

2025 **GUIDE** *Muskogee*

**& ANNUAL PROGRESS
FORECAST**

On the Move — Inside the region's surge in public investment, infrastructure, education and industry

Muskogee is leading Oklahoma's economic surge

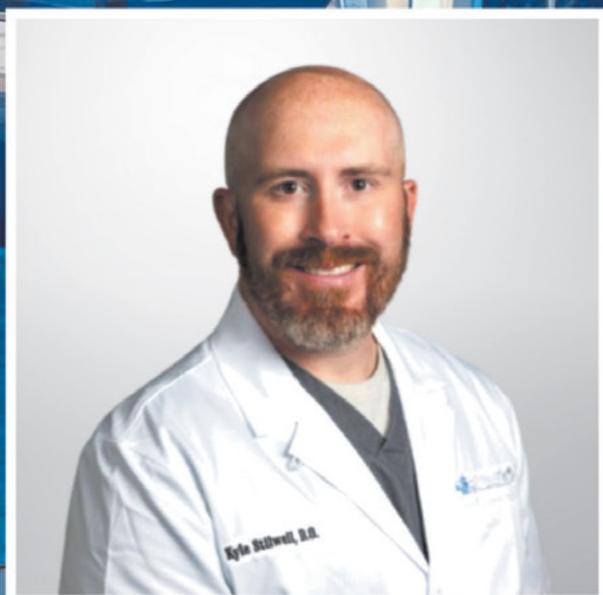
New roads, new horizons — Muskogee builds forward

Saint Francis nears major expansion finish

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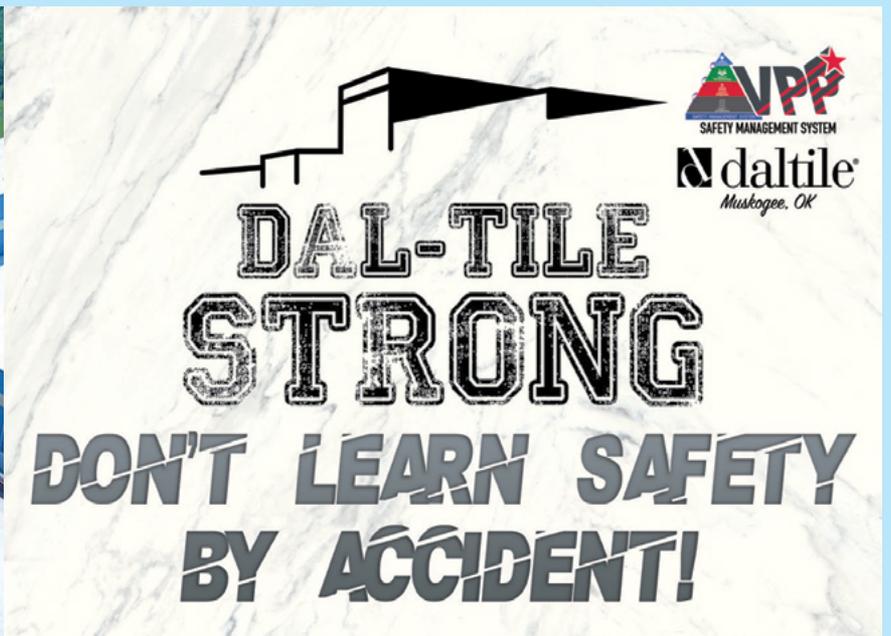
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GUIDE

& ANNUAL PROGRESS FORECAST

Muskogee

What's new in Muskogee

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Photo composition by Joshua Cagle.

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MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN MUSKOGEE.



Artist's rendering, subject to change

Saint Francis Hospital Muskogee expansion is almost here!

With the largest healthcare construction project in Muskogee history, the new patient bed tower will feature a ground floor entrance, chapel and over 150 new patient rooms including new intensive and progressive care units. Construction is underway, and the tower will welcome its first patient by the end of 2025. With patient rooms up to 47% larger than existing rooms, new family waiting and staff support areas, this construction will help ensure Muskogee remains an excellent place to receive and work in healthcare.

TOWER FEATURES:

- New critical care units
- 47% larger patient rooms
- Larger staff support area
- New ground floor entrance
- New expanded chapel
- Expanded admission testing and admitting area
- Surgery family waiting area with consult rooms
- Dedicated infection isolation rooms, with anterooms, per floor
- Designed for pandemic preparedness
- Additional space for future growth

saintfrancis.com/muskogee





Workers keep moving on finishing expansion of Saint Francis Hospital Muskogee. (File photo)

Saint Francis rising closer to completion

By Cathy Spaulding
MUSKOGEE PHOENIX

Progress in Muskogee health care is rising in the west.

The eight-story tower, adding 158 inpatient beds to Saint Francis Hospital Muskogee, is on track for completion by the end of 2025.

Michelle Keeling, Senior VP and President of Saint Francis Hospital Muskogee, anticipates its completion.

“Every physician, nurse and staff member on our team, myself included, couldn’t be more excited to celebrate this monumental grand opening with our community later this year, most likely in December,” Keeling said. “This expansion represents our unwavering commitment to investing in the health and well-being of Eastern Oklahoma — improving access, enhancing quality and elevating the patient experience for our friends, families and neighbors.”

These rooms are to be 47% larger than the current ones, with massive windows and more space for family and visitors. Bathrooms also will be bigger.

Workers set a beam topping the eight-story wing at Saint Francis Hospital Muskogee last August. (File photo)





Construction elevators go up and down the eight-story expansion of Saint Francis Hospital Muskogee. (File photo)



Saint Francis Hospital Muskogee, gather for a portrait in front of the eight-story wing under construction. (File photo)

The expansion includes 30 beds in the intensive care unit and 32 beds in progressive care, a new ground floor entrance and a new chapel for patients, visitors and staff.

Muskogee officials joined hospital staff last August to celebrate this progress. Dozens watched a giant crane carry the final beam to top the multi-story wing for Saint Francis Hospital Muskogee.

Trey Bomier, hospital executive director of operations said in August, said the expansion will have “282 miles of electrical wire, 2,000 tons of American-made steel and over 1,100 trucks of concrete.”

The new patient bed tower will result in the creation of dozens of new positions and create capacity within the existing hospital for continued growth, he said.

Progressive Care Unit Manager Christie Vaughn, RN, said her unit will have more room to care for patients.

“The elevator will go up the center of it,” Vaughn said. “So we’ll have 16 beds on each side of the elevator, and two nurses stations on each side with full linens, supplies, everything we need.”

The expansion is part of the system’s contributions

to Muskogee and beyond.

Staint Francis Muskogee consistently is a leading sponsor of events, such as the mayor’s State of the City Address.

The Greater Muskogee Area Chamber of Commerce named Saint Francis Muskogee as Business of the Year in February.

The hospital is part of Saint Francis Health System, based in Tulsa. In May, Saint Francis Health System was recognized in the 16th edition of the 15 Top Health Systems study by Premier’s PINC AI and published by Fortune magazine.



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City touts street, facility improvements

By Cathy Spaulding
MUSKOGEE PHOENIX

The City of Muskogee shows progress with new parks, improved facilities and miles of street improvement.

And more improvements are to come, including a new wastewater plant, pickleball courts and potential capital improvement projects.

Many accomplishments came through a two-part, five-year sales tax

voters approved in 2019. Both parts totaled a half-cent per dollar spent in Muskogee.

Proceeds from a 0.33% sales tax funded more than 100 miles of street improvements. The city microsealed or repaved streets in each ward.

Proceeds from a 0.17% sales tax funded improvements across Muskogee,

including at Muskogee Swim and Fitness Center, Hatbox Event Center and Muskogee Civic Center.

Muskogee welcomed a new park, Grandview Park, in November. The park features bike trails and obstacles, as well as an action-oriented playground.

New pickleball courts went up at Spaulding Park, and more are to be

built at Honor Heights Park. Muskogee Teen Center moved to the former Rougher Alternative Academy.

More city improvements are expected this year and in coming years.

The city is to seek bids this spring on an \$80 million wastewater treatment plant to replace one that dates to the 1950s. Project engineers say the



Southbound trucks on U.S. 69 pass under a pedestrian bridge before going uphill to Border Avenue. Oklahoma Department of Transportation plans to ease the effort when it raises the pedestrian bridge and widens the highway. (File photo)



Elliot Anthis, 9, concentrates on getting his bike over obstacles at Grandview Park, which opened in November. (File photo)



Women play pickleball at Spaulding Park. City of Muskogee Foundation could help fund pickleball courts at Honor Heights Park.
(File photo)

plant will be a state of the art facility, built above the flood plain. Updated features include ultraviolet disinfection to kill bacteria, and aerobic digestion, a biological process that breaks down organic matter.

Work could begin later this year on widening U.S. 69 south of Main Street. Improvements include reconstructing the four-lane divided highway between Haddock Street and Border Avenue.

Work between Border and Okmulgee Avenue involves building three lanes in each direction. Plans also call for replacing the Centennial Trail pedestrian bridge and raising the highway going under it by six inches.

The city also is looking toward the future by planning a sales tax to replace the 2019 tax when it expires in October.

Former Mayor Marlon Coleman

leads a committee considering projects for a potential sales tax election later this year. They are to submit their proposals to the council soon.

“They are a very curiously progressive group,” he said. “They want what’s best for the city. They tried to look at everybody’s points, everybody’s options.”

