

# District Court moving to new case management system

TOPEKA — Coffey County District Court is one of 17 courts in six judicial districts in east and southeast Kansas scheduled to convert to a new case management system this week, according to an announcement by the Kansas Supreme Court.

The judicial districts are known collectively as “Track 3” in the Kansas eCourt State-wide Rollout Plan to move all state court case data to a single web-based platform. They are:

- 4th Judicial District (Anderson, Coffey, Franklin, and Osage counties);
- 6th Judicial District (Bourbon, Linn, and Miami counties);

- 11th Judicial District (Cherokee, Crawford, and Lette counties);
- 14th Judicial District (Chautauqua and Montgomery counties);
- 19th Judicial District (Coville County); and
- 31st Judicial District (Allen, Neosho, Wilson, and Woodson counties).

During the conversion to the new case management system, courts will remain open and operating, but some procedures will change. These procedure changes authorized by Supreme Court Administrative Order 2020-CC-110.

Courts will stop accepting electronically filed documents from attorneys. They will also stop accepting electronic payments. Courts will continue to accept paper filed documents from attorneys, and self-represented parties will be able to file by fax or on paper. The courts will accept only payments made in cash or by paper check.

The cutover to the new case management system started at 3 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 27. That’s when electronic filing was turned off and courts began accepting paper filings from attorneys. At 4:30 p.m., they stopped accepting electronic payments and began accepting only payments made in cash or by paper check.

Courts were open and continued to operate during regular business hours on Oct. 28 and 29; however, electronic filing and electronic payments remained off.

Clerk of court offices in all Track 3 courts will be closed Friday, although the courts will be open and continuing to operate. Clerk offices will post telephone numbers for persons who need urgent court help, such as for processing requests for protection from abuse or protection from stalking.

At 12:01 a.m. Monday, Nov. 2, Track 3 courts will return to accepting documents filed electronically and payments made electronically. Courts

will resume full operations during regular business hours.

## Public Access Portal

As Kansas courts move to the new centralized case management system, their public records become available through the Kansas District Court Public Access Portal.

Public records are both case data and case documents. What will be accessible through the portal is described in Supreme Court Rule 22: Access to Public Electronic District Court Case Records.

Only documents filed after a court’s adoption of the new case management system

will be available through the portal as permitted under Supreme Court rule. Case data that predates adopting the new case management system will be accessible if it complies with Supreme Court rule.

Public records not available through the public access portal will be available at the courthouse using a courthouse terminal. Each court has a computer reserved for public searches of court cases and court records in that court.

Sealed cases and sealed records are not public and will not be available through either the public portal or the courthouse terminal.

## County

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The airport reopened just prior to Sept. 1 following a five-month runway replacement project that included installation of new LED runway lights.

Isch said the original runway marking was done at the end of the project. The contractor is waiting to apply a second coat of paint, due to weather.

Ideker, Inc., St. Joseph, Mo., was the contractor for the project. Coffey County had to pay 10 percent of the near \$4 million total cost.

Isch said the airport is “100 percent” open for business; however, it will close for three days when the second coat of paint is applied. The mechanic has also returned to work in the Kraft Hangar.

Isch was very pleased with the work done by the contractor.

Pat Reese, a member of the Coffey County Airport Board, also attended.

## Internet Connection

Information Technology Director Brad Scheibmeir and Burlington USD 244 Technology Director Doug Vander

Linden visited with commissioners about the Chapter 7 bankruptcy filing of Valnet Holdings and how it affects the internet connection to the CoffeyCAN network and the Coffey County Courthouse. See related story.

The courthouse has two internet connections, one with Valnet and the other with MT Networks. Before signing a contract with TelXP to succeed Valnet, commissioners requested additional information.

## County Engineer

County Engineer Wayne Blackburn presented the following cleanup week totals recorded at the landfill: solid waste - 90.67 tons, construction debris - 60.73 tons, metal - 17.05 tons, tree limbs - 0.99 tons and appliances - 11 items.

Commissioners approved the transfer of Jeff Clarkson, equipment operator, full-time, from the signs/seeding/mowing crew to the asphalt crew within the same department; subject to regular IPP, wage classification to remain the same at MB 3 with a wage of \$18.06, effective Nov. 1.

