



**Board of Riley County
Commissioners
Regular Meeting
Minutes
September 4, 2025**

2101 Claflin Road
Manhattan, KS 66502
www.rileycountyks.gov

Cindy Kabriel
785-565-6200

Family & Child Resource Center, Room #124

8:30 AM

[District 1 – John Ford, Member](#)

[District 2 – Greg McKinley, Chair](#)

[District 3 – Kathryn Focke, Vice-Chair](#)

8:30 AM

Call to Order

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
John Ford	County Commissioner	Present	8:30 AM
Kathryn Focke	County Commissioner	Present	8:30 AM
Greg McKinley	County Commissioner	Present	8:30 AM
Rich Vargo	County Clerk	Present	8:30 AM
Jacob Hansen	County Counselor	Present	8:30 AM
Brittany Phillips	Budget and Finance Officer	Present	8:30 AM
Michele Reid	Human Resources Manager	Present	8:30 AM
David Adams	EMS/Ambulance Director	Present	8:30 AM
Anna Burson	Appraiser	Present	8:30 AM
Evan McMillan	Assistant County Engineer	Present	8:30 AM
Russel Stukey	Emergency Management Director/Fire Chief	Present	8:45 AM
Michael Boller	Noxious Weed/HHW Director5	Present	8:58 AM
Emma Loura	Manhattan Mercury	Present	9:16 AM
Shilo Heger	Treasurer	Present	9:24 AM
Amy Manges	Register of Deeds	Present	9:37 AM
Barry Wilkerson	County Attorney	Present	9:37 AM
Diane Creek	Health Department Director	Present	9:44 AM
John Ball		Present	9:44 AM
David Alexander		Present	9:44 AM
Rosemarie Alexander		Present	9:44 AM
John Ellermann	Public Works Director/County Engineer	Present	9:50 AM
Amanda Webb	Planning/Special Projects Director	Present	9:50 AM
Cory Meyer	IT/GIS Director	Present	10:02 AM
Gary Olds		Present	10:08 AM

Pat Hudgins		Present	10:08 AM
Alfonso Leyva		Present	10:15 AM
Jason Hilgers	Deputy Manhattan City Manager	Present	10:15 AM
Aaron Stewart	Manhattan City Parks and Recreation Director	Present	10:15 AM

Pledge of Allegiance**Public Comment****Commission Comments**

Ford's Comments:

Hopefully everyone had a relaxing and meaningful Labor Day holiday. I didn't have a lot going on since last Thursday to be honest.

Friday evening I did take some and headed down to the Purple Power Play down at the Blue Earth Plaza. Beautiful evening to be out and about, and it looked to be well attended with lots of activities and vendors. This event has really come along ways since its inception down in the corridor in the early 90s.

Saturday I watched the K-State and North Dakota home opener football game from home. Not the most fun game to watch for certain, but at least Wildcats won 38-35 so there is that at least.

Sunday morning had breakfast at The Chef with some friends who came into town for the game. Always enjoy having breakfast there, it was very busy as you can imagine too, and it also allowed me to come over and check out the progress on the windows at our downtown offices as well.

The rest of the holiday weekend I spent watching college football, glad to have it back to for sure.

Tuesday and Wednesday I spent at work getting caught up on everything here at the start of September. It is going to start to get busy for me once again.

Focke's Comments:

Saturday evening I went to the KSU football game. The team was disappointing, but we won in the last minute of the game. Pretty exciting.

Sunday and Monday, I took time to relax. The game was late on Saturday night and I didn't feel well, so took it easy and got caught up around the house.

Monday, I caught up on phone calls and e-mails and later attended the Worship Committee meeting at the church.

Wednesday, I attended the Military Relations Luncheon at the Holiday Inn Campus. The guest speaker was LTC Heather Barton, Military Professor of Military Science KSU ROTC program. She gave a great presentation on the activities and programs at the ROTC program. Later that afternoon, I attended the Westloop Business Association meeting at the Rockin K's event room. This month and October, the Manhattan City Commission Candidates will be present to give their political speeches and answer questions. The candidates in attendance were Scott Seel, Peter Oppelt, Larry Fox, and Andrew Von Lintel. The other candidates will be there in October. It was a good Q & A session. That evening, I attended the church's first practice for the season of the bell choir. It was good to get started after the summer break.

McKinley's Comments:

No comments.

Business Meeting

1. UP Utility Extension -Lakeside Construction Co. Contract

Move to approve the Contract Agreement with Lakeside Construction, LLC for the University Park Utility Extension Project.