He said the committee is focusing on several areas, including infrastruc-

ture and quality of life improvements.

“They’re looking at city facilities because we probably have 50 years or more of deferred maintenance on city properties,” he said. “While we do need infrastructure, we want to continue to build the live, work and play environment, which means having something to do with families so they can spend their recreational dollars here instead of other places.”

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City leads in capital investment growth

By Cathy Spaulding
MUSKOGEE PHOENIX

Business expansions and expanding businesses help Muskogee lead investment growth.

Muskogee County had four listings, totaling \$4.1 billion, on Oklahoma Department of Commerce's New Growth and Expansion Report for 2024. The report listed 75 new or expanding companies across the state in 2024.

"Major projects like Core Scientific/CoreWeave's AI computing, Polaris Technologies' data innovation, Love Bottling's logistics expansion and Quality Liquid Feeds' agricultural initiatives are driving job growth and boosting the local economy," said Port Muskogee Executive Director Kimbra Scott. "These announced

investments, driven by Muskogee's long-term vision, strategic investments in industrial land and infrastructure, and a strong network of committed community partners, are laying the foundation for future growth."

Core Scientific, which broke ground last November for a 100 megawatt, high-performance computing data center to be built at Smith Ferry Road and Dal-Tile Road.

"With a \$4 billion capital investment, the project is in its final design and approval stages, with operations expected to begin in 2026," Scott said. "This landmark project will not only position Muskogee as a leader in digital infrastructure but also

create 100 direct high-paying tech jobs, well above the county's average salary."

The commerce department report mentioned Polaris Technology's plan to build a 200 megawatt bitcoin data center at John T. Griffin Industrial Park, a \$100 million investment.

Scott said Polaris finished its first phase last May, adding 25 new jobs. A second phase, doubling its data center capacity, is set to be finished around midyear. She said Polaris anticipates creating 50 jobs when fully operational.

The report also touted two Muskogee business expansions.

Quality Liquid Feeds, Inc. is building a 150' x 100' building at the Port of

Muskogee. The expansion, a \$3.3 million investment, will allow for increased production of its liquid carbon-based fertilizers business.

Plant manager Nick Brandon said the port prepared the site for the new building.

"The people at the port are really good to work with," he said.

Scott said the expansion is designed to meet the rising demand for liquid carbon-based fertilizers.

"This active initiative underscores QLF's commitment to innovation and sustainability in agriculture while enhancing river access for efficient barge and rail transportation," she said.



State, county and city officials join representatives of Core Scientific and Core Weave for a mock groundbreaking of a new data center. It was too rainy to break ground at the actual site last November. (File photo)



Love Bottling Vice President of Operations Joey Conaway shows how each of the companies 14 new docks will have a moveable fan and light. The docks are part of a 32,000 square-foot expansion. (File photo)

Love Bottling Co. is finishing a 32,000-square-foot expansion of its warehouse, a \$32,000 investment. The expansion included 14 loading docks, bringing the warehouse total to 17 docks.

Love Bottling President and CEO James Gulley said contractors are adding computer and WiFi access to the expansion.

He said the expansion means crews won't have to load and unload tractor-trailers in bad weather because each rig will have an assigned loading dock.

Scott attributed the year's success to Muskogee having The Four Rs – rail, road, river and runway.

The city also excels in the 3 Ps, she said. They are:

– People: "A growing and skilled workforce that supports diverse industries and is ready to meet the demands of expanding businesses," she said.

– Partnerships: "Strong collaboration between local government, businesses, and community organizations ensures sustainable growth and resource optimization," she said.

– Power: "With OG&E as the electric provider, Muskogee benefits from some of the most affordable electric rates in the U.S., providing reliable and cost-effective energy solutions to businesses and fostering the region's industrial growth."

Scott says 2025 is off to a good start. Ground was broken in January on Stardust Power's proposed \$1.2 billion lithium refinery on South 53rd West Avenue and U.S. 64. Stardust officials say the plant could produce up to 50,000 metric tons per year of battery-grade lithium. Scott said the first phase of construction

is to start later this year.

"Looking forward, the momentum built in 2024 is expected to carry through 2025 and beyond," Scott said. "With an increasingly dynamic industrial landscape, Muskogee is poised to build on its success, attract new investments, and provide even more opportunities for its residents. As the city continues to strengthen its leadership in key sectors, the future holds immense potential for continued growth and prosperity, ensuring a vibrant economic future for years to come."

Port Muskogee focuses on future

By Ronn Rowland
MUSKOGEE PHOENIX

Port Muskogee Executive Director Kimbra Scott says the port and the city are capitalizing on planning.

“Muskogee is setting the pace for economic growth in Oklahoma, and Port Muskogee is at the heart of that momentum,” Scott said. “The city secured over \$4.1 billion in new projects in 2024, a direct result of years of strategic planning, smart investments in industrial land and infrastructure, and strong collaboration among community partners.”

As the port moves forward, Scott says it continues to take advantage of its assets.

“Looking ahead, Port Muskogee continues to leverage its unique advantages as the only micropolitan in Oklahoma with the 4R’s—rail, road, river, and runway—to attract even more industries,” she said. “Logistics, advanced manufacturing, and technology sectors are all expanding here,

and with Muskogee’s business-friendly environment and skilled workforce, the port is positioned for continued growth and investment.”

Another part of the forward movement by the port is “transformational infrastructure projects” Scott said that are preparing a solid foundation for future growth.

“The recently completed \$14 million BUILD grant-funded rail project has significantly improved the connection between the UP mainline and the marshaling yard, increasing rail throughput and streamlining logistics to support industry,” Scott said. “The \$11 million Flood Protection Improvement Project has successfully completed its first phase, including the construction of a berm and the purchase of AquaFence, proactively mitigating flood risks and safeguarding critical infrastructure. The fully funded \$33

million Waterfront Recovery & Resiliency Project will introduce new dockside rail and bulkhead, a main dock replacement along with a new heavy-lift dock, the replacement of three overhead cranes, and a new transit warehouse. These enhancements will optimize cargo handling, expand operational capacity, and strengthen the regional supply chain to support industry.”

Scott also pointed out how Muskogee’s future endeavors are not about corporate investments.

“It’s about real opportunities for the people who live and work here,” she said. “Hundreds of good-paying jobs in industries like tech, energy, logistics, and advanced manufacturing are ensuring that residents can build careers here instead of leaving to find opportunity elsewhere. As new industries take root, local businesses—from suppliers and contractors

to restaurants and retailers—will see direct benefits, creating a stronger economy across the region.”

While Muskogee is a leader in the state in capital investment, Scott points out that position wasn’t “built overnight.”

“It’s the result of years of strategic planning to attract projects that will generate economic returns for generations to come,” she said. “Recent investments from companies like Core Scientific and CoreWeave in AI and high-performance computing, Polaris Technologies in Bitcoin data innovation, and Love Bottling in logistics and QLF and agriculture have strengthened our local economy, creating long-term, sustainable job growth. These companies didn’t just choose Muskogee for our infrastructure or location—they chose Muskogee because of our skilled workforce, strong industry partnerships, and Oklahoma’s pro-business



Dignitaries, from left, Stardust Power CEO Rushan Pujari, Lt. Gov. Matt Pinnell, Mayor Patrick Cale and Port-Muskogee Director Kimbra Scott, join a groundbreaking ceremony for a Stardust Power’s lithium refining facility to be built south of Muskogee. (File photo)

environment.”

And the port is improving trade in areas outside Muskogee.

“Port Muskogee is quickly becoming known as Oklahoma’s gateway to national and global markets, giving businesses a competitive edge with our unmatched transportation infrastructure,” Scott said. “Our ability to attract large-scale industrial operations creates a ripple effect that benefits existing businesses, suppliers, and service providers across the region. When a company invests in Muskogee, its success relies on a strong network of suppliers, warehousing, transportation, and support services that help sustain and grow operations.”

And with increasing demand for industrial space, Scott said the port is investing in the future.

“In July 2022, the Port announced a \$58 million investment in infrastructure improvements designed to enhance safety, boost operational efficiency, and improve resiliency to withstand significant flood events, ensuring that Muskogee remains a leading hub for multimodal commerce for the next 50 years,” she

said. “The improvements—prioritized based on a Waterfront Infrastructure Assessment and Resiliency Study—target critical infrastructure including facilities, utilities, equipment, waterfront structures, railways, electrical systems, and stormwater management.

Notable upgrades include:

- Replacing three terminal cranes to increase cargo handling efficiency
- Enhancing stormwater and security infrastructure to improve long-term sustainability
- Upgrading docks and waterfront structures to support heavier industrial activity
- Increasing road and pedestrian accessibility for better connectivity
- Constructing a new 50,000 square feet rail-served warehouse to support growing logistics demands

Beyond these infrastructure investments, Port Muskogee is expanding workforce development initiatives to ensure that industries locating here have access to skilled, job-ready talent in manufacturing, logistics, and advanced technology.”



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A worker guides a cherry picker around the Polaris Technologies substation south of Muskogee. (File photo)

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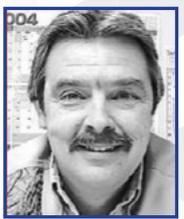
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County to move forward on safety

By Ronn Rowland
MUSKOGEE PHOENIX

Muskogee County voters passed a temporary sales tax in January 2025 to fund an array of public safety facilities, projects and services.

