

the town crier

Volume 37 Number 3

September 1, 2025

Ellis, Kansas



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The Public Works Department will return to 8am to 5pm work hours on September 2, 2025.



Big Shoes to Fill

Submitted by Dustin Vine, Fire Chief

It's been a while since I last submitted an article to the Town Crier. For the past few years, Tim Kohlrus has been not only writing the articles, but also taking on many behind-the-scenes tasks to keep the Fire Department running smoothly. Recently, Tim reached a significant milestone in his career and decided to retire after serving twenty years.

It's truly remarkable to witness a young person with no prior experience joining the department and growing into a pillar of the organization. The term "hero" has been overused and lost its true meaning in recent times, but Tim Kohlrus is a true hero. In June 2012, without hesitation, he rescued two people trapped on the roof of their vehicle, surrounded by the rapidly rising water of Big Creek. Despite my initial plan of swallowing all the water in Big Creek and then having the victims walk back to the bank, Tim's idea to swim to them with a rope, grab them, and be pulled back by the people on land proved successful.

Tim's dedication and training have not only saved lives but also helped bring back victims of cardiac arrest. He's also rescued trapped people from wrecked cars and even ventured in to burning buildings, searching for both people and pets. Additionally, Tim has been an enthusiastic teacher, sharing his skills with others who have no prior experience but a desire to learn. If you or someone you know is interested in joining the fire department despite having no prior skills, please visit the City office or text (785) 656-0900.



Welcome to the Clerk's Office

Submitted by Rachel Pfannenstiel, Clerk II

I am originally from south of Salina, but have lived in Ellis since 2019. I live north of Ellis with my husband, Scott and son, Andrew.

I wanted to get a job with the City of Ellis because I wanted to be more involved with the community and get to know more people around town.

My favorite part of the job so far is getting to meet a lot of new people and learning more about what the Clerk's office does for the community.

In my spare time, I like to coyote hunt. We have greyhounds, so I have a lot of dogs to take care of! I also enjoy watching my son play sports. He will be starting junior high this year, so we will be busy following him all over with his activities.

I am excited to be part of the Clerk's office and serving the community!



We will be **CLOSED** Monday,
September 1st for



the town crier, official newsletter of the City of Ellis, is distributed quarterly (March, June, September and December). Questions, comments or suggestions about the newsletter may be directed to:

City Clerk's Office
815 Jefferson
Ellis KS 67637

(785) 726-4812
www.ellis.ks.us
ellisclerk@cityofellisks.gov



That's a Wrap!

Submitted by
Ashley Scheibler, City Clerk

We hope everyone enjoyed this past pool season! A huge thanks to our pool staff for a fun and safe summer: Manager Kelsie McMillan, Head Lifeguard Maleah Vine, Lifeguards Dora Bencze, Baylor Born, Payten Burd, Haylee Comer, Cody Cullison, Raegan Jimenez, Leah Reed, Mackinley Rhoden, Mason Rohleder, Trenton Schartz, Taegan Shannon, and Pool House Attendants Madison Birdsong and Eliana Brull.

We had two Water Safety Instructors who led the two sessions of Red Cross swimming lessons – Mason Rohleder and Maleah Vine. They also held private swimming lessons before and after regular pool hours.

Mother Nature spoiled many of our pool days with cloudy skies and cooler weather. Those conditions, however, surprisingly did not spoil our attendance, with 3,015 patrons visiting the pool this year, up from 2,859 last year. Water aerobics continued to be popular with 164 participants, and we hosted 19 pool parties! Thank you all for making 2025 another successful year! We can't wait to see you next summer!



Every Vote Counts!

Submitted by Verda Flinn,
Assistant City Clerk

Registered voters will head to the polls on November 4th to elect local government representatives. This year, five positions are up for election: Mayor, Treasurer, and three City Council seats. The positions are currently held by Mayor David R. McDanel, City Treasurer Faith Scheck, and Council Members Devin Henderson, John Walz, and Terry Zerfas.

For the Council, incumbent John Walz is seeking re-election and is joined on the ballot by Kevin LaBarge and David R. McDaniel, with all three competing for the open seats. Devin Henderson and Martin LaBarge are running for Mayor, while Amanda Shannon is running for Treasurer.

Polls will be open from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. at the Ellis VFW, 813 Jefferson (next to City Hall). Make sure to vote on November 4th and let your voice be heard!



Community Clean-up OCTOBER 6th

Submitted by Steve Homburg, Public Works Director

- You must have items out before 8:00 a.m. on October 5th (but please do not begin making your pick-up piles before October 3rd).
- Place items to be picked up where your normal trash is collected.
- All items should be placed approximately 3 feet away from all utilities.
- **Separate your items by type (see categories below).**
- We will be stopping at each residence for ONLY 15 minutes MAXIMUM
- We will NOT make any return trips.
- **To avoid wrongful pickup, please tag or remove your "treasures" from the collection area.**
- **Grass will NOT be picked up Monday, October 6th.**

If you have any questions concerning the Clean-Up, call the Ellis Public Works Department at 785-726-4741 or 785-726-1741.

