

THE KANSAS CITY STAR.

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Royals stadium meeting cut short by protest



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A member of Stand Up KC holds up a sign during a presentation about the proposed rezoning of Crown Center for a new ballpark.

BY JACK HARVEL AND DYLAN LYSEN
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Protesters derailed a rezoning meeting on Crown Center, cutting short a hearing intended to inform residents about redevelopment plans to accommodate a new downtown Royals stadium. The public meeting is the first in a series of steps the Royals must complete to create a new “sports and entertainment district” within Crown Center. A series of speakers representing the team, the shopping, dining and retail district, and the devel-

opment detailed plans for the area.

About an hour into the meeting, as the last remaining speaker was at the podium, members of the Missouri Workers Center erupted in chants of “let us vote.” The progressive labor advocacy group broke out in chants and heckled speakers.

Last month, the group, along with Stand Up KC, delivered signatures to City Hall seeking to force a public vote on the city’s plan to contribute \$600 million to fund the new \$1.9 billion stadium. It’s unclear if it can stop the stadium, and Mayor Quinton Lucas has said that

he’s anticipating construction to begin before a vote can derail it.

The meeting ended about 15 minutes early. During a question-and-answer period, when presenters addressed pre-screened questions from the crowd, a host announced they would end the meeting amid the ongoing outburst.

Fran Marion, one of the protesters, said she showed up at the meeting to send a message about mismatched priorities.

“We voted before. We told them no. You’re not hearing me, so let me come back and tell you again,” Marion said. “There’s more important things out here in Kansas City than a Royals Stadium.”

But many of those in attendance were frustrated by the outburst that led to the end of the meeting. Some in attendance shouted back at hecklers,

SEE MEETING, 6A



ZURI PRIMOS

A new 1.5-acre sunflower field opened in Fleming Park on July 24.

KC area’s new sunflower habitat is in bloom

BY ZURI PRIMOS
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Jackson County’s wildlife will have a feast this year thanks to the new sunflower habitat in Fleming Park.

Flowers towering 6 feet or more stretch into the skyline in a break from the expansive, lush green forest surrounding the park at 22807 SW Woods Chapel Rd in Blue Springs. Admission is free. The 1.5-acre field is a drive down

winding roads at 8201-8205 E/SE Park Road at the trailhead of the Augie Phase 2 trail.

The flowers, bold yellow, are visited by bees, butterflies and birds while the rest of the surrounding wildlife wait for

the petals to wilt and the seeds to drop, said Jackson County’s Deputy Director of Park Operations Tina Spallo.

The flowers were first planted in March. About 35,000 to 40,000 seeds were placed into the ground to grow into the sprawling field.

Seeds were donated by Pioneer Seed, and this is the first time Jackson County has made this type of habitat. The Parks and Rec Natural Resources Division had a goal to produce

SEE SUNFLOWERS, 8A

Mom of KC teen killed in wreck prays for hospitalized friend

BY ERIC ADLER
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Her family called 18-year-old Danaya Blair “Little Beyonce” because of the Grandview High School graduate’s beaming smile, style and fashion flair.

When Jordan Wells’ family thinks of him, it will always include how happy he was on Friday, July 17, eating at Cheddar’s Scratch Kitchen in Independence with his family on the evening of his 19th birthday.

Two days later, at about 4:40 a.m., in the wee hours of Sunday, July 19 — following what has been a party at a Kansas City Airbnb for friends who had July birthdays — both were killed in a wreck. Joshua Marchbanks, Blair’s boyfriend, who was also a passenger in Wells’ Ford Focus, was sped to Research Medical Center in what continues to be serious condition, after the car they were in was reportedly struck from behind by an SUV, sending both vehicles off the roadway in south Kansas City.

The driver of the other car has not been named. He, too, was transported to the hospital. No charges have been filed as Kansas City Police investigate the case.

Just over one week later, as

SEE TEENS, 4A

Terrell Ray’s farewell at Kansas City People’s Choice Awards

BY J.M. BANKS
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The final Kansas City People’s Choice Awards ceremony began as much like a fashion showcase as an awards program.

As doors opened at 4 p.m. Sunday at the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts, more than 1,000 people entered in tailored suits, sweeping gowns, jeweled accessories and other carefully planned looks. Temperatures outside climbed into

the upper 90s, but the heat did little to discourage guests from dressing for what had become one of the summer’s most important social events.

Before the ceremony, nominees, performers, presenters and supporters gathered near the Black Carpet. For many attendees, the entrance had become one of the most anticipated parts of the night. It offered an opportunity to experiment with high fashion and recreate the glamour associated with nationally televised award shows.

“This is our Super Bowl for the industry,” said De’Angelo Daniel, a stylist and designer known professionally as D-Lo Stylez. “This is our Grammys and our BET Awards and all of that, so you’re going to put it on. People are proud to support each other.”

A FINAL NIGHT OF RECOGNITION

The celebration unfolded against a reflective backdrop. Founder and organizer Terrell

SEE AWARDS, 3A



SOPHIA BUONPANE sophiabunpane@kcstar.com

Creator of the Kansas City People’s Choice Awards, Terrell Ray, speaks to the crowd gathered at the Kauffman Center for the last in-person ceremony for the awards.



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