First to be funded will be a no-cost emergency ambulance service for Muskogee County residents beginning in April.

Also on the horizon is a joint

facility, to be built west of Muskogee Civic Center between Okmulgee Avenue and Columbus Avenue, to house Muskogee County EMS, Muskogee Police Department, Muskogee City and County Emergency Management, Muskogee County Call Center and part of Muskogee County Sheriff's Office and Muskogee Fire Department.

Muskogee County Emergency Medical Service Director Laurel Havens said there's a year's worth of preparation before the new facility can be built.

"One year of design, architecture and engineering is required," Havens said. "Then there's a year and a half to build the building."

Havens also said the new building will benefit the city and county.

"The sheriff's department, the county emergency management and emergency medical services will be positioned in this building," he said. "So for us providing services inside the city we'll be able to get across the tracks quicker."



An artist rendering shows what a joint public safety building for Muskogee County and the City of Muskogee could look like. (MUSKOGEE COUNTY EMS/Submitted)



Muskogee Fire Capt. Josh Doughty shows wear on the York Street fire station. Replacing the station is part of a county-wide public safety sales tax proposal approved on Tuesday. (File photo)

After initial projects are funded, within seven to 10 years, the sales tax would drop to a half-cent to keep funding the no-cost ambulance service, building maintenance and ongoing departmental vehicle and equipment needs. It will be administered by a county trust.

Muskogee County Sheriff Andy Simmons said the new facility will

make it easier on certain aspects of his office.

“We have deputies in three locations,” Simmons said. “So we’ll be moving the deputies and filed investigations over there. Admin and clerical employees will still be at the courthouse.”

Simmons said the arrangement will “bring a little structure to the office.”

“What benefits us the most is the funding,” Simmons said. “Right now I pay about \$185,000 a year for dispatch. I won’t have to pay that — I can pass that on to the deputies.”

Muskogee Fire Department, which has seven fire stations, would get \$6 million to fund the new York Street station, plus renovations to Station 6 on Peak Boulevard and Station 7 on 40th

Street. Sales tax money also would fund new trucks and equipment.

Fort Gibson, Haskell and Warner would receive \$4 million each for new joint police-fire-EMS facilities in their towns, plus new vehicles and equipment.

Money also will be allocated for new radios for county volunteer fire departments, Havens said.

REAL ESTATE IN 2025: WHAT TO EXPECT

As a realtor, there's one question we hear constantly

“How’s the market?” But the real question is, which market are you asking about?

Real estate isn’t one-size-fits-all. Are you curious about **residential homes? Vacant or undeveloped land? Investment properties? Commercial real estate?** Each sector has its own trends, opportunities, and challenges.

So, what does the market look like in our area? Let’s dive in and find out!

As of March 2025, the real estate market in Muskogee, Oklahoma, exhibits several noteworthy trends across various property sectors:

Residential Real Estate:

The average home value in Muskogee County is approximately \$192,000, reflecting a 1 % increase over the past year. First quarter 2025, the median sale price for homes was \$190,000, a slight decrease compared to the previous year. Homes in Muskogee are selling with properties typically remaining on the market for 57 days, up a little from 46 days the previous year, with a 4% average negotiation from list to sale price.

Vacant/Undeveloped Land:

Specific data on vacant or undeveloped land trends in Muskogee is a wide range from lots to large parcels averaging longer times on the market. However, the overall increase in home values suggests a growing interest in land development, potentially driven by residential and commercial expansion.

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WHAT'S THE MARKET LIKE?

Constantly - sometimes multiple times a day:

Investment Properties:

The Muskogee market presents opportunities for investors. The median gross rent in Muskogee is \$725, offering a favorable price-to-rent ratio for potential investors. Over the past decade, home values have appreciated at an annual rate of 3.5%, indicating steady long-term growth.

Commercial Real Estate:

While specific figures for commercial properties are not provided in the available data, the overall economic indicators and population growth in Muskogee suggest potential opportunities in the commercial real estate sector.

Muskogee's real estate market in 2025 demonstrates resilience and growth, particularly in the residential sector. Investors and potential homeowners should consider these trends when making decisions, keeping in mind the rapid pace of sales and the steady appreciation in property values.

*Monica Medley, Managing Broker
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BY THE NUMBERS

STUDENT INFORMATION:

Number of Students: **794**

Female: **601**

Male: **183**

Unknown: **10**

ETHNICITY:

White: **379**

Hispanic: **64**

Native American: **149**

Other: **148**

Black: **54**

BUDGET

FY 2025:
\$2,322,379

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**NORTHEASTERN
STATE UNIVERSITY**

FACULTY & STAFF

Male: **18** Total: **67** Female: **49**

TOP FIVE MAJORS

1. Psychology
2. Business Administration, BBA
3. Health and Human Performance
4. Business Administration, MBA
5. Accounting

TUITION/PER CREDIT HOUR

Resident Undergraduate:	Non-resident Undergraduate:
\$260.30	\$576.30
Resident Graduate:	Non-resident Graduate:
\$320.57	\$665.57

STUDENTS COME FROM

In-State:	International:
696	8
Out of State:	Completely online:
90	487



Northeastern State University's Muskogee campus continues to serve students seeking degrees in business administration, human performance and health. (NORTHEASTERN STATE UNIVERSITY/Submitted)

MPS sees success in classroom, stadium

By Cathy Spaulding
MUSKOGEE PHOENIX

Muskogee Public Schools' youngest students walked through new halls this year. And students are showing a positive new attitude, Superintendent Jarod Mendenhall said.

"The culture of our district has been based on a 'growth mind-set,' where we are always looking for ways to improve and get better," Mendenhall said. "I'm extremely proud of our students and their many accomplishments – too many to name individually. I am also very proud of our staff who work tirelessly to help our students and never give up on our students. They continue to amaze me with their selfless attitudes and commitment to excellence."

Muskogee Public Schools continues to see benefits from the massive bond issue passed in 2019.

Rougher Village has become a regional hub for athletic and fine arts competitions. The Region East 5A and 6A marching band contest was held at the football stadium in October. The NCJAA Division 1, Region 2 Men's and Women's Basketball Tournament was held at the gym for the third year in a row in March.

Muskogee's Early Childhood Center moved to the remodeled Grant Foreman Elementary School in August.

"Another apparent change is the level of excellence in both the arts and athletics," Mendenhall said. "Our choir, band, and robotics teams are competing on a statewide level and oftentimes achieving national level recognition. We are seeing our athletic teams winning state championships and more student-athletes moving on to participate at the collegiate level and

excelling."

Muskogee Roughers went to the Class 6A State Football Championship for the second year in a row.

Muskogee school buildings also are shining. Seven buildings received Energy Star ratings from the Environmental Protection Agency in March. They were Cherokee Elementary, Creek Elementary, 6th and 7th Grade Academy, 8th and 9th Grade Academy Rougher Alternative and Grant Foreman.

To be recognized, a building must rank in the top 25% nationwide for energy efficiency and ventilation. Schools were recognized for reducing energy usage by nearly 21% per square foot.

Mendenhall said the 2019 bond issue addressed most of the district's capital needs. However there area onging needs

including new HVAC units, roof replacement and new parking lots, he said.

"These are items that have a 15-20-year life span that need ongoing repair and/or replacement depending on the condition of the equipment, he said, adding that updating technology is another issue.

He said that, later this year, school officials might consider another bond issue.

"We are always planning at least three years in the future and setting lofty goals to accomplish," he said. "This next school year, we will begin a new five-year strategic planning process. This process will include community stakeholders who will help us set new goals and objectives for the school district which will then be taken to the Board of Education for their consideration. This process will help set us on a new path to our vision of excellence."



Early Childhood Center teacher Haleigh Carrier, left, listens to pupil Maeve Dvorak, third from left, on the first day of class at Muskogee Public Schools. Remington Bingham, second from left, already had a turn. (File photo)

BY THE NUMBERS

FUNDING SOURCES

Local:
\$10,692,154.73

County:
\$1,070,000.00

State:
\$27,964,546.77

Federal:
\$8,204,750.83

Total projected:
\$47,931,452.33



ENROLLMENT

Students:
4,785

Support Staff:
284

Certified Staff:
261

Administrators:
39

DISTRICT LEADERSHIP

Superintendent:
 Jarod Mendenhall.

Executive Assistant to Superintendent:
 Carla Cooper.

Assistant Superintendent:
 Lance Crawley.

Executive Director of Finance:
 David Chester.

Executive Director of Athletics:
 Jason Parker.

Executive Director of Human Resources:
 Bradley Eddy.

Executive Director of Secondary Instruction:
 Lisa Yahola.

Executive Director of Elementary Instruction:
 Ginger Baker.

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Bobby Jefferson, Tommy Anderson, Larry Stewart, Debra Horsechief, Danny Shiew.

BUILDING PRINCIPALS

Early Childhood Center:
 Jennifer Schuler.

Cherokee Elementary:
 Latricia Dawkins.

Creek Elementary:
 Stacy Miller.

Irving Elementary:
 Katy Thomson.

Pershing Elementary:
 Lisa Rogers.

Tony Goetz Elementary:
 Sarah McWilliams.

Sadler Arts Academy:
 Ronia Davison.

6th and 7th Grade Academy:
 Reubin McIntosh.

8th and 9th Grade Academy:
 Ryan Buell.

Muskogee High School:
 Kinsey Cook.

