Greetings KAC members. It was an honor and a pleasure to meet virtually with many of you on October 14. My second annual conference and WOW! what a difference from last year! I thought I would use my column this month to share my thoughts with those of you who were not able to attend the virtual conference event.

Last year you may remember that my address to the membership was my first big event for the KAC. As is customary, I was asked to give a “State of the Organization” speech after only being on the job for eleven weeks. I said at the time that it was: “A task that actually had been easier to accomplish than I first thought.” I then went on to say: “If I had to sum up the state of the organization in one word – I would say that the organization was Changing or to put a more positive spin on the situation, Evolving or Transforming.” And again, I say WOW! We had no idea just how much our world would be changing – evolving – transforming the following year.

Fast forward to today. If I were asked that same question, to sum up the State of the Organization in one word, I would say: resilient! This staff, this association, and the people of Kansas have all shown a sense of resiliency like no other situation in my lifetime anyway. The amount of uncertainty, the having to re-think how we live our lives, do our jobs, even relate to one another in public and private has forced us to do things that we never imagined having to do. But, you have, we have. As an organization, as an association, we have risen to the challenge and continue to not only survive – but we thrive!

I can honestly say, the main reason we are doing so well as an organization is because of our staff. As you are aware, we have had some changes this past year. We wished Dorrie Sullivan, Dana Wethington, and Norm Bowers a happy retirement

continued next page
farewell (although we still owe Norm a lunch). We welcomed aboard Kimberly Qualls as our new Education and Communications Manager, and I am happy to announce that Keith Browning will be joining us on November 2 as our new Local Road Engineer. Both individuals bring with them an amazing and diverse skill set.

I would be remiss if I did not mention all the great work that Jay Hall, our Legislative Policy Director and General Counsel, has done throughout this pandemic. A big thank you goes out to Dornella Leal for keeping our finances in order and crafting a $963,000 FY2021 budget that is solid and achievable, and to Betty Oliva, who has been instrumental in keeping the ship upright and running smoothly. Although we have not been in the office since late March, as we have been working remotely per the Governor and Shawnee County Health Officer’s recommendations. The KAC staff works hard in and day out to make sure that you, our members, receive the best bang for your buck.

My next thank you needs to go out to the 2020 KAC Governing Board. Through virus and pandemic, you have continued to serve tirelessly both in your professional roles in your county homes as well as a KAC Board member. The biggest thank you goes out to our KAC Board President, Commissioner Chip Westfall from Harvey County. Chip has been a constant rock and a guiding light for us all during these unusually weird and unprecedented times.

Next are our sponsors. Many of you reading this today may not be aware, but we plan on 27 percent of our gross revenue coming from registrations and sponsorships at the annual conference and exhibition. So, you can imagine when the vote was finally made to postpone the in-person event (putting personal safety and health over profits) what sort of hole that created in our FY2020 budget, approximately a $40,000 loss. However, our sponsors said not on their watch. I am happy to say that eighteen vendors have committed $15,100 to help mitigate that shortfall. A full list of these sponsors as well as links to their websites can be found on our KAC website Home.
As an organization, as an association, we have risen to the challenge and continue to not only survive — but we thrive!

A WORD FROM OUR KAC PRESIDENT

G. A. “Chip” Westfall, President, KAC Board of Directors

With the completion of the 2020 elections this month, our County Clerks/Election Officers will be asking County Commissioners to perform their duties as the Board of Election Canvassers. While this action was probably not part of the reason that most Commissioners signed up to run, it is yet another very important duty assigned to County Commissioners.

In all 105 Kansas counties, the County Clerk or Election Officer has prepared all the provisional ballots for review along with the legal interpretation to accept or deny each ballot. I want to thank all county staff and poll workers for their dedication and service which helps provide for successful elections across Kansas.

Now is the time for all Kansans to move forward working cohesively with our local county officials to bring efficiency to local government, and for each of us in county government to be responsible for the health and well-being of our residents.

We have two major holidays this month. First holiday is Veterans Day, November 11. On this day, please take the time to thank all those you may know who are serving or have served in the Armed Forces for their service to keep our great nation safe and protected.

