

# \* Workers look at fire results

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 problem is we don't have enough guys to spare."  
 Mr. Gallentine agreed.  
 "You have a house being burned," he pointed out, "it's kind of difficult to call someone."  
 Mr. Badsky said this was exactly why a single coordinator is necessary. Mr. Cathcart agreed that if they had a coordinator, then all people able to help, especially farmers with tankers of water and the like, could report to one spot in an emergency. From there, the coordinator could direct them to where they were most needed.

Mr. Badsky said that if a setup like this could be established, then they could make something like blue flags for volunteer trucks, and be able to tell firefighters low on water that a refill was coming, and to just look for the truck with the flag on it.

## Sightseers

The supervisors agreed that one of the biggest problems the various departments had in the fields was the sightseers — people who were not volunteers, and only came to see the fire.  
 "How do we keep people out of the way?" Mr. Gallentine asked.  
 "I say we write tickets," Sheriff Badsky replied.  
 Ms. Manning told of a woman she encountered in the fields.  
 "She said she'd do it again in a heartbeat," Ms. Manning said. "I couldn't get her out of there, and she was one of the ones handing out alcohol. They were right in the middle of everything."  
 The fact that alcohol had made an appearance during the disaster was disconcerting to everyone.

Mr. Unger, who fought to save his land from the fire's rapid onslaught, said that many sightseers were still coming out to the area.  
 "The fields are really fragile, said Mr. Unger, "Erosion is bad enough without trucks driving through the fields ... these people have left trash and beer cans behind. They've driven through people's yards and hang around to see what was and wasn't destroyed. The people who live out there are disgusted."

Mr. McEvoy said he'd received calls that there had been firemen drinking, to which Mr. Cathcart said no, all the empty cans were from the sightseers. Mr. Unger pointed out that the majority of the beer cans turned up the day after the fire.  
 "One woman brought a cooler of beer to the Dollar General," Ms. Boultinghouse said, referring to the site where donations and supplies were collected that week. "I told her that on her life, it wouldn't make it out to the fire."

## Policy

"The whole incident only took four hours from start to finish until we had things controlled," Chief Cathcart said. "By the time we would set something like a command post up, it would be over. It would take as long to set it all up as the incident would last.  
 "If it had gotten bigger, we would have had to have something though."  
 That's when Chief Lyon chimed in.  
 "After the whole deal was over ...," he said, "I called around to every farmer in the area to see who had what. I found that we had something around 70,000 gallons of water in Norcat, and now we have all the cell phone numbers of these people if we need them."  
 Everyone agreed it was a good

idea for every fire department to assemble a similar list. Mr. Gallentine then asked how everyone felt about the burn ban now that it had rained, and the room unanimously agreed to keep it in place.  
 "The grass is not green after that little bit of rain," said Chief Cathcart. He pointed out how dry it still was by recalling how sections of dirt had seemingly caught fire during the blazes.  
 "Normally when you turn the soil up in a situation like this, the moisture in the dirt will be what stops the fire. But everything was so dry that the fire was setting the stubble underneath the soil on fire."

Mr. Unger agreed, noting that the corn, too, had appeared to be on fire, but that this was a result of the corn being planted on top of dry stubble.  
 "Everyone working together was the only thing that got the whole fire put out," he said. "We had everything saturated, and I checked it five times before going to bed at 1 a.m., and it was fine until 10 a.m. Then suddenly, the flames were two feet high. It looked to me like the roots of the trees had caught fire."  
 "So many people came to help us in the aftermath, putting out trees and hot spots. They saved us."

Mr. Gallentine pointed out how much more amazing the success of putting out the fire was in light of most volunteers having no experience with disasters.  
 "You've got all this help and untrained people coming out to help, how do we manage that? They could have only compounded the problem."  
 "But they didn't, not this time," Mr. Cathcart said.  
 "I just can't believe to this day that you saved anything at the Bremer place," Mr. Unger said, referring to the old Art May homestead, where a 95-year-old, one-of-a-kind barn was lost to the blaze, along with two outbuildings.

"When that wind broke, those cedar trees took off," he said. "I could have sworn everything was gone."  
 "It's lives first, property second," Mr. Cathcart said. "Throughout the incident, all the incoming fire trucks were placed at the farmsteads to protect them, and we didn't have enough trucks to attack the fire."

## Rumors and facts

"I hope we don't have to do this again anytime soon," Ms. Boultinghouse said.  
 When it came time for her to report on how emergency services went during the crisis, the first thing she suggested was a public information officer. She had so many news outlets calling her, she said, at a certain point she just quit answering the phone.