Rougher Alternative Academy:
 Lisa Charboneau.

Rougher Innovations Academy:
 Jennifer Kiser.

Muskogee High School students cheer for the Roughers late in the fourth quarter in OSSAA Class 6A-II State Championship at Chad Richison Stadium in Edmond on Saturday. (File photo)



Hilldale prioritizes tech, student safety

By **Cathy Spaulding**
MUSKOGEE PHOENIX

Hilldale Public Schools works to improve technology and safety and to give wrestlers a better place to practice.

“Technology’s constantly changing, we do the best we can to stay up with that,” Hilldale Superintendent Erik Puckett said.

He said the biggest advancement has been artificial intelligence, “how we use it to help kids with the real world because it’s not going away.”

School officials also see the down side of artificial intelligence.

“We’re trying to make sure kids do their own work and have their own thoughts and not just plagiarize that part,” Puckett said.

Another security measure involves scrutinizing student cell phone use, Puckett said.

“We already have a cellphone policy on kids using it at school, but I think we’re about to see that get reinforced with state law this legislative session,” he said. “In high school and middle school, they’re not supposed to have them out at all during their classes. We do allow them during

lunch time.”

Puckett said he expects legislation could prohibit student cellphone usage throughout the school day.

Hilldale is working to make its buildings more secure.

“We got a DOJ grant a few years ago,” Puckett said. “We replaced a lot of doors and windows and cameras, were about through with that cycle.”

Puckett said he’s working on grants to get more automated external defibrillators in every vehicle.

BY THE NUMBERS

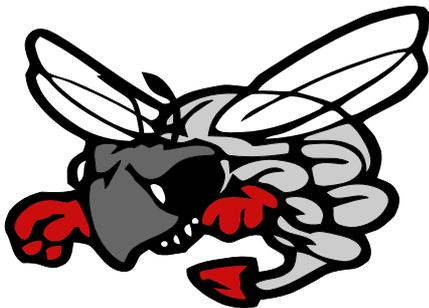
SCHOOL INFORMATION:

Enrollment:
2,018

Certified staff:
(excluding administration)
141

Number of support staff:
75

Number of administrators:
(three central office, three at the elementary, two at the middle school, two at the high school)
9



DISTRICT LEADERSHIP

Superintendent:
Erik Puckett

Assistant Superintendents:
**Deborah Tennison,
Chad Kirkhart**

BUILDING PRINCIPALS

Elementary:
Patty Bilyard

Middle School:
Darren Riddle

High School:
Josh Nixon

FUNDING SOURCES (Amount from each fund)

Local:
\$2,447,764

County:
\$501,551

State:
\$13,375,927

Federal:
\$2,136,816

Total projected:
\$18,462,058

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Hilldale seniors stand in front of a crowd of family members, friends and others at Monday's graduation ceremony. (File photo)

Dirt is being moved for a new wrestling facility behind the high school and middle school. Puckett said Hilldale started a wrestling program about five or six years ago, but facilities were outdated and inadequate.

"They need their own practice space," Puckett said., "Right now they're sharing locker rooms another with basketball. We're building a facility where they'll have their own locker room, practice space where it's nice and clean."

Hilldale made these improvements without having a school bond issue since 2017. Voters approved a \$15 million proposal that funded technology and textbook updates, an all-sports building a single entrance for the elementary school and other improvements.

Puckett said no bond issue is planned until 2028.

"But we'll start making those plans and start having those discussions and steering committee and community outreach within the next year or so," Puckett said.



Third grade teacher Mindi Grider, right, guides her class through setting up their desks and notebooks on Hilldale Elementary's first day of school earlier this year. (File photo)

Fort Gibson schools look to future

By Cathy Spaulding
MUSKOGEE PHOENIX

Fort Gibson Schools could be safer and greener in 10 years. “We’ve been working with community members, our faculty, school board and architects to make plans for what our priorities are going to be,” Superintendent Scott Farmer said.

Farmer said the district works with such partners on a 10-year plan to help decide what to include in future bond issues. He said the district tries to have bond issues every five years, with the next one set for 2028.

“Nothing is set in stone but we want to make sure we have a direction we’re headed before we start asking the community for more money,” he said. “We want to move the needle in technology and safety.”

Technology will continue to expand, but with more security, Farmer said.

“Technology goes way beyond that computer on your desk,” he said. “There’s an infrastructure that must be

maintained, bandwidth needs, content filtering. It’s an ugly world out there and your internet infrastructure can always be compromised. We’ve got to stay up with current trends and technology to mitigate breach of security.”

Priorities also include improved traffic flow. “These facilities were built in the 70s and 80s,” Farmer said. “We’re looking to secure our entrances even tighter and manage the flow of traffic.”

This could include relocating high school and middle school entrances to other sides of the building. The space surrounded by the high school, cafeteria, middle school and administration building could become a green space, Farmer said.

“Cars drive on campus at times students are crossing,” Farmer said. “We want to figure out a way to keep vehicle traffic away from pedestrians.”

Vehicle traffic between the high school and ag building also could be relocated. Farmer said the district bought land for expanded parking, roads and bus facilities.

A public safety facility to be built on Willey Road could have another safety feature — a road to the school campus and athletic fields.

“That way if we had some kind of accident at the high school or middle school, they can come directly to our property and not have to get on the public thoroughfare,” Farmer said.

The school recently added a second floor and elevator to the elementary schools’ multipurpose building. The addition was funded by the 2023 bond issue.

However, finishing the second floor is not a priority, Farmer said. “It is still on the drawing board to have it available when needed.”

Farmer said enrollment has gone down in the past year, so the district is not pressed to plan for growth.

“One thing we’re proud of is how we maintain our facilities,” he said. “So every bond issue is going to include an element of maintaining what we have already been gifted.”



Josie Smith joins in the Fort Gibson High Class of 2024 graduation procession. (File photo)

BY THE NUMBERS

FUNDING SOURCES

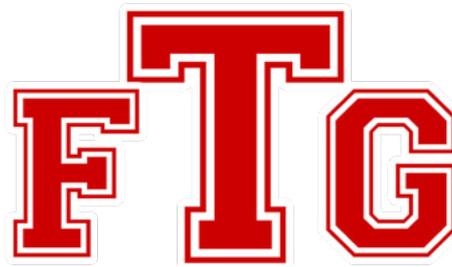
Local:
\$4,991,405

County:
\$408,694

State:
\$9,188,230

Federal:
\$2,884,981

Total Projected:
17,473,310



SCHOOL INFORMATION

Enrollment:
1,687

Support Staff:
86

Certified Staff:
142

Administrators:
8

DISTRICT LEADERSHIP

Superintendent:
Scott Farmer

Assistant Superintendent:
Tom Stiles

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Jennifer Rouse

Josh Young

W. Scott Abbott

Patrick Dause.

Haley Norman

BUILDING PRINCIPALS

High School:
Ben Pemberton

Middle School:
Todd Friend

Intermediate Elementary:
Andrea Sifers

Early Learning Center:
Cheryl Hill

Fort Gibson Schools employee daycare director Darci Karnes watches her 2-year-old daughter, Saylor, play with a toy bulldozer. The district offers daycare for faculty and staff during school hours. (File photo)



Connors grows, adds programs

By Cathy Spaulding
MUSKOGEE PHOENIX

Connors State College has more students preparing for ongoing demands from area employers.

Connors President Ron Ramming said campus enrollment has increased a little over the past year.

“We do have a good reputation for our programs and good people,” he said. “We have recruiters out working hard. We have programs folks are interested in.”

The nursing program at Connors’ Muskogee campus continues to grow.

“We are continuing to try to meet the need and provide nurses,” he said. “It’s a challenge and we’re doing our best.”

Connors is developing a speech-language pathology tech program, he said.

“There’s obviously a huge need for speech-language pathology in the schools,” Ramming said.

“And there’s just not enough speech paths to go along.”

A meat judging program has started at Connors’ Warner campus.

“It’s a competitive team,” Ramming said. “Instead of judging carcasses, they judge cuts.”

Connors also brought back a childcare major through the Scholars for Excellence in Childcare. The program is funded through a Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education.

Students can earn a certificate of mastery and associates degree in child development while working at a child care center, said Anna Sobba, the program’s scholar coordinator.

“This really helps the students because they don’t have to worry about getting off work and going to the campuses,” she said. “I go to them and help them through the process.”

Sobba said she works with the students directly

and through online classes.

She said students must work at least 30 hours a week at a daycare, Head Start or similar business.

“The program works a little slower than your typical program because they are full-time workers,” Sobba said. “The certificate of mastery takes about a year to complete and the associates is another year and a half to two years. We found that if they go slower, we set them up for success.”

Connors had a child development program 14 years ago and brought it back three years ago, she said. The program has grown from two students then to 63 now, she said.

The program pays 100% of a student’s tuition until the student obtains a certificate of mastery.

“It comes with a stipend when they earn that certificate,” Sobba said. “Then they can go on and earn their associate’s and the program pays 90% tuition.”



Connors State College healthcare students check vitals on a mannequin patient. Healthcare continues to be a major draw at Connors. (CONNORS STATE COLLEGE/Submitted)

BY THE NUMBERS



Communication between faculty and students is important at Connors State College, whether in the lab, classroom or online. (CONNORS STATE COLLEGE/ Submitted)

STUDENT INFORMATION:

Number of Students: **2,113**

Male: **70%**

Female: **30%**

Warner Campus: **460**

Muskogee Campus: **649**

Rest of students are primarily online.

