Sunday

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 2026

Salina311

YOUR COMMUNITY. YOUR NEWS.



HOLIDAY SHOPPING

Salina faces first holiday shopping season without Central Mall as local sales tax distributions run ahead of 2025

Story, Page 2

FORM OF GOVERNMENT

Salina resident says petitions to change form of government submitted for county review

Story, Page 3

INSIDE

PAGE 4
Winter wheat planting reaches 98%

PAGE 6
Fairview Improvement District approved

PAGE 9
Food Bank seeks holiday donations

PAGE 11
Murals remain under current sign code

PAGE 13
Cultural plan heads to January review

PAGE 15
Community Calendar, Nov. 23–29

Salina faces first holiday shopping season without Central Mall as local sales tax distributions run ahead of 2025

November 18, 2026

Salina is heading into its first holiday shopping season since storm damage closed the interior of Central Mall, and several stores that once drew holiday shoppers to South Ninth Street will not be there this year.

So far, Kansas Department of Revenue records reviewed by Salina311 do not show local sales tax money falling with the mall's closure. Salina's local sales tax distributions for July through October, which reflect sales made in May through August, totaled $6,465,168.24. That is up 7.2% from $6,031,661.03 in the same four months of 2025.

The interior of Central Mall, 2259 S. Ninth St., has been closed since an April 27 storm caused significant damage, Salina311 has reported. Since then, AMC Theatres confirmed to Salina311 that AMC Salina 10 had permanently ceased operations, a Books-A-Million manager said the Salina store was closing permanently, and Salina311 confirmed Old Navy's store at the mall was permanently closed. Maurices staff said in June that the store was not expected to reopen inside the mall and that the company was looking at other Salina locations.

Some businesses have moved. Salina311 reported in August that Spirit Halloween, which previously operated from Central Mall, was moving for the 2026 season to 1814 S. Ninth St., in the shopping plaza next to Harbor Freight. In October, Taylor Urban, owner of Taylor's Twirler's Baton Twirling Studio, told the Salina City Commission she had searched for space beginning in April before finding a new location. She said other former mall businesses had relocated, settled for less-than-ideal spaces, were still searching or had closed.

What the sales tax numbers show

The Kansas Department of Revenue sends cities and counties their local sales tax money about two months after the sales take place. The October distribution reflects August sales. That means the figures released so far cover the months right after the storm, but not the holiday season.

Salina's June distribution, which reflects April sales, was $1,372,970.44, down 3.2% from June 2025. The May distribution, reflecting March sales, was down 2%.

The four distributions since then have each been higher than the year before:

- July: $1,597,588.85, up 3.6%
- August: $1,678,012.73, up 15%
- September: $1,610,243.02, up 7.5%
- October: $1,579,323.64, up 3.1%

Saline County's local sales tax distributions for July through October totaled $8,138,510.02, up 7.2% from $7,588,701.25 a year earlier. Statewide, city and county distributions for the same four months were up 1.5%.

From January through October, Salina has received $15,156,404.54, up 4.8% from the same period in 2025. Saline County has received $19,087,241.55, up 5.1%.

Neither local rate changed during that time. The department's reports list Salina's rate at 1.25%, effective since Oct. 1, 2016, and Saline County's at 1.5%, effective since April 1, 2021. City and county distributions come from separate tax levies and should not be added together.

The reports show only the total distributed to each city and county. They do not break out sales by business or location, so they cannot show whether people who once shopped at the mall are now spending at other Salina stores, at restaurants or somewhere else. The distribution covering September sales had not been posted on the department's website as of Nov. 17.

The mall's future

The mall property is the focus of a proposed redevelopment. CR Holland Real Estate lists a project called District 135 at Salina, a mixed-use redevelopment with an entertainment

Continued on page 3 »

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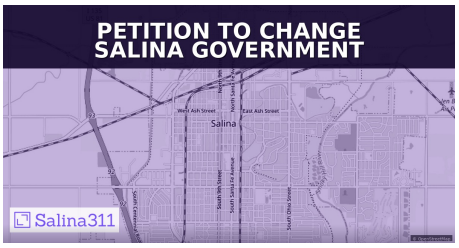
Continued from page 2: Salina faces first holiday shopping season without Central Mall as local sales tax distributions run ahead of 2025

complex, retail, a hotel and convention center, multifamily housing and pedestrian-oriented public spaces, Salina311 reported Aug. 10. The developer listed an estimated cost of $183,270,141, STAR bonds as the financing tool and a projected completion in 2028.

The Salina Community Economic Development Organization's June records listed the project as active and said it had been submitted to the Kansas Department of Commerce. The records Salina311 reviewed did not show final approval.

Salina resident says petitions to change form of government submitted for county review

November 19, 2026



A Salina resident says he has submitted two petitions that would ask voters whether to abandon the city's commission-manager form of government and adopt a mayor-council-manager system with four council members elected from wards and a mayor elected citywide.

Anthony "Tony" Johnson described the petitions in a Nov. 16 press release sent to Salina311. He said he submitted them the week before Nov. 16 to Saline County Counselor Mike Montoya.

The questions, as stated in the release, are:

Shall the City of Salina, Kansas abandon the commission-manager form of government?

Shall the City of Salina adopt the mayor-council manager form of government and become a city operating under such form of government?

Johnson said Montoya's review is to be complete next week and that he plans to circulate the petitions for signatures within the next few weeks. Salina311 has not independently confirmed that the petitions were submitted or that a review has begun, and it has not seen the petition documents or any advisory opinion.

Kansas law requires that a copy of a petition requesting an election be submitted to the county counselor, who is to issue a written advisory opinion on the legality of the form of the question within five business days. Circulation of a petition is not prohibited before that opinion is obtained. To place a question of adopting or abandoning a form of city government on the ballot, a petition must be signed by at least 10 percent of the city's qualified electors. The press release describes the threshold as 10 percent of the most recent number of registered Salina voters according to the Kansas Secretary of State. When a petition requirement is a percentage of registered voters, Kansas law bases that percentage on the most recent number

Continued on page 5 »

ADVERTISEMENT



Salina Public Library Circulation (monthly)

38,245

−2.0% vs Oct. 2025

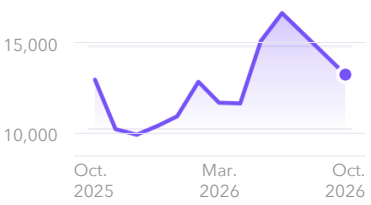


LOW 37,822 · AVG 40,443 · HIGH 45,348

Salina Public Library Building Visitors (monthly)

13,318

+2.5% vs Oct. 2025

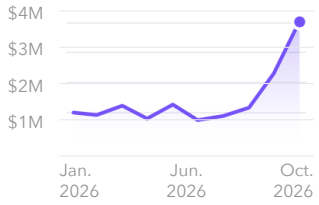


LOW 9,643 · AVG 12,297 · HIGH 17,038

Salina Residential Building Permit Value (monthly)

$4.1M

+301.4% vs Jan. 2026



LOW $758K · AVG $1.4M · HIGH $4.1M

Winter wheat planting reaches 98% in Central Kansas district that includes Saline County

November 17, 2026



Farmers in the Central Kansas crop reporting district, which includes Saline County, had planted 98% of their winter wheat as of Nov. 15.