Blackburn said Monday morning crews were working snow activities and treating all of the hard surface roads. Embankment Road was

closed.

## Coffey County Lake

Coffey County Sheriff Randy Rogers, who also serves as Coffey County Lake Director, received permission to advertise and hire one permanent part-time lake attendant. The position will fill a vacancy created at the beginning of the summer. Due to COVID-19, the position remained vacant through the summer; however now the position needs to be filled in order to allow other lake employees to take vacation they earned.

Lake attendants have asked the county to consider allowing them to use vacation for partial days, especially when the days are shortened due to the lake being closed; however this practice is not in the county’s policy manual.

Rogers told about an incident that happened several weeks ago at Coffey County Lake where a fisherman swamped his boat while attempting to navigate three-foot waves. Rogers said the water temperature was 70 degree at the time. No one was injured and the boat was recovered.

## Miscellaneous

Sheriff Rogers said the state denied the county’s request to use COVID-19 funds

for architectural fees related to developing COVID-related solutions in the courthouse. Bowie disagrees with the state’s decision to deny the funds, and he is drafting a response on behalf of the county.

Bowie summarized Kansas Attorney General Opinion 87-10, which indicates the commission cannot enter into executive session to discuss board appointments. More specifically, the opinion stated the “personnel matters” exception to the open meetings law pertains to employees of public agencies. Persons appointed to public boards and committees are not employees, they are public officers. Bowie said any discussion about board appointments must take place in an open meeting.

Bowie discussed the county’s policy manual regarding vacation time. He said 2020 has impacted vacation time for county employees. If a policy change is not made to allow some latitude in taking vacation time, then some departments may have a problem if following the “use it or lose it” policy. No action was taken.

Bowie reminded commissioners while advance voting is taking place at the courthouse, state laws apply,

especially within 250 feet of a polling location, to electioneering, disorderly election conduct and intimidation of voters. Bowie specifically mentioned people cannot wear shirts, hats, etc., to promote a candidate while at or near a polling location.

Kirchner, who is the county election officer, said all poll workers are trained about electioneering. If they see anything concerning, they are to call law enforcement.

Early voting is taking place this week from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. in Room 201 of the courthouse. Early voting will also be available 8 a.m. to noon Monday. The general election will be 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Tuesday at designated polling locations (see related story).

County Treasurer Karen Maley said she had discussed the interest report mentioned last week with Commissioner Meats. Interest rates are significantly down from the same period last year, resulting in less interest income.

Commissioners also approved:

► A \$7,280 request made by Coffey County Library Administrator Darrin Daugherty for COVID-related purchases. Daugherty updated commissioners about how the library has been handling the challenges of COVID-19.

► A recommendation of the Emergency Services Group to waive the purchasing policy, as to competitive bidding, due to the vendor being a single source supplier and to approve the quote from Motorola Solutions to purchase three APX Consolettes for the county radio system, replacing two radios that are inoperable and one with intermittent issues, for \$21,835.20.

► The recommendation of the interim emergency management director with approval of the Coronavirus Relief Task Force, to sign the memorandums of agreement between Coffey County and approved recipients of the Coronavirus Relief Task Force Grant Funds - Amy Lira (Time Out Tavern). Johnson recused himself from the issue and did not vote.

► The recommendation of the interim emergency management director to appoint Cortney Bartley as the Northeast Kansas Homeland Security Council Representative for Coffey County.

Commissioners recessed at 11:48 a.m. and planned to reconvene at 9 a.m. Wednesday to sign October checks and vouchers. The next regular meeting will be 9 a.m. Monday. The agenda includes (9:05) county engineer’s weekly report.

## City

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Anne Brown as Burlington city clerk created a vacancy in the deputy city clerk position formerly held by Brown. Applicants for the deputy city clerk position were interviewed Monday, Oct. 19. The council unanimously approved Brown’s recommendation to promote Kerry Weltha to deputy city clerk at the wage of \$21 per hour, effective Oct. 24. Weltha had been the utility clerk/assistant municipal court clerk.

The council also unanimously approved Brown’s recommendation to promote Laura Riccobono to utility billing supervisor/assistant municipal court clerk at the wage of \$16.72 per hour, effective Oct. 24. Riccobono had been the utility billing clerk/municipal court clerk.

The council approved advertising, until filled, the position of utility billing clerk/municipal court clerk.