ETHNICITY:

White: **40%**

Native American: **19%**

Black: **5%**

Hispanic: **3%**

Other: **33%**

BUDGETS

Total Budget: **\$26.97M**

State Appropriation: **\$6.55M**

TOP MAJORS

1. Pre-Nursing
2. Business Administration
3. Nursing
4. Agriculture
5. Child Development

FACULTY

Total: **140**

Male: **52**

Female: **88**

WHERE STUDENTS COME FROM

In-State: **92%**

Out-of-state: **5%**

International: **1%**

Online: **39%**

TUITION AND MANDATORY FEES

Resident: **\$105**/per hour and **\$53** fees

Non-resident: **\$160.76**/per hour and **\$53** fees

ICTC expands campuses, programs

By Ronn Rowland
MUSKOGEE PHOENIX

With the opening of the Coweta campus in 2024, Indian Capital Technology is able to service more students and businesses.

ICTC Superintendent Tony Pivec said what they're most proud of is the addition of nine new programs.

"At Tahlequah campus we added medical assistant and truck driver training," Pivec said. "At Coweta we added practical nursing, health careers, information technology, cosmetology, welding and plumbing. At our Sallisaw campus we added information technology.

"What that means is we're projected to have our highest enrollment ever."

Pivec also said that next year there will be four more programs added.

"At Coweta we're adding medical assistant and electrical trades," he said. "At Stilwell we're adding cosmetology and at Sallisaw were adding plumbing. So that means we'll break record enrollments next year and the way we enroll we'll break records in FY '27."

The opening of the Coweta campus was beneficial to the Muskogee campus.

"It took four schools off the Muskogee campus," Pivec said. "It opened up about 25% more slots for the Muskogee area students. So greatly beneficial for the Muskogee students as well."

Pivec went on to say the system-wide response to the additional campus has been very positive.

"We're getting a lot of positive feedback from the communities, from our sending schools and from our students," he said. "Before we had significant waiting lists, particularly at the Muskogee campus. We noticed this year with the Coweta campus open, that waiting list has dissipated greatly – that means we're able to serve more and more students in the Muskogee area."

Pivec said while more students are being served by the expansions, there are limits on program sizes.

"We still have caps on certain programs because of safety, lab space and classroom space," he said. "In some of our programs he still have significant waiting lists and others have been reduced to a very small number, if any. Most of those programs will still be full so that we're being stewards of the taxpayer's dollars."



Jessi Campbell and Paige Risenhoover, two students in the ICTC physical therapy assistant program, test out a hydrotherapy tub. (File photo)

BY THE NUMBERS

MUSKOGEE CAMPUS STUDENTS

Total Students:	Male:
506	271
High School students:	Female:
435	227
Adult students:	Unknown/Other:
71	8

MUSKOGEE CAMPUS ETHNICITY

White:	Hispanic/Latino:
257	66
Native American:	Other:
124	6
African American:	
53	

LOCATIONS

Four campus locations districtwide.

Muskogee Campus:
2403 N. 41st St. East, Muskogee; (918) 687-6383

Sallisaw Campus:
401 E. Houser Industrial Blvd., Sallisaw; (918) 775-9119

Stilwell Campus:
Rt. 6 Box 3320 (Oklahoma 59 and Maryetta Road), Stilwell; (918) 696-3111

Tahlequah Campus:
240 CareerTech Way (Vo-Tech Road), Tahlequah, (918) 456-2594

Adult Health Careers Campus:
2403 N. 41st St. East, Muskogee; (918) 348-7998

ADULT TUITION, FEES

In-district tuition for full-time day programs:

\$2.50 per credit hour

In-district tuition for Adult Health Careers programs (books and fees not included):

\$2.75 per credit hour

ICTC

INDIAN CAPITAL TECHNOLOGY CENTER

ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL

Superintendent:
Tony Pivec

Assistant Superintendent:
Doyle Bates

Muskogee Campus Director:
Angela Kohl

ICTC BOARD OF EDUCATION

President:
Monte Madewell

Vice President: Darrell Russell

Clerks: Tom Stiles



Keylee Morgan, left, and Indian Capital Technology Center Job Placement Specialist Kim Morgan engage in a virtual reality game at an ICTC job expo. (file photo)

TOP COURSES AT MUSKOGEE CAMPUS

1. Cosmetology
2. Automotive Service Technology
3. Electrician's Assistant
4. Residential HVAC Technician
5. Network Management and Support

BY THE NUMBERS

TOP DISTRICT LEADERSHIP

Superintendent:
Brent Pearce

BUILDING PRINCIPALS

High School Principal/Dean of Students: Brent Pearce.

Elementary/Middle School Principal: Shawna Coplen.

INFORMATION

Enrollment:

87

Administrators:

3

Support staff:

67

Certified staff:

33

FUNDING SOURCES

STATE:

\$7,881,000

FEDERAL:

\$7,000

INTER-AGENCY:

\$838,000

TOTAL:

\$8,794,000

Oklahoma School for the Blind's Ocie Webster, top, pins Texas' Jeremiah McNair to win his first match of the day in the South Central Association Schools for the Blind meet Saturday at the OSB's gymnasium. Webster would finish second in his weight class. (RONN ROWLAND/Muskogee Phoenix)



Oklahoma School for the Blind junior Kyler Harrington fishes off a bridge at Silver Spur Western Lodge during Western Heritage Day. (CATHY SPAULDING/Muskogee Phoenix)



Oklahoma School for the Blind



**DRS/OSB 2024
Student of the Year
Piper Conner**



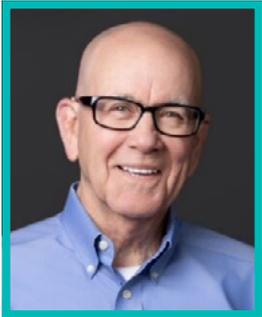
Proudly serving visually impaired/blind students throughout the state!

Preparing students for success in life!

GET TO KNOW YOUR LEADERS...

Muskogee City Council

TOM MARTINDALE



COUNCILOR

Ward IV City Councilor Tom Martingale, 78, said he owes it to Muskogee to pay back some of the benefits he's received here.

"Since I started working here in Muskogee over 20 years ago this city has been very good to me and my family," Martingale

said. "I ran for public office in an attempt to give back to this community."

Martingale defeated former councilor Tracy McGee in Feb. 2024 for the seat and feels economic stability is important for Muskogee.

"Financial stability is always the foundation of any institution because without it there is no way to fund the many departments that provide the necessary services any city requires," he said. "Developing the skillset to get the city officials and funding opportunities to work together has taken me a lifetime and I look forward to bringing that experience to the Council."

TRACY HOOS



COUNCILOR

Dr. Tracy Hoos, 47, is a local pediatrician who was appointed in July 2020 to the Muskogee City Council as Ward IV representative. He succeeded Marlon Coleman, who was elected by Muskogee voters to be the city's first Black mayor.

Hoos was graduated in 1994 from Hilldale High School. He went on to earn degrees at Northeastern State University and Oklahoma State University Center for Health Sciences College of Osteopathic Medicine and completed his residency with the University of Oklahoma.

Hoos said he likes to barbecue, something for which he has earned several awards for his talent at barbecue competitions, including Exchange Club of Muskogee's Chili and Barbecue Cook-Off. He also enjoys spending time with his family and pets.

He and his wife, Kristi, have two sons: Trey and Cadyn.

MELODY CRANFORD



COUNCILOR

Ward III Councilor Melody Cranford was elected to the position in April and has a vision for moving the city forward.

"I believe in the people of the city of Muskogee and I want to be a part of the growth that I see taking place daily. I believe that

when we combine the vision that I have for Ward III and the city as a whole with the vision of the other council members, we can see change that will move our city forward."

Cranford, who teaches fifth grade at Cherokee Elementary, believes the city's infrastructure is of vital importance to economic growth.

"I believe the most pressing capital need currently facing the city is infrastructure. I think we should take advantage of our centralized location and invest in our infrastructure to support air, water, and ground transportation which would lead to more competitive business opportunities for the Port."

DAN HALL



COUNCILOR

Ward II Councilor Dan Hall returned to his seat in 2024 he held until 2019, saying housing development in west Muskogee is hampered by lack of infrastructure, particularly pump stations to get sewage to the treatment plant east of Muskogee.

Hall replaces Alex Reynolds who decided to not seek another term as Ward II councilor.

"I'm looking forward to working with all the new councilors and some of the old councilors," Hall said. "I'm hoping we can get some stuff going as far as infrastructure and manufacturing facilities coming in. Try to grow Muskogee, try to work together as a team and get things moving."

Hall said his reason for returning to the council had to do with experience.

"To bring my experience of being a city councilor back to the council," Hall said. "We have several big projects needing to get started with in-

frastructure and water treatment. Pump stations, city streets, making the city a safer and clearer place to live and raise their families."

SHIRLEY HILTON-FLANARY



COUNCILOR

Shirley Hilton-Flanary, 72, is a lifelong Muskogee resident. She has been involved with the lending business for 40 years, most recently as American Bank's senior vice president for mortgage lending.

Flattery said, "If Muskogee is to secure a successful future, I

believe there are two components that go hand in hand: Cultivation of a community that attracts younger generations and infrastructure improvements."

