



HOOD COUNTY EXPRESS

TRUTH. ACCOUNTABILITY. COMMUNITY.

AUGUST 1, 2026

MONTHLY / FIRST SATURDAY

HOOD COUNTY, TEXAS

JULY IN REVIEW / RECALL 02 / COURTS 03 / YOUR MONEY 04 / SCHOOLS 05

RECALL REJECTED

City refuses to certify five petitions. Organizers challenge the decision.



Recall organizers and petition papers at City Hall, published with the July 13 filing announcement. | Daniel Piatt / Granbury Grassroots

HCE STAFF WRITER

GRANBURY | July began with residents carrying recall petitions to City Hall. It ended with the city refusing to certify them and organizers preparing their response.

The petitions, filed July 13, sought the removal of Mayor Jim Jarratt, Mayor Pro Tem Bruce Wadley and council members Greg Corrigan, Skip Overdier and Zeb Ullom.

On July 28, the city said its review found problems with valid signatures and the specificity of the allegations. The announcement placed a new obstacle between the petition campaign and a recall election.

Granbury Grassroots disputed that interpretation. In a July 30 statement, the group said it was reviewing the

city's opinions with legal counsel and weighing its next steps.

The campaign grew out of opposition to Project Patriot and concerns about transparency. The allegations remained contested. The city's reasoning and the charter are examined on page 2.

Source: City recall statement, July 28; Granbury Grassroots, July 13 and 30 statements

CITY HALL & THE BALLOT

02

The signatures. The rules. The next election.

THE CITY'S POSITION

HCE STAFF WRITER

The city's statement on Mayor Jim Jarratt's petition said the city secretary could verify only 26 signatures. It said addresses without a city of residence and signatures without complete dates could not be verified under its review.

That number is the city's count of signatures it accepted, not the number organizers submitted. Granbury Grassroots said the campaign delivered more than 1,300 signatures and challenged the city's interpretation.

The disagreement concerned how the recall process should operate. The city's rejection statement was an administrative position, not a court judgment deciding every disputed signature or allegation.

Source: City recall statement, July 28; Granbury Grassroots, July 13 and 30 statements; City statement on Jarratt petition

THE CHARTER

HCE STAFF WRITER

Granbury Charter Section 4.07 sets the recall threshold at 15 percent of qualified voters registered at the last general city election, or 200 qualified registered voters, whichever is greater.

It also requires a statement of specific acts of misfeasance or malfeasance. Section 4.08 directs the city secretary to present recall papers to the council within 15 days after filing.

A targeted official may request a public hearing at the next regular meeting after presentation. The hearing must then be held five to 15 days after the request. If the official does not resign, the council is directed to order an election for the earliest date state law allows.

Those provisions explain the stakes of July's procedural dispute. They do not, by themselves, resolve the parties' competing positions on certification.

Source: Granbury Charter, Sections 4.07-4.08



Official 2025-2026 council and staff portrait; not a July meeting photograph. | City of Granbury

PROJECT INFORMATION

HCE STAFF WRITER

Granbury announced July 17 that granbury.org/datacenter was live as a home for official documents, city FAQs and project information.

The page gives residents access to the city's explanations. It represents City Hall's position in an ongoing public debate over data-center development.

Source: City newsletter, July 17

NOVEMBER 3

HCE STAFF WRITER

A separate election process opened July 18: applications for Granbury City Council Places 4 and 6 on the November 3 ballot.

The city's candidate packet sets a 5 p.m. August 17 filing deadline and lists three-year terms for both seats. Applications go to the city secretary.

The packet lists October 5 as the voter-registration deadline, October 19-30 for early voting and November 3 as Election Day. These dates concern the regular election. The disputed recall petitions did not automatically place a recall question on that ballot.

Source: City 2026 candidate packet, pp. 1-5

AUGUST 17 / 5 P.M.

Regular council candidate filing deadline

COURTS & ACCOUNTABILITY

03

Two court fights. July turning points.



Hood County Courthouse, June 2018.
Archive; cropped. License:
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Michael Barera / CC BY-SA 4.0

CIVIL RIGHTS CASE MOVES FORWARD

HCE STAFF WRITER

A July 19 federal order kept Kolton Krottinger's civil-rights claims against Sheriff Roger Deeds, investigator James Luckie and Hood County alive.

U.S. District Judge Reed O'Connor denied their motion to dismiss and rejected the officers' qualified-immunity defense at that stage. The order found the complaint sufficiently alleged false arrest, malicious prosecution, First Amendment retaliation and a basis for county liability.

