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# THE JOPLIN GLOBE

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**AUDITOR:** Missouri budget cuts looming as surplus declines. **4A** | **BASEBALL:** Joplin Jailbirds fall 10-9 to Iowa team. **1B**

## Joplin officials hear more on tax question

Legislator to try to schedule a Joplin town hall on Amendment 5

BY DEBBY WOODIN  
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Members of the city of Joplin's legislative committee sought more information Wednesday about a state ballot measure set for the Aug. 4 election. The proposal would phase out Missouri's individual income tax over time, and city officials want to know how that could affect local sales tax collections.

The committee is composed of City Council members including Mayor Rob O'Brian, Mayor Pro Tem Keenan Cortez, Josh DeTar and Josh Bard, and includes City Manager Nick Edwards, City Attorney Peter Edwards and the city finance director, Leslie Haase.

The discussion was similar to one last week at a meeting of the council-appointed finance committee.

If approved by voters Aug. 4, Amendment 5 will require the phase out and elimination of the individual income tax over time based on revenue growth. It is envisioned that as the income tax is reduced, the state will enact sales or use taxes to generate new revenue.

The language of the amendment also requires "the reduction of property taxes and other local taxes to offset any local sales tax revenue increases" from new sales taxes on categories that currently are not taxed.

"Our biggest concern is how its going to affect the city and our budget," DeTar said.

Rep. Lane Roberts, R-Joplin, quoted former City Council member Phil Stinnett, who at the finance committee meeting said, "Just because it's good for the state does not mean it's good for Joplin."

"My belief is that we can do this without adversely affecting the city if we pay attention to business," Roberts told the committee.

How tax offsets on a local basis would guarantee existing revenue levels to local governments is not yet clear. The mayor said that local governments could keep 3%.

SEE **AMENDMENT, 2A**

## Tuition rising



Daughter Kenna Haley (left) and wife Susan Haley join Missouri Southern State University board of governors member Carlos Haley at Friday's board meeting, where he was honored for nine years of service on the board. **GLOBE | JOHN HACKER**

### Cost of attending MSSU going up by 4.3% for 2026-27 school year

BY JOHN HACKER  
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In-state undergraduate tuition to attend Missouri Southern State University will go up about 4.3% for the 2026-2027 school year.

Southern's board of governors voted at Friday's regular meeting to increase base tuition to \$313.50 per credit hour, an increase of \$13.50 over the 2025-26 tuition, according to MSSU President Dean Van Galen.

"It's important to note that will continue to make Missouri Southern among the most affordable

public universities in the state of Missouri, significantly less than the University of Missouri, less than Missouri State University and others," Van Galen said after the meeting. "We remain very committed to being a high-quality and affordable option for students in our region and beyond."

Other tuition rates set included the out-of-state tuition at \$627 per credit hour, up \$27; graduate in-state tuition at \$400, up \$15; and distance-learning tuition at \$330, unchanged from last year.

Van Galen said state funding will be flat in the fiscal year that starts July 1, according to the state budget that's on Gov. Mike Kehoe's desk awaiting his signature.

Van Galen also said the board approved a \$78 million budget for the university in the coming year as well.

"It's very similar to last year, and part of that is a projection of state funding," Van Galen said. "We did

bring to the board and they approved a balanced budget, slightly revenue positive, and that's the third consecutive year we've been able to do that. I think that's a sign that we are a financially stable and responsible institution."

Van Galen said Southern and all public universities and colleges in Missouri will be monitoring efforts by the Missouri Department of Higher Education to "develop a funding formula or model to fund specific institutions within public higher education."

Earlier in 2026, term-limited Rep. and House Budget Chairman Dirk Deaton, R-Seneca, proposed a funding formula that would have cost Southern more than \$6 million, but the Senate rejected it and stuck with the recommendation Kehoe made in his State of the State address at the beginning of the

SEE **MSSU, 2A**

Boat races return to Grand Lake this weekend as part of the annual Toes in the Grand celebration.

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## Toes in the Grand returns this weekend

BY KAYLEA M. HUTSON-MILLER  
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GROVE, Okla. — A mix of red dirt and Americana music take center stage this weekend at the ninth annual Toes in the Grand summer festival in Grove.

Hosted by the Grove Area Chamber of Commerce, it runs through Sunday at the Wolf Creek Park and Expo Center along the shore of Grand Lake.

The highlight of the festival is a two-night free concert ex-

travaganza featuring regional bands Friday and Saturday. Each evening kicks off at 6 p.m. with an America 250 celebration headlined by retired Broadway entertainer Ron Young and Jana Jae, playing her blue fiddle from "Hee Haw."

Young, joined by Timmy Moore on trumpet, will sing the national anthem.

Jae and others will perform a selection of American fiddle tunes.

During the opening, veterans

from American Legion Post 178 will join Jae and Young, presenting the colors.

Amanda Davis, Grove Area Chamber of Commerce president, said they also plan to recognize veterans in attendance and that PSO and Solid Rock Realtors plan to provide patriotic giveaways, including American flags, during the ceremony.

"It is a tremendous honor for Grand Lake to play a role in

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