She said her favorite thing about Muskogee is its friendliness.

"It's a great community to raise children," she said. "Our cost of living, that's another thing we have here. We're surrounded by lakes. I think that's a big plus."

C.B. ABEL



COUNCILOR

C.B. Abel is a third-generation Muskogee police officer, serving nearly 22 years with Muskogee Police Department before retiring in May of 2023. His son Austin is an officer with MPD.

"I made a lot of friends here, a lot of friends in the commu-

nity," Abel said. "I love my job, I love the community, I love meeting people in the community."

Abel, Ward I City Councilor, is in his first term on the council, taking over for Patrick Cale, and said he has seen a lot of changes during his years in Muskogee.

"It's a lot better now than what it was," he said. "It's cleaned up a lot. A lot of people have done a lot of good things for Muskogee, and the properties look nice."

MUSKOGEE CITY COUNCIL CONTINUED

JAIME LYNN STOUT



COUNCILOR

Stout attended school at both Hilldale and Oktaha school districts. She has an associate's degree from Connors State College as well as a bachelor's degree in management information systems from Northeastern State University. She is employed with ORS Nasco as an information technology support analyst.

She also is actively involved with her church, Immanuel Baptist. She has served in leadership and volunteer roles in many community organizations serving with Relay for Life, Habitat for Humanity, Junior Achievement, Gospel Rescue Mission, Women in Safe Home, The Barracks and United Way Day of Caring. She is a councilor in Ward II.

DERRICK REED



COUNCILOR

Reed won election in 2012 and took over the seat of Robert Perkins. In addition to his backing from labor supporters, Reed credited Perkins for his win.

Reed said Perkins groomed him for the city council.

Reed, who oversees various programs at the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Community Center, referenced the date of his victory with that of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s last public speech before he was slain by an assassin. In that speech

is remembered the phrase, "I've been to the mountain top."

It was April 3, 1968, when Dr. King gave his last public speech. On April 3, 2012, Reed stood in the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Community Center giving his victory speech. Reach Ward III Councilor Reed at dreed@muskogeeonline.org.

MAYOR PATRICK CALE



MA

Patrick Cale was elected as Muskogee's mayor in Feb. 2024, replacing Marlon J. Coleman.

Cale is a longtime businessman and civil servant who knows that honesty and transparency truly are the best policies. When it comes to his hometown, he is upfront about his ideas and takes concerns seriously. He was first elected to public office in 2016 as Ward I City Councilor and was reappointed to the position in July of 2022, replacing Stephanie Jones.

"I've sold what we're capable of doing in Muskogee over the next couple of years," he said.

"Industrial is starting to take off. We're going to be looking at a bond issue for the city. Big things are going to happen and I wanted to be here to see it all through."

During his campaign for mayor, Cale said economic development was important in moving Muskogee forward in the 21st Century.

"Industrial development is what leads the city of Muskogee," Cale said. "It's going to be what enables us to build the subdivisions, it helps sales tax base. It's going to be so much, when you've got that much stuff going on."

GET TO KNOW YOUR LEADERS...

Muskogee County Commissioners

KENNY PAYNE

County Commissioner, District 3

HOMETOWN: Muskogee.
FAMILY: Wife, Stephanie Payne; two children, Tori and Tate.
OCCUPATION: Regional sales, Springfield Grocer Co.
EDUCATION: Northeastern State University, safety and education.
RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION: Timothy Baptist Church.
HOBBIES: My children's activities, classic cars and trucks, and golfing.



COMMISSIONER
Kenny Payne



COMMISSIONER
Ken Doke



COMMISSIONER
Keith Hyslop

guns and spending time with family.

KEITH HYSLOP

County Commissioner, District 2.

HOMETOWN: Webbers Falls.
OCCUPATION: County Commissioner, District 2; construction inspector, project manager.
FAMILY: Wife: Tamra Hyslop; Daughters: Lauren Harris, Ashley Beard, Celeste Reaves, Ashton Burleson; Son, Richard Burleson Jr.; five grandchildren.
EDUCATION: High school graduate; numerous state certifications for roads and bridges.
HOBBIES: Work, spending time with family.

KEN DOKE

County Commissioner, District 1.

HOMETOWN: Muskogee.
FAMILY: Wife, Jodi; three children,

Kaje, Kensli Faith, and Jenlee Hope.
OCCUPATION: Vice president, business development director at Arvest Bank in Muskogee.
EDUCATION: University of Phoenix,

bachelor's degree in business administration.
RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION: New Hope Assembly of God.
HOBBIES: Hunting, fishing, shooting

GET TO KNOW YOUR LEADERS...

Public Safety

CITY OF MUSKOGEE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Director: Tyler Evans
Phone: (918) 684-6295
Fax: (918) 684-6316
E-mail: EmergencyManagement@muskogeeonline.org
Address: 229 W. Okmulgee Ave.
Mailing address: P.O. Box 1927, Muskogee, OK 74402-1927

MUSKOGEE COUNTY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Interim Director: Carrie Wages — (918) 682-2551



Tyler Evans

Fax: (918) 684-1699
Address: 220 State St., #20, Muskogee, OK 74402
Mailing address: P.O. Box 2274, Muskogee, OK 74402
E-mail: mcem@readymuskogee.org

MUSKOGEE COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

Sheriff: Andy Simmons — (918) 687-0202
220 State St., Muskogee, OK 74401



Carrie Wages

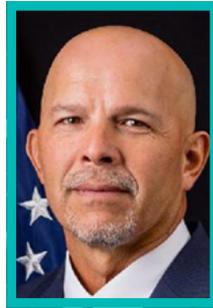
Fax: (918) 687-9658
POLICE DEPARTMENT
Chief: Johnny Teehee — (918) 683-8000
112 S. Third St., Muskogee, OK 74402
Fax: (918) 680-3197
E-mail: MPD@muskogeeonline.org

FIRE DEPARTMENT

Chief: Jody Moore — (918) 684-6252
Fax: (918) 684-6253



Andy Simmons



Johnny Teehee

E-Mail: fire@muskogeeonline.org

FIRE DEPARTMENT STATIONS

1. 515 Columbus St.
3. 2603 Border St.
4. 100 S. Country Club Road
5. 1706 N. York St.
6. 513 E. Peak Blvd.
7. 200 North 40th St.

MUSKOGEE COUNTY EMERGENCY MEDICAL



Jody Moore

SERVICE

Executive Director: Laurel Havens, NREMT-P — (918) 683-0130
Address: 200 Callahan St., Muskogee, OK 74403
Email: laurelh@mcems.us

OKLAHOMA HIGHWAY PATROL

Address: 1806 N. York St., Muskogee, OK 74403
Phone: (918) 683-3256



Laurel Havens

GET TO KNOW YOUR LEADERS...

State Elected Officials

EVERY FRIX

District 9 Oklahoma Senator (R-Muskogee)

HOMETOWN: Muskogee.
FAMILY: Wife Haley.
OCCUPATION: President, Oxford Productions Inc.; vice president, Frix Construction Co.
EDUCATION: University of Oklahoma, bachelor's degree in business administration, accounting.
RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION: First Baptist Church of Muskogee.
HOBBIES: Watching Hilldale Hornets play football.
CAPITOL ADDRESS: 2300 N. Lincoln Blvd.; Room 328B; Oklahoma City, OK 73105; (405) 557-7302
Legislative Assistant: Lindsey Stinson; (405) 521-5533

CHRIS SNEED

District 14 Oklahoma Representative (R-Fort Gibson)

HOMETOWN: Fort Gibson.
FAMILY: Wife, Joie Sneed; three children: Summer Brock, Cody Sloan and Keaton Sloan; one grandchild.
OCCUPATION: Business owner, Chris Sneed Insurance.
EDUCATION: Graduate of Hulbert High School; Attended Murray State College and Northeastern State University.



SENATOR
Avery Frix



REPRESENTATIVE
Chris Sneed



REPRESENTATIVE
Neil Hays



REPRESENTATIVE
Tim Turner

RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION: Christian; Member Muskogee First Assembly.
HOBBIES: Hunting, watching college football and baseball, playing golf.
CAPITOL ADDRESS: 2300 N. Lincoln Blvd.; Room 300C; Oklahoma City, OK 73105; (405) 557-7310
Legislative Assistant: Chris Morriss; (405) 557-7310

NEIL HAYS

District 13 Oklahoma Representative (R-Muskogee)

HOMETOWN: Checotah.
FAMILY: Wife Nicole Hays; Children, Morgan Huerta, Nick Hays, Chance Hays, Brett Hays, Camden Hays and Connor Hays.
OCCUPATION: Farmers insurance agent.
EDUCATION: (MBA) Masters Degree in Business Administration.
RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION: Methodist
HOBBIES: Hunting, Fishing, Golf.
CAPITOL ADDRESS: 2300 N. Lincoln Blvd., Room 302;

Oklahoma City, OK 73105.
Legislative Assistant: Glenda Mollman; (405) 557-7302

TIM TURNER

District 15 Oklahoma Representative (R-Eufaula)

HOMETOWN: Kinta.
FAMILY: Wife, Brooke; Children: Sawyer.
OCCUPATION: Law enforcement.
EDUCATION: Associate's degree from Northeastern Oklahoma A&M; Bachelor's degree from University of Tulsa; Master's degree from Northeastern State University; Ph.D from Oklahoma State University.
RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION: First Assembly, Stigler.
COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES: President of Haskell County Livestock Committee, coaches Little League football.
CAPITOL ADDRESS: 2300 N. Lincoln Blvd.; Room 302; Oklahoma City, OK 73105; (405) 557-7375
Legislative Assistant: Kaley Mills; (405) 557-7375

HEALTH CARE FACILITIES

SAINT FRANCIS MUSKOGEE

Address: 300 Rockefeller Drive.
Phone: (918) 682-5501.