RESULT:	Adopted Passed
MOVER:	Commissioner Kathryn Focke
SECONDER:	Commissioner John Ford
AYES:	Greg McKinley, Kathryn Focke, John Ford
NAYS:	None

2. Riley County Employee Action Form

The Board of County Commissioners signed Riley County Employee Action Forms for the following:

- Roxanne Pakeman, an Administrative Assistant I, in the Attorney's Department, for Separation from County Service, effective September 10, 2025.
- Danny Cook, a Volunteer Firefighter, in the Fire District #1 Department, for Separation from County Service, effective August 28, 2025.
- Jim Larkins, a Volunteer Firefighter, in the Fire District #1 Department, for Separation from County Service, effective August 28, 2025.
- Damion Kennedy, an Intensive Supervision Officer/Case Manager I, in the Community Corrections Department, for Separation from County Service, effective September 12, 2025.
- Julie Martin, a new hire, as a Volunteer Firefighter, in the Fire District #1 Department, at a Range TASND.
- Tim Stranimier, a new hire, as an Election Day Worker, in the Clerk/Election Department, at a Range TASND.

3. Discuss Intergovernmental Luncheon
4. Approve payroll/accounts payables (when completed)

Move to approve the payroll vouchers in the amount of \$756,387.25 and the following warrant vouchers for September 5, 2025:

2025 Budget

County General	\$ 829,151.24
Disaster Fund	200.00
Health Department	91,019.51
Court Services	300.00
Capital Improvements Fund	7,085.36
Emergency 911	181,831.30
Solid Waste	6,751.80
County Building	11,441.41
Road & Bridge Cap Project	16,052.67
RCPD Levy/Op	1,264.80
Riley Co Fire Dist #1	10,756.93
University Park W&S	854.54
Hunters Island Water Dist	2,496.39
Deep Creek Sewer	317.55
Moehlman Bottoms	1,121.71
Terra Heights Sewer	3,048.88
Konza Water Operations	5,663.71
KDOC Adult Services	14,289.32
KDOC Juvenile Services	4,538.22
KDOC Juv Reinvestment	1,192.45
BJA Grant	1,123.28
City Alcohol Funds	2,141.37

TOTAL. \$ 1,192,642.44

RESULT:	Adopted Passed
MOVER:	Commissioner John Ford
SECONDER:	Commissioner Kathryn Focke
AYES:	Greg McKinley, Kathryn Focke, John Ford
NAYS:	None

Review Minutes

5. Board of Riley County Commissioners - Regular Meeting - Aug 28, 2025 8:30 AM

Move to approve the minutes.

RESULT:	Adopted Passed
MOVER:	Commissioner Kathryn Focke
SECONDER:	Commissioner John Ford
AYES:	Greg McKinley, Kathryn Focke, John Ford
NAYS:	None

Review Tentative Agenda

6. Tentative Agenda

Press Conference Topics

9:00 AM

Russel Stukey, Emergency Management Director/Fire Chief

7. August Staff Update EM/Fire

Stukey presented the Emergency Management/Fire District #1 staff update.

Stukey asked the Board if Riley County would provide lunch for the G2300 three-day training sessions.

The Board agreed by consensus for Riley County to provide lunches at the G2300 three-day training sessions.

Stukey discussed the City of Riley's proposal to decommission the Riley City Fire Department and have Riley County Fire District cover the city.

9:15 AM

Michael Boller, Noxious Weed/HHW Director

8. Noxious Weed Staff Update

Boller presented the Noxious Weed/HHW staff update.

9:30 AM

Anna Burson, Appraiser

9. Appraiser's Office September Staff Update

Burson presented the Appraiser's Office staff update.

9:45 AM

Barry Wilkerson, County Attorney

10. Fill vacant position

Wilkerson presented the request to fill the Administrative Assistant I.

Move to approve filling the vacant position of Administrative Assistant I from the applications submitted to the Riley County Attorney's Office for the Legal Secretary.

RESULT:	Adopted Passed
MOVER:	Commissioner John Ford
SECONDER:	Commissioner Kathryn Focke
AYES:	Greg McKinley, Kathryn Focke, John Ford

NAYS:	None
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The Board of County Commissioners signed a Riley County Position Action Form for an Administrative Assistant I, in the County Attorney's Office, at a Range 4.

10:00 AM Amanda Webb, Planning/Special Projects Director

11. Planning & Development Staff Update

Webb presented the Planning and Development staff update.

10:15 AM Brittany Phillips, Budget and Finance Officer

12. Riley County Rural Fire District #1 RNR Hearing

Phillips asked the Chair to open the RNR Hearing.

The Chair called the meeting to order and opened the Fire District #1 Revenue Neutral Rate Hearing.

No public comment.

McKinley closed the Public Hearing for the Fire District #1 Revenue Neutral Rate.

Move to approve "Resolution No. 090425-36, A Resolution of the County of Riley, Kansas to levy a property tax rate exceeding the Revenue Neutral Rate of Riley County Fire District No. 1" for the tax year 2026.

RESULT:	Adopted Passed
MOVER:	Commissioner Kathryn Focke
SECONDER:	County Commissioner Greg McKinley
AYES:	Greg McKinley, Kathryn Focke
NAYS:	John Ford

10:25 AM Brittany Phillips, Budget and Finance Officer

13. Riley County RNR Hearing

Phillips asked the Chair to open the Public Hearing for the Riley County RNR.

The Chair called the meeting to order and opened the Revenue Neutral Rate Hearing.

