



Legislators resume budget, tax talks

TOPEKA (AP) - One group of Kansas legislators went back to work today on proposals to reduce sales and income taxes, even though they've already approved a package of major tax cuts, as another group met to iron out details of the \$14 billion budget for fiscal 2013.

draft an alternative to the tax plan that cleared the Legislature last week. Even some supporters raised fears that it would leave the state short of income in coming years. Republican Gov. Sam Brownback pushed the GOP-controlled Legislature to cut income taxes and has said he's willing to sign the plan already approved by

lawmakers. It cuts individual income tax rates, exempts 191,000 businesses from income taxes and reduces the sales tax to 5.7 percent from its current 6.3 percent, starting in July 2013. But Brownback has encouraged lawmakers to keep working because many of them fear the tax plan they passed could

create serious budget problems. Today is the 93rd day of the session and the 20th day of the wrap-up session, the longest in the state's history. The conference committee, three House and three Senate budget negotiators, met Saturday but stuck to minor issues. The budget calls for spending some \$6 billion in state tax dollars and fees in

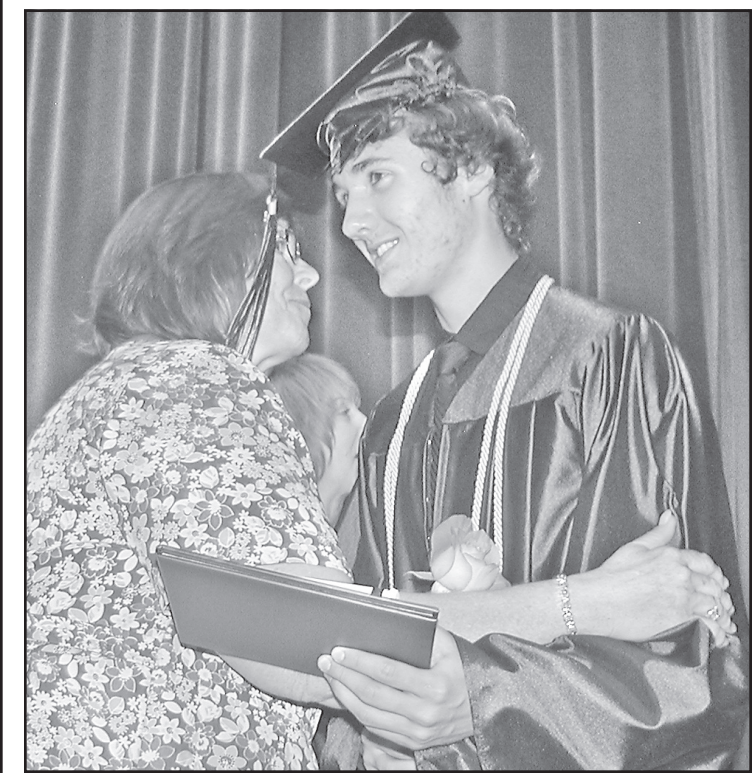
the fiscal year beginning July 1, covering most government programs. Negotiators are at odds over how to pay for increases in public-school budgets, including how much to boost spending and the source of that money. They also disagree on spending on social services and money to defend the state in a possible lawsuit over redistricting maps.



KATHRYN BALLARD/Colby Free Press

Colby High sends off 65 seniors on Sunday

Colby High seniors graduated Sunday at the Community Building, with some decorating their hats (above) for the occasion. High school secretary Lynn Carpenter (below left) hugged Jaydon Bixenman after he received his diploma. Brenna McKee (right) talked with friends and family outside after the ceremony. The high school graduated 65 seniors this year.



County plans public bidding on scrap metal

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Thomas County commissioners decided last Monday, against the recommendation of landfill supervisor Larry Jumper, to open up public bidding on scrap metal for crushing at the landfill.

Commissioners had been approached at their meeting April 30 by Pete Stephens, who said he was representing Bohm Farm and Ranch of Salina.

Jumper said he has remained loyal to the county's current metal-crushing company, B-Rose Transportation, which has operated L&M Metal in Alvo, Neb., for 16 years. He said because of the company's quality service, the landfill has never received a violation to the strict operating standards set by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment and other agencies. A clean record is hard to maintain, he said.

"They are one of the few companies who uses a magnet to clean up all of the metal, and they don't leave any mess behind," Jumper explained. "They drain and properly dispose of refrigerant, are licensed and insured and we've never had any problems with them. So, why fix something that's not broken?"

Commission chairman Ken Christiansen noted that Bohm had never approached the county when scrap metal prices were cheap.

"That has me concerned," said Christiansen.

"That's exactly what I've been thinking about all weekend," Jumper added. "If we bid it out today, we may get an extra \$100, but what about tomorrow when prices are down and the new company doesn't bid again and we've burned our bridge with B-Rose? What then?"

