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The Record

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Get Out of Town

By Dr. Jim Haas

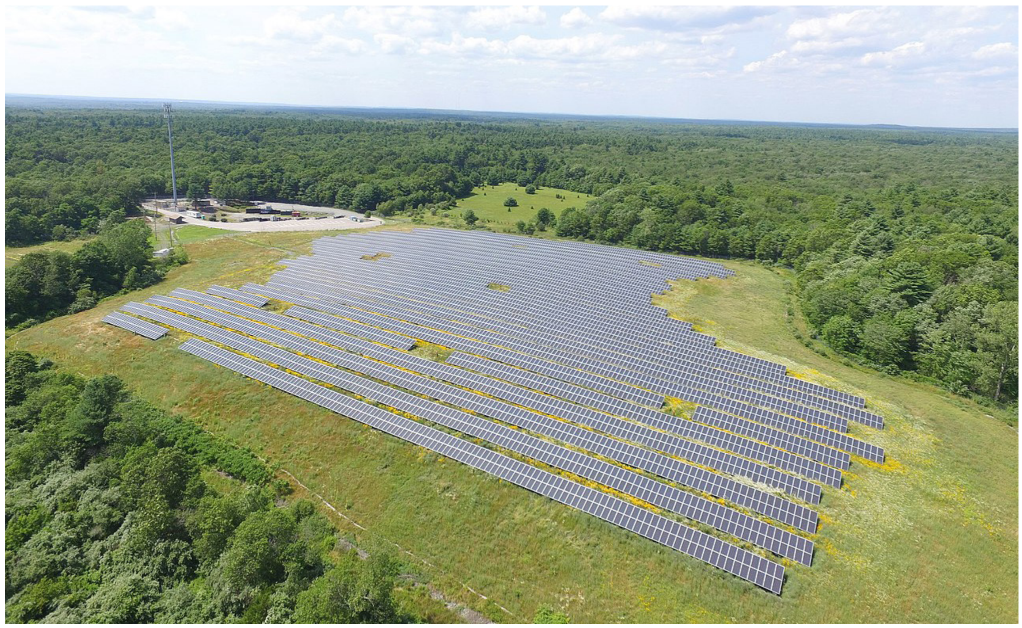
My Wife the English Teacher and I got out of town recently for a week in Colorado and New Mexico. We had a good time, learned a lot, and reached the conclusion that government officials, especially federal, need to get out of town and see for themselves what climate change is doing to our world.

After driving to Colorado nearly every summer for 30 years, we quit in 2018 after three episodes of hail damage made more common by climate change. This year, we flew to Denver, took a fuel-efficient commuter train to Union Station's excellent hotel, and walked to the nearby Rockies stadium to watch the Royals lose.

In the morning, we boarded a fuel-efficient Amtrak for the comfortable ride to Glenwood Springs through some of America's most spectacular mountain scenery. The high country was abnormally hot and snowpack was 27 percent of normal. Snow matters because the Colorado River is a major water source for seven states including Arizona, Nevada, and California. The Lake Mead and Lake Powell reservoirs are at the lowest levels since they were dammed and filled in the mid-20th century.

We took a rental car 370 miles south to Santa Fe, New Mexico. This was my first time driving a hybrid, which drove like a traditional car but with an impressive 55 miles per gallon, not as good as an EV, but double most cars. There were 12 active wildfires in Colorado that had burned 200.000+ acres and nearly a thousand buildings. Smoke was in the air nearly everywhere. We passed a highway department sign saying, "Smoky skies. Do not call 911."

On the bright side, we saw a large solar farm (pictured: farm on a Massachusetts landfill) and numerous wind turbines that were new since we last passed that way. We also saw two small turbines that powered a hotel and possibly nearby shops. Arriving in Santa Fe, we were surprised at the lack of the usual crowd of tourists. Apparently, high gas prices and other rising expenses are keeping people home.



News reports showed large parts of Spokane, Washington, the state's second-largest city, burning, with 67,000 residents evacuated and more than 800 homes destroyed. Arson is suspected, but bone-dry conditions and high winds quickly spread the flames. Fire was also threatening Reno, Nevada. Climate change may not start a fire, but it creates the conditions for rapid spread.