That is ahead of the statewide figure of 96% and up from 96% in the district a week earlier. In the Central district, 85% of the wheat had emerged, compared with 86% statewide, and corn harvest was complete, ahead of the statewide pace of 92%.

Statewide, the sorghum harvest remains well behind its five-year average. Soybean and sunflower harvests are also behind their averages. Cotton harvest is ahead of last year and the five-year average.

Statewide

There were 5.9 days suitable for fieldwork in Kansas during the week. Topsoil moisture supplies rated 4% very short, 15% short, 72% adequate and 9% surplus. Subsoil moisture supplies rated 7% very short, 19% short, 67% adequate and 7% surplus.

Winter wheat condition rated 4% very poor, 9% poor, 30% fair, 45% good and 12% excellent. Winter wheat planted was 96% statewide, near 93% last year and 97% for the five-year average. Emerged was 86%, near 83% last year and 85% average.

Corn harvested was 92%, near 91% last year and 96% average.

Soybeans harvested was 87%, near 89% last year, and behind 92% average.

Sorghum harvested was 69%, behind 76% last year and 87% average.

Cotton condition rated 11% very poor, 31% poor, 41% fair, 15% good and 2% excellent. Cotton harvested was 61%, well ahead of 29% last year, and ahead of 55% average.

Sunflowers harvested was 74%, near 73% last year, but behind 86% average.

Pasture and range conditions rated 10% very poor, 15% poor, 39% fair, 33% good and 3% excellent.

By district

Winter wheat planting ranged from 80% in the Southeast district to 100% in the Northwest. Corn harvest ranged from 80% in the Northwest to 100% in the Central and Southeast districts.

District	Wheat planted	Wheat emerged	Corn harvested
Northwest	100%	99%	80%
West Central	99%	90%	89%
Southwest	99%	95%	99%
North Central	95%	85%	85%
Central	98%	85%	100%
South Central	93%	81%	99%
Northeast	84%	71%	94%
East Central	86%	62%	95%
Southeast	80%	60%	100%
State	96%	86%	92%

The weekly release reports figures by district and statewide, not by individual county.

Art & Design Committee Highlights Public Art Maintenance Concerns, Including Ohio Street Overpass Paint

November 18, 2026

Members of the Community Art and Design Committee discussed the ongoing challenge of maintaining Salina's public art collection, warning that works can fall out of public attention once they are completed.

One member emphasized the importance of stewardship of existing cultural assets, saying, "everybody loves

Continued on page 14 »

Continued from page 3: Salina resident says petitions to change form of government submitted for county review

certified to the secretary of state. Published Secretary of State registration reports reviewed for this story are organized by county, not by city, and the exact Salina signature target has not been independently determined.

If both questions were approved, the release says, the new form of government would take effect beginning with the regular city election in November 2029. Voters would elect a mayor at large to a two-year term and four council members from neighborhood wards. Council members would be elected from the wards in which they live and would serve four-year terms, staggered so two are chosen at each regular city election. At the 2029 election, according to the release, council members from two wards would serve initial four-year terms and those from the other two wards would serve initial two-year terms to establish the stagger.

That structure would replace the current Commission-City Manager government, in use in Salina since 1921, under which five commissioners are elected at large and the commission selects one of its members each year to serve as mayor. The commission appoints a city manager. The mayor-council-manager form is one of the plans authorized in Kansas law and provides for a city manager appointed by the governing body.

The press release says officials elected under the current form of government in 2027 would be required to establish ward boundaries well in advance of the 2029 election, with each ward as equal in population as practicable and with territory that is contiguous and compact.

Johnson said the questions would appear on next year's November election ballot if the petitions succeed. Under Kansas law, a question on adopting or abandoning a form of government is submitted at the next city or state general or primary election at least 60 days after a petition is certified. If voters adopt a manager-plan form, the new governing body is elected at the next regular city election as provided in the petition.

"Voting 'yes' on these ballot questions would help political power be more evenly distributed throughout the city," Johnson said in the press release.

"I look forward to getting out in the community to discuss these issues," he said. "It's a privilege for all of us to participate so directly in democracy."

Johnson previously outlined the proposal in a social media post and at the Salina City Commission meeting on Nov. 9, as previously reported by Salina311. At that time, he said he planned to submit the petitions to the county counselor before collecting signatures.

The City of Salina and members of the City Commission have not issued a public response to the Nov. 16 press release. The commission's next regular meeting is scheduled for Nov. 23.

Roundabout recommended for Ohio Street and Schilling Road, with all-way stop first

November 19, 2026



Salina city commissioners will hear a consultant's recommendation Monday to install all-way stop signs at South Ohio Street and East Schilling Road as an interim fix and eventually replace the intersection with a roundabout.

Engineering firm Benesch estimates the recommended "2+1" roundabout with a bypass lane would cost $3.7 million to build, compared with $3.8 million for a traffic signal with geometric improvements, according to the presentation in the commission's Nov. 23 study session packet.

The city's five-year capital improvement plan, adopted by the commission Oct. 12, budgets $2,000,000 for a roundabout at Ohio and Schilling, to be built in 2028 and paid for with general obligation bonds backed by property tax, according to the plan, which is attached to a Magnolia Road item in the packet for the commission's Nov. 23 regular meeting. That amount is below the consultant's $3.7 million construction estimate.

The study session begins at 2:30 p.m. Monday, Nov. 23, in Room 107 of the City-County Building, 300 W. Ash St. It will also be available on Zoom and on the city's YouTube channel. The commission takes no formal action at study sessions, though matters reviewed there may be acted on at a later formal meeting, according to the agenda.

The intersection is now controlled by stop signs on two approaches.

Continued on page 6 »

Continued from page 5: Roundabout recommended for Ohio Street and Schilling Road, with all-way stop first

Crash rate above state average

The presentation lists 11 crashes at Ohio and Schilling. Nine were angle crashes, one was a rear-end crash and one was a head-on crash. Six of the crashes caused injuries, all of them angle crashes. Five caused property damage only, and none was fatal.

The intersection's crash rate is 0.83 crashes per million entering vehicles, according to the presentation, above the statewide average of 0.67.