The case stems from Krottinger's November 2025 arrest over a satirical political Facebook post. The order recounts the later discharge of the criminal complaint and a special prosecutor's decision to decline prosecution for insufficient evidence linking Krottinger to the post.

This was a ruling on the legal sufficiency of the allegations, not a trial verdict or damages award. The order separately noted that District Attorney Ryan Sinclair's dismissal

motion would be addressed in another order.

By July 30, Deeds, Luckie and the county had filed an appeal, docketed in the Fifth Circuit as 26-10703. The litigation therefore remained contested at month's end.

Krottinger is the publisher of Hood County Express. This account is based on the court order and public appellate docket.

Source: Krottinger v. Deeds, ECF 43, July 19; Fifth Circuit docket 26-10703 / Justia

DATA-CENTER CASE HEADS TO APPEAL

HCE STAFF WRITER

Two proposed data-center projects remained in litigation after a Hood County judge granted the county defendants' plea to the jurisdiction July 14.

Judge Bryan Bufkin's signed order in case C2026226 dismissed the plaintiffs' claims with prejudice as to refile. National CRE Holdings and Greenland Capital filed their notice of appeal the next day, taking the

dispute to the Second Court of Appeals.

The underlying fight concerned whether the county's response to submitted plans triggered automatic approval. Texas Scorecard reported July 20 that developers invoked a 30-day deadline, while the county argued the submissions did not qualify as development plans that would start that clock.

The proposals are known as Project Red and Project Yellow. This lawsuit is separate from the Granbury recall fight involving Project Patriot.

The order favored the county in the trial court. The appeal left the dispute unresolved; the ruling did not prohibit all data centers countywide.

Source: 355th District Court order, July 14; National / Greenland notice of appeal, July 15; Texas Scorecard, Grant Halk, July 20

FEDERAL CASE

4:26-cv-00029-O / Appeal 26-10703

STATE CASE

C2026226 / Appeal noticed July 15

GOVERNMENT & YOUR MONEY

04

The cost of a growing city

July brought street financing and a 6 percent utility-rate increase.

\$20M

Project proceeds announced by the city

\$18.475M

Repayment figure in the city newsletter

\$32.084M

Pre-sale estimate: principal + interest

HCE STAFF WRITER

Granbury approved street-project financing at its July 21 council meeting. The city's next-day announcement said a premium-priced sale would deliver \$20 million in proceeds with \$18.475 million to repay.

That headline needs a second number: interest. The city's advance notice for the July transaction estimated \$32,083,667 in combined principal and interest and specified a

maximum maturity of August 15, 2046.

The notice was a pre-sale estimate, not the final repayment schedule. It should not be substituted for the final debt documents. Likewise, the newsletter's lower figure should not be presented as the entire lifetime cost of financing.

The stated project purposes included street, alley, culvert and bridge work, drainage, sidewalks,

lighting and related improvements. The notice described repayment from property taxes and a limited pledge of net utility-system revenues.

For residents evaluating the deal, the useful comparison is project proceeds alongside the final principal-and-interest schedule. A premium at issuance does not turn borrowing into free money.

Source: City financing newsletter, July 22; City debt notice, posted May 21 for July 21 action

WATER & WASTEWATER: +6%

HCE STAFF WRITER

Granbury announced July 22 that the council approved a 6 percent increase in water and wastewater rates, covering both monthly minimum charges and usage rates.

The city cited higher costs for construction, equipment, materials and operating the utility systems.

Officials said the increase would support reliable service and infrastructure needs as the community grows.

The change affects both base and consumption charges. Usage can also change a household's bill from one month to the next.

Source: City water-rate announcement, July 22

SERVICE-AREA LETTERS

HCE STAFF WRITER

Some property owners received notices as Granbury proposed updates to its water and wastewater service areas, known as Certificates of Convenience and Necessity.

In its July 20 explanation, the city said existing customers would continue receiving service. The proposed changes concerned certain properties not currently connected to city utilities and possible requirements for future connections.

The city published a notice and map, and directed questions to 817-573-7030, extension 1750. A notice about service territory is separate from the council's rate increase.

Source: City utility service-area notice, July 20

\$100 BECOMES \$106

Illustration: a 6% increase on an unchanged \$100 charge.

SCHOOLS & SPORTS

05

Summer honors. A new year ahead.