Municipal Waste

Fabrics
Lamps
Furniture
Upholstery &
Plastic Chairs
Couches
Carpet & Pad
Foam Products

Trees

**NO LONGER THAN:
4' in length & 6" in diameter**

Place in alley—will be removed as soon as possible at a later date

Construction & Demolition

Bricks & Masonry Materials
Any Wood Products
(including Pallets)
Wallcoverings
Drywall
Electric Wiring
Non-Asbestos Insulation
Roofing Materials
Plumbing Fixtures
(Stools, Sinks, Tubs)
Wire Fencing or Wire

Metals (White Goods)

Washers
Dryers
Metal Buildings
Metal Doors
Piping
Lawn Chairs
Swing Sets
Bicycles
Open Barrels
Tin
Wagons
Refrigerators (only
remove if tagged)
Lawn Mowers
(with Gas & Oil
removed)
Metal Containers
Bed Frames &
Springs
Lawn Equipment

Non-Collectable Items*

Explosives
Glass
Thinners
Flammable Materials
Asbestos Materials
Hot Tubs or other Large Items
Medical Waste (Needles, Syringes, etc.)
Batteries
Paints/Coatings
Strippers
Drain Openers
Buildings
Concrete or Rocks

* **E-Waste** can be taken directly to the Ellis County Transfer Station.

* **Household Hazardous Waste** Station is open

Mon.-Fri. 8:00 am to 4:45 pm
Sat. 9:00 am to 3:45 pm
785-628-9460



While doing your yard work, please remember that the City's **BURN SITE** is open Mon., Tues., Thurs. & Fri. 7am-3:30pm, Wed. 7am-7pm and 1st & 3rd Sat. 8:30am-11:30am and accepts **ONLY tree limbs, branches and brush**. The site does **NOT** accept grass, leaves, lumber, or miscellaneous wooden items. **Take your grass, leaves and garden waste to the COMPOST SITE** which is open 24 hours/7 days per week.



New Online Utility Payment Option now Available for Ellis Residents

Submitted by Ashley Scheibler, City Clerk

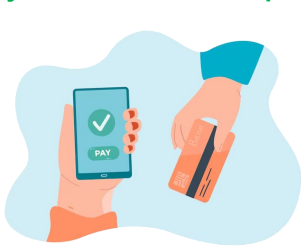
We're excited to announce that residents can now conveniently pay their utility bills online through our official website at ellis.ks.us using KanPay. This new payment option makes managing your bills easier and faster, right from your computer or mobile device.

Here's what you need to know about the new online payment service:

- **Credit or Debit Card Payments:** A service fee of 2.5% of your total bill will be applied.
- **eCheck Payments:** A flat service fee of \$1.50 per transaction.

Note: These fees are the same as those charged when paying over the phone or in person at the City office, ensuring consistency no matter how you choose to pay.

To pay your bill online, visit ellis.ks.us > **City Office tab** > **Resident Info/Pay** and click on **Online Bill Pay** to access the KanPay portal. **When entering the Zip Code, it must be the Zip Code on file with your credit card company, otherwise, your payment will be rejected.**



In 2026, the City of Ellis will upgrade its accounting and utility billing system to Edmunds GovTech. This upgrade comes as our current software reaches its end of life and is designed to provide enhanced functionality and a better user experience.

One key feature of the new system is the integration with Edmunds GovTech's online utility bill payments. This service will allow payments made by residents to automatically sync directly with their utility accounts, eliminating manual processing and reducing errors.

Once the new system is in place:

- Residents will enjoy seamless payment posting to their accounts.
- The City will have improved tracking and reporting capabilities.
- The overall payment process will be more efficient and convenient for both residents and City staff.

With this upgrade, the online payment fees will adjust slightly as follows:

- **Credit or Debit Card Payments:** The service fee will increase to 2.95%.
- **eCheck Payments:** The flat fee will increase to \$1.95.

We appreciate your understanding as we work to enhance your experience and provide better services for our community. To start paying your utility bill online today, visit ellis.ks.us > **City Office Tab** > **Resident Info/Pay**, then **Online Bill Pay**.

Thank you for being a valued member of the Ellis community!



Deer Season on the Roads!

Submitted by Avery Smith, Chief of Police

Autumn in Kansas means beautiful sunsets, great weather and a sharp increase of vehicle vs. deer accidents. From October through December, deer are more active due to mating season and changes in food sources, making them more likely to cross roadways, especially at dawn and dusk.

What to watch for:

1. **Peak Hours** - Deer are most active in the early morning and evening.
2. **Herd Behavior** - If you see one deer, there are usually more around it.
3. **Rural and Wooded Areas** - Pay extra attention in areas with tree lines, creeks, and fields.