Signal not warranted until 2036

Benesch analyzed the intersection against the traffic signal warrants in the federal Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices. The analysis found an all-way stop is warranted now, but a traffic signal would not meet a warrant until 2036, when projected traffic would meet the four-hour volume warrant. The crash-experience warrant is not met because there are not enough reported crashes, according to the presentation.

With all-way stop signs, the intersection would operate at level of service B in the morning peak hour and C in the evening peak hour under current traffic, the presentation shows. Level of service is an A-through-F grade engineers use to rate traffic flow. By 2031, the evening peak would drop to D.

Four options compared

The consultant compared four long-term options during the evening peak hour, the busiest period in its analysis:

- A traffic signal with the existing lane layout would operate at level of service E overall, with eastbound and northbound left turns at F.
- A traffic signal with two eastbound left-turn lanes would operate at level of service C overall.
- A single-lane roundabout would operate at level of service F, with projected northbound queues of 1,960 feet.
- A "2+1" roundabout with a bypass would operate at level of service C overall.

The presentation recommends the 2+1 roundabout as the long-term improvement. It lists improved future traffic operations, room for area growth, a reduction in severe angle and left-turn crashes, lower maintenance costs from eliminating traffic signal equipment, power and maintenance, less idling and fewer stops, and "aesthetic opportunities" as reasons.

Growth around the intersection

The two roads change character at the intersection, according to the presentation.

North of Schilling, Ohio Street is a four-lane undivided road with curb and gutter, a 40 mph speed limit and a 10-foot trail on the east side. South of Schilling, it narrows to a two-lane rural section with open ditches, a 45 mph speed limit and a 5-foot sidewalk on the east side.

West of Ohio, Schilling Road is a three-lane road with curb and gutter, a 40 mph speed limit and a 10-foot trail on the north side. East of Ohio, Schilling is a two-lane gravel dead-end road with a gravel trail on its south side that ties into the levee trail system.

A site map in the presentation notes that East Schilling is the only access to Johnson Sand Co., so the design must accommodate truck traffic. The map labels the northwest corner as a potential strip mall location and shows the Quail Meadow Estates neighborhood to the southeast. It also notes a large drainage box near the intersection and says the roundabout would be built to the north to leave it undisturbed.

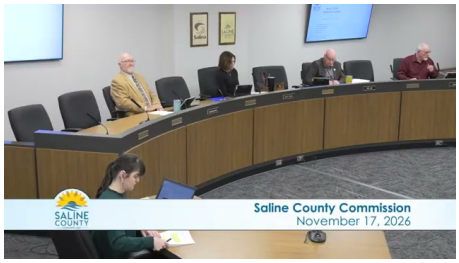
The consultant's future traffic projections account for trips generated by commercial, residential and industrial development in the area. For the 2031 evening peak hour, the presentation projects 699 vehicles per hour turning left from eastbound Schilling onto northbound Ohio, which the site map identifies as one of the primary movements along with traffic from the south turning west.

Ohio Street is classified as a minor arterial north of the intersection and a major collector to the south. Schilling Road is a minor arterial to the west and a local road to the east.

Michael Heigert, Benesch project manager, and Jim Jussel, Benesch traffic manager, are listed as contacts at the end of the presentation.

Saline County Commission approves formation of Fairview Improvement District

November 18, 2026



The Saline County Commission on Tuesday, Nov. 17, approved a petition to form the Fairview Improvement District, a step toward placing the water system serving the Sundowner area under a self-governing district with its own elected board.

Commissioners found that the petition meets the requirements of K.S.A. 19-2754, that all required notices were given and that forming the district is in the best interest of Saline County. They also directed staff to prepare an

Continued on page 10 »

Approval Ratings

Salina311 reader approval ratings for local organizations.

Salina Fire Department
Fire and emergency response agency
96% approve

Saline County Sheriff's Office
County law enforcement agency
92% approve

Saline County Emergency Management
County emergency management agency
82% approve

Saline County Health Department
Saline County
78% approve

Salina Police Department
Municipal law enforcement agency
69% approve

Salina Housing Authority
Salina Housing Authority - Affordable Housing
58% approve

Salina Parks & Recreation
City parks and recreation department
32% approve

Salina Arts & Humanities
Department
31% approve

Water Department
Utilities department for the City of Salina
21% approve

Salina Area Chamber of Commerce
Salina Area Chamber of Commerce
18% approve

Committee Reviews Draft Cultural Plan Recommendations, Seeks Public Feedback Before Month's End

November 18, 2026

The Community Art and Design Committee discussed the draft recommendations of Salina's "Big Picture" cultural plan, which is being developed by Keen Independent Research and whose draft recommendations were presented at an October 26 study session.

Staff outlined five major areas in the draft recommendations: sustaining and strengthening Salina's cultural foundation; making arts and culture more accessible, visible, and relevant; making Salina a place where artists and creatives can build a life and career; connecting Salina's ecosystem and building shared cultural capacity; and leveraging arts and culture as a driver of Salina's identity, downtown vitality, and regional appeal.

A staff member described a SWOT analysis included in the plan, citing strengths such as "strong cultural infrastructure for the city size," long-standing city leadership and investment, and extensive public art and downtown cultural assets. Listed weaknesses included limited mid-sized and affordable creative space, uneven programming across disciplines, limited opportunities for local artists, and "relatively weak outside funding." Identified threats included limited population and audience growth, rising facility and operating costs, dependence on city funding and personnel, and loss of artists and younger audiences to other communities.

The committee discussed recommendations that resonated with their work, including expanding public art into neighborhoods and everyday community spaces, establishing a shared cultural identity for Salina, and creating a more coordinated way for residents and visitors to discover arts events.

Staff said members and the public have until the end of the month to submit feedback directly to Keen Independent Research, either through the firm's project webpage, a study hotline, or by email. Staff said the plan could be found by searching "Salina cultural plan" online. The Arts Commission will also review the draft. Staff said the committee will approve its own draft annual report in January and that the strategic plan is intended to guide the community's arts direction for the next decade.