The June-July 2026 average temperature in the continental U.S. was the highest since reliable records began. In North Carolina, beachfront homes are being destroyed or moved to higher ground because of rising sea levels due to ice melting near the poles. Overseas, Europe is having its fifth heat wave with temperatures nearing 110 F, widespread drought, and huge fires in France, Spain, Italy, and Greece. Europe has long led the transition to sustainable energy sources, now joined by China.

China produced half as much electricity as the U.S. in 2005; it now produces twice as much and at lower cost. It installed more solar power in one year, 2023, than the U.S. has ever installed. Chinese car company BYD now makes more EVs than Tesla, and China makes at least 70 percent of all EVs, lithium-ion batteries, and solar cells.

In mid-July, Mr. Trump complained to reporters about smoke from Canadian fires, saying, "We gotta stop the fires up there. I never remember this happening over the last four or five years they've started to take place." He spoke over the noise of an idling jet, but his limited intellect didn't make the connection between the engines emitting CO_2 and the climate change he still calls "a hoax." Trump promotes fossil fuels, which historian Timothy Snyder has called "superpower suicide."

Stock Market Outlook for the Second Half of 2026: Where Investors Should Focus

My family and I had been looking forward to hiking the Sucha Bela Gorge in Slovakia since Thanksgiving. The problem was that my doctor called me the day before I left telling me I had torn my rotator cuff in a recent fall. My vacation started off with a little bit of craziness, sort of like the markets in July.

The markets began in the second half of 2026 with no shortage of craziness, from the Iran mess which is begging to feel like a daily soap opera that never ends to higher oil prices and ongoing questions about whether there will be a big payoff from the huge artificial intelligence (AI) spending. Despite these uncertainties, the S&P 500 started August near all-time highs, and chances for further gains seem possible because of the resilient economy and solid corporate fundamentals.

The main story continues to be the AI investment cycle. As the big technology companies reported second quarter earnings, it became clear that investors have shifted from investing in whichever companies promised the most out of AI to rewarding companies who have started seeing a return on their AI investment. Investors are waiting to see if the big guys such as Microsoft, Amazon, Alphabet, and Meta generate profit from their spending on data centers, chips, cloud infrastructure, and AI platforms. Second quarter results were a mixed bag. Some showed strong revenue growth, increased cash flow, and a hint of making money on AI and saw their stocks rise, while those companies who announced more AI spending but with little to no profit from their previous AI spending saw their stock prices drop.

I believe the AI story is still a positive one, but I wouldn't be surprised if saw some streaks of volatility as markets begin to hold companies responsible for their massive spending. Investors are beginning to show their impatience with the spending and want to see a return sooner rather than later.

Corporate earnings continued to be strong and provide strong support for stocks. S&P 500 companies as a whole had profits of nearly 30% year over year in the second quarter, not counting the markups of private holdings in Anthropic, OpenAI, and SpaceX. That earning strength isn't just the technology sector, with earnings growth excluding the Magnificent Seven at nearly 20%.

The inflation picture is still difficult but seems ready to improve. The ongoing Iran mess and strong economic growth have put pressure on long-term interest rates, leaving the Federal Reserve and its new chairman in a tricky spot. Hopefully, the weaker jobs report on August 7th might have put the brakes on any talk of a Fed rate increase this year.

Overall, the earning season showed me that the economy is still strong, and I like the fact that investors have stopped rewarding hype and are pushing up companies making AI profitable tools. We need to see

shipping traffic restored in the Persian Gulf or that could grow into a problem. I will be keeping an eye on that and will continue to preach investment diversification.

My doctor told me, "The hike is off the table, you can't do it," but I said, "Doc, the hike is definitely on the table." So, I bought a sling for support and to squeeze out maximum sympathy from my wife and hiked the number one rated hike in Europe with all its ladders one handed. I was slow but I did it. It wasn't pretty but I worked my way upward and finished strong. The same way the market has done so far in the second half. Not pretty, not smooth, and not fast but finishing upward and strong.

Have a blessed week.

Richard Baker

www.FerventWM.com

This article was written by humans for humans because AI doesn't have this quality of sarcasm.

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What's happening in Weston?

Summer is in full swing, and there's no better time to spend a day exploring Weston. Wander our historic streets, browse one-of-a-kind boutiques, discover local art, enjoy a wine tasting or craft cocktail, and settle in for a leisurely lunch or dinner. Whether it's your first visit or your fiftieth, there's always something new waiting around the next corner.