Safety tips:

1. **Slow down** in known deer zones and use your high beams when possible at night to spot eye shine in the ditches along the roadway.
2. **Don't swerve!** It is much safer to brake firmly and stay in your lane than to swerve into oncoming traffic or a ditch.
3. **Buckle up!** A seatbelt can reduce injury if a collision occurs.
4. **Stay alert** after a near miss. Deer travel in herds, if you miss one, there are surely more nearby!
5. **Report accidents promptly.** If you are in an accident and are un-injured contact Ellis County Communications at (785) 625-1011 to report the accident. Use 911 if you are injured!

By staying alert and knowing what to look for, we can reduce collisions and keep both drivers and wildlife safer this season!



HOLIDAY TRASH SCHEDULE



Monday, September 1.....NO trash pickup on **LABOR DAY**
Tuesday, September 2.....The Monday grass/trash and Tuesday trash routes will be run
Monday, October 6The Monday grass route will not be run due to the City Wide Cleanup
Tuesday, November 11.....NO trash pickup on **VETERANS DAY**
Wednesday, November 12 ... The Tuesday and Wednesday trash routes will be run
Wednesday, November 26 ... The Wednesday and Thursday trash routes will be run
Thursday, November 28NO trash pickup on **THANKSGIVING DAY**
Friday, November 29NO trash pickup on **Thanksgiving observation**
Monday, December 1.....The Friday and Monday trash routes will be run

**City code prohibits
vegetation watering
between the hours of
Noon to 7:00 p.m.
year round.**



Downtown Historic District Update

Submitted by Verda Flinn, Assistant City Clerk

The City of Ellis has received notification from Hernly Associates, Inc. that fieldwork is now complete and all Kansas Historical Registration Information entries have been finalized. They prepared the rough draft and plan submitted it to the Kansas Historical Society for review by August 31, 2025.

In addition, Hernly Associates, Inc. consulted with Bethany Falvey of FEMA to gather information on flood regulations as they apply within a Historic District. This information was included in our submission, as much of the downtown area lies within the floodplain.

We look forward to receiving feedback from the Kansas Historical Society regarding our community.



Revenue Neutral Rate Hearing

Submitted by Ashley Scheibler, City Clerk

On September 2nd, along with the regular Council meeting, the City will hold its Revenue Neutral Rate (RNR) Hearing and Budget Hearing for the 2026 budget document. The RNR Hearing is required as part of the Tax Transparency Act under Senate Bill 13. The Act prohibits municipalities from levying a single dollar more of property tax than the prior year without a Revenue Neutral Rate hearing. If the City would not hold this hearing, and levy more tax dollars than the dollars levied last year, the City would be required to refund taxpayers every dollar received in excess of last year's levy.

The Revenue Neutral Rate is a calculation dividing the previous year's property tax raised in dollars by the current year's estimated assessed valuation. For the 2026 budget, the City's RNR is 72.302, compared to a 2025 final adjusted mill levy rate of 75.228.

The City's estimated valuation increased for the fifth year in a row, from \$14,629,310 to \$17,612,539. The value of one mill for the 2026 budget is \$18,326, which means that every mill assessed generates approximately \$18,326 in tax dollars to fund the 2026 budget.

The Governing Body participated in multiple budget work sessions. The City prepared the budget, maintaining the same mill levy rate as 2025. The City has not increased the mill levy for the last five years. Under the 2026 budget, the City will be able to maintain the same level of services to residents; however, many capital improvements and equipment purchases will have to be delayed.

The City Council appropriated 3.86 mills (\$70,750) in aid to the Ellis Railroad Museum, Walter P. Chrysler Boyhood Home & Museum, Ellis Alliance, Ellis Community Foundation, Options, Ellis Recreation Commission, Grow Hays, Big Brothers Big Sisters, the Center for Life Experience, and the Heartland Community Foundation. As required by Charter Ordinance, 4 mills were levied for the Ellis Public Library (\$80,825). In addition to the required 4 mills, the City appropriated another 0.65 mills (\$12,000) to the Library for capital improvements, personnel, and programming.

The City was able to fund operations of the utility funds within the automatic 2% rate increase as authorized by Ordinance 1407. This ordinance has allowed Council to make small inflationary increases rather than large rate jumps. The City has the authority to implement a higher rate increase by approving a resolution; however, the automatic 2% increase was sufficient to provide the same level of service.