"We've got a good company

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New road chief to dedicate sign

The state's new secretary of transportation will be in Colby on Thursday to help dedicate part of U.S. 24 across Kansas at the World War II Veterans Memorial Highway.

Secretary Mike King, a McPherson building contractor, was named to his post in March by Gov. Sam Brownback. He will share the honors with Dale Deaver of Colby, a World War II veteran.

Also speaking will be Jeff Steward, district engineer for northwest Kansas for the state Department of Transportation, and Relda Galli, a board member of the Thomas County Historical Society, who helped lead efforts to raise money for the sign here.

She said the group here raised \$1,600 to pay for the sign and start a fund for future upkeep, since the Legislature made no provision for any money to mark the route. The dedication will begin at

10:30 a.m. at the Frahm Theatre in the Northwest Kansas Cultural Arts Center at Colby Community College, just east of the student union.

After the ceremony, weather permitting, state crews will take the sign out to its permanent home on U.S. 24 just east of the U.S. 83 junction, also known as the Nine-Mile junction.

Kristen Brands, public involvement co-ordinator at the department's northwest district office in Norton, said the ceremony is being held in town for safety reasons. Officials in Topeka thought it would be too risky to have a crowd out on the shoulder of the highway, she said.

Brands said a law passed by the 2009 Legislature designated U.S. 24 as the memorial route for World War II vets from the U.S. 77 junction north of Manhattan to the Nine-Mile junction here.

Trading executive casualty of big losses

NEW YORK (AP) - The executive responsible for trading strategy at JPMorgan Chase, one of the highest-ranking women in Wall Street, today became the first casualty of the bank's stunning \$2 billion loss.

Ina Drew, 55, the chief investment officer for the bank and a 30-year veteran of the company, will retire, the bank said. She was replaced by Matt Zames, an executive in JPMorgan's investment bank.

CEO Jamie Dimon said Drew's "vast contributions to our company should not be overshadowed by these events." He stressed that the company remains "very strong."

JPMorgan, the largest bank in the United States, is seeking to minimize the damage from the trading mistake, which Dimon has conceded will complicate the efforts of banks to fight certain regulatory changes.

Drew, one of the highest-paid officials at JPMorgan Chase, had offered to resign several times since Dimon disclosed the trading loss on Thursday, a person familiar with the matter told The Associated Press on Sunday.

At least two other executives at the bank will be held accountable for the mistake, the person said.

Two local cases head to Court of Appeals

By Kevin Bottrell
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Two northwest Kansas cases will get their day before the Kansas Court of Appeals on Tuesday and Wednesday, when judges hear arguments in Larned on a lawsuit over prairie dogs and a long-running fight between the Colby hospital and a doctor.

Tuesday, the court will hear arguments in Barnhardt and Haverfield v. Logan County Commissioners, originally filed in 2007, which could settle a dispute over killing prairie dogs on private land.

Then Wednesday, attorneys will argue Hildyard v. Citizens Medical Center, which involves a decade-

old dispute between Dr. Victor Hildyard and the hospital, which had suspended his staff privileges after receiving complaints about his behavior.

Hildyard's suit, filed in 2010, alleges that the hospital violated its own bylaws, constituting a breach of contract, and that it violated anti-trust laws, depriving him of economic opportunity at his clinic, Colby Medical and Surgical Center. He sought damages in excess of \$75,000.



V. Hildyard

The court sends out panels of three judges to towns around the state to hear oral arguments in cases from that region several times a year. The three judges coming to Larned this week will be Michael Buser, G. Gordon Atcheson and retired

appeals judge David Knudson. Attorneys in each case submit briefs to the court before the hearing. Oral arguments are limited to 15 minutes for each side, though some time can be reserved for rebuttal. The docket also includes summary cases that will not have oral arguments.

The judges do not decide the case on the day of the hearing; they issue a ruling later, which can be found at www.kscourts.org.

The judges will begin hearing the cases at 9 a.m. Tuesday and continue into the afternoon, then pick things up again Wednesday morning.

Barnhardt and Haverfield v. Logan County Commissioners

This case was originally filed in 2007 in Logan County. According to a brief submitted by the appellee, the case involves a dispute between the Logan County commis-

sioners, the Kansas Farm Bureau and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service over the extermination of prairie dogs on a property in Logan County.

That property, known as the Haverfield-Barnhardt Complex, consists of about 9,000 acres of short grass prairie. The owners, Gordon Barnhardt and Larry and Elizabeth Haverfield, entered into an agreement with the federal agency to allow the reintroduction of black-footed ferrets, an endangered species, on their land. Prairie dogs also thrive on the land, providing much of the ferrets' food as well as shelter.

On March 3, 2008, a district

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