PUBLIC NOTICES

Public Notice

NOTICE

Millsap & Singer, LLC
8900 Indian Creek Parkway, Suite 180
Overland Park, KS 66210
(913) 339-9132
(913) 339-9045 (fax)

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF SALINE COUNTY, KANSAS
CIVIL DEPARTMENT

West Gate Bank	)	Case No.SA-2026-CV-000176
	)	
Plaintiff,	)	Court No.
	)	
vs.	)	Title to Real Estate Involved
	)	
Tyler R Schulze, et al.	)	Pursuant to K.S.A. §60
	)	
Defendants,	)	

NOTICE OF SALE

Under and by virtue of an Order of Sale issued to me by the Clerk of the District Court of Saline County, Kansas, the undersigned Sheriff of Saline County, Kansas, will offer for sale at public auction and sell to the highest bidder for cash in hand on December 2, 2026 at the time of 10:00 AM at the front door lobby of the Saline County Courthouse, Kansas, the following real estate:

THE EAST FIFTY FEET (E50') OF LOTS FIFTY (50), FIFTY-TWO (52), AND FIFTY-FOUR (54) ON NINTH (9TH) STREET, GROUNDS OF KANSAS WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY, AN ADDITION TO THE CITY OF SALINA, SALINE COUNTY, KANSAS, TOGETHER WITH THE WEST SEVEN AND FIVE TENTHS FEET (W7.5') OF VACATED ALLEY., Parcel ID No. / Tax ID No. 11413. Commonly known as 215 W Jewell Ave., Salina, KS 67401 ("the Property") MS199325

to satisfy the judgment in the above-entitled case. The sale is to be made without appraisement and subject to the redemption period as provided by law, and further subject to the approval of the Court.

1

MS File No. 199325.466633 KJFC

Saline County Sheriff

MILLSAP & SINGER, LLC

By:_____
Nicholas Carvajal, #30837
ncarvajal@msfirm.com
8900 Indian Creek Parkway, Suite 180
Overland Park, KS 66210
(913) 339-9132
(913) 339-9045 (fax)

By: _____
Aaron M. Schuckman, #22251
aschuckman@msfirm.com
612 Spirit Dr.
St. Louis, MO 63005
(636) 537-0110
(636) 537-0067 (fax)

ATTORNEYS FOR PLAINTIFF

MILLSAP & SINGER, LLC AS ATTORNEYS FOR WEST GATE BANK IS ATTEMPTING TO COLLECT A DEBT AND ANY INFORMATION OBTAINED WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE.

2

MS File No. 199325.466633 KJFC

Public Notice

NOTICE

Millsap & Singer, LLC
8900 Indian Creek Parkway, Suite 180
Overland Park, KS 66210
(913) 339-9132
(913) 339-9045 (fax)

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF SALINE COUNTY, KANSAS
CIVIL DEPARTMENT

Planet Home Lending, LLC	)	Case No.SA-2026-CV-000101
	)	
Plaintiff,	)	Court No.
	)	
vs.	)	Title to Real Estate Involved
	)	
Spencer J McLeland, et al.	)	Pursuant to K.S.A. §60
	)	
Defendants,	)	

NOTICE OF SALE

Under and by virtue of an Order of Sale issued to me by the Clerk of the District Court of Saline County, Kansas, the undersigned Sheriff of Saline County, Kansas, will offer for sale at public auction and sell to the highest bidder for cash in hand on December 2, 2026 at the time of 10:00 AM at the front door lobby of the Saline County Courthouse, Kansas, the following real estate:

LOT FOUR (4), BLOCK SIX (6), HIGHLAND COURT, AN ADDITION TO THE CITY OF SALINA, SALINE COUNTY, KANSAS., Parcel ID No. 08508623040100 10.000. Commonly known as 400 W Ellsworth Ave., Salina, KS 67401 ("the Property") MS231831

to satisfy the judgment in the above-entitled case. The sale is to be made without appraisement and subject to the redemption period as provided by law, and further subject to the approval of the Court.

_____
Saline County Sheriff

1

MS File No. 231831.466323 KJFC

MILLSAP & SINGER, LLC

By:_____
Nicholas Carvajal, #30837
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8900 Indian Creek Parkway, Suite 180
Overland Park, KS 66210
(913) 339-9132
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By: _____
Aaron M. Schuckman, #22251
aschuckman@msfirm.com
612 Spirit Dr.
St. Louis, MO 63005
(636) 537-0110
(636) 537-0067 (fax)

ATTORNEYS FOR PLAINTIFF

MILLSAP & SINGER, LLC AS ATTORNEYS FOR PLANET HOME LENDING, LLC IS ATTEMPTING TO COLLECT A DEBT AND ANY INFORMATION OBTAINED WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE.

2

MS File No. 231831.466323 KJFC

Public Notice

NOTICE

As Required by K.S.A. 79-2001 the amount of the tax to be charged for state, county, cities, schools, and other taxing units for 2026 on each $1,000 of valuation is hereby published.

LEVIES FOR TAX YEAR 2026

State of Kansas	0.000	Falun Township Gen/Cemetery	0.910
Saline County	42.172	Glendale Township	0.080
Salina City	29.657	Greeley Township	0.000
Assaria City	48.379	Gypsum Township	0.207
Brookville City	20.960	Liberty Township	0.120
Gypsum City	38.521	Ohio Township	0.183
New Cambria City	10.001	Pleasant Valley Township Gen/Fire Prot	0.033
Smolan City	9.640	Smoky Hill Township	0.000
Solomon City	66.579	Smoky View Township	0.000
USD #305 General	20.000	Smolan Township	0.026
USD #305 Supp Gen/Cap Out/Ad Ed	25.249	Solomon Township	0.615
USD #305 B&I	10.343	Spring Creek Township	0.471
USD #306 General	20.000	Walnut Township Cemetary	0.129
USD #306 Supp Gen/Cap Out	23.114	Washington Township	0.000
USD #306 B&I	5.468	Gypsum Valley Fire Dist #1	4.462
USD #307 General	20.000	Assaria Fire Dist #2	5.859
USD #307 Supp Gen/Cap Ou	27.913	Hedville-Bavaria Fire Dist #3	5.508
USD #307 B&I	7.173	Rural Fire Dist #4	19.364
USD #240 General	20.000	Rural Fire Dist #5	5.410
USD #240 Supp Gen/Cap Out	27.464	Rural Fire Dist #6	4.164
USD #240 B&I	5.530	Rural Fire Dist #7	4.974
USD #393 General	20.000	McPherson Fire Dist #2	8.482
USD #393 Supp Gen/Cap Out	29.387	McPherson Fire Dist #8	5.458
USD #393 B&I	16.134	Gypsum Cemetery Dist #1	0.906
USD #393 Recreation Commission	1.000	Gypsum Cemetery Dist #2	1.141
USD #400 General	20.000	Rose Hill-Bridgeport Cemetery Dist #3	1.451
USD #400 Supp Gen/Cap Out	22.834	Crown Point Cemetery Dist #1	1.215
USD #400 B&I	13.750	Salina Public Library	5.500
Cambria Township Gen/Cemetery	0.512	Central Kansas Library	1.714
Dayton Township	0.000	Salina Airport Authority	6.690
Elm Creek Cemetery Township	0.000	Central Kansas Extension Dist #3	1.466
Eureka Township	0.000		

I hereby certify that this is a true and correct statement of levies for Saline County, Kansas for the 2026 tax year as obtained from Tammy J. Arnold, Saline County Clerk.

