



**WARD CASSIDY, Representative of the 120th District, had the privilege of having his bill signed officially by the Governor Sam Brownback. The bill gives accountants who return to the family farm to be able to practice without having the family farm held liable for any mistakes made in their accounting business.**  
Photo courtesy of Ward Cassidy

## Legislative News

I returned to Topeka Tuesday, April 26, with more than a little concern as to how revenues were coming in and how many more cuts were going to have to be made. Most everyone I talk to wants to cut state spending, but not in their area of interest.

In an earlier article, I mentioned how 77 percent of our state's population lives in three major areas and the other 23 percent is the rest of us. With the new census data the discrepancy in representation will grow even greater. I feel that the East - West concern is not near as great as the discrepancy between rural and urban concerns. The joke, in Topeka this year, is that Western Kansas starts at Wamaker road (that is the first major intersection when you arrive in Topeka).

Back to revenues - overall the state is \$22.1 million above estimates for the year - individual income taxes were up 32.9 percent over last April. Sales tax revenue estimates are down 4.7 percent from last year (gas price is playing a huge role in the decline of sales tax). An interesting tax shortfall - since the Clean Air Act was established tobacco revenues are down 14.7 percent to \$7.321 million. It will be awhile till we see the overall health care savings from the act.

On a related issue, the House passed out a bill that removes the exemption allowing smoking on the floor of a gaming facility.

There was lots of discussion and I voted for the bill.

This final legislative time is referred to as the Veto Session. This time is usually dedicated to addressing bills approved or vetoed by the Governor and working on the state budget. However, this year we have a number of issues still waiting to be wrapped up. In the short time we have left, many items remain on our to-do list including Kansas Public Employees Retirement System (KPERs) reform, my leading e-mail question.

KPERs is still in conference committee. A conference committee is the Republican chair, the vice chair, and the minority chair from both the House and Senate. Six people attempt to iron out the differences and get a bill that can be passed by both the House and Senate. Governor Brownback has indicated he wants a good bill that will solve the overall funding problem of the system. There continues to be ideas thrown out and I will be glad to see what the final proposal will be. I initially voted against the House version, as I thought we could do better.

This retirement system has an unfunded liability of over \$8 billion, the second worst pension system in the nation. The main point of contention between the House and the Senate concerns the option of transitioning to a 401(k) like plan.

There has been a major breakdown in the tax committees be-

tween the House and Senate and any new legislation looks like it could be passed on to next year. Many of the new legislators have been very frustrated with the state tax codes and now that we have learned the system have plans to address it next year. I feel there is a strong need for tax reform as Kansas is rated 48th in state competitiveness for businesses looking for investment locations. Some good news is that our budget director has indicated that over 100 companies have inquired about moving to Kansas since the passage of the Rural Opportunity Zone Act, many of them are looking at rural areas. High speed internet capabilities will be very important to communities hoping to attract interested companies.

There is so much maneuvering going on between the House and the Senate - give us this policy and we will give up this budget item. Then there are the factions, the Democratic representatives almost always vote as one, the Republicans are divided into ultra conservative, conservatives, moderates, and people like myself. I want to be a Northwest Kansas Republican and to fight for what is best for our area and for our State.

A great big week at the State House is taking place as you read this. The next article will be able to address what we actually accomplished this year. Say your prayers!

Look for your money at the State Treasurer's website. Several people in Northwest Kansas have found money they did not know they had coming to them. Go to [www.kansasstate.treasurer.com/prodweb/upownr\\_1.php](http://www.kansasstate.treasurer.com/prodweb/upownr_1.php).

Ward Cassidy, State Representative 120th District

# Council looks at property needing spring cleaning

By Karen Krien

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Spring is here and the city council is looking at property that needs cleaning up.

At the April 25 meeting, the St. Francis City Council looked at photos of different property. The photos had been compiled by J.R. Landenberger, superintendent, and he recommended that each council person take time to go to the different locations, then, at the next city council meeting, he would like them to identify five that they consider at the top of list for cleanup.

There were some properties that were not major and letters will be sent to those as well as some of the property that have been contacted previously. Some of these letters will be to encourage the property owner to continue improving.

Scott Schultz, mayor, said he had been contacted by a person wanting to clean up the property at 426 Emerson and would take ownership of the property. This house has been on the city's major clean-up list. The back property taxes on the house are \$1,745. The city can abate \$320 of the taxes but the rest of the taxes would be up to person wanting the property.

City attorney, Mike Day, suggested that the person meet with him or Mr. Landenberger and there will be more information at the next council meeting.

### Complaints

There were two complaints and people had come to the council meeting to protest.

Eric and Leslie Hook had purchased the property east of their house on Jackson Street. We cleaned up the property, got rid of all the rats, cats and other critters, Mrs. Hook said. After they had closed on the property, they received notification that \$91 mowing and cleanup of the property plus taxes and fees had been charged to them.

Mrs. Hook said she was disappointed that it had taken so long for the county treasurer to get the information to her. They had title insurance before they purchased the property and, the former owner thought all expenses had been paid.

The council agreed to abate anything that is due to the city but could not abate the publication costs or any other fees.

Don Keeker said the city had shut off the water at his dad's house on East Jackson. However, during one of the cold spells, a pipe broke after it was frozen and flooded the basement. Because there was a drain, he said, the water drained without causing a lot of damage. However, the bill was \$214 for 171,000 gallons of water.

Mr. Landenberger said it appeared that the shut off valve had been twisted off. However, he said the person who had shut off the water is very dependable and, if he would have twisted it off, he would have fixed it. Mr. Keeker said he had not turned the water on and had not broken the valve.

After discussion, the council agreed to split the water bill but only after Mr. Keeker has sold the house and the new owner has ap-

proved the condition of the house. In the meantime, Mr. Keeker will not be charged any late fines.