The council also increased Brown’s wage from \$28.35 to 29.35 per hour, retroactive to Oct. 10.

Applications from small businesses in Burlington are being accepted for funding from CDBG-CV Small Business Economic Development grant received by the City of Burlington. Becky Voorhies, of Thrive Allen County, is administering the grant. She said the applications are available at Burlington City Hall. Anyone with questions can contact Voorhies at (620) 365-8128.

## Department Reports

**Electric:** Superintendent Alan Schneider said crews fixed two street lights with malfunctioning photo cells. Employees primarily have been doing normal line maintenance and tree trimming.

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They had one callout in the 1300 block of St. Lawrence Street for an outage.

**Water and Wastewater:** Superintendent Danny Hawkins said the Alleghany Street water line replacement project started. A two-inch water meter was installed at the old bowling alley and the top of some water meter pits have been lowered to help with mowing. Hawkins said Mike Schmidt completed the rip rap at the sewer lagoon. The dry weather has resulted in several small leaks that have been repaired. The City of Gridley had a major water leak that had to be fixed.

Hawkins recommended and the council approved Dillon Brown’s evaluation as well as a 2 percent merit increase to \$17.09 per hour.

**Street:** According to Superintendent Mark Davidson, street crews have been working on alleys, cleaning curb and gutters and cleaning catch boxes. They hauled 32 loads of solid waste weighing 41.24 tons to the Coffey County Landfill during Countywide Cleanup Week. That is significantly more than the 25 loads weighing 17.7 tons during fall cleanup in 2019.

The council approved two sidewalk replacement cost-share applications, one for Doris Van Pelt, 815 Niagara Street, \$600 for 60 linear feet, and the other for Synthia Renyer, 821 Niagara Street, \$650 for 65 linear feet. The city pays \$10 per linear foot of sidewalk

approved by the council. Sidewalk requirements include it must be five feet wide and a minimum four inches thick.

The council learned having an inspector during the two Kennebec bridge deck replacement projects was not part of the funds approved, so far. The council unanimously approved hiring BG Consultants to inspect work during the entire deck replacement on the Bowman Bridge and the Osborne Bridge, not to exceed \$55,848. The council expects Coffey County will pick up half of that cost since the county is paying costs related to the Osborne Bridge.

**Police:** Police Chief Doug Jones said police have been working a variety of calls. The prior day started with a fight in progress and ended with a welfare check that turned into a pedestrian walking erratically near his home. Police spent an hour and a half with the pedestrian at the hospital until he was medically cleared. Police were helping to investigate a fire in the kitchen of a house at 1024 Housatonic Street.

Jones said the number of unemployment fraud cases has been increasing, including several reported within city government. Victims are now being directed to go to the Kansas Department of Labor website, which has a link to self-report cases.

Jones said the elementary school will not have a Halloween Parade this year. The po-

lice department plans to participate in a Trunk or Treat slated for Oct. 29.

**Parks:** Scothorn gave the parks report in the absence of Superintendent Kevin Boyce. The report included removing all flowers from baskets downtown and starting to close and winterize outdoor restrooms.

B&B Bridge Company started work on the city dam retaining wall on Oct. 19. Jasper said once B&B began removing the retaining wall, it was discovered the cavity behind the wall was worse than anticipated. The discovery will result in additional cost for the project, which was not known Wednesday night.

**Finance:** The council approved Claims Ordinance No. 2020-19 in the amount of \$455,304.16 and Payroll Ordinance No. 2020-21 in the amount of \$89,686.87.

**Zoning:** Zoning Clerk Jimmy Hugunin has been updating permits. He attended the last meeting of the Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF) Task Force. Inquiries have been received about structures at Willow Bend; however, Hugunin said Willow Bend, which is just north of the city dam, is outside of the city limits and is in Coffey County’s jurisdiction.

**City Hall:** City Clerk Anne Brown said the city received \$45,316 in Coronavirus Relief Funds (CRF) from Coffey County. City Hall staff has also been doing a lot of cross-training.

A Veterans Day proclamation calls upon all citizens to commend America’s veterans and to observe Veterans Day with solemn pride on Nov. 11. Citizens are encouraged to honor the deceased by giving service to the living victims of war.