Second holiday is Thanksgiving, November 25. Thanksgiving is a time of gratefulness to celebrate the end of the harvest season and to gather, perhaps virtually this year, with family and friends. I hope you each have a fun and safe holiday weekend.

and I want you to know that we appreciate the opportunity to be here and to be able to help you do your job better and more effectively.

So, to wrap this up.

We were joking the other day in staff conference that come December 31, 2020 at 11:59 p.m. and 59 seconds, will we be welcoming in a new year? or will we be saying good riddance to the old? Me, personally, I am usually a glass half full kind of guy so I will be welcoming in the new year and all the great possibilities that it has to offer. But do not be fooled, I will be saying get outta here to 2020 at the very same time!

As an organization, as an association, we have risen to the challenge and continue to not only survive — but we thrive!
NOW AVAILABLE! Recording Links and PowerPoint Presentations

The 2020 KAC Virtual Conference Event took place on Tuesday-Wednesday, October 13-14, 2020. Thank you to all our wonderful presenters and to all those who participated in the October 13 and 14 virtual events!

A special thank you to all our **Bronze Sponsors** for your generous support of this year’s virtual event! You can find the Bronze Sponsor list on the next page, as well as on KAC’s website home page, [www.kansascounties.org](http://www.kansascounties.org). Once you are on the home page, be sure to click on the sponsor logos and visit their websites to learn more about the products and services that they have in place for you, our Kansas County members.

A recording link for all event sessions and PowerPoint presentations are included below.

**Tuesday, October 13, 2020**

2021 Legislative Policy Review Recording Link

10 a.m.-11 a.m. 2021 Legislative Policy Statement Review

**Wednesday, October 14, 2020**

Recording Link (For sessions between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m.)
KAC Conference PowerPoint & Bronze Sponsors Presentation Link

9-9:30 a.m. Kansas Governor Laura Kelly

9:30 a.m.-10:45 a.m. KAC Annual Business Meeting

10:45-11 a.m. ACEC 59th Annual County Public Improvement Awards
PowerPoint Presentation Link

11-11:20 a.m. NACo Overview, Matt Chase, NACo Executive Director
PowerPoint Presentation Link

11:20-11:35 a.m. NACo Works for You, Kim Hall, NACo Membership
PowerPoint Presentation Link

1-2 p.m. Kansas Transportation Secretary Julie Lorenz
PowerPoint Presentation Link

2-3 p.m. Kansas Commerce Deputy Secretary Bill Murphy
PowerPoint Presentation Link

3-4:30 p.m. KCAMP Business Meeting Recording Link
KWORCC Business Meeting Recording Link
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The purpose of Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP) is to ready our state and counties for a host of public health emergencies. These range from natural disasters (e.g., floods and tornados), bioterrorism, and the most recent test of our capabilities: pandemics. COVID-19 has put state and local governments to the test on a variety of fronts, and public health is at the forefront in combating the disease.

The COVID-19 pandemic integrates into PHEP via several capabilities (which is how PHEP conceptually is divided). Two capabilities have been of note so far:
• Capability 11: Nonpharmaceutical Interventions
• Capability 13: Public Health Surveillance and Epidemiological Investigation

And in the upcoming months we expect another capability to rise in prominence
• Capability 8: Medical Countermeasure Dispensing and Administration

This article will briefly describe what is meant by each such capability.

Capability 11 – Nonpharmaceutical Interventions
Nonpharmaceutical interventions are actions taken to help slow the spread of illness. The focus is on public health partners in the community and interested stakeholders in recommending and implementing the interventions. Some common COVID-19 nonpharmaceutical interventions are:
• Isolation/Quarantine
• Wearing masks
• Social distancing
• Encouraging hand washing
• Limits on mass gatherings

All these steps, if properly implemented, slow the spread of COVID-19, and thus further protect the health of Kansans. At the present time, these interventions are what the entire containment strategy relies upon (as we still lack medical interventions).

Capability 13 – Public Health Surveillance and Epidemiological Investigation
Public health surveillance and epidemiological investigation is about the ability to create, maintain, support, and strengthen routine surveillance and detection systems and epidemiological investigation processes. This includes being able to expand these systems in response to an incident such as COVID-19.

