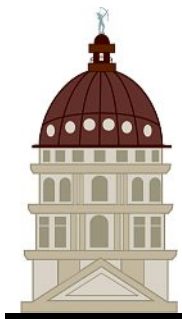




## Washburn Rural's Selm wins state title for father

SPORTS, 1B



# THE TOPEKA CAPITAL-JOURNAL

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# Water safe despite earthy taste

## City points to condition of Kansas River

Tim Hrenchir

Topeka Capital-Journal | USA TODAY NETWORK

Topeka's tap water remains safe to drink despite recent complaints about its taste, odor and color, city officials say.

The city's water continues to meet all state and federal drinking water standards, said Daniel Garrett, the city's communications director, on May 29.

Garrett responded by email to questions The Capital-Journal posed after Facebook users last week described the taste and odor of city water as having recently been "musty," "like mildew," "like pool water" and "like dirt."

### Customers made service requests, city official says

The city between May 21 and May 28 documented nine water quality-related service requests associated with taste and odor concerns, Garrett said.

City utilities staff have received additional spoken reports, some of which may overlap with those service

requests, he said.

"The reported concerns have generally described an earthy or dirty taste and odor, with some customers also reporting temporary cloudiness," Garrett said. "Complaints have come from multiple areas of the community, and do not appear isolated to a single neighborhood."

City utilities staff members have identified no regulatory or compliance issues related to water quality, Garrett said.

While state and federal officials don't regulate taste and odor compounds, the city understands taste and

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Central Crossing Commerce Park is an industrial park with over 500 acres in South Topeka.

EVERT NELSON/TOPEKA CAPITAL-JOURNAL

# Evergy eyes county data center project

## GO Topeka has three active leads in its project pipeline

Matt Resnick

Special to the Topeka Capital-Journal | USA TODAY NETWORK

Electric-utility giant Evergy has been engaged in monthslong discussions to bring a data center to Shawnee County.

GO Topeka President Rhiannon Friedman she was unable to divulge the company that Evergy is negotiating with, but added that GO Topeka — which serves as a liaison between the two entities — has dubbed the codename for those discussions as Project Deep Blue.

"Evergy reached out to us to make the introduction that they've been having conversations about the project back in late October, early November," Friedman told The Capital-Journal.

Friedman also said she was unsure whether the project is being developed as an AI-focused hyperscale data center, which could consume up to 5 million gallons of water daily to operate, or a smaller facility.

Regardless, the facility would likely be located on the southern outskirts of Topeka near Central Crossing Commerce Park or Kanza Fire Commerce Park. Industrial areas typically provide more land access to high-voltage electricity lines.

"We try to direct industrial development into our industrial commerce parks," Friedman said. "It just makes the most sense for land use."

Courtney Lewis, a senior communications manager for Evergy, declined to confirm whether Evergy was in discussions to bring a data center to Shawnee County. But Lewis said Evergy has been closely monitoring the exponential rise of data centers across the country.

"Evergy has been following that growth and is prepared for it," Lewis said in an email reply.

The topic of data centers was broached by Friedman during the Joint Economic Development Organization's quarterly meeting in May.

According to a presentation, GO Topeka has three active data center leads locked into its project pipeline, which includes Project Deep Blue. An active lead in this case means that a company has reached out to GO Topeka, expressing interest in a data center development project.

"As far as I can see, the first path to any success or any forward movement with any of these projects is getting through approvals with Evergy — which has yet to happen," Friedman told the board.

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# Financial expert launches bid

## Calcutt running for District 1 seat on Shawnee County Commission

Keishera Lately

Topeka Capital-Journal | USA TODAY NETWORK

Jack Calcutt has filed to run for the District 1 seat of the Shawnee County Commission.

Calcutt, 41, a Republican, said he felt a spiritual calling to run for the position and get more involved in local government.

"I had a number of experiences where I was disappointed with how things were being run, not just here, but just generally overall," Calcutt told The Capital-Journal. "I had a sense that because of how we have structured things, some of the people with talents and competency to make entrepreneurial decisions with government weren't getting involved in the process for a lot of reasons."



Calcutt

"And it started with wanting to encourage some of my friends to run, who I thought would be good leaders. And I felt looking back at myself that I couldn't really ask someone else to do something that I wasn't willing to do myself. And so, I began by trying to get involved in our local party precinct committee."

District 1, which covers much of western Topeka and western Shawnee County, has been represented since January 2019 by Bill Riphahn, who is not running for reelection.

### Candidate hopes to bring financial expertise to District 1

Calcutt said one of the main areas he would like to focus on is bringing down property taxes.

"One of the things that I've noticed is it does seem that the county commission and other, frankly, other government bodies as well. For example, the state Legislature would benefit from at least a few voices of individuals who have deeper financial experience, that are more comfortable with ins and outs, money flow, how financing works, how budgets work."

"And that's something I've been working with my whole career."

Calcutt is a chartered financial analyst and has sat on a zoning board for Shawnee County.

"For instance, a particular department is prioritizing its budget," he said. "The Department of Corrections, for example, has over a \$50 million budget and we didn't spend very much time at all reviewing how that \$50 million is prioritized this past budget cycle in the public."

"That's something we could look at, and I imagine if we took a critical eye to it and just made sure that we were making good prioritized decisions across all of the departments, we could easily find the \$1.5 million or so that we needed this past year to make sure that we didn't raise the mill levy."

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