The Tax Transparency Act shortens an already intense and extensive process. Preparing the annual budget is always an intense and challenging process, requiring a great deal of time, thought, and collaboration. Both City staff and the City Council have worked diligently to ensure a fair and balanced budget that meets the needs of our community while remaining fiscally responsible. This is no small task; balancing essential services, future planning, and financial constraints takes careful consideration and tough decision-making. We commend the Council for their dedication, attention to detail, and commitment to doing what's best for the residents of Ellis.



calendar

SEPTEMBER

- 1 LABOR DAY**
City offices closed
- 2** Public Works resumes
8-5 work hours
RNR & Budget Hearings 6:00 pm
City Council 6:30 pm
- 5** Municipal Court 8:00 am
- 15** City Council 6:30 pm
- 19** Municipal Court 8:00 am
- 22** Planning Comm 7:00 pm

OCTOBER

- 3** Municipal Court 8:00 am
- 6** CITY-WIDE CLEANUP
City Council 6:30 pm
- 14** Voter Registration Books
closed until after election
- 17** Municipal Court 8:00 am
- 20** City Council 6:30 pm
- 27** Planning Comm 7:00 pm
Last Grass Pickup
- 31 HALLOWEEN**

NOVEMBER

- 2** Daylight Saving Time Ends
- 3** City Council 6:30 pm
- 4 ELECTION DAY**
City-State-National offices
- 5** Voter Registration Books
Re-open
- 7** Municipal Court 8:00 am
- 11 VETERANS DAY**
City offices closed
- 17** City Council 6:30 pm
- 21** Municipal Court 8:00 am
- 24** Planning Comm 7:00 pm
- 27 THANKSGIVING**
City offices closed
- 28 Thanksgiving Holiday**
City offices closed





Utility Rate Changes (Comparison of Current to New)

Submitted by Verda Flinn, Assistant City Clerk

One of the key considerations during the budget process is determining whether current utility rates can continue to cover the expenses required to maintain each utility. The City manages three main utility funds: water, sewer, and sanitation (trash).

According to State Statute, municipal utility funds must be self-sustaining, meaning that the revenue generated must be sufficient to cover the expenses of each fund. In August 2016, the Council adopted Ordinance No. 1407, which provides

for automatic 2% annual utility rate increases. This measure aims to address inflation gradually, reducing the need for larger, more sudden rate hikes. The percentage can be adjusted by Resolution if necessary.

During budget preparation each year, this Ordinance is reviewed to determine whether the 2% increase will be sufficient for the upcoming year. After analyzing the utility funds, the Council decided to move forward with the automatic 2% increase in water, sewer, and sanitation rates for the next budget. The new rates will take effect with the November 1, 2025 utility bills, covering usage from September 10th to October 10th.

	CURRENT	Starting with November 1, 2025 billing	
	4,000	4,000	Gallons of water billed (Sample Usage Only - Actual usage unique to each household)
	\$13.38	\$13.65	3/4" Meter Monthly Rate
	\$5.13	\$5.23	Water Usage Rate (per 1,000 gallons)
	\$0.032	\$0.032	State Water Fee Rate (per 1,000 gallons)
WT	\$34.58	\$34.58	Total Water Charge (monthly meter charge PLUS charge for water usage)
WF	\$0.13	\$0.13	State Water Fee
SW	\$41.39	\$42.24	Monthly Sewer Charge
SN	\$29.86	\$30.46	Monthly Sanitation Charge
TR	\$9.56	\$9.75	Monthly ADDITIONAL Trash Cart Charge (i.e.—second trash cart)
GR	\$2.38	\$2.43	Monthly Grass Cart Charge (for EACH grass cart*)
	\$117.90	\$119.59	TOTAL RESIDENTIAL FAMILY UTILITY BILL
1.4% Increase in TOTAL utility bill *Grass carts are only billed May-November.			



NIXLE Alert System - Stay in the Know!

Submitted by Ashley Scheibler, City Clerk

Did you know the City of Ellis has a weather alert system? Yes, NIXLE, this system links with the National Weather Service for weather alerts and advisories. Residents have an option to set "silent" hours, in which notifications will not be sent out during those hours. In order to avoid "text fatigue", we will only use the "Alert" notification for those notifications that warrant an immediate response. Once you set up your Nixle account, you can modify your settings at any time!

How to sign up:

There are two ways to sign up if you would like to OPT IN to receive notifications.

☆ TEXT "ELLISCITY" to 888777 and follow prompts

☆ Go to www.nixle.com and click on "Resident Login", then click on **GREEN** "Sign Up" box.

Even if you sign up through text, you will still need to go to www.nixle.com to set up an account in order to select notification preferences. On the "Settings" tab, mark the box for City of Ellis. On the "Locations" tab, we strongly encourage everyone to input your address. This will enable us to ONLY send out messages relevant to your neighborhood, i.e. waterline breaks, police activity, etc. Residents have the ability to input multiple addresses for work and home.

There are THREE types of notifications the City will use – Alerts, Advisories, and Community

☆ ALERT – time sensitive notifications that need immediate attention – severe weather warnings, water leaks in your area, etc.

☆ ADVISORY – "need to know", but less time sensitive – weather advisories, street closures, etc.

☆ COMMUNITY – announcements, NOT time sensitive – event reminders, community updates, etc.