Anthony Newell, Saline County Treasurer

Salina Emergency Aid Food Bank serving an average of 1,053 households a month, seeks holiday donations

November 18, 2026

The Salina Emergency Aid Food Bank, 255 S. Chicago St., is collecting food for its Holiday Bags campaign and pantry shelves this season as it serves an average of 1,053 households a month. Executive Director Karen Couch said that figure, about 2,636 individuals a month, is around a 6 percent decrease from 2025.

Couch said the most-needed items for the Holiday Bags campaign and in general are boxes of macaroni and cheese, canned green beans, Jell-O or Jell-O pudding mix, instant potatoes, cream of mushroom soup and cranberry sauce.

A Winter 2026 newsletter Couch forwarded also lists canned tuna in water, 100% fruit juice, tea bags, coffee grounds or pods, toilet paper, shampoo, dried beans, sugar-free Jell-O, pasta and low-sodium soup as donation ideas.

Donations may be dropped off from 9 a.m. to noon Monday through Friday at 255 S. Chicago St. The newsletter asks donors to use the west-side entrance by the garage. Food distribution is at 1 p.m. Monday through Friday, with an additional window at 5 p.m. Mondays. Distribution windows may close early depending on supply and demand, according to the food bank's website.

The food bank will close at 3 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 23, and will be closed Thursday, Dec. 24, Friday, Dec. 25, Thursday, Dec. 31, and Friday, Jan. 1, according to a holiday hours graphic Couch provided.

Couch said food donations, money and volunteering "are equally important to the work we do," and that the holiday season is full of opportunities for people to share their time and resources. If the food bank could emphasize one thing, she said, it would be that hunger does not happen only during the holidays and that helping a neighbor should not be only a holiday activity. She said it is a yearlong struggle to keep pantry shelves full, volunteer shifts filled and programs running smoothly, and that the work takes the support of a caring community every day of the year.

The food bank's website says the organization relies on more than 600 volunteer hours a month. Volunteers can sign up at salinafood.org/volunteer.html.

Getting food

Eligible clients receive a week's worth of food free of charge, up to three times a month, according to the food bank's website. The lobby is closed, and orders are taken at the window during distribution times. Clients should bring a photo ID and proof of residence in Saline County at each visit, plus documentation for any children under 18 in the household.

People who cannot reach the food bank during distribution can call 785-827-7111 about using a proxy or other arrangements. The website lists the Temporary Tote Outreach Program as temporarily suspended and asks people to call for referrals or more information.

The Isis Shrine's Feztival of Trees, Nov. 14-22 at The Temple, 336 S. Santa Fe Ave., is giving visitors one free raffle ticket for bringing at least one canned or boxed food item for the food bank.

For more information, call 785-827-7111 or visit salinafood.org.

Continued from page 6: Saline County Commission approves formation of Fairview Improvement District

organizational order setting the district's boundaries, scheduling the first election of directors and designating election officials under K.S.A. 19-2757. Commissioner Joe Hay Jr. made the motion, Commissioner Rodger Sparks seconded it, and it passed on a voice vote.

The vote followed a public hearing on the petition. County Administrator Matt Stiles told commissioners the proposed district covers what is more commonly known as the Sundowner area.

A Kansas Corporation Commission staff member told commissioners the agency began looking into the Sundowner water system in early 2024 after a state representative raised concerns. The KCC regulates rates for privately owned water utilities, while the Kansas Department of Health and Environment oversees drinking water quality. KCC staff recommended against granting the system's operator a certificate to run it as a public utility after concluding he lacked the financial, managerial and operational capability, and the KCC later issued a temporary certificate so the system could keep running while a long-term solution was worked out.

He said an improvement district, as a governmental entity with an elected board, can apply for grants and subsidized loans that a private owner could not. Once the district takes over, the KCC would no longer have jurisdiction over the system, but it would still have to meet KDHE minimum water quality requirements.

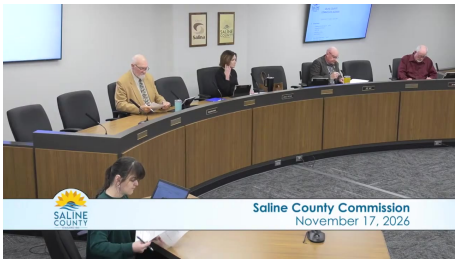
Commissioners were told that forming the district does not by itself create any direct financial obligation for Saline County. The district would be responsible for any debt, loans or grants it takes on, and its board of directors would be elected by people in the district rather than appointed by the county.

Speakers at the hearing were divided. Some residents described leaks, broken meters and low water pressure and asked whether the district would lead to new taxes or lawsuits against residents. Supporters of the petition urged the commission to move forward so the system could qualify for outside funding. Representatives of the companies now working on the system said they plan to stay involved long enough to help it succeed before turning the board over to residents.

Before the vote, one commissioner said that while change is difficult, moving forward and seeking funding opportunities is the best thing for the county and the area.

Saline County Commission approves Gypsum petition to join Rural Fire District 1

November 18, 2026



The Saline County Commission on Tuesday, Nov. 17, approved a petition from the City of Gypsum to be included in Saline County Rural Fire District 1.

Commissioners were told the city formally petitioned the county to join the district under K.S.A. 19-3605. Gypsum operates a municipal volunteer fire department and decided to seek inclusion in the rural fire district because of ongoing difficulty finding staff for that department. The city had completed its required procedural steps and passed a resolution requesting inclusion.

Under state law, the district's boundaries cannot change until next year, so the inclusion would take effect in 2028. Until then, the city and the district expect to work under a cooperative agreement. Gypsum included funding for its fire department in its 2027 budget, and the city has determined what equipment it wants to transition to the district.

With the petition received and acknowledged, county staff will prepare a resolution to formally expand Rural Fire District 1 to include Gypsum. That process includes a public hearing and several other steps, which staff aims to complete by April 1.

No one spoke during public comment on the item. One commissioner thanked residents, rural fire district members and city officials who attended the commission's recent roadshow meeting in Gypsum, saying their questions had largely been answered there and that people supported the change.

The motion to approve the request, item 2026-136, was made and seconded and passed on a voice vote.

Saline County Commission authorizes deputy appraiser job offer

November 18, 2026

The Saline County Commission on Tuesday, Nov. 17, authorized the county appraiser to offer the position of deputy appraiser at step 10, a salary of $86,694.40.

Commissioners took the action after returning from a 10-minute executive session on personnel matters with the county administrator, the human resources director and the appraiser. The motion passed on a voice vote.