Looking for a reason to make the drive? Our community calendar is packed with live music, trivia nights, workshops, tours, family-friendly activities, and special events throughout the season. Every weekend offers a different way to experience the charm, history, and hospitality that make Weston such a memorable destination.

Bring your friends, gather the family, or plan a spontaneous getaway. Slow down, stay awhile, and make this summer one to remember in Weston.

However you spend your time here, we think you'll find something to love. Be sure to check out the full list of merchants and community partners on our website, and don't forget to follow What's Up in Weston on Facebook for all the latest happenings around town.

Kansas Turnpike Authority Announces $500M Long-Term Investment Plan

Multi-year strategy focuses on infrastructure, customer experience, technology and operational excellence

The Kansas Turnpike Authority (KTA) announced a long-term investment plan designed to preserve, modernize and strengthen the Kansas Turnpike for future generations while maintaining one of the region's safest and most reliable travel corridors.

The multi-year strategy outlines a nearly $500 million investment in infrastructure, facilities, technology and operational improvements across the 236-mile Turnpike system. The plan is guided by a long-term needs assessment and reflects KTA's commitment to responsibly stewarding a transportation asset that has served Kansas travelers for 70 years.

The long-term investment plan includes projects and initiatives focused on:

Modernizing and preserving roadway infrastructure

Expanding capacity in growing travel corridors

Improving interchanges and system connectivity

Enhancing customer amenities and service areas

Advancing technology and operational systems

Supporting workforce readiness and organizational effectiveness

Customers are already seeing examples of these investments across the system.

The redevelopment of the Emporia Service Area, currently under construction, represents one visible example of KTA's broader strategy to modernize facilities and improve the customer experience. Additional investments include I-70 widening projects, interchange improvements and technology upgrades to support safer, more efficient travel.

For 70 years, travelers have counted on the Kansas Turnpike to connect communities, support commerce and provide reliable transportation. Ninety-five percent of surveyed drivers are satisfied with the toll value KTA provides. Additionally, the Kansas Turnpike handles commerce that drives 13% of the state's economy.

KTA receives no state or federal tax fund-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7

Your Hometown Business Directory

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National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
800*273*8255

HIV/AIDS,

KC Care Health Center
816*753*5144

Senior-focused Health Care, Partners in Primary Care
Medicare-Advantage Care Center
7527 State Ave.
913*355*6986

Quotes To Ponder

By Tom Valverde

"The U.S. national debt is approximately equal to the value of the economies of China, Germany, Japan, India and the United Kingdom combined."

Peter G. Peterson Foundation
June 2026

"As of May 2026, the average interest rate on the national debt was 3.38% on a debt of $39.20 trillion. Five years ago, the interest rate was 1.48%. This means that the United States is paying significantly more than it was five years ago.

In the past 12 months, interest paid totaled $272.89 billion. The Congressional Budget Office projects that interest costs will equal 14.26% of the federal budget in FY2027 and 14.94% in FY2028."

Source: Investopedia
June 2026

With the Iran war having no end in sight, the national debt is sure to increase. We are being led down a path of economic ruin. The United States cannot continue spending trillions of dollars it does not have. Trump should never have authorized the U.S. military to attack Iran. Iran was never going to attack the United States.

And now, a quote from Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders:

"A new study estimates that Medicare for All would save 114,000 lives every year and reduce overall health care spending by more than $1 trillion annually."

Do not tell me that we cannot afford Medicare for All!

What we cannot afford is a broken health care system based on greed.

Imagine $1 trillion being saved and placed into the Social Security Trust Fund to help keep it from going broke in less than 10 years.

LEGAL PUBLICATION LEGAL PUBLICATION LEGAL PUBLICATION

Revised Notice of Hearing 2026-2027 Budget

The governing body of Unified School District 500 will meet on the 8th day of September 2026 at 5:05 PM at 2010 N 59th St, Kansas City, KS 66104 for the purpose of hearing and answering objections of taxpayers relating to the proposed use of all funds and the amount of tax to be levied differ from the first published version. Detailed budget information, including budget profile, building needs assessment and Board state assessments review is available at District Office on the district website and will be available at this hearing.