NOTE: When setting up your account in Nixle, if you click "Email" notifications on the Settings tab, "Advisory" and "Community" notices will ONLY come through email and not text. "Alerts" are ALWAYS sent to all devices.



Seeking Volunteers

Submitted by Dustin Vine, Fire Chief

The Ellis Volunteer Fire Department is currently accepting applications. If you or someone you know are interested in serving the community and becoming part of a dedicated team, we encourage you to apply!

For more information or to express interest, please contact the City Clerk's Office or reach out directly to Chief Dustin Vine at D & B Body Shop.

Come be a part of something meaningful - protect, serve, and make a difference in Ellis!





Last Grass Pickup

Submitted by Verda Flinn, Assistant City Clerk

The **LAST GRASS PICKUP** of 2025 will be Monday, **October 27th**.

After that date, the Sanitation Crew will **NOT** empty the green grass carts until next April. You may store the grass cart at your residence until the next mowing season.

If you are still mowing grass after October 28th, please place the **BAGGED** grass clippings in your trash cart or take them to the compost pile.

During the winter season, grass carts cannot be used as extra trash carts. If you have more trash than your regular cart can hold, please call 785-726-4812 to arrange a special trash pickup.



Shorter Days, Longer Nights

Submitted by Avery Smith, Chief of Police

As autumn approaches, the amount of daylight that we receive every day grows shorter. That means that many of us are commuting to and from different activities in the dark or during low light conditions. Reduced light can make it harder for drivers to see pedestrians, cyclists, or even other vehicles.

For Pedestrians and Cyclists:

- **Be Seen** - Wear bright colors or reflective clothing. A simple reflective armband or headlamp can make a huge difference.
- **Use Lights** - Cyclists should follow all applicable Kansas Statutes in regard to usage of lights. Kansas Statute states that cyclists *shall* use white lights mounted to the front of the bike when riding in dark conditions, just like you would behind the wheel of a car. Cyclists are also required to have *at least* a red reflector to the rear- but it is encouraged that they have a red light displayed.
- **Cross Safely** - use crosswalks and wait for drivers to stop. Avoid crossing near parked cars.
- **Stay Off Devices** - Keep your head up and eyes on your surroundings. Consider only using one earbud so that you can hear the world around you if listening to music.

For Drivers:

- **Slow Down in Neighborhoods**
- **Check Your Headlights** - Clean, working headlights are your best friend!
- **Watch for Glare** - Autumn sunsets can cause blinding glare during evening commutes. Keep sunglasses in your vehicle and make sure your windshield is clean.

Whether you're behind the wheel, on foot, or on a bike; staying visible and alert helps prevent accidents. A few extra seconds of awareness can save a life!

City of Ellis

VISION STATEMENT

A truly unique Kansas community, Ellis celebrates its rich heritage of friendly people that value family and strong work ethics while actively promoting quality education and public services.



Cyber Shopping Safety

Submitted by Avery Smith, Chief of Police

As holiday seasons approach, gift giving is a time-honored tradition that many families participate in. Unfortunately, scamming you out of your hard earned money is another tradition that is honored by online criminals. Criminals take this time to create seemingly legitimate online storefronts that can trick you into revealing your personal information. When shopping online do the following:

- Use trusted retailers and avoid deals that seem too good to be true. Check for "https" in the website's address and look for customer reviews. You can verify most major online retailers through the Better Business Bureau or via Google Reviews indicating that the person is a verified buyer.
- Don't click links in unsolicited messages. If you get a shipping notice, go to the carrier's official website or app to check tracking on your packages.
- Secure your accounts! Use strong, unique passwords and enable two-factor authentication.
- Review your bank statements and credit/debit card activity often so you can catch suspicious charges quickly.
- If you are being pressured to act on a purchase fast, it might be a scam! Scammers play on a sense of urgency to bypass your good judgement.

A few extra minutes of caution or doing some homework on a retailer can help save you a lot of headache. If you have been a victim of a scam, please contact the Ellis Police Department.



Is Your Dog an Escape Artist?

Submitted by Danielle Schaus, Clerk I

We often receive calls about dogs running at large. If your pup is properly tagged with a City dog tag, the Police Department will do their best to contact you before taking your dog to the pound.

However, if your dog is impounded, fees will apply:

- Admin Fee (one-time): \$10
- Vaccinated Dogs: \$20 per calendar day
- Unvaccinated or Dangerous Dogs: \$30 per calendar day

Important: If your dog is not legally tagged, you'll need to provide a valid rabies certificate and purchase a tag before your pet can be released from the pound.

Dog Tag Costs:

- \$5 for spayed/neutered dogs
- \$10 for intact dogs

Dog tag renewals begin January 1st each year and are penalty-free until February 28th. Starting March 1st, a \$2/month penalty applies. If you have questions, call the City Office at 785-726-4812 to keep your furry friend safe and legal!