The council will meet next at 6 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 4, at Burlington City Hall.

## Valnet

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businesses using the Coffey-CAN fiber network. Valnet utilized equipment on 10 towers to reach 337 customers, of which approximately 80 percent are estimated to be customers in rural areas.

Burlington USD 244 Technology Director Doug Vander Linden said for many of those rural customers, Valnet was their only option for an internet provider.

Vander Linden, who participated in the meeting through a StarLeaf video link, said TelXP has committed to continue working with Coffey-CAN and the school district. Continuing a partnership with TelXP is important, especially if Coffey County schools were forced to return to an online learning model. “We don’t anticipate that,” Vander Linden said. “... there really is not another business model that could come in and provide that level of service.”

Before commissioners approve a contract with TelXP, they wanted to know more information. Vander Linden planned to provide additional information to commissioners when they met Oct. 28 to sign warrants and vouchers.

Coffey County Commissioners originally worked with TerraWorld to use the Coffey-CAN fiber network to reach rural residents with no internet service. TerraWorld became Valnet and several years ago Valnet was purchased by a Tulsa, Okla., company and became Valnet Holdings.



**EXTRA!**

*Read all about it every Thursday!*

The Coffey County  
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## AUCTION

**10 A.M. • SUNDAY • NOV. 8**  
**3449 PAWNEE RD. • OTTAWA, KS**

**TRACTORS – SKID LOADER – EQUIPMENT – TRUCKS**  
**LIVESTOCK EQUIPMENT – RED IRON BUILDING – PIPE**  
**TUBING – SADDLES – COLLECTIBLES – SHOP TOOLS**

- I.H. 1086
- N.H. BR 7090 Big Baler
- I.H. 966 w/Westendorf WL 42 Loader
- ‘14 Load Trail Flatbed Car Trailer, 20’, 4’ Dove
- Case 1370
- ‘95 Dodge 3500 Diesel (244K)
- Ford 8N
- Ground Hog 5 Yard Dirt Scraper
- Cat 246 Skid Loader
- WW Livestock Chute
- Ground Force Rotating Tree Saw
- Ground Force Hydraulic Post Auger

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<b>Updated Coffey County Phone Numbers – 2020</b>			
County Clerk’s Office	(620) 364-2191	Coffey County Emergency Management	(620) 364-2721
County Treasurer’s Office	(620) 364-5322	Coffey County Sheriff’s Department	(620) 364-2123
County Appraiser’s Office	(620) 364-8426	Coffey County Jail	(620) 364-3199
Register of Deeds Office	(620) 364-2423	Coffey County District Court	(620) 364-8628
Coffey County Attorney’s Office	(620) 364-5111	Coffey County Engineer’s Office	(620) 364-2441
County Commission	(620) 364-2683	Coffey County Road and Bridge	(620) 364-8446
Economic Development Office	(620) 364-8780	Coffey County Landfill	(620) 364-2048
Coffey County Extension Office	(620) 364-5313	Coffey County Noxious Weed	(620) 364-8409
Coffey County IT	(620) 364-3609	Coffey County Recycling	(620) 364-8409
Coffey County Health Department	(620) 364-8631	Coffey County Fire District Office	(620) 364-2305
Coffey County Transportation	(620) 364-1935	Burlington Recreation Center	(620) 364-8776
Coffey County Airport	(620) 364-5346	Burlington City Hall	(620) 364-5334
USD 243 Schools	(785) 733-2651	LeRoy City Hall	(620) 964-2245
USD 244 Schools	(620) 364-8478	Gridley City Hall	(620) 836-3145
USD 245 Schools	(620) 964-2212	New Strawn City Hall	(620) 364-8283
Chamber of Commerce	(620) 364-2002	Waverly City Hall	(785) 733-2461
Housing Authority	(620) 364-8895	Lebo City Hall	(620) 256-6622
Coffey County Library Admin.	(620) 364-2010	Burlington Post Office	(620) 364-5334
Coffey County Conservation	(620) 431-9821	LeRoy Post Office	(620) 964-2556
Coffey County Hospital	(620) 354-2121	Gridley Post Office	(620) 836-4522
Fish & Game	(620) 672-5911	Waverly Post Office	(785) 733-2251
Coffey County Republican	(620) 364-5325	Lebo Post Office	(620) 256-6544