion made by Wollen, seconded by Arensdorf, to approve the consent

agenda. Motion carried 5-0.

605 East B Ave Demolition Bids: Director Schrag presented the board with three bids for the demolition of 605 East B Ave. The bids range from \$17,500 to \$34,725. Attorney Graff man pointed out that the approval of a bid does not mean that work can start because a contract will need to be drafted first to include indemnity language to protect the City, which is particularly important for this demolition as the structure being demolished is fire damaged.

• Motion made by Wollen, seconded by Arensdorf, to accept the bid from Stucky Excavating in the amount of \$17,500 subject to the approval of a contract drafted by the City Attorney and authorizes Interim City Manager Dearthoff to sign the contract for the City. Motion carried 5-0.

**Adjournment:**

• Motion made by Wollen, seconded by McFarland, to adjourn the Kingman Landbank meeting at 7:48pm. Motion carried 5-0.

## LEGAL NOTICE

(First published in the Kingman Leader-Courier on Thursday, Feb. 26, 2026) 3t

### IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF KINGMAN COUNTY, KANSAS

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF BRETT ROBERT MOORE, Deceased

Case No. KM-2025-PR-000033

(Petition Pursuant to K.S.A. Chapter 59)

#### NOTICE OF HEARING

THE STATE OF KANSAS TO ALL PERSONS CONCERNED:

You are notified a Petition has been filed in this Court by Patricia Anne Moore, duly appointed, qualified and acting Administrator of the Estate of Brett Robert Moore, deceased, requesting that Petitioner's acts be approved; account be settled and allowed; the heirs be determined; the Estate be assigned to the persons entitled to it pursuant to the laws of intestate succession; fees and expenses be allowed; costs be determined and ordered paid; the administration of the Estate be closed; the Administrator be discharged and

Petitioner be released from further liability.

You are required to file your written defenses to the Petition on or before March 23, 2026 at 10:00 A.M. in the District Court, Kingman, Kingman County, Kansas, at which time and place the cause will be heard. Should you fail to file your written defenses, judgment and decree will be entered in due course upon the Petition.

/s/ Patricia Anne Moore Patricia Anne Moore Petitioner  
SUBMITTED BY:  
NORTON, WASSERMAN, JONES & KELLY, L.L.C.  
213 South Santa Fe  
P.O. Box 2388  
Salina, Kansas 67402-2388  
(785) 827-3646  
Fax (785) 827-0538  
Email: JAB@nwjklaw.com  
By: /s/Jeffrey A. Bohnenblust  
Jeffrey A. Bohnenblust  
SC # 30152  
Attorneys for Petitioner

## PUBLIC NOTICE KINGMAN CO. QUARTERLY REPORT

(Published in the Kingman Leader-Courier on Thursday, March 5, 2026) 1t

### Kingman County

#### Treasurer's Quarterly Publication Report Selected Date Range: 11/1/2025 thru 1/31/2026

Fund	Fund Name	Ending Cash
010	TAX/CUR-RLPPOLSPGS SAFUND	\$373,115.32
065	TAX/DELINQUENT-PP OL G S FUND	\$4,632.75
070	MOTOR VEH RV TAX	\$143.74
072	COMMERCIAL MTR VEH FEE	\$23,667.84
075	NVHS 0.75% SALES TAX FUND	\$0.01
080	MV PROPERTY TAX	\$44,490.98
084	ANTIQUE VEHICLE FUND	\$5,958.00
085	REDEMPTIONS	\$3,308.10
088	STATE MV FEES FUND	\$650.82
089	STATE MV SALES TAX FUND	\$51,405.21
090	MOTOR FUEL TAX FUND	\$135,355.99
095	TAX/CURRENT-TK	\$6,121.68
097	TAX/DELINQUENT-TK	\$357.40
098	COUNTY 0.75% SALES TAX FUND	\$788,007.72
099	CLEARING FUND	\$3.55
115	GENERAL FUND	\$3,895,484.49
120	ROAD & BRIDGE FUND	\$1,226,486.39
125	SPECIAL BRIDGE FUND	\$309,124.81
130	PUBLIC HEALTH FUND	\$188,241.97
135	EXPO CENTER FUND	\$115,892.67
145	APPRAISER FUND	\$171,231.76
155	NOXIOUS WEED FUND	\$123,131.66
165	EMPLOYEE BENEFITS FUND	\$1,716,460.32
167	SELF-INSURANCERESERVE FUND	\$1,368,998.70
200	DEBT SERVICE FUND	\$3,519,478.05
205	CNTY TREASURER AUTO FUND	\$12,976.78
212	RAINY DAY RESERVE FUND	\$1,110,000.00
215	KS FIGHTS ADDICTION FUND	\$34,596.33
225	SPECIAL PARK & RECREATION FUND	\$23.14
230	DRUG STAMP TAX FUND	\$1,541.25
256	GRANT PROCEEDS FUND	(\$2,362.76)
259	SHERIFF EQUIPMENT FUND	\$80,358.11
261	COURTHOUSE REMODEL FUND	\$272,305.49
265	SOLID WASTE FUND	\$171,783.23
272	CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTSRV FUND	\$2,354,445.24
273	CAPITAL EQUIPMENT RESERVE FUND	\$318,243.60
275	SPECIAL HIGHWAY IMPROV FUND	\$271,398.07
277	PROSECUTING ATTY TRAINING FUND	\$6,245.33
280	SPECIAL MACHINERY FUND	\$49,863.57
282	DIVERSION FUND	\$104,313.15
284	SPECIAL PROSECUTOR TRUST FUND	\$10,305.93
287	FLEXIBLE SPENDING ACCOUNT	\$11,182.11
288	CIVIL ASSET FORFEITURE FUND	\$9,829.86
298	HERITAGE TRUST FUND	\$577.00
715	ROD TECHNOLOGY FUND	\$91,689.19
717	CLERK TECHNOLOGY FUND	\$27,433.18
719	TREASURER TECHNOLOGY FUND	\$12,181.51
911	911 COMMUNICATIONS FUND	\$52,710.59
Total of All Funds		\$19,073,389.83

Bank Balances as of: 1/31/2026

PEOPLES BANK AND TRUST	\$943,572.38
CASH ON HAND BANK	\$1,620.00
CONWAY BANK	\$224,119.81
NINNESCAH VALLEY BANK	\$800,000.00
CITIZENS BANK OF KANSAS	\$17,104,077.64
Total of All Banks:	\$19,073,389.83

County Treasurer: Jamie Smith

I do solemnly swear that the above statement is complete, true, and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief, so help me God. to the best of my knowledge and belief, so help me God.

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/s/ Patricia Anne Moore Patricia Anne Moore Petitioner  
SUBMITTED BY:  
NORTON, WASSERMAN, JONES & KELLY, L.L.C.  
213 South Santa Fe  
P.O. Box 2388  
Salina, Kansas 67402-2388  
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Email: JAB@nwjklaw.com  
By: /s/Jeffrey A. Bohnenblust  
Jeffrey A. Bohnenblust  
SC # 30152  
Attorneys for Petitioner