Art & Design Committee: Salina Murals, Signage Remain Under Current Sign Code Following Litigation Ruling

November 18, 2026



The Community Art and Design Committee was briefed on the status of public murals and signage in Salina after a ruling in litigation the city had been involved in over signage and murals.

Art Services Coordinator, Crystal Hammerschmidt, told the committee that, for now, anything created or placed in the community — including murals, artwork, or signage — will be regulated under the current sign code. Development Services will review the sign code and determine how to proceed, a process expected to take months rather than days or weeks.

"Just because a ruling has been made doesn't mean that we're ready to just get back to same old, same old," the Hammerschmidt said, noting "it'll take some time."

As a result, certain projects such as trash corral murals may remain on pause for a while. The staff member said the ruling could still have significant implications for programming heading into festival season and encouraged committee members to review the sign code to stay informed. A committee member asked whether the city was still consulting with outside sign code experts who had previously spoken at City Hall, but staff said they did not know the current status of outside consultation.

Staff Plans Policy Recommendation on Smoky Hill River Festival Art Collection

November 18, 2026



A staff member told the Community Art and Design Committee she intends to bring forward a recommendation on updated policy language governing the city's Smoky Hill River Festival public art collection.

The staff member said the city has continued adding pieces to the festival collection each year but has never had a dedicated policy for it. While the existing Community Art and Design (CAD) policy addresses outdoor, public-facing art, it does not cover the festival collection, raising questions about care, maintenance, tracking, storage, loan agreements, and sign-off procedures as staff turns over.

She noted the city is "not a warehouse" or "an auction house," and said clearer policy is needed for situations in which people offer to donate collections. She said she has already begun working on loan agreements and policy language and hopes to bring the matter to the committee for review early in the year.

The staff member also proposed that the committee review a section of the CAD policy each month, in part to familiarize newer members and gather feedback on inconsistencies the committee has encountered in recent years, including some larger donated sculptures that appeared to fall outside the existing policy language.

Saline County Expo Center gets bucking chutes, plans Kenwood Hall roof work

November 18, 2026

David Flaherty II, Saline County's Expo, Weed and Farm director, gave the Saline County Commission his department's November update on Tuesday, Nov. 17.

Flaherty said the Expo Center now has bucking chutes, and once a few more pieces of equipment are brought in or purchased, the facility can again host full rodeos.

Recent work at the Expo Center included installing child changing stations donated by the Health Department, finishing lights in Ag Hall, repainting the Ag Hall seating, putting roof paint on Barn 2 and winterizing it. Staff also helped other county departments, including taking a podium to Gypsum for the commission's roadshow meeting.

Upcoming projects include a coating on the Kenwood Hall roof to help control leaks, replacing broken boards on the outside barns, painting the restrooms on the north end of Ag Hall and moving a cleaning closet to make room for seating near the concession stand.

On the weed side, Flaherty said fall spraying should wrap up the week of Nov. 16, and the department's applicator is scheduled to take the general exam for a noxious weed license on Dec. 9. For the county farm, rent statements have gone out and are due Dec. 31.

A commissioner thanked Flaherty and his staff for their help in Gypsum and with departments across the county.

Kay Jenez Gladow

November 18, 2026



Kay Jenez Gladow

October 8, 1939 - November 15, 2026

Kay Jenez Gladow passed peacefully away Sunday, November 15, 2026, at 12:25 p.m. in Salina. She was born October 8, 1939, in Council Grove, to Jacob and Bonnie Waymire.

In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by siblings Jack Richard Waymire, Don Waymire, and Beverly O'Meara, her first husband Steven Burke, and her second husband Henry Gladow.

She is survived by her daughters, Tamera Martin (Herington) and Stephanie (Kevin) Cool (Salina); her grandchildren, Tessa (Chad) Girard (Olathe), Adam Young (New York, NY), Tyson (Megan) Weber (Nickerson), and Jordan (Angelica) Young (Glen Cove, NY); eight great-grandchildren; and one great-great-granddaughter. Many nieces and nephews are also left to mourn her passing.

Throughout her life, Kay wore many hats. She was a homemaker, sold Avon and Mary Kay, and was employed with Flint Hills Job Corps, where she was selected as the 2001 Outstanding Older Kansas Worker. In the community of Council Grove, she volunteered at swim meets, helped with Brownies, Girl Scouts, and vacation Bible school, and checked out books at the library. She was a former member of Council Grove Church of Christ Christian and The Order of the Eastern Star. She briefly enjoyed involvement in the Red Hat Society.

Kay had an eye for making things beautiful. Holidays were especially important to her, and decorating was something she took seriously. She loved reading, usually having at least two books going at once, and enjoyed Jeopardy and the Game Show Network, Pitch, Bridge, Rummikub, and square dancing. She was a doll collector, a loyal K-State Wildcat fan, and a Kansas City Chiefs fan.

Cremation was chosen and a private family celebration of life will be held. The family wishes to acknowledge and thank the health care team at Reflections Retirement Resort and Gentiva Hospice for the care extended to her and the family during her final days.

Memorials may be made to Tammy Walker Cancer Center or Gentiva Hospice Foundation.

Ryan Mortuary & Crematory

Richard Michael Gorman

November 18, 2026



Richard Michael Gorman

April 3, 1944 - November 14, 2026

Richard Michael Gorman, age 82 and living in Salina, died November 14, 2026. Richard was born in Emporia to Michael and Agnes (Siebenaler) Gorman and spent his early years on the family farm near Hartford. They moved to the edge of Erie in 1960 and he graduated from Erie High School in 1962. He attended auto mechanics school in Kansas City, leading to work in the service department of the Ricketts Chevrolet dealership in Erie as one of his first jobs. After his parents sold the farm and retired in 1976, Richard moved to Halstead. He married Irene (Habiger) Jones in 1992, and they lived in Wichita until retiring in Salina.

He is preceded in death by his parents; wife, Irene; and brother, David.

He is survived by siblings Carol Medvick, Jeannine Nordstedt (Larry), and Roger Gorman (Virginia); as well as eight nieces and nephews.

Mass of Christian burial will be Friday, November 20, 2026, at 10:30 a.m. at St. Mary Catholic Church, 501 Mechanic, Hartford, KS 66854, with Fr. Colm Larkin officiating. Interment will follow at St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception Cemetery, Hartford.

Memorials may be made to St. Mary Catholic Church of Hartford, care of the church or Ryan Mortuary, Salina.

Ryan Mortuary & Crematory

Salina City Commission to consider readopting financial policies with no changes

November 19, 2026

The Salina City Commission is scheduled to consider Resolution No. 26-8386, which would adopt the city's financial policies. Staff is not proposing any changes to the policies.