City of Ellis MISSION STATEMENT

The City of Ellis efficiently promotes infrastructure and beautification programs, supporting community growth while preserving its intrinsic small town charm.



Sales Tax Ballot Question

Submitted by Ashley Scheibler, City Clerk

On November 4, 2025, Ellis residents will decide whether to **renew** the current one-cent City sales tax that helps support our community's water supply and distribution systems. This sales tax is currently used to make payments on the Water Treatment Plant, which was built in 2006.

If voters approve the renewal, the tax would continue from 2026 through 2036, and at that time, residents would need to vote again to decide if it should be extended further. The General Obligation Bonds used to finance the Water Treatment Plant are scheduled to be paid off in 2048 and 2050.

If the renewal is not approved, the City would need to raise revenue through other means to meet the bond payments. Choosing a sales tax over a property tax increase or higher utility rates allows the cost to be shared by all who visit and shop in Ellis, not just local residents.

On September 2, 2025 the Ellis City Council will Vote to approve Resolution No. 630, submitting the sales tax proposition to the County Clerk. Below is an excerpt from the Notice of Special Question Election.

The proposition shall appear on the ballot as follows:

Shall the following be adopted?

Shall a one percent retailer's sales tax be imposed on qualified purchases within the City of Ellis, Kansas, with the revenue generated therefrom to be either directly or indirectly applied to improvements in the municipal water supply and distribution systems?

Yes ☐

No ☐

To vote in favor of any question submitted upon this ballot, darken the oval to the right of the word "Yes;" to vote against it, darken the oval to the right of the word "No."

City Council has not yet determined if the election will take place at the physical polling location (Ellis VFW) or through "mail-in" ballots. We will keep you informed of their decision once a decision has been made.



Campground Project Wrap-up

Submitted by Verda Flinn, Campground Committee Member

The Campground Committee is excited to share that Phase 2 of the expansion project is now complete! The Kansas Department of Commerce recently conducted the final inspection, and the closeout hearing was held on September 2nd.

This phase included the installation of a new ADA-accessible playground and a pre-fabricated bathhouse. The bathhouse is now open for use, and the playground has already been enjoyed by many youth. If you haven't had a chance to visit yet, we encourage you to stop by and see the new additions. We've received wonderful feedback from travelers who remark on how fortunate Ellis is to have such a well-maintained, city-owned campground.

We would also like to extend our sincere thanks to the organizations whose generous support made this project possible. Funding was provided by the following:

- **CDBG** – \$334,216
- **Dane G. Hansen Foundation** – \$45,000
- **Patterson Family Foundation** – \$40,000
- **Heartland Community Foundation** – \$7,059
- **Community Foundation of Ellis** – \$1,000
- **Midwest Energy Community Fund** – \$1,000

This totaled \$428,275 in grant funding. With the final project cost coming to \$491,402 (after two change orders), the City of Ellis contributed the remaining \$63,127.

In addition to providing great amenities for travelers, the campground brings many benefits to our community. Visitors often shop in our local stores, dine at local restaurants, and purchase fuel and supplies while staying in Ellis. Their presence helps support local businesses and strengthens our economy, while also showcasing all that our community has to offer. With this phase now complete, we are proud to celebrate another successful project for our community - one that will provide lasting benefits for both residents and visitors.



Blank Canvas



Moving the bathhouse to the location



Aerial View after completion



Congratulations and Thanks!

Submitted by Ashley Scheibler, City Clerk

Our employees are the heart of our organization. We could not provide you the service you expect without them. Our employees work very hard to make sure you are provided clean water, public safety, trash services, fire protection, administrative services, beautiful parks, safe roads, and much more! We'd like to recognize those employees who recently celebrated anniversaries with the City! Thank you for your dedication!



Shaun Bird – Volunteer Firefighter – 11 years

Monte Boydston – Volunteer Firefighter – 11 years

Ronald Julian – Volunteer Firefighter – 10 years/Public Works – 3 Years

Greg Cochrane – Public Works – 6 years

Jake Romey – Volunteer Firefighter – 5 years

Hillary Newell – Volunteer Firefighter – 5 years

Kody Niblock – Volunteer Firefighter – 5 years

Devin Henderson – Council Member – 5 years

Dustin Mattheyer – Volunteer Firefighter – 4 years

Brad Deines – Volunteer Firefighter – 4 years

Brayden Reese, Volunteer Firefighter – 1 year

Jonathan Turner – Police Officer – 1 year

Scott Gugler – Public Works – 1 year

Daniel Newell – Public Works – 1 year

Ashley Scheibler – City Clerk – 1 year



Welcome to the Police Department

Submitted by Jaden Flower, Police Officer

Hello, I am Jaden Flower. I recently joined the Ellis Police Department after leaving the Hays Police Department. I have been an officer for about 7 years as I started on my 21st birthday back in August of 2018 in a small town called Beloit, KS.