Students and educators at the July board recognition. | Granbury ISD

TOP 10 IN TEXAS

HCE STAFF WRITER

Granbury trustees recognized three high-school students at their July 20 meeting for top-10 finishes in UIL 5A academic competition.

Madison Drehmann placed second in news writing, Nolan Porter seventh in science and Cameron Ward ninth in social studies, according to the district's July 21 spotlight.

The July recognition celebrated earlier competition results. The district also credited coaches Cindy Leatherman and Margarite Anderson.

Source: Granbury ISD July board spotlight, July 21

EXCELLENCE BEYOND THE COURT



The district announced the AVCA academic honor roll July 23. | Granbury ISD

HCE STAFF WRITER

The Lady Pirate volleyball team earned the American Volleyball Coaches Association's 2026 Team Academic Award and a place on its Team Academic Honor Roll, Granbury ISD announced July 23.

The award recognizes programs maintaining a year-long team GPA of

at least 3.3 on a 4.0 scale, or 4.1 on a 5.0 scale. Honor Roll recognition places a team among the top 20 percent of team GPAs in its division.

Head coach Des Shahan credited the players' classroom work.

Source: Granbury ISD volleyball announcement, July 23

FAMILIES: SAVE THESE DATES

HCE STAFF WRITER

Granbury ISD's July 21 family notice set elementary Meet the Teacher for August 10, from 5:30 to 7 p.m., at all five elementary schools.

Registered students' teacher assignments were due in Skyward

after 4 p.m. August 7. Emma Roberson families would receive individual conference arrangements.

Classes were scheduled to begin August 12.

Source: Granbury ISD family notice, July 21; Granbury ISD August calendar

AUGUST 10

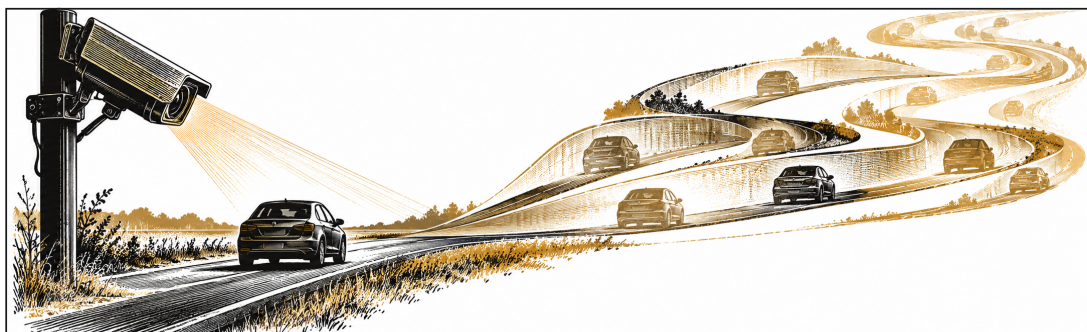
Meet the Teacher / 5:30-7 p.m.

AUGUST 12

First day of classes

SURVEILLANCE & STREETS

06

THE CITY'S
CAMERA FOOTPRINT

Editorial illustration / Hood County Express

26 CAMERAS

July 26 portal disclosure

30 DAYS

Published data retention

HCE STAFF WRITER

Granbury Police Department's public Flock portal reported 26 cameras and 30-day data retention in its July 26 update.

For the preceding 30 days, it listed 323,444 plate reads, 151 search sessions and 4,097 hotlist hits. Those are different measures: a recorded plate is not a search, an arrest or a solved crime.

The department described two uses: historical searches after crimes and real-time alerts when vehicles match hotlists. Its published rules limited access to law-enforcement purposes and prohibited personal use, harassment, immigration enforcement and traffic enforcement.

The portal also said each access required a valid reason and hotlist

matches needed human verification before action. The data belonged to Granbury PD and would not be sold, according to the policy.

The figures describe the city's system at a specific point in July. Published safeguards are a statement of policy, not an independent audit proving how every individual search was performed.

Source: Granbury PD Flock portal, July 26 snapshot

JULY ROADWORK

HCE STAFF WRITER

TxDOT scheduled intermittent one-lane traffic on FM 51 between SH 171 in Parker County and Loop 567 in Granbury for July 28-31, from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., using flaggers and a pilot car.

A wastewater connection also changed travel on East Moore Street between Switzer Street and Victoria Court. Initially announced for July 15-16, that closure was rescheduled after bad weather. The city's July 22 update said work would continue through July 24.