The Amount of 2026 Tax to be Levied and Expenditures (published below) establish the maximum limits of the 2026-2027 Budget. The 'Est. Tax Rate' (column 7), shown for comparative purposes, is subject to slight change depending on final assessed valuation.

		2024-2025 Actual		2025-2026 Actual		2026-2027 Proposed Budget		
	Code 99 Line	Actual Expenditures (1)	Actual Tax Rate* (2)	Actual Expenditures (3)	Actual Tax Rate* (4)	Budgeted Expenditures (5)	Amount of 2026 Tax to be Levied (6)	Est. Tax Rate* (7)
OPERATING								
General	06	200,450,964	20.000	206,861,864	20.000	222,569,243	23,055,240	20.000
Supplemental General (LOB)	08	64,245,874	13.016	66,136,878	14.320	73,605,700	21,499,005	14.680
SPECIAL REVENUE								
Federal Funds	07	22,756,210		23,866,280		27,563,059		
Adult Education	10	0	0.000	0	0.000	0	0	0.000
Preschool-Aged At-Risk	11	2,407,577		2,926,310		3,300,000		
Adult Supplemental Education	12	0		0		0		
At-Risk Education Fund	13	63,214,575		69,762,369		71,802,065		
Bilingual Education	14	7,478,988		7,542,409		8,506,134		
Virtual Education	15	1,523,284		1,591,803		2,000,000		
Capital Outlay	16	21,575,295	8.000	20,319,722	7.129	27,700,320	11,466,181	8.000
Driver Training	18	0		0		0		
Declining Enrollment	19	0	0.000	0	0.000	0	0	0.000
Extraordinary School Program	22	0		0		0		
Food Service	24	19,543,727		20,741,815		25,579,346		
Professional Development	26	371,061		547,354		682,409		
Parent Education Program	28	1,519,271		2,023,669		2,593,289		
Summer School	29	0		0		0		
Special Education	30	26,211,957		33,719,414		59,000,000		
Cost of Living	33	0	0.000	0	0.000	0	0	0.000
Career and Postsecondary Education	34	4,563,159		5,172,901		6,053,042		
Gifts and Grants	35	15,668,587		11,220,518		17,529,079		
Special Liability Expense Fund	42	0	0.000	0	0.000	0	0	0.000
School Retirement	44	0	0.000	0	0.000	0	0	0.000
Extraordinary Growth Facilities	45	0	0.000	0	0.000	0	0	0.000
Special Reserve Fund	47	1,536,053		2,288,374				
KPERS Special Retirement Contribution	51	26,544,714		26,429,958		28,445,242		
Contingency Reserve	53	4,017,200		2,466,171				
Textbook & Student Material Revolving	55	34,188		42,123				
Activity Fund	56	201,670		194,418				
DEBT SERVICE								
Bond and Interest #1	62	15,227,231	9.294	24,460,162	12.079	24,354,341	20,065,772	13.702
Bond and Interest #2	63	0	0.000	0	0.000	0	0	0.000
No-Fund Warrant	66	0	0.000	0	0.000	0	0	0.000
Special Assessment	67	0	0.000	0	0.000	0	0	0.000
Temporary Note	68	0	0.000	0	0.000	0	0	0.000
COOPERATIVES1								
Special Education	78	24,203,739		18,760,714		0		
TOTAL USD EXPENDITURES	100	523,295,324	50.310	547,075,226	53.528	601,283,269	76,086,198	56.382
Less: Transfers	105	111,275,940		129,578,068		142,538,813		
NET USD EXPENDITURES	110	412,019,384		417,497,158		458,744,456		
TOTAL USD TAXES LEVIED	115	59,087,864		67,187,378		76,086,198		