The item is on the consent agenda for the commission's 4 p.m. meeting Monday, Nov. 23, in Room 107 of the City-County Building, 300 W. Ash St. The meeting will also be on Zoom and the city's YouTube channel.

The commission last adopted the financial policies on Nov. 10, 2025, under Resolution No. 25-8316,

Continued on page 13 »

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Jean Marie (Schwieterman) Huser

November 18, 2026



Jean Marie (Schwieterman) Huser

July 21, 1945 - November 14, 2026

Jean Marie (Schwieterman) Huser, 81, of Salina, died on Saturday, November 14, 2026. She lost consciousness while out with friends, after a months-long battle with her failing heart. She was born on July 21, 1945, to Pauline (Bergkamp) and Walter "WJ" Schwieterman in Syracuse, the third child of seven.

Jean married Kenneth Huser on December 28, 1966. They had three children. Jean and Ken were devout Catholics and very active in their parish community.

Jean was, by profession, an educator. She taught elementary-aged children with behavioral and learning challenges. She was also a homemaker, quilter, and seamstress, and offered much of her craft and time to young mothers and their children.

She was preceded in death by her parents and husband. She is survived by her six siblings: Judy (Marlin) Kocher, Dave (Jenny) Schwieterman, Luke (Rena) Schwieterman, Bart Schwieterman, Omer (Taa) Schwieterman, and Kent (Tina) Schwieterman; children Shelby Noggle, Audrey (Kyle) Clem, and Nathan (Teri) Huser; seven grandchildren: Justin (Rose) Shriver-Noggle, Kenneth Clem, James (Mitzi) Clem, Christopher (Madison) Noggle, Margaret (Alex) Davis, Cameron Noggle, and Elizabeth Huser; and four great-grandchildren: Jake Clem, Ryan Clem, Vanessa Clem, and Eleanor Davis.

A visitation will be held Friday, November 20, 2026, from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at Ryan Mortuary, with a rosary at 7:00 p.m.

The funeral Mass will be 10:00 a.m. Saturday, November 21, 2026, at St. Mary Queen of the Universe Catholic Church, 230 E. Cloud St., Salina. The burial will follow the service at All Saints Catholic Cemetery, 3350 E. Crawford St., Salina.

In lieu of flowers, memorials can be made to Birthright of Salina or the St. Mary School Endowment.

Ryan Mortuary & Crematory

Salina Cultural Plan Heads Toward Final Draft, City Commission Review Set for January

November 19, 2026



Salina Arts and Humanities staff provided an update on the ongoing cultural plan being developed by consultant Keen Independent Research, outlining a timeline that leads to a presentation to the City Commission.

Staff said the cultural arts directors' roundtable was scheduled to meet by Zoom with the plan author to review preliminary findings and goals. Staff said a final draft would be released for a one-week review on Jan. 5, with a final draft prepared for the City Commission on Jan. 26. Staff encouraged public feedback through a link, email, and phone line on the department's website, noting that time for input was limited.

Staff said the plan would not carry a financial requirement upon adoption. The director recalled that a previous "Big Ideas" cultural plan included $50,000 per year for three years to support implementation. Staff said they may consider a budget request for the 2028 budget cycle, noting the department had not sought a line-item increase in its main spending areas in about 10 years.

Staff explained that any funding request would originate from the department through the city manager and finance director rather than from the commission directly.

Staff also discussed efforts to improve a central cultural calendar, noting that local cultural agencies have increasingly posted events only on their own websites. Staff said Visit Salina's "Discover Salina" platform launched a new calendar with customizable filters, and the department may work with the cultural roundtable to create a dedicated arts and culture link.

Salina City Commission to consider readopting…, continued from page 12

according to a staff report from Finance Director Debbie Pack.

The city must review and approve its investment policy each year to renew expanded investment powers from the Kansas Pooled Money Investment Board, the report said. Because the investment policy is a section of the financial policies, staff is bringing the entire policy document forward for annual review and approval.

The city was approved for the expanded powers on Jan. 26, 2022, the report said. The approval extends the maximum maturity for investments from two years to four years and broadens the allowed instruments to include direct obligations of the United States.

The draft policies cover accounting, auditing and financial reporting; reserves; the operating budget;

Continued on page 16 »

Salina Connect

News, milestones and specials from Salina businesses and attractions.

BUSINESS

Freddy's Frozen Custard & Steakburgers runs Dinner & Movie Sweepstakes with Hershey Lineup



The Dinner & Movie Sweepstakes is in full swing.

Folks still have a chance to win 2 free tickets to HERSHEY, a major motion picture (in theaters starting 11/25), and a $100 Freddy's gift card.

Folks can even celebrate their win with a treat from their new Hershey Lineup.

Sign up here:
https://www.angel.com/giveaway/hershey-and-freddys

Art & Design Committee Highlights Public..., continued from page 4

the mural, and then all of a sudden you move on to the next great thing," and stressed the committee should keep track of past works. Another speaker said someone had raised at a meeting

City of Salina Hiring An Engineering Technician



The City of Salina has announced a new position opening:

- Engineering Technician II

Candidates can apply at jobs.salina-ks.gov

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continued

that the paint on the artwork at the Ohio Street overpass is "looking pretty bad at this point," along with paint coming off bridge railings, issues that could leave visitors feeling the works are not being maintained.

A speaker also raised the cost of painting the overpass. The City Commission awarded the $950,000.16 bid for the North Ohio Overpass Painting Project on Nov. 9, Salina311 previously reported. A staff member noted that such capital improvement

Sebree Meadows hosts first responders for Equine Assisted Learning with Kansas Wesleyan University



Sebree Meadows, 3145 E Country Club Rd, welcomed first responders for an Equine Assisted Learning experience in partnership with Kansas Wesleyan University.

Participants worked with horses to explore communication, teamwork, and personal growth.

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continued

projects involve a site committee and a separate department for care and maintenance, and that the arts and humanities budget cannot cover upkeep of all major art and design projects.

Staff said it is important to plan for long-term maintenance at the outset of projects to ensure the city can be a good steward of its collection, and progress was noted in addressing works that have needed attention.

Community Calendar

Salina-area events for Monday, Nov. 23, through Sunday, Nov. 29, 2026. Times and venues as submitted to Salina311.

FEATURED · FRIDAY, NOV. 27 · 4:30 p.m.

