

THE JOPLIN GLOBE

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ART: Joplin looks for artists to decorate roundabouts. **3A**

MSSU: Outfield key for NCAA regional competition. **1B**

No violations by City Council members found in investigation

BY DEBBY WOODIN
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A St. Louis municipal law attorney cleared several members of the Joplin City Council of any council ethics or Sunshine Law violations regarding their asking to meet with council member Ryan Jackson on April 13. They met with him ahead of a council hearing on statements Jackson made that prompted pro-

tests by some members of the community.

Documents were released Wednesday by the city of Joplin showing that City Attorney Peter Edwards turned the investigation sought by the City Council over to a St. Louis attorney, Kevin O'Keefe, a principal in the law firm of Curtis, Heinz, Garrett and O'Keefe.

A council majority voted at the April 13 meeting to reprimand Jackson for

election day comments he posted on social media regarding LGBTQ candidates and for threatening a television reporter who provided information to the station's viewers about the comments. A vote to remove Jackson from the council failed.

In a statement issued Wednesday regarding the conclusion of the investigation of other council members, Mayor Rob O'Brian

said, "I am satisfied with the investigation, which was completed and the conclusions reached and am pleased there are no findings of any ethical or Sunshine Law violations by any of the parties involved."

Three members of the City Council spoke privately with Jackson that evening in an office outside council chambers. There were allegations made after the meeting that it appeared

then-mayor Keenan Cortez told police officers to bring Jackson to the mayor's office.

According to the investigation report, Cortez said he asked Jackson to come to the mayor's office. Jackson stated that police officers offered to escort him from the building before Cortez asked Jackson to come to the mayor's office.

There had been a protest in front of City Hall that

evening against Jackson because of his comments and some protestors holding signs were inside the council chambers during the council meeting.

At the conclusion of the meeting that night, newly elected council member Mary Price made a motion for the city attorney to investigate the treatment of Jackson by council members

SEE **CITY**, 2A

Granby kennel owner charged with animal abuse

83 dogs removed from the property

BY DEBBY WOODIN
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NEOSHO, Mo. — A Granby dog breeder or dealer who was not licensed, according to authorities, made his initial appearance Tuesday in Newton County Court on animal cruelty charges.

The charges stem from conditions found Friday, May 8, with the discovery of 83 dogs and puppies at his two kennel operations. Many of the animals were Great Danes, according to court records.

The kennel owner, Devin Matthew Harris, 49, faces a felony charge of animal abuse. That charge alleges that Harris, whose operation was called Great Danes of the Ozarks, "purposefully caused suffering of a Great Dane puppy and the suffering was the result of torture consciously inflicted by the defendant."

In addition, Prosecutor Will Lynch also filed two misdemeanor charges. One alleges that Harris purposely killed a Great Dane and the second alleges that Harris knowingly failed to provide adequate care for the dogs and kept them in unsanitary conditions.

An investigator reported, in a sworn statement to support charges, that he had probable cause to believe that Harris "is operating Great Danes of the Ozarks without a commercial license and is responsible for the death of two adult dogs and three puppies. One dog was found with a bullet hole in its right-side neck area. One dog was skeletal remains and three puppies were in a state of decomposition and cause of death is unknown."

In addition, the statement reads that Harris "is also operating the two kennels in a state of unsanitary conditions with no form of ventilation and the smell of ammonia was to the point that personal protective gear needed to be worn to remove the dogs and the door had to be opened to air the kennels out."

"Also there was a large amount of fecal material and diarrhea on the floors and walls to a state that it made it difficult to walk through the kennels without slipping and falling."

Some of the dogs required immediate medical attention for cuts, scrapes and bites from other dogs and sores on their bodies. The areas where the dogs were kept were small and dirty for the number of dogs kept in the area, the investigator reported.

Judge Jacob Skouby set a hearing for Harris on July 7 and bond at \$5,000 cash or surety.

The dogs were taken to a north Missouri kennel that specializes in Great Danes. The woman who operates that kennel could not be reached. She left a message on her phone to say she is too busy taking care of the dogs to answer the heavy volume of phone calls she is receiving.

House of learning



Work will begin in the next few days on interior renovations of the former Neosho Colored School at 639 Young St. in Neosho.

GLOBE | JOHN HACKER

Renovation to start on former Neosho Colored School

BY JOHN HACKER
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NEOSHO, Mo. — Construction begins this week on a renovation project that has been 15 years in the making on a historic building that has been hiding in plain sight for about 130 years.

Lana Henry, president of the Carver Birthplace Association, said her group chose Construction Services Group, or CSG, to renovate the 1872 Neosho Colored School, a

building that served as a school for African Americans who had only recently been freed from slavery and were wanting to learn to read and write.

The school is at 639 Young St. in Neosho and its most famous student, George Washington Carver, who was born a slave in 1865 near Diamond, was about 10 years old when he walked the 8 miles from the home of Moses and Susan Carver to

SEE **SCHOOL**, 2A



Lana Henry (third from right), chair of the Carver Birthplace Association, meets with Arvest Bank employees and others at the Neosho Colored School in this photo from July 2024.

GLOBE FILE

World Street Painting Festival comes to Joplin in June

Artists from 10 countries to participate

FROM STAFF REPORTS
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A bigger World Street Painting Festival will come to Joplin this summer to create artwork that will help celebrate the 100th anniversary of Route 66.

There will be 16 international artists participating in what the Joplin Convention

and Visitors Bureau bills as the world's largest outdoor 3D street painting collection to celebrate the Mother Road anniversary.

From Native American legends to classic diners, from open highways to stories of movement and migration, the paintings will celebrate the many layers of the route's past, present and future.

Paintings will be done Wednesday, June 3, through

SEE **ART**, 2A



This is one of several 3D street paintings that previously went on display at the Harry M. Cornell Arts & Entertainment Complex. The World Street Painting Festival comes to Joplin in June.

GLOBE FILE