1. Sponsoring District Only

**Tax Rates are expressed in Mills*

		2024-2025 Actual		2025-2026 Actual		2026-2027 Proposed Budget		
	Code 99 Line	Actual Expenditures (1)	Actual Tax Rate* (2)	Actual Expenditures (3)	Actual Tax Rate* (4)	Budgeted Expenditures (5)	Amount of 2026 Tax to be Levied (6)	Est. Tax Rate* (7)
OTHER								
Historical Museum	80	0	0.000	0	0.000	0	0	0.000
Public Library Board/District	82	9,833,097	10.131	11,228,978	8.841	54,969,000	7,634,968	5.213
Public Library Board Employee Benefits	83	1,380,073	1.378	1,667,179	0.422	2,040,000	593,136	0.405
Recreation Commission	84	0	0.000	0	0.000	0	0	0.000
Rec Comm Emp Benefits & Spec Liab	86	0	0.000	0	0.000	0	0	0.000
TOTAL OTHER	120	11,213,170	11.509	12,896,157	9.263	57,009,000	8,228,104	5.618
TOTAL TAXES LEVIED	125	$73,801,870		$79,767,297		$84,314,302		
Assessed Valuation - General Fund	128	$1,001,039,478		$1,074,449,057		$1,152,762,020		
Assessed Valuation - All Other Funds	130	$1,307,668,973		$1,383,280,879		$1,464,468,435		
Assessed Valuation - Capital Outlay	129	$1,267,546,648		$1,354,438,271		$1,433,272,628		
Outstanding Indebtedness, July 1		2024		2025		2026		
General Obligation Bonds	135	257,860,000		430,175,000		422,210,000		
Capital Outlay Bonds	140	0		0		0		
Temporary Note	145	0		0		0		
No-Fund Warrant	150	0		0		0		
Lease Purchase Principal	153	20,590,000		20,590,000		5,465,000		
TOTAL USD DEBT	155	278,450,000		450,765,000		427,675,000		

**Tax Rates are expressed in Mills*

Randy [illegible]
Board President

D Downing
Clerk of the Board

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Success consists of going from failure to failure without loss of enthusiasm. – Winston Churchill

Victory is sweetest when you've known defeat. – Malcolm S. Forbes

Satisfaction lies in the effort, not in the attainment, full effort is full victory. – Mahatma Gandhi

LEGAL PUBLICATION

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Exceeding Revenue Neutral for the 2026-2027 School Year

Revenue Neutral

	2025-2026				2026-2027	
	Actual Taxes	Actual	Revenue	Revenue	Proposed	Proposed
General	$21,488,981	20.000	$21,489,002	20.000	$23,055,240	20.000
ALL OTHER FUNDS						
Supplemental General (LOB)	$19,450,140	14.320	$19,808,603	13.527	$21,499,005	14.680
Adult Education	$0	0.000			$0	0.000
Capital Outlay	$9,842,129	7.129	$10,019,710	6.700	$11,466,181	8.000
Cost of Living	$0	0.000			$0	0.000
Special Liability Expense Fund	$0	0.000			$0	0.000
Extraordinary Growth Facilities	$0	0.000			$0	0.000
Bond and Interest #1	$16,406,128	12.079	$16,708,667	11.410	$20,065,772	13.702
Bond and Interest #2	$0	0.000			$0	0.000
No-Fund Warrant	$0	0.000			$0	0.000
Special Assessment	$0	0.000			$0	0.000
Temporary Note	$0	0.000			$0	0.000
Historical Museum	$0	0.000			$0	0.000
Public Library Board/District	$12,007,340	8.841	$12,229,599	8.351	$7,634,968	5.213
Public Library Board Employee Benefits	$572,579	0.422	$583,745	0.399	$593,136	0.405
Revenue Neutral Calculation						
Total Taxes Levied Including General Fund	$79,767,297	62.791	$80,839,326	60.387	$84,314,302	62.000
Total Taxes Levied Excluding General Fund	$58,278,316	42.791	$59,350,324	40.387	$61,259,062	42.000

Board President

Clerk of the Board

(First published 8-20-26) 1t-The Record--8-20-26

Kansas Turnpike...

...from page 3

ing. Revenue generated on the Kansas Turnpike is reinvested directly into maintaining, preserving and improving the system customers use every day.

To support these long-term investments, the KTA Board of Directors approved a three-year annual toll adjustment of three percent for passenger vehicles (1-4 axles) and four percent for commercial vehicles (5+ axles) effective September 1, 2026. This is the first toll adjustment since 2022 and despite the change, KTA continues to provide one of the lowest toll rates in the nation.

"Long-term infrastructure requires long-term planning," Hewitt said. "The investments outlined in this plan were carefully evaluated and prioritized based on system needs, customer benefits and future growth. By planning ahead today, we're helping keep the Kansas Turnpike safe, reliable and ready to serve Kansas for decades to come."

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