Saint Francis Hospital Muskogee is made up of more than 140 providers and 320 beds. The community hospital serves a seven-county area and is one of Muskogee's top employers.

In April 2017, Eastar Health System and affiliated clinics became part of Saint Francis Health System. Along with Warren Clinic physician offices, Saint Francis Hospital Muskogee provides area residents with quality care and expanding services.

As part of Saint Francis Health System, patients in Muskogee and the surrounding communities have access to continuum of care and services offered by eastern Oklahoma's largest health care network.

JACK C. MONTGOMERY VA MEDICAL CENTER

Address: 1011 Honor Heights Drive.
Phone: (918) 577-3000.

The Eastern Oklahoma VA Health Care System consists of a Joint Commission accredited, complexity Level 2 medical center in Muskogee that serves veterans in 25 counties of eastern Oklahoma. The 89-bed facility offers primary and secondary levels of inpatient medical and surgical

care, as well as an inpatient rehabilitation and inpatient behavioral health unit.

As part of the Rocky Mountain Network (VISN 19), EOVAHCS has ready access to seven sister facilities for referral, although it uses the Oklahoma City VA Medical Center for the majority of its tertiary services. EOVAHCS also operates three community-based outpatient clinics that provide primary and consultative care in medicine, surgery and mental health in Tulsa, Hartshorne and Vinita. In addition, they operate a Behavioral Medicine Clinic in Muskogee that provides outpatient therapy for post-traumatic stress disorder and substance abuse, and a Behavioral Medicine Clinic in Tulsa that provides outpatient mental health therapy and substance abuse treatment.

CHEROKEE NATION THREE RIVERS CLINIC

Address: 1001 S. 41st St. E.
Phone: (918) 781-6500.

Cherokee Nation Health Services, a division of Cherokee Nation, is a medical facility that provides nursing, nutritional, emergency medical, and behavioral and community health services. The center also offers treatment solutions for cancer and diabetes.

Cherokee Nation Health Services performs more than 2 million outpatient visits. It works with communities, families



Cherokee Nation Three Rivers Clinic performs more than 2 million outpatient visits.

and individuals. The center additionally specializes in the areas of dentistry, radiology, optometry and tobacco cessation. Cherokee Nation Health Services provides the Healthy Nation Program. It also maintains a residential adolescent treatment center and offers disease prevention services. The center operates a WINGS Activity Club. Cherokee Nation Health Services also provides a cancer prevention program.

GREEN COUNTRY BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES

Address: 619 N. Main St.
Phone: (918) 682-8407.

Green Country Behavioral Health Services is a private, non-profit agency providing comprehensive outpatient and crisis response services to clients of all ages in Muskogee. Services are confidential, effective, and easily accessible.

GCBHS offers crisis intervention, mobile response services for children, families and adults who may be in crisis, facility-based crisis stabilization for adults, families and children; and Urgent Recovery services for adults and children. They accept Sooner Care, private insurance and private pay.

The Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services provides partial funding for GCBHS programs. All of our programs are certified by the ODMHSAS, which currently operate under "Certification with Special Distinction."

GCBHS offers a full spectrum of integrated behavioral health services for adults, teens, and children both in-person and through telehealth. Finding the right treatment option is your first step on the path to feeling better.

NEO HEALTH CENTER

Address: 922 N. York St.
Phone: (918) 683-0470.

Neo Health strives to provide affordable quality health care to the residents of our service area.

Their doctors and staff are committed to keeping their patients healthy, at rates that they can afford.

The staff will file claims to insurance companies, Medicaid, SoonerCare or Medicare on the patient.

In order to continue with its current level of services, it will be necessary to collect the necessary fee from all patients when services are received. This includes the co-pay from Medicare and private insurance, as well as the minimum fee.

ARKANSAS VERDIGRIS VALLEY HEALTH CENTERS

Two locations: Muskogee GC Health Center, 110 W. Martin Luther King St. (918) 682-0222; Muskogee West Health Center, 201 N. 32nd St., (918) 912-2333.

Arkansas Verdigris Valley Health Centers is a private, non-profit organization that receives federal funding to focus on improving the health of the individual pa-



Jack C. Montgomery VA Medical Center offers primary and secondary levels of inpatient medical and surgical care, as well as an inpatient rehabilitation and inpatient behavioral health unit.



Neo Health aims to provide affordable quality health care to the residents.

tients and improving the health status of the entire community.

AVV provides medical, x-ray and behavioral health services along with substance abuse treatment, physicals, dental services, telhealth and weight loss management.

AVV Health Centers can file private insurance, Medicaid/ Soonercare, and Medicare. The cost of services may be based on a sliding fee scale according to household size and income.

MUSKOGEE BONE AND JOINT AND SPORTS MEDICINE CLINIC

Address: 209 S. 36th St.
Phone: (981) 682-7717.

Muskogee Bone and Joint's aim is to provide comprehensive medicare care for musculoskeletal injuries and diseases to patients in Muskogee and the surrounding community.

It strives to help patients maintain an active, healthy lifestyle, because we believe we are all athletes – some are in

training, some are not.

They promote health through activity, encourage patients to initiate an active lifestyle, and provide operative and non-operative medical care to patients of all ages – on and off the field.

GRACE RIVER WOMEN'S HEALTH

Address: 347 S. 37th St.
Phone: (918) 912-9500.

Grace River Women's Health strives to provide a personal, trustworthy, and superior experience for its patients.

As a comprehensive stop for women's care, it offers the best technology, treatment methods, and medical knowledge women need to navigate almost any female medical concern and remain healthy for years to come.

URGENT CARE OF MUSKOGEE

Address: 384 S. 33rd St. Suite E.
Phone: (918) 986-0400.



Saint Francis Hospital is a community hospital that serves a seven-county area.

Urgent Care of Muskogee is a full service facility with on-site X-rays and lab services. This includes treatment for all minor illnesses, such as colds, flu, coughs, infections, minor injuries, minor fractures, lacerations, minor burns, and many other non life-threatening illnesses. We can see you when your primary care physician can't.

Emergency room physicians and staff provide quality care for the patient to start feeling better fast.

Urgent Care of Muskogee can also provide independent, competent, proactive and quality-based occupational health services to employers. They are committed to providing reliable, convenient, and quality care to all of their patients.

CORNERSTONE SPECIALTY HOSPITAL MUSKOGEE

Address: 351 S. 40th St.
Phone: (918) 682-6161.

Cornerstone Specialty Hospital Muskogee is a long-term acute care (LTAC) hospital specializing in the treatment of patients recovering from post-intensive care and medically complex conditions.

The hospital provides both intensive care and telemetry-level services, offering advanced monitoring and support for patients requiring extended medical care.

With a multidisciplinary team dedicated to personalized treatment plans, they focus on helping patients achieve significant recovery and transition to the next level of care.



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Green Country Herbal Academy

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1805 N. York Street, Suite D1, Muskogee, OK 74403
www.morningsongorchardnursery.com

LAKE AREA UNITED WAY SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS

BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA, INDIAN NATIONS COUNCIL

Serves over 18 counties in eastern Oklahoma. Scouting has helped build future leaders by combining educational activities and lifelong values with fun and adventure in the outdoors. www.okscouts.org (918) 743-6125.

BOYS & GIRLS CLUB OF TAHLEQUAH

Provides youth development to Cherokee County youth by working to inspire, educate, and empower kindergarten-eighth graders to realize their full potential as productive and responsible citizens in a safe and fun environment. www.tahlequahbgca.org (918) 456-6888.

GIRL SCOUTS OF EASTERN OKLAHOMA

Girl scouting equips young girls in making better life choices by developing leadership, confidence, and girls of courage through a variety of scouting programs. www.gseok.org (918) 683-7738.

MUSKOGEE COUNTY COUNCIL OF YOUTH SERVICES — MCCOYS

Provides guidance and character building programs in two United Way funded areas; 1) supervised community experiences for youth and young adults working within the judicial system, and 2) in-school "Lifeskills" training for 6-8th graders at Braggs, Okay and Muskogee Public Schools. www.mccys.org (918) 682-2841.

OK CIRCLE OF CARE - PAL

Faith-based agency provides foster care and prevention services throughout the state of Oklahoma. circleofcare.org (918) 456-6166

RISE - CENTER FOR PREVENTION AND EMPOWERMENT

RISE CPE assists adolescent girls by offering programs specialized in helping at risk girls, girls who have experienced domestic minor sex trafficking, commercial sexual exploitation, or sexual violence, and their families. www.risecpe.org (918) 910-5131

UNITED METHODIST CHILDREN'S HOME

Provides a spectrum of transitional living assistance into early adulthood for at-risk



Day of Caring is an annual community-wide effort that brings together volunteers and local businesses to provide short-term, project-focused volunteer service to our community's local nonprofit organizations. (Submitted)

high school and college-aged youth through an independent living program to better equip them in making their way into the adult world. (918) 456-6166.