Mr. Cathcart said that if they had an information officer, they could combat the rumors that were circulating, provide accurate information and knock down the number of people who came out to the fires to see what was happening.  
 "Even if we have one, though," Ms. Boultinghouse said, "we'd be too busy to talk to them."  
 Mr. Gallentine disagreed, saying the need for an information officer was one of the most important things he got out of the experience.  
 Mrs. Mack noted that at dispatch, they already had everyone's number and media contacts.  
 "It's something we can handle if we have the right information," she said.  
 Mr. Cathcart said a reporter from

NTV, a Kearney station from Nebraska, interviewed him on the scene. Ms. Boultinghouse said *The Salina Journal* called her every five minutes. Mrs. Doeden said she couldn't believe how fast the story went national. A niece in Chicago sent her a text message to make sure everything was OK, she said.  
 Someone brought up social media such as Facebook, which had been alive with posts throughout the ordeal.  
 "I like Facebook," Ms. Boultinghouse said, "but it's as bad as fire itself. The wrong information just spreads."  
 Mrs. Davis pointed out that *The Herald* had posted an incorrect entry on Facebook, but as soon as someone pointed it out, it was down.  
 "We're trained to get the news," Mrs. Davis said, "but we need to do our jobs with you."

Mr. Cathcart said that he had no problem with local news people being on the scene, but thought area news outlets should stay away while the problem persists.  
 "We sent out pictures to everyone, it seemed," Mrs. Davis said, "but one of our people will always need to be there. That's the nature of the beast. Even if you have a public information officer, we still have to do our jobs. But we're here to help you and work with you. Always let us know when we make mistakes — call us and tell us, because we're not here to make your jobs harder."

## The Damages

The trees that burned went up like a tinderbox, Mr. Unger said.  
 "That was 80 years of wind-breaks," he said. "Some of the things lost in the fire will take a long time to replace, but overall, the county was lucky."  
 "It could have been much worse," Mr. Cathcart agreed.  
 Chief Cathcart and Mr. Unger estimated the damages to be up to \$2 million, and that as many as 6,000 to 7,000 acres may have been lost.

While many fields were only stubble due to the early harvest, fields of milo and corn were reportedly destroyed, as well as numerous outbuildings and farm machinery.  
 "Everyone needs a pat on the back," Ms. Boultinghouse said. "No one lost their homes or their lives. Everything that was lost is replaceable."  
 The many donations that supported the firefighters and volunteers throughout the crisis have run over into a collection of money for the fire department, Mr. Cathcart said.  
 "Since the fire, we've had a lot of people talking about donating," he said, "so we're setting up some fund raisers. We'll see if we can't get some new equipment from it."

The fire department has been restocking supplies since the fire, he added, and still needs to replace at least eight of its trucks. Dollar General, where most people sent their donations, collected over \$500 for the department.

## Thank you

Everyone wanted to thank all the volunteers who helped during the fires, from farmers who showed up with discs and water to people who collected and delivered the water, food and other donations.  
 "Those farmers," Ms. Boultinghouse chuckled, "It was like a dog on a bone! I've never seen so many tractors. They circled that one fire and it had no where to go."  
 "With the Saturday fires," Mr. Cathcart said, "we heard about dry lightning coming in, so we went out to patrol on a fire watch. We saw

it hit, and we were only six miles away."

Mrs. Doeden raved about the people from other areas who offered to help during the crisis.

"They even called to make sure that we had enough rooms for people," she said, referring to other hospitals. "The command person from Atwood offered 10 beds, and we already had 18 for heat exhaustion. A doctor even volunteered to come in and work the ER with us."  
 Scott Hartzog, who had been quiet up until this point, jumped in.  
 "We poured our hearts and souls into it," he said. "I think it went really well for being a volunteer force."

Mr. Gallentine appeared touched by the statement.  
 "I just can't thank all these people enough," he said.  
 "You know we pay you so much," joked Mr. McEvoy, to a round of laughter from the volunteers and directors alike.

"Something I think we should do," he said, "there should be more you get paid other than the call." Mr. Gallentine was referring to the flat fee that volunteer firefighters receive for each emergency response.  
 "I think we should do more for the volunteers."  
 "No," said Jennings Fire Chief Kerry Green, a volunteer, thumping his chest. "It all comes right here."  
 "No one does it for the money," Chief Cathcart agreed.

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## NOTICE OF BUDGET HEARING

The governing body of  
 The City of Oberlin  
 will meet on August 2, 2012 at 7 p.m. at Rooms 1 & 2, Gateway Civic Center, 1 Morgan Drive for the purpose of hearing and answering objections of taxpayers relating to the proposed use of all funds and the amount of ad valorem tax.  
 Detailed budget information is available at the City Offices, Gateway Civic Center, 1 Morgan Drive and will be available at this hearing.

## BUDGET SUMMARY

Proposed Budget 2013 Expenditures and Amount of 2012 Ad Valorem Tax establish the maximum limits of the 2013 budget. Estimated Tax Rate is subject to change depending on the final assessed valuation.