After about three years with Beloit, I transferred to a small county to become a Deputy. I was with Jewell County Sheriff's Office for about a year before moving to Hays, KS. I was with Hays Police Department for about three years before coming to Ellis.

I look forward to my future here at Ellis Police Department and getting back to the roots of being a small-town officer. Some of my hobbies when I'm not on duty include spending a lot of time with my family, playing card games and video games, and travelling.



October Match Month

Submitted by Verda Flinn, Campground Committee Member

Exciting News! When bids were received for the Phase 2 expansion project, the Campground Committee faced the tough decision of removing a piece of playground equipment in order to stay within budget for the project. However, the committee intentionally left space in the playground area so that the equipment could be added in the future if funding became available.

We are thrilled to announce the Community Foundation of Ellis (CFOE) has been approved to participate in the Rural Community Foundation Match Program, and the CFOE has selected this playground equipment as one of the projects for the upcoming October Match Month.

The cost of the playground piece is \$11,593. During October Match Month, the Patterson Foundation will generously match up to half of the funds raised toward this project. If you would like to support this effort, please complete the form below and submit it with your **check made payable to the Community Foundation of Ellis.**

Important: Do not date your check prior to October 1st, as only donations made during the October Match Month will qualify for the Patterson Foundation match.



Sponsorship Opportunity

(Please detach and include with payment)

Name and/or Business _____

Address _____ City, State, Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Amount Donated \$ _____ ☒ **Playground Equipment** All donations are tax-deductible!

Make checks payable to the Community Foundation of Ellis and include this form with your payment.

Checks may be mailed or dropped off at:

Community Foundation of Ellis, 820 Washington St., Ellis, KS 67637 or City of Ellis, 815 Jefferson St., Ellis, KS 67637

Please indicate "Playground Equipment" on your check.

If you have any questions or would like more information, please contact Community Foundation of Ellis at (785) 726-2660 or email ellisalliance@eaglecom.net

CANDIDATE COMMENTS

On August 21, 2025 the candidates who filed for a position on the Governing Body were asked the following questions:

- ▶ *What position are you running for?*
- ▶ *What do you think are your qualifications for this position?*
- ▶ *What do you think are the most important issues facing the City during the next two years, and how should they be dealt with?*

The following responses have been printed exactly as the candidate submitted.

What position are you running for?

City Treasurer

Amanda Shannon

What do you think are your qualifications for this position?

I have over 13 years of government experience previously, working for 3 years at the City of Norton as a clerk and have spent the last 10 with Ellis County where I currently am the Deputy Treasurer. This background has given me strong knowledge of public finance and service to the community.

What do you think are the most important issues facing the City during the next two years, and how should they be dealt with?

The most important issue facing the City Treasurer is ensuring responsible management of public funds, maintaining transparency and accountability. It is essential that all city spending, both large and small, is properly accounted for so the public can clearly see how their money is being used.

Thank you - Amanda

What position are you running for?

I'm David McDaniel and I'm running for one of the open positions on the Ellis City Council. With your support, it is my desire to continue my public service for all citizens of Ellis.

David McDaniel

What do you think are your qualifications for this position?

As you are probably aware, I have served as Ellis Mayor for several years. I feel that this position gives me a solid knowledge of the many good opportunities that are on the horizon for our city.

I have been recognized by the State of Kansas and the League of Ks Municipalities for my leadership and public service for the Citizens of Ellis and the state. I currently serve on the League of Ks Municipalities Governing Body and serve on various state, county and city committees.

What do you think are the most important issues facing the City during the next two years, and how should they be dealt with?

Most important issues:

Trego Water Project: finalizing property easements and getting shovels in the ground.

Ellis Booster Pump Station: acceptable water pressure for the south hill residents. The site and design are approved, and we need to continue assembling costs and equipment and getting it done.

Downtown Development: a firm was hired to assess the development area and submit reports.

Encourage and ACCEPT outside investors to pledge dollars to improve all aspects of the Ellis Economy.

Continuing Support of affordable housing starts to increase the tax base and bolster school enrollment.

New Commercial Businesses within the North Hill Commercial Business Area to broaden the tax base.

Stabilizing the City Employment Pool with the new recruits.

Working through unfunded mandates from State and Federal levels.

Workable 10th St Bridge negotiations and maintaining and upgrading the city's infrastructure.

I still prefer face-to-face communications on all city business and if elected I will continue to be your voice on all issues. I'm out in the community every day and my contact information is always available.

Your vote would be appreciated to continue positive growth in our community.

What position are you running for?

Kevin LaBarge, I am running for City Council.

Kevin LaBarge

What do you think are your qualifications for this position?

I am the former owner of Kevy-Lee's Diner. I want to serve and be a part of the city government, to help Ellis continue growing.

What do you think are the most important issues facing the City during the next two years, and how should they be dealt with?

