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Firefighters go in and out of the liquor store, searching for hidden fires after the transformer behind the store exploded and caught the roof on fire. Due to the hazard from the power lines, the entire blocks between Seventh and Eighth on Kansas Avenue and Kansas and Lincoln on Seventh Street were closed to traffic. L&T photos/Victoria Calderon

By VICTORIA CALDERON

• Leader & Times

A fire broke out at Starlight Liquor on Kansas Avenue around 6:30 Friday night.

“Our first report was for a transformer that exploded and was on fire, and then very quickly after that, we got the report that the liquor store, Starlight Liquor, was on fire as well,” Liberal Fire Chief Kelly Kirk said at the scene of the fire. “When we got here, what we found was the

transformer burning, and we had a fire on the roof of the liquor store. We were able to get it extinguished pretty quickly."

In addition to several trucks from the Liberal Fire Department, Southern Pioneer Electric Company also showed up to the scene to fix the power line and transformer issues.

"We had to wait for the electric company to secure the power to the building. Now that they've got that done, we're going to search for any hidden fire and make sure it's completely out, and then they'll take care of the issues with the transformers," Kirk said. "We're still in the very early stages of this right now. We might be here for another hour or so."

At the time, a full investigation and report had not been made yet, so the cause of the transformer explosion is unknown as of press time.

"It could have just been a heavy electrical load, because of the heat or a weak spot in the electric (system)," Kirk said.

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