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The I-70 Scout

# The I-70 Scout

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Searching for news in Watkins, Bennett, Strasburg, Byers, Deer Trail and Agate

Thursday, September 26, 2024

## Big sewer fee hike slated for Strasburg

by **Steven Vetter**  
Managing Editor

STRASBURG — Like it or not, wastewater customers in and around Strasburg will see a hike in their sewer bills after a local util-

ity company's board of directors meets at the end of the month.

While the public notice about the Eastern Adams County Metropolitan District's Sept. 30 hearing on its 2025 Budget and 2024 Budget Amendment says the district

"may fix, adjust or increase fees, rates, toll, penalties or charges ...," a district official recently indicated a significant wastewater increase is inevitable.

"I 100% acknowledge this is a large increase and one that no

one wants and that I don't want to present," said Eastern Adams representative Ryan Stachelski of the planned \$10 per month increase per residential equivalent (EQR)

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STEVEN VETTER/The I-70 Scout

I-70 Corridor residents are in the mood for fall as indicated by this photo recently taken in the Comanche Crossing subdivision southwest of the Strasburg interchange at I-70.

## Adams leadership shaken up

by **Steven Vetter**  
Managing Editor

Six weeks after receiving a resignation letter from its former county manager, Adams County announced last week a temporary replacement for the position.

In its Sept. 18 announcement, the county announced David Fraser will serve as interim county manager until a permanent replacement for Noel Bernal is determined.

Officials indicated they wanted the county's new lead administrator to be hired by the newly seated board of county commissioners, which will be determined during the upcoming November general election. Three commissioner seats are up for grabs, including District 5 that covers approximately the eastern two-thirds of



SUBMITTED PHOTO

David Fraser, above, was recently named Adams County interim manager replacing Noel Bernard.

the county.

In last week's statement, the county called Fraser a distinguished leader with three decades of experience in local government that will guide Adams County as interim county manager

**SEE ADCO MGR**

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## Bennett School begins rebuilding bus routes

by **Steven Vetter**  
Managing Editor

BENNETT — After several weeks of running no bus routes or alternating them every other day, Bennett School District reinstated all five on a daily basis, but officials cautioned that interruptions might still occur.

During the Sept. 17 school board meeting, Bennett Superintendent Robin Purdy and new Transportation Director Nick Ophaug said that district families would receive an e-mail communication by the end of last week saying the district's handful of bus routes would be fully reinstated but asked parents and guardians to be aware of last-minute changes.

"Beginning Monday, Sept. 23, all five of our current bus routes will begin running everyday again," Ophaug's memo said. "We are still short drivers and have no subs, so there is a possibility a route will have to be canceled in the event of a driver being out sick. We will work very diligently to notify families quickly if a bus route has to be canceled and we will work as hard as possible to not cancel any routes."

During the board meeting, Ophaug, who has been high school assistant principal, said he is in the process of deciding between three vendors of transportation software and a phone app to expedite communication between himself or staff and parents and students.

"A lot of these apps are a notification via text

message," he said, noting a process similar to an all-call system.

Efforts to grow the bus driver roster continue, but Ophaug, who himself is a licensed bus driver and serves as a sixth driver when needed, said that it is at least a three-week process before interested people receive adequate CDL training and can pass their driving test.

"We've hired two candidates," he said. "But it takes about 93 hours for enough training to pass the test. And conversely, it could take a little bit more than three weeks."

In addition to the bus routes, Ophaug has been juggling athletic and activity trips, including a recent high school football jaunt to Lamar in southeast Colorado.

"Plus we have a couple overnight trips that are coming up and you have to consider our focus of getting all students that need a bus back on theirs and getting them back-and-forth to school on a daily basis," he said. "We're especially focusing on that and preparing for October count. We need every student we can get transported here."

Purdy reiterated that daily transportation services are for students outside the city limits or on the farthest outskirts of the district and urged families to peruse Policy EEAA for bus-ing specifics.

Until last week's decision, the previous cou-

**SEE BENNETT BOE**

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CARL STEITZ/For The Scout

A car appears under a harvest moon as seen Sept. 18 from the rebuilt Texas crossing on County Road 2 between Byers and Strasburg.