- work with the city council to solve and finish the water booster pump station project
- get the water line project from Trego to Ellis
- help blend the water for better quality drinking water
- help promote and develop new housing for the future growth of Ellis
- help get street projects funded by grants to help our infrastructure projects
- move forward to be completed

CANDIDATE COMMENTS continued on back →

CANDIDATE COMMENTS continued

What position are you running for?

I am John Walz and am running for a position on the Ellis City Council.

John Walz

What do you think are your qualifications for this position?

I believe my qualifications for this position are my many years of work experience involving problem solving, serving on numerous boards including the Ellis City Council and my general knowledge of Ellis, Kansas.

What do you think are the most important issues facing the City during the next two years, and how should they be dealt with?

The number one issue for Ellis is always maintaining safe and adequate supplies of drinking water. Solution is the City of Ellis is getting closer to adding a new water supply to blend with our existing water supply.

The rest of my priorities are in no particular order.

New housing and business development is a priority. Houses are presently going up in the Tax Increment Financing area on the south end of Ellis. I am hoping we will be able to encourage developers to add more housing and encourage new businesses to locate in Ellis. The City of Ellis needs to work with developer's and investors to encourage them to build houses and locate businesses in our community.

Ellis must work toward replacing aging streets, water lines and sewer systems by applying for state and federal grants.

Maintain a high level of the quality of life in Ellis so we retain and recruit new citizens to stay and to move into our community. Improvements must be made to public buildings, parks, swimming pool and retain our quality city staff. Once again, we must encourage developers to invest in Ellis. Push forward with getting the Ellis Historical District designated and renovations moving forward.

Last but not least we must shop local to keep the great businesses we have in Ellis!!! The solution is to shop in Ellis which keeps their doors open and keeps sales tax dollars in Ellis.

Your Vote is Your Voice!!! Please get out and Vote!!!

Sincerely, John Walz

What position are you running for?

My name is Martin LaBarge and I am running for the position of mayor to serve the citizen's of Ellis.

Martin LaBarge

What do you think are your qualifications for this position?

From 1985 to 2025 I have served Ellis as your city council member for 15 years. Off and on the last 40 yrs. I have also served as your council president. I have also served 24 years on the Ellis Rec. Comm. As a board member and rec. president.

What do you think are the most important issues facing the City during the next two years, and how should they be dealt with?

The water pressure situation on the south hill is being addressed with a water pressure booster station. The city now has the land easement in place. We are now applying for the construction grant so we can complete the project. The Trego water line project is moving along, the city is getting all the land easements necessary. When all the easements are completed the city will be able to apply for grants to help lower the loan costs from KDHE. This water from the Trego wells will help improve our current water quality and taste. The TIF project is over, there are several interested parties that want to further pursue other housing sites for apartments and other housing needs within the city. The 6th St project will be getting under way shortly. In the near future 2nd St project is in the planning stage. It is vital we maintain our streets, curbs & gutters with the proper maintenance. Our city crews are doing a good job to maintain all departments. Our city clerk's office is always searching for grants to help offset the costs so that not all the burden is on the tax payers. The 10th St. bridge is also vital for Ellis. We must work together with the county and do what it takes to get the bridge replaced. We must all work together so Ellis can continue to grow and prosper into the future.

What position are you running for?

I'm running for Mayor of the great City of Ellis.

Devin Henderson

What do you think are your qualifications for this position?

Serving as Mayor of Ellis, Kansas, I will bring a unique combination of local government experience and military service, both of which have equipped me with the skills, perspective, and dedication necessary to effectively lead our city into the future. Through my service, I have developed a deep understanding of Ellis's infrastructure, economic development, and the importance of maintaining transparent and responsive local government.

What do you think are the most important issues facing the City during the next two years, and how should they be dealt with?

Infrastructure- Maintaining and updating infrastructure is a concern for small municipalities like Ellis. Roads, water systems, and public buildings require ongoing maintenance, but limited tax revenues make it difficult to fund major projects. So, little by little, we will work to get our infrastructure replaced.

Jobs, Housing, Recreation- The lack of GREAT paying jobs, and lack of housing, hasn't been a great attraction for our small city. Don't get me wrong, we do have people working here, and moving into town, but need higher paying jobs/housing. We need to work with building owners to renovate and open their buildings to business. We need to create housing. We are on a roll with the new addition on the south side of town, let's keep it going. The library, the ERC, and other organizations have done great at having events and games for the city. We should continue to build on that. We need more events and activities for Ellis.

Community Engagement- A vibrant civic life depends on active participation from residents. Volunteerism and community involvement can wane. Local events, historical preservation, and cultural activities are integral to the city's identity, but sustaining them requires energy and investment from the whole community. Supporting local organizations and events. Encouraging new residents to become involved in civic affairs. Foster intergenerational cooperation and community pride. The governing body must also engage with the public, and that's why I will call for town halls.