Victoria Court access was directed through East Moore from Barton Street. These are the schedules announced during July, not current closure notices.

Source: City financing newsletter, July 22; City / TxDOT notice, July 23; City East Moore notice, July 14

ON LOCATION

HCE STAFF WRITER

The city's July 17 bulletin announced several filming-related traffic changes: an overnight U.S. 377 closure in Cresson July 19-20, followed by brief stops on U.S. 377 between Acton Highway and Waters Edge July 20-21.

Bridge and Crockett streets on the Square were also scheduled to close July 28 from 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., with parking restrictions beginning earlier.

The notices described filming projects without naming a production. They did not establish that every announced closure occurred exactly as planned.

Source: City newsletter, July 17

WEATHER & THE COMMUNITY

07

JULY’S RAIN DEFICIT

Granbury recorded 1.08 inches, about 43 percent below its July normal.

Rainfall at the Granbury station

July 2026 compared with the 1991-2020 normal



Editorial illustration / Hood County Express

Source: National Weather Service, Granbury climatology. NWS station data. A single site, not a countywide average.

HCE STAFF WRITER

Granbury’s National Weather Service climate record lists 1.08 inches of rain for July, compared with a 1991-2020 July normal of 1.91 inches.

That leaves a monthly shortfall of 0.83 inches, about 43 percent below normal. June’s total was 4.37 inches,

making the July decline substantial at this reporting location.

These are station totals, not an average for every neighborhood in Hood County. A monthly rainfall figure also cannot show how evenly the rain was spread across the month.

The year’s January-through-July total was 17.99 inches against 20.90 inches from the monthly normals. That comparison provides context without treating one month’s rain as a complete measurement of drought or lake conditions.

Source: National Weather Service, Granbury climatology

AMERICA TURNS 250

HCE STAFF WRITER

Independence Day brought Granbury’s annual parade to the center of the nation’s 250th-birthday observance. The city’s holiday guide scheduled the July 4 procession for 9 a.m. and directed spectators toward the Historic Square and Pearl Street.

The guide paired the parade with the Chamber of Commerce’s professional fireworks celebration over Lake Granbury. It also warned of downtown road closures and extra foot traffic during a morning fun run

near Granbury High School and City Park.

City facilities largely closed July 3, while Visit Granbury remained open. The holiday notices emphasized keeping travel routes and pedestrian areas safe during the celebration.

On July 8, the city published an edited recording of the parade, preserving a way to revisit the event after the holiday weekend.

Source: City Independence Day guide; City parade recording, July 8

WHEN SIRENS SOUND

HCE STAFF WRITER

Hood County’s sirens cover weather warnings, Comanche Peak emergencies and scheduled tests.

A July bulletin listed noon tests on first and third Mondays, except major holidays. Outside those times, it advised going indoors and checking local news or WBAP 820 AM.

Source: City newsletter, July 17

JULY 4, 2026

A hometown parade. A national milestone.

THE PEOPLE OF HOOD COUNTY

08

THEY STOPPED.
A NEIGHBOR GOT HELP.

Honorees Sharon Rains, Chuck Matlock, Chris Taylor and Mark Davis, center, with district leaders on July 28. | Granbury ISD

HCE STAFF WRITER

Four Granbury ISD employees were traveling between work sites in July when they saw an older resident suffer a serious fall. They stopped and stayed with him until first responders arrived.

The district identified the employees as Chuck Matlock, Chris Taylor, Mark Davis and Sharon Rains from Facilities and Maintenance and Support Services. Its account said the

group provided aid and comfort, with Taylor remaining beside the injured man and offering prayers.

After learning where the employees worked, the man's wife contacted the district to thank them. By the July 28 announcement, the family reported that he had returned home and was recovering.

Superintendent Courtney Morawski and Facilities and

Maintenance Director Hailey Veron recognized the four at a Facility Committee meeting. Each received a TeamGISD Challenge Coin.

The district's account turned a routine workday into a reminder of how quickly a neighbor can need help, and how much it matters when someone stops.

Source: Granbury ISD lifesaving recognition, July 28

HUNDREDS OF PLANTS.
NINE PUBLIC SPACES.

HISTORICAL EDITION

Compiled October 4, 2026.

HCE STAFF WRITER

Lake Granbury Master Gardeners donated hundreds of plants for public landscaping, the city reported July 14. Nine sites benefited,

including Shanley and Hewlett parks, City Hall and the Historic Square.

Source: City Master Gardeners announcement, July 14