Welcome to the 2020 Kansas Legislative Session. This is the second year of the biennium, so bills and resolutions from the 2019 Session carried over to the 2020 Session. As a result, the bill numbers will not start over at 1 and 2001, but will pick up where they left off last session. Additionally, bills that “died” in committee last year have been revived and are available for debate.

For a review of common legislative terms, please refer to the “Common Legislative Terms” list on the www.KansasCounties.org website in the “Services” Tab under “Legislative,” or bookmark http://www.kansascounties.org/services/legislative/common-legislative-terms.pdf/view

Summaries of all legislation passed during the 2019 session can be found at www.kslegresearch.org under the Publications tab by searching the 2019 Summary of Legislation and 2019 Legislative Highlights.

**What Happened this Week**

**Coronavirus (COVID-19)**

Typically, I would not venture outside the legislative world in this space, but COVID-19 has changed that for a major reason. With Governor Kelly declaring a state of emergency last night, there are major questions about what happens from here. For more information about COVID-19, please consult with your local health department. You can also find links on the KAC website at www.kansascounties.org for information from the KDHE, CDC and NIH.

Coffee at the Capitol on March 18 has been cancelled, as the Statehouse is limiting visitors due to COVID-19.

To give you an example of why I am venturing outside the usual legislative news, let’s peak behind the curtain at how the update you are reading right now is usually prepared.

On Thursday morning each week, the legislative calendar for each chamber is released online at www.kslegislature.org/li/b2019_20/chamber/calendars/. Once that is available, KAC begins putting together the list of important hearings for the following week that you see in the “What’s Coming Next Week” section. KAC also begins preparing testimony for the following week.
On Thursday afternoon, KAC starts writing this section of the update, covering “What Happened this Week” in detail, leaving space for any remaining hearings on Thursday afternoon or Friday that need to be covered in this section. Governor Kelly’s press conference last night happened at 6:30 PM, which is after all of these things had occurred.

COVID-19 could change everything. As of right now, KAC is proceeding with three separate legislative plans to account for all of the potential changes.

Scenario 1: Legislature continues with the pre-session calendar

Under this scenario, nothing changes. Committees meet through March 25, with floor work in both chambers during the week of March 30. First adjournment would remain on April 3.

Scenario 2: Done on March 25

Under this scenario, the legislature works through March 25, but rather than having floor work during the week of March 30, they move that up a week, pushing through floor work and adjourning on the 25th, keeping the option open as to when they return in May.

Scenario 3: Abrupt Ending

Under this scenario, the legislature finishes up sometime next week, running only the budget and the transportation plan. They give the Constitutional Amendment a final shot, then adjourn very quickly. Under this scenario, they may or may not return in May for more than one day. This morning already, the Senate has announced that they will be on General Orders on Monday next week. This indicates that there will be bills debated in the Senate on Monday.

Stay tuned, because things are changing VERY quickly. Also, please keep an eye on updates from KAC on the COVID-19 situation from KDHE and other state officials. The situation is moving rapidly, and information is important in all decision making.

In other news, the transportation plans are moving in both chambers. The House made some changes to their version of the plan. It’s anyone’s guess how the scenarios listed above will affect potential negotiations on legislative items.

There was discussion in both tax committees on SB 396/HB 2656, which would eliminate the formula for general use taxes. KAC opposed these bills, as KAC chose to support local control and the ability to negotiate interlocal agreements under the current formula.

The renewal of STAR bonds is up in the air right now. There are bills in both chambers, although there are major differences between the two. Stay tuned.
What's Coming Next Week

With Turnaround now behind us and first adjournment a mere four weeks away, time is very short. As a result, the legislative calendar is packed next week. Timing is always an issue with legislation, but timing is especially a factor now, with very little time left for consideration in committees and on the floor. This is doubly true with the potential that the legislature wraps up abruptly.

Monday, March 16

SB 294, which would establish notice and public hearing requirements prior to any budget increase, will be heard in House Tax at 3:30 PM in room 112-N.

Tuesday, March 17

Senate STAR Bond bill (awaiting number) will be heard in Senate Commerce at 8:30 in room 548-S.

HB 2529, the House STAR bond bill, will have final action in House Commerce at 1:30 in room 112-N.

SB 272, which would prohibit valuation on property from increasing during appeal, will be heard in House Tax at 3:30 in room 112-N.

HB 295, which would prohibit valuation increases solely as the result of normal repair, maintenance or replacement, will be heard in House Tax at 3:30 in room 112-N.

Wednesday, March 18

Senate STAR Bond bill (awaiting number) will be heard in Senate Commerce at 8:30 in room 548-S.

SB 264, which would allow for the removal of a person that no longer holds the office of county appraiser, will be heard in House Tax at 3:30 in room 112-N.

SB 266, which would require appraisal courses to be approved by the Kansas real estate appraisal board, will be heard in House Tax at 3:30 in room 112-N.

SB 297, which would require appraisal directives to comply with uniform standards, will be heard in House Tax at 3:30 in room 112-N.

Thursday, March 19

SB 400, which would allow counties to impose an earnings tax, will be heard in Senate Assessment and Taxation at 9:30 in room 152-S.
As with all legislative meetings, the schedule is fluid and subject to change on short notice. Additionally, please watch for email blasts from KAC for important hearings that have been added to the calendar, and please watch your individual affiliate and associate groups for discussion on bills that relate directly to your county office.

**Other Resources**

For daily information on things happening in the Legislature, follow @KansasCounties and @JayHallKS

You can find information on the Kansas Legislature, such as daily calendars, audio links and bill text at [www.kslegislature.org](http://www.kslegislature.org)

2020 Legislative deadlines can be found at [www.kslegislature.org/ll/documents/2020_deadline_card.pdf](http://www.kslegislature.org/ll/documents/2020_deadline_card.pdf)