Holiday Lights in the Museum

Rolling Hills Zoo, 625 N. Hedville Rd., Salina, KS

Holiday Lights in the Museum - Kansas' only all-indoor holiday light display! With just eight exclusive nights to experience the dazzling magic! Step into a twinkling winter wonderland, surrounded by the warmth and wonder of the Wildlife Museum. This event is FRIDAYS and SATURDAYS ONLY November 27 - December 19, 2026 4:30 - 8:00 PM Entry by donation (Give what you can - every little bit counts and goes toward animal care here at RHZ) Indoor Holiday Light Display throughout our incredible Wildlife Museum Gift Shop open to help you with your holiday shopping Along with the awe-inspiring lights, the Elephant Trunk's Gift Shop will also be open, stocked with a wide selection of unique gifts ideal for holiday shopping. From exclusive zoo souvenirs, fair-trade items, apparel & décor, kids' toys and plushes, there's something for everyone on your list. Eats & Treats for All ($) Meet & Take Photos With Santa North Pole Photo Stop Indoor Snowball Fights & Forts Mark your calendar and bring your loved ones for a night of holiday enchantment, shopping, and fun! Whether it's your first time visiting our Zoo & Wildlife Museum or an annual tradition, Holiday Lights in the Museum promises an unforgettable experience this holiday season - all indoors and perfect for those chilly nights! PLEASE NOTE: No ATM Machine Please plan ahead! We no longer have an ATM on-site, so if you'd like to have cash on hand for tips, smaller purchases, or other event activities, we recommend bringing cash with you. (Of course, you can alternatively pay with a debit/credit card.) Thank you!

MONDAY, NOV. 23

9:30 a.m.
Brainy Babies
Youth Programming Room, Salina Public Library, 301 W. Elm St., Salina, KS

10:30 a.m.
Toddler Storytime
Youth Programming Room, Salina Public Library, 301 W. Elm St., Salina, KS

4:00 p.m.
Youth Pokémon—Beginner Basics Club
Youth Programming Room, Salina Public Library, 301 W. Elm St., Salina, KS

6:15 p.m.
The Checkmate Club
Campbell Room, Salina Public Library, 301 W. Elm St., Salina, KS

TUESDAY, NOV. 24

10:15 a.m.
Tinker Tots
Youth Programming Room, Salina Public Library, 301 W. Elm St., Salina, KS

4:00 p.m.
Paint & Munch
Prescott Meeting Room, Salina Public Library, 301 W. Elm St., Salina, KS

FRIDAY, NOV. 27

7:30 p.m.
Disney's FROZEN | THE MUSICAL
Theatre Salina, 303 E. Iron Ave., Salina, KS

SATURDAY, NOV. 28

1:00 p.m.
Holiday Gift Shop Sale: Artist Alley Pop-Up!
242 S Santa Fe Ave, Salina, KS 67401

7:30 p.m.
Disney's FROZEN | THE MUSICAL
Theatre Salina, 303 E. Iron Ave., Salina, KS

SUNDAY, NOV. 29

2:00 p.m.
Disney's FROZEN | THE MUSICAL
Theatre Salina, 303 E. Iron Ave., Salina, KS

Salina tournaments drew 533 teams in 2026, with estimated $5.6 million economic impact

November 19, 2026



Salina hosted 24 tournaments on its Bill Burke Park and BFRA tournament lists in 2026, drawing 533 teams and an estimated $5,612,160 in economic impact, year-end figures presented to the Salina Parks and Recreation Advisory Board on Wednesday show.

The 14 tournaments at Bill Burke Park brought in 402 teams and an estimated $3,516,736. The 10 tournaments on the BFRA list brought in 131 teams and an estimated $2,095,424.

Continued on page 16 »

Sunday Crossword

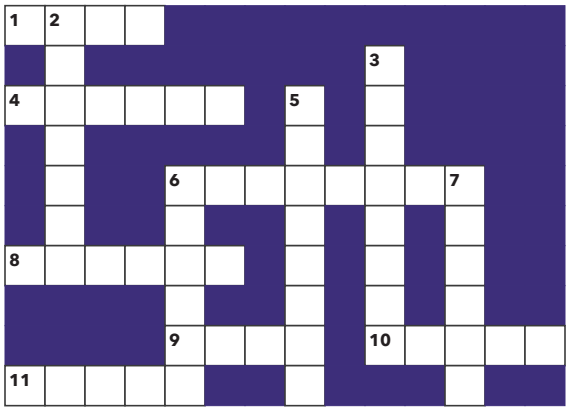
Every clue comes from this edition of Salina311. Answers available on Salina311.com/stories – scan the Answers code.

Answers

Subscribe / order this paper

AROUND SALINA THIS WEEK

10×14 · news, events and businesses in this edition



ACROSS

1. Street that meets Schilling at the proposed roundabout (4)
4. Disney musical Theatre Salina stages Nov. 27-29 (6)
6. Salina's ____ plan is headed toward a January City Commission review (8)
8. City whose petition to join Rural Fire District 1 was approved (6)
9. Saline County ____ Center, planning Kenwood Hall roof work (4)
10. Winter ____ planting reached 98% in the Central Kansas district (5)
11. The proposed mayor-council plan would elect four council members from ____ (5)

DOWN

2. Brand in the Freddy's Dinner & Movie Sweepstakes (7)
3. ____ Improvement District, approved by the Saline County Commission (8)
5. Kansas law requires a copy of a ____ requesting an election go to the county counselor (8)
6. Bucking ____ the Expo Center is getting (6)
7. Saline County Treasurer's notice listing 2026 tax ____ (6)

Salina tournaments drew 533 teams in…, continued from page 15

The totals above are the figures stated in the report. The individual BFRA tournament entries listed in the same report add up to 11 tournaments, 138 teams and an estimated $2,113,744, one more tournament than the report's BFRA subtotal. The difference is an April 11 adult slow-pitch softball tournament listed with seven teams and an estimated $18,320.

The report compares the totals with recent years. In 2025, Salina hosted 27

continued

tournaments with 583 teams and an estimated $5,248,899 in economic impact. In 2024, it hosted 24 tournaments with 586 teams and an estimated $5,177,419.

The largest events by team count on the Bill Burke list were the Salina Diamond Wars Baseball Tournament on May 30-31 and the Kansas USA State Fastpitch Tournament on June 27-28, with 53 teams each. Their estimated economic impact was

Salina City Commission to consider readopting…, continued from page 13

revenue; cash management; investments; debt management; and the capital improvement program.

There is no direct fiscal impact from adopting the policy, the staff report said, though approval of the expanded powers may allow the city to capture additional investment revenue.

continued

$573,664 and $533,120.

The report lists the Leonard Cyre Memorial in June with no teams and an estimated loss of 50 teams, and an Oct. 11 USA Fastpitch fall softball tournament with no teams and an estimated loss of 35 teams. It states that USA Softball held its fall state tournament in Manhattan this year and that changes have already been made to bring that tournament back to Salina in 2027.