We see Capability 13 on the laboratory side. The Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE), for example, has greatly ramped up its testing capabilities for COVID-19 to minimize the lag time between a COVID-19 test being submitted and the results determined. Likewise, reference labs across the state have expanded their capacity as well. Rapid tests have been developed by companies to generate results even faster. These steps are critical because given the speed COVID-19 spreads, rapid surveillance is the only way to both successfully detect outbreak clusters and allow for response fast enough to try and contain the disease’s spread.

Epidemiological investigation follows from the testing. This is where disease investigation and contact tracing come into play. Once an infected person is known, investigation protocols attempt to identify close contacts of the ill individual and where they have been while in the contagious phase to identify those who could potentially become sick. This allows nonpharmaceutical interventions (namely quarantine) to halt further disease spread.

Without either step in this capability it would be virtually impossible to manage the spread of COVID-19 as things presently stand.
expected to come into play with COVID-19 soon. This is because of the vaccine development. Medical countermeasure dispensing and administration is the ability to provide medical countermeasures to targeted populations to prevent/mitigate/treat adverse health effects of a public health incident.

Currently, medical countermeasures do not play a large role in the public health response to COVID-19. There are treatments used to help those with severe symptoms in the medical setting, but this capability will really be put to the test when mass vaccine deployment begins as that will be the trigger where a medical solution to preventing disease spread is available.

Vaccine deployment will involve a lot of partners and stakeholders, from public health departments and local hospitals to pharmacies and health clinics. KDHE (along with partner organizations, including local health departments) are working with the Centers for Disease Control to come up with a vaccine deployment plan to respond to COVID-19 (initial drafts are publicly available at this time, but changes are anticipated). PHEP has prepared local health departments for this step, but COVID-19 will be a new test due to the sheer volume of vaccine that this pandemic is going to involve. Vaccine deployment is expected to be the next major phase in pandemic response and is presently expected to occur at some point in 2021.

**Conclusion**

Local health departments have trained for years through PHEP to address a public health emergency. While COVID-19 has created an immense staffing and financial strain, the approach in responding still falls along the same capabilities that are expected with other, smaller emergencies. So, while the specifics do vary, and the scale of COVID-19 makes it quite unique in terms of global impact, the approach to addressing the emergency still plays by the same basic set of rules.

For those who would like to learn more about the capabilities in PHEP described here, or any of the others (there are 15 total), you can read more at the CDC here: [https://www.cdc.gov/cpr/readiness/capabilities.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/cpr/readiness/capabilities.htm)
The Kansas Association of Counties is pleased to introduce our newest staff member, Keith Browning, who will serve as the new Local Road Engineer. Mr. Browning will begin his new position on Monday, November 2. He is replacing Norm Bowers who retired in May.

Keith served as Public Works Director/County Engineer for Douglas County from October 1998 to June 2020. Prior to 1998, he served seven years as Chief Design Engineer for Douglas County Public Works. He has held engineering positions with Johnson County Public Works, Coffey County Highway Department, the Oklahoma Department of Transportation, and a private engineering consultant during his 37-year career.

Keith earned B.S. degrees in Civil Engineering and Business Administration from the University of Kansas. He has been an active member of the Kansas County Highway Association serving as the association’s President in 2007, as well as serving on several committees.

Keith and his wife, Theresa, live at Douglas State Fishing Lake located just north of Baldwin City.

You can reach Keith Browning by email at: browning@kansascounties.org or by calling the KAC Office.

High performance organizations have a culture that inspires and enables employees. To examine how to transition to becoming a high performing organization, the KU School of Public Affairs and Administration and its Public Management Center are offering an intensive weeklong seminar in January 2021 called Public Service Leadership: Creating a Culture for High Performance. During the week, practitioners and students will come together to understand theories and practices regarding organizational culture and performance, focusing on principles that enable leadership at all levels and to identify the leadership principles, strategies, and practices that contribute to creating a high performing organization.

The seminar format will blend material presentation, opportunity for introspection around individual beliefs and characteristics, and group discussion to explore the latest thinking in public sector and adaptive leadership. Ultimately, the seminar is designed to train and empower public administrators to enliven the Athenian oath in their organization and community.