Fund	Prior Year Actual for 2011		Current Year Estimate for 2012		Proposed Budget for 2013		
	Expenditures	Actual Tax Rate*	Expenditures	Actual Tax Rate*	Budget Authority for Expenditures	Amount of 2012 Ad Valorem Tax	Estimate Tax Rate*
General	1,077,520	73.842	3,418,875	74.176	1,266,450	511,981	76.289
Debt Service	125,520	5.541	41,757				
Library	55,064	7.627	55,287	3.776	68,030	65,019	9.688
Employee Benefits	38,951						
Special Highway	98,637		348,836		273,525		
Parks and Recreation	1,859		11,760		12,805		
Tourism and Convention	10,000		13,500		11,500		
Economic Development	766		1,260		15,779		
Sappa Valley Youth Ranch	275		8,827		18,482		
Gateway	149,324		167,905		184,985		
Electric	2,007,476		1,895,381		2,045,985		
Water	316,790		389,835		339,196		
Sewer	291,122		310,550		347,033		
Non-Budgeted Funds-A	149,090						
Non-Budgeted Funds-B	1						
Non-Budgeted Funds-C	416,255						
<b>Totals</b>	<b>4,739,190</b>	<b>87.010</b>	<b>6,663,773</b>	<b>77.952</b>	<b>4,583,770</b>	<b>577,000</b>	<b>85.977</b>
Less: Transfers	471,846		316,757		300,000		
Net Expenditure	4,267,344		6,347,016		4,283,770		
Total Tax Levied	583,681		523,897		xxxxxxx		
Assessed Valuation	6,708,204		6,720,817		6,711,079		
Outstanding Indebtedness, January 1,		2010		2011		2012	
G.O. Bonds	877,133		799,500		665,300		
Revenue Bonds	0		4,473,000		4,473,000		
Other	1,167,741		1,230,393		1,165,628		
Lease Purchase Principal	0		0		0		
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,044,874</b>		<b>6,502,893</b>		<b>6,303,928</b>		

\*Tax rates are expressed in mills

Karen Larson,  
 City Administrator

**NOTICE OF BUDGET HEARING**  
 The governing body of  
 City of Jennings  
 will meet on August 6, 2012 at 7:00 p.m. at Jennings Community Building Senior Citizens Center for the purpose of hearing and answering objections of taxpayers relating to the proposed use of all funds and the amount of ad valorem tax.  
 Detailed budget information is available at Jennings City Office and will be available at this hearing.

**BUDGET SUMMARY**  
 Proposed Budget 2013 Expenditures and Amount of Current Year Estimate for 2012 Ad Valorem Tax establish the maximum limits of the 2013 budget. Estimated Tax Rate is subject to change depending on the final assessed valuation.

Fund	Prior Year Actual for 2011		Current Year Estimate for 2012		Proposed Budget for 2013		
	Expenditures	Actual Tax Rate*	Expenditures	Actual Tax Rate*	Budget Authority for Expenditures	Amount of 2012 Ad Valorem Tax	Estimate Tax Rate*
General	40,834	32.297	50,000	37.911	105,000	15,160	38.395
Debt Service	6				5,544		
Employee Benefits	4,678	3.654	4,500	1.091	4,500	2,170	5.496
Library	5,110	6.709	3,819	7.571	3,819	2,954	7.481
Special Highway			2,000		27,709		
Water	23,200		28,000		48,984		
Sewer	4,278		4,000		35,727		
Com. Bldg. Renovation			186		512		
Municipal Equip Reserve					780		
Capital Improvements					2,031		
Special Projects	60,000		1,565		91,132		
<b>Totals</b>	<b>138,106</b>	<b>42.660</b>	<b>94,070</b>	<b>46.573</b>	<b>325,738</b>	<b>20,284</b>	<b>51.372</b>
Less: Transfers	0		0		0		
Net Expenditure	138,106		94,070		325,738		
Total Tax Levied	18,460		18,460		xxxxxxx		
Assessed Valuation	432,729		401,284		394,845		
Outstanding Indebtedness, January 1,		2010		2011		2012	
G.O. Bonds	5,700		0		0		
Revenue Bonds	0		0		0		
Other	0		0		0		
Lease Purchase Principal	0		0		0		
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,700</b>		<b>0</b>		<b>0</b>		

\*Tax rates are expressed in mills  
 Paula Krizek, City Clerk

**Rawlins County Health Center**  
 RAWLINS COUNTY HEALTH CENTER COMMUNITY CALENDAR  
 707 Grant  
 Atwood, KS 67730  
 (785) 626-3211  
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 July 2012  
 Celebrate Freedom Wednesday, July 4  
 To schedule an appointment with a visiting physician, PLEASE CALL (785) 626-3211 Cheryl Banister, RN - Specialty Clinic Director

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1		2	3	4	5 Dr. Reeves Podiatry	6 Dr. Reeves Podiatry	7
8	9 Dr. Rubinowitz Oncology	10	11 Dr. Frankum Surgery	12	13	14	
15	16	17 Dr. Frederick C. Miller Cardiology	18 Dr. Curtis Cardiology	19	20	21	
22	23	24 Dr. Frederick C. Miller Cardiology	25	26	27	28	
29	30 Dr. Rubinowitz Oncology	31					