### Superintendent's report

Mr. Landenberger, in his superintendent's report, said A.J. Jones had made sure the letter from the Kansas Department of Health and Environment had been received. The letter concerned the process of how the waste products from the mobile slaughter house at Callicrate Feed Yard were going to be disposed of in the city sewer ponds.

The materials will be weighed before dumping so will be easily tracked. They will have an agreement at the next meeting.

Mr. Landenberger said that there were a few businesses who had made arrangements for special dumping into the ponds and the cost had been \$50. That was agreeable with the council. Mr. Landenberger also added that the disposal of the waste products is only temporary as the feed yard plans to be self sufficient in the near future.

### In other business

• Big container units such as the one at Ross Manufacturing were discussed. Mr. Landenberger will figure out the requirements for those wanting to bring one in.

• Mr. Landenberger talked about the recent electric outages. He said Sunflower Electric which supplies electricity to the city, had lines that failed by Riverside Recreation. Sunflower had let the city crew repair the lines which had saved the city lots of gas by not having to run the big generators at the plant. Mayor Schultz praised the crew for the work they had done during that time.

• Councilmen, Roger Jensen and Dale Weeks, along with Mayor Schultz were sworn in for another four years.

• Mr. Jensen recommended that Marlene Penton receive a 5-percent raise for the outstanding work she does at the Roadside Park. Her wage raised from \$7.25 to \$7.66 per hour.

• Kelly Frewen and Roxie Neitzel talked about the city's insurance, noting that premiums will be up about \$900 next year.

• Bruce Swihart, councilman and member of the Swimming Pool Committee, reported that the pool staff and salaries had been determined. The manager will get \$8.20. The water safety instructor will get \$8 per hour and all the lifeguards will earn \$7.25 per hour. Admissions and fees will stay the same.

• Attorney Day said the proceedings with the Schoenrogge case are moving along.

• A zoning variances was OKed for Kari Gilliland's daycare.

• Business incentives were approved for Mrs. Gilliland and Jason Padgett's computer business.

• Chief Shane Guggenmos reported that there was a black lab dog with an orange collar that had been running loose. He and his officers had been trying to corner him.

• Carla Lampe, council woman, reported that an Economic Development meeting should be held. The date was set for May 18.

### Next meeting

The next meeting of the city council has been set for 7:30 p.m. on Monday, May 9, at city hall on Washington Street.



Our passion is making sure our employees are safe and protected and our practices are compliant and designed to protect employees and the public. Do you share that passion? Do you enjoy working with others to solve problems? Do you like to "get out on the ground" and make a difference? If so, this may be your ideal career.

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This position reports directly to the Manager, Safety. This position is responsible for providing administrative support, technical support, and training necessary to create and maintain a safe work environment. The safety professional must work independently under minimal supervision and perform a wide spectrum of assignments with difficult levels from low to moderate, requiring technical evaluation, innovation, and judgment. The employee must apply knowledge and experience to solve moderate to complex problems and may be called upon to make and be accountable for independent decisions and coordinate activities of others.

### Primary Responsibilities:

Primary responsibilities include (but not limited to):

- Compliance**
  - Research, interpret and communicate OSHA safety regulations, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations, DOT driver regulations, Company O & M processes and procedures, or other regulations as required
  - Review/revise company safety procedures
  - Conduct or assist with investigation of work related accidents
  - Assist with resolution of OSHA safety issues
- Document Preparation**
  - Prepare various reports
- Budgetary**
  - Plan and complete projects
  - Assist with departmental budget preparation, reconciliation, identifying variances, and forecasting as assigned
- Awareness, Prevention, and Training**
  - Assist with contractor pre-project safety orientation
  - Conduct and document construction site safety reviews
  - Conduct and document facility safety reviews/audits
  - Schedule, develop, procure and/or conduct required safety training
  - Lead safety committee processes
  - Identify and procure safety related material, equipment and supplies
- General**
  - Identify team and individual goals and prepare individual performance plan annually
  - Help identify ongoing process, policy, and procedural improvements
  - Support the Company's vision, mission, guiding principles, strategies and goals
  - Serve as a role model and champion for safety and safety compliance

### Qualifications:

- Minimum:**
  - Bachelor's Degree in Occupational Health and Safety or related field **OR** a Bachelor's degree (in any field) plus experience in fulltime Occupational Safety and Health positions
  - Evidence of strong communications skills (verbal and written)
  - Evidence of strong interpersonal skills
  - Evidence of analytical ability
  - Experience with independent problem-solving
  - Valid Driver's License and insurability
  - Experience in positions requiring detail-orientation
  - Experience providing strong customer service
  - Experience with computer information systems and Microsoft® applications (Excel®, Word®, PowerPoint®, Outlook®).
- Preferred:**
  - Certified by the Board of Certified Safety Professionals (BCSP) as Associate Safety Professional (ASP), Graduate Safety Professional (GSP), or Certified Safety Professional (CSP)
- Additional Traits:**
  - Personal Accountability
  - Initiative
  - Creativity

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### How to apply:

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We thank all applicants for their interest, but we will only respond to those candidates selected for interviews.

## Book Review

Book review from the St. Francis Public Library

### Whisper My Name

By Fern Michaels

Photographer Samantha Blakeley is stunned when her beloved friend Gemini Delaney leaves her the controlling interest in her family business, a magazine conglomerate-the same conglomerate that owns *Daylight Magazine*, where

Sam has just landed her dream job as a photojournalist. Then she meets her new boss, Christian Delaney, and his mere gaze leaves her wanting more. But how can she tell him that she's 'the' Sam Blakely, who inherited the legacy he'd thought would be his? If he discovers the truth, he'll have every reason to hate her. What Sam needs now is a loophole...

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