For more information, contact Patty Gentrup at patty.gentrup@ku.edu.
I have a habit during workdays of jotting things down on sticky notes. Often, this will be information like names or phone numbers of people that I need to call or email, or items that I need to review or complete. Inevitably, that leads to a colorful pile of sticky notes with various shorthand messages on them for me to come back to later. Often, these notes come from phone calls and emails from county officials throughout the state.

While most of these notes are not really enough material for a full County Comment article, they do present good topics for a few bullet points, hence the Sticky Note Challenge.

- Deadlines for the SPARK funding continue to approach. Tuesday, November 10, 2020 is the due date for the third reconciliation of CRF for all Kansas counties. Thursday, December 10, 2020 is the due date for the fourth reconciliation of CRF for all counties.
- Earlier this month, the Kansas Department of Commerce announced the start of the Office of Broadband Development. Along with that announcement, $50 million in grants was announced, to be distributed among 67 different projects. A list of those projects can be found here: https://governor.kansas.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Final-CERG-Awards.pdf.
- The Kansas Emergency Management Act Special Committee had its final meetings at the end of September. The final recommendations are not yet available, but KAC will alert the membership once those recommendations are made public.

It should be noted that these recommendations are not law and would need to be included in a bill that passes through the normal legislative process to become law.

- U.S. Census data should be available to counties sometime in early 2021. Once that data is available, counties can begin the process of redrawing their county commission districts to account for population shifts.
- The Kansas Housing Resources Corporation has introduced the Kansas Eviction Prevention Program to aid both tenants and landlords financially impacted by COVID-19. Up to $5,000 is available. Interested parties can apply here: www.kshousingcorp.org/eviction-prevention-program/.
- Remember, the Kansas Open Meetings Act still applies to meetings conducted via electronic platforms. While most counties are back to holding all county meetings in person, several

continued next page
That helped clean off my desk a bit. If you have more questions about any of these topics, or any other topic that involves counties here in Kansas, please feel free to reach out to me. I am available both by phone and email: hall@kansascounties.org to answer your questions.

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CONNECTIONS

With the general election on November 3, KAC will be contacting counties to update our member information and get contact information for any new commissioners. We look forward to working with the incoming group of elected officials, as well as working with those that are continuing to serve.

That helped clean off my desk a bit. If you have more questions about any of these topics, or any other topic that involves counties here in Kansas, please feel free to reach out to me. I am available both by phone and email: hall@kansascounties.org to answer your questions.

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SUPERVISOR: Director of Planning and Zoning

SCOPE: This is a professional planning position responsible for complex planning work primarily in areas of current planning. Additionally, the Planner III will assist the Director in long-range community planning.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:
Requires a Bachelor’s degree with a major in Urban Planning or equivalent and 2-4 years of experience. Preference may be given to candidates who have experience in Rural Planning. A Bachelor’s degree in the land use-planning field such as Geography, Architecture, GIS, and Cartography may also be accepted. Other degrees and combinations of experience will be considered on a case-by-case basis. A Master’s degree and AICP certification preferred.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS:
May be required to be a Notary Public at county expense. The Planner III must possess and maintain a valid driver’s license.

EMPLOYMENT BENEFITS:
This is a full-time position whereby County employee benefits apply to this position. These may include medical, dental, KPERS, and workman’s comp. Specific details are available from the County Human Resources office.

PROFESSIONAL BENEFITS:
Membership expenses for the Kansas Chapter of the American Planning Association and the National APA is provided after one year of satisfactory employment.

For a complete job description and application visit https://www.leavenworthcounty.gov/employment.asp
Noxious Weed Director – Crawford County

Crawford County, Kansas is accepting applications for the position of Noxious Weed Director. This is a full-time position with benefits. Applicants should have knowledge of noxious weed containment and licensed as a Kansas Commercial Pesticide Applicator. Please send cover letter, resume, application and copies of certifications to Emily Vediz, P.O. Box 249, Girard, Kansas 66743 or evediz@crawfordcountykansas.org Deadline for submission of applications: November 20, 2020. Crawford County, Kansas is an Equal Opportunity Employer.
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