DOLLY PARTON IMAGINATION LIBRARY

Provides age appropriate books to children ages 0-5 years of age each month to boost children during the early formative years and put them on a path towards a successful education. www.lakeareaunitedway.org (918) 682-1364.

AMERICAN RED CROSS

A volunteer led humanitarian organization. United Way support touches lives daily with relief to victims of disasters as well as emergency and prevention/preparedness training. www.oklahomaredcross.org (918) 682-1366.

BRIDGES OUT OF POVERTY

Focuses on empowering those in poverty to investigate the barriers that keep people from getting ahead and educates the entire community on the complexities of poverty. www.muskogeebridgesoutofpoverty.org (918) 840-5331

LEGAL AID SERVICES OF OKLAHOMA

Providing high-quality civil legal services to lower income and elderly residents. www.legalaiddok.org (918) 683-5681.

CASA FOR CHILDREN IN MUSKOGEE — COURT APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATES

CASA recruits, screens, trains, and supports community volunteers to advocate in the best interests of children involved in juvenile cases of neglect and abuse in Muskogee, Wagoner and Sequoyah district

courts. www.casaok.org (918) 686-8199.

SALVATION ARMY

Provides essential programs 365 days a year, helping meet the needs of individuals in our community who needs it most. southernusa.salvationarmy.org/muskogee (918) 682-3384.

CASA OF CHEROKEE COUNTRY

Advocating as a voice for children who enter the court system as a result of abuse and/or neglect by providing trained volunteers to speak independently for the best interests of the children. www.oklahomacasa.org (918) 456-8788.

GREEN COUNTRY BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES

Provides comprehensive outpatient and crisis response services to clients of all ages in Muskogee and McIntosh Counties. Services are confidential, effective, and easily accessible. gcbhs.org (918) 682-8407

KELLY B. TODD CEREBRAL PALSY & NEURO-MUSCULAR CENTER

Provides children and adults with motor deficit or developmental delays physical therapy to enhance mobility and interaction with friends and family. www.kbtoddcpcenter.org (918) 683-4621.

www.kbtoddcpcenter.org (918) 683-4621.

KIDS' SPACE – MUSKOGEE COUNTY CHILD ADVOCACY CENTER

Provides a child-friendly environment for the intervention, assessment, and investigation needed to assist with prosecution, treatment and prevention of physically and sexually abused children. Provides educational and child protective classes. www.kidsspacemuskogee.org (918) 682-4204.

VOLUNTEERS OF AMERICA – RSVP (RETIRED SENIORS VOLUNTEER PROGRAM)

Creates opportunities for senior citizens to remain actively engaged in their communities through volunteer services in a variety of organizations ranging from hospitals to youth centers by utilizing their time and talents in service to others. www.voaok.org (918) 683-1578.

WOMEN IN SAFE HOME — WISH

Provides shelter, counseling, and support services to victims of domestic violence, rape, and adult survivors of child sexual assault or harassment in order to achieve safety, survival, recovery, empowerment and rehabilitation to women and children coping with domestic violence. (918) 682-7879.



Kim Jaquez
Executive Director



Lake Area United Way
230 W. Broadway, Suite 200
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MUSKOGEE CITY PARKS



Honor Heights Park is blanketed in azalea blooms in April. (File photo)

BECKMAN PARK

North 16th Street and West Broadway

Located in the heart of Founders Place Historic District, this 3.7-acre neighborhood park has a new playground, splash pad and picnic shelter.

BILL POOL PARK

Gawf and Foltz lanes

This 2.5-acre park in Phoenix Village has picnic tables, a playground, and a basketball court.

CIVITAN PARK

3301 Gibson St.

Daniel Boone's son, Nathan, originally surveyed this 43-acre hillside park across the street from

the Oklahoma School for the Blind. The eastern boundary of the park is the boundary of the Cherokee and Creek Nations. Amenities include a concrete trail that is .8 mile in length and is the meeting place for many regular park patrons. An 18-hole disc golf course is open to the public at no charge. There are picnic areas, playground, open play areas, and a historic shelter that is available by reservation.

DOUGLAS-MAXEY PARK

South Sixth Street and West Southside Boulevard

This 2-acre park was originally two separate parks. Now considered a single park, it has picnic areas, playground, open spaces, and a basketball court.

ELLIOTT PARK

Altamont Street and Tower Hill Boulevard

One of Muskogee's older historic parks, Elliott Park is situated on Tower Hill, the site of Muskogee's first water tower. This beautiful treed and terraced 29-acre setting has picnic areas, playgrounds, lighted basketball courts, a shelter that is available for reservation. During summer days the sprayground, an interactive water playground, is in operation.

GULICK PARK

South Seventh and Elgin streets

This 1-acre neighborhood park has shaded picnic areas, playground, and open play areas.

HONOR HEIGHTS PARK

Honor Heights Drive

Originally purchased by the City of Muskogee in 1909, Honor Heights Park has proven to be the "the crown jewel in Muskogee's park system." The idyllic setting of this 132-acre park makes it attractive to visitors year-round. There are many picnic areas, two picnic shelters, a pavilion, gazebos, and public restrooms. You also will find activities such as fishing in five lakes and ponds from the shore of the fully accessible fishing docks, playground, open play areas, three tennis courts, and a sand volleyball court. A splash pad located next to the playground area is in operation May-September. Honor Heights is home to three trails: Henry Bresser

Nature Trail, the Audubon Trail, which is a favorite of local birders, and the half-mile Stem Beach Trail which is a habit of local runners and walkers. Also home to the Conard Rose Garden, the C. Clay Harrell Arboretum, Art Johnson Memorial Dogwood Collection, Elbert L. Little Jr. Native Tree Collection, azalea gardens, floral gardens, white garden, and at the top of Agency Hill, you will find the Rainbow Division Memorial Amphitheater. Honor Heights Park also is home to the city's largest festivals: The Azalea Festival and The Garden of Lights.

LOVE-HATBOX SPORTS COMPLEX/HATBOX FIELD

34th and Arline streets

This 60-acre site is formerly a historic airport that had seen the likes of such people as Charles Lindbergh and Amelia Earhart. Newly expanded and developed over the last several years, this complex is home to many leagues,

tournaments, and individual users.

KING PARK

Gibson Street and East Side Boulevard

This fenced park has a shaded picnic area, playground and an open play area.

LANGSTON PARK

Euclid and Sandow streets

This 2-acre park north of Shawnee Bypass has shaded picnic areas, a playground, an open area, and a basketball court.

OPTIMIST PARK

South F and Independence streets

There is a shaded playground and picnic area in this 1.5-acre park. There is also a ballfield and an open play area.

PALMER PARK

Honor Heights Drive and Denison Street

This 2-acre park is named after early Park Superintendent George Palmer. You will find shaded and sunny picnic areas, a playground, open play area, and two fishing ponds.

ROBISON PARK

Augusta and Gulick streets

This park offers a playground and sprayground with picnic areas, basketball courts, baseball/softball practice area, and soccer goals. Walking trails and outdoor fitness equipment are available, as well.

ROTARY PARK

South 24th and Elgin streets

Originally donated by the Rotary Club, this 3.5-acre park is home to a newly renovated playground and splash pad, picnic areas, open play area, pavilion, and two basketball courts.

SPAULDING PARK

East Okmulgee and East Side Boulevard

This setting is home to 19 acres of many amenities and some of the first publicly planted trees in the city. There are picnic areas, a playground, open play areas, fully accessible swimming facility, tennis courts, the asphalt multipurpose Spaulding Trail, a picnic shelter (reservations available), a gazebo surrounded by the water of the park's lake, two basketball courts, a fishing dock, and public restrooms. Located directly next to the Parks and Recreation Administration offices.

PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT FACILITIES

River Country Water Park, 3600 Arline St.

Honor Heights Park Pavilion. Georgia-Pacific Butterfly House open Mother's Day through Sept. 30.

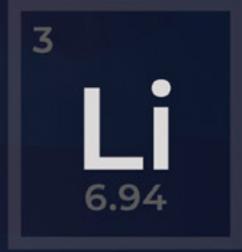
Love-Hatbox Sports Complex, 3601 Arline St.

Muskogee Swim and Fitness Center, 566 N. Sixth St. (918) 684-6304.

Source: City of Muskogee



A player follows through a pickleball serve at Spaulding Park. (File photo)



ONE OF AMERICA'S LARGEST LITHIUM REFINERIES

Stardust Power is building one of North America's largest battery-grade lithium refineries in Muskogee, Oklahoma, creating hundreds of local jobs and boosting the local and state economy.



**HUNDREDS OF
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MUSKOGEE LEADS OKLAHOMA IN CAPITAL INVESTMENT



MUSKOGEE IS #1 FOR CAPITAL INVESTMENT

Our community is leading the charge in economic growth, securing \$4.1 billion in capital investment in 2024. Major projects from CoreScientific/CoreWeave in AI computing, Polaris Technologies in data innovation, Love Bottling in beverage logistics, and QLF in agriculture are driving new opportunities across our region. These investments mean good-paying jobs, a stronger economy, and a future where residents can build their careers right here at home.

This momentum isn't by chance—it's the result of a long-term vision, strategic investments in industrial land and infrastructure, and a committed network of community partners all working toward the same goal: *economic growth that benefits Muskogee for generations to come.* Learn more at PortMuskogee.com