Olds thanked the Board for all the work that they do and to try to keep property taxes low. He asked why Riley County could not achieve the RNR. He said he felt it was due to pay increases.

Ford said due to increased costs in general. He stated the high level of tax exemption makes it difficult as well.

Olds stated the RNR is the target, some entities can get to it while others cannot.

McKinley stated RCPD is 50% of this year's increase.

Erles asked if they allow dialog on the budget at the hearing and, if not, what is the purpose?

McKinley stated yes the Board can reduce the budget at the hearing.

Stevenson said since she retired at 65 her taxes have increased 40%. She stated we have to have fair taxes.

Ball stated he does not always agree with the commissioners but does support them. He said he is concerned about the ever increasing, stated the county is the smallest portion and does a good job, but to strive for the RNR.

McKinley closed the Revenue Neutral Rate Hearing for Riley County.

Move to approve "Resolution No. 090425-37, A Resolution of the County of Riley, Kansas to levy a property tax rate exceeding the Revenue Neutral Rate" for the tax year 2026.

RESULT:	Adopted Passed
MOVER:	Commissioner Kathryn Focke
SECONDER:	Commissioner John Ford
AYES:	Greg McKinley, Kathryn Focke, John Ford
NAYS:	None

10:30 AM Brittany Phillips, Budget and Finance Officer

14. Riley County 2026 Public Budget Hearing

Phillips presented the 2026 Riley County Budget Certificate.

McKinley opened the 2026 Riley County Budget Hearing.

Stevenson asked about the intangible taxes. Stevenson suggested raising the intangible tax threshold.

Olds asked in the budget hearing, can the budget be changed?

Vargo said yes it could be reduced.

Olds suggested not approving the COLA for the department heads and save the taxpayers some money. He said there is one way to show good faith in the taxpayers. If not this year consider it next year for the high earners. Olds said two of the commissioners are on the Law Board and need to hold them accountable next year.

McKinley closed the Public Hearing for 2026 Riley County Budget.

Move to approve and sign the 2026 Riley County Budget Certificate in the amount of \$108,975,918 and the Special District Funds Certificate totaling \$6,994,828.

RESULT:	Adopted Passed
MOVER:	Commissioner John Ford
SECONDER:	Commissioner Kathryn Focke
AYES:	Greg McKinley, Kathryn Focke, John Ford
NAYS:	None

10:35 AM Jason Hilgers, Deputy Manhattan City Manager and Aaron Stewart, Director of Parks and Recreation

15. CiCo Survey

Hilgers presented and discussed the City of Manhattan CiCo Park Survey.

McKinley stated it would be interesting to see what the public wants and where.

Ford said the survey is rather long.

Focke stated she was not in favor of the survey earlier. She said people do not want their taxes to go up.

Hilgers said they intend to send out 2,800 to 3,000 registered voters in the City of Manhattan. He stated Manhattan City would be open to working with Riley County on sending it to rural registered voters as well.

Hilgers asked for input from the County Commissioners on any changes or additions to the survey.

11:05 AM Jacob Hansen, County Counselor

16. Administrative Work Session

17. Executive session for attorney-client consultation exception

Move the County Commissioners, including Chairman McKinley, Vice Chairwoman Focke, and Commissioner Ford, with Jacob Hansen, County Counselor, attorney for the commission, recess into executive session pursuant to the attorney-client consultation an exception to the Kansas Open Meetings Act, regarding confidential legal advice and the open meeting to resume in the County Commission Chambers at 12:00 p.m.

RESULT:	Adopted Passed
MOVER:	Commissioner John Ford
SECONDER:	Commissioner Kathryn Focke
AYES:	Greg McKinley, Kathryn Focke, John Ford
NAYS:	None

Move the Board of County Commissioners come out of executive session.

RESULT:	Adopted Passed
MOVER:	Commissioner John Ford
SECONDER:	Commissioner Kathryn Focke
AYES:	Greg McKinley, Kathryn Focke, John Ford

NAYS:	None
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Move the record reflect action shall be taken consistent with the consensus reached in executive session.

RESULT:	Adopted Passed
MOVER:	Commissioner John Ford
SECONDER:	Commissioner Kathryn Focke
AYES:	Greg McKinley, Kathryn Focke, John Ford
NAYS:	None

11:15 AM Diane Creek, Health Department Director

18. RFP opening for Electronic Medical Records System

Move to recess as the Board of County Commissioners and convene as the Board of Health.

RESULT:	Adopted Passed
MOVER:	Commissioner John Ford
SECONDER:	Commissioner Kathryn Focke
AYES:	Greg McKinley, Kathryn Focke, John Ford
NAYS:	None

The Board of County Commissioners opened Request for Proposals (RFPs) for an Electronic Medical Records System from the following.

<u>Company</u>
Omnipractice, Inc. 1201 Seven Locks Road, Ste 360 Rockville, MD 20854
CureMD 421 Fayetteville St, Ste 215 Raleigh, NC 27601
Texas AI 5050 Quorum Drive, Ste 700 Dallas, TX 75254
Patagonia Health, Inc. 15100 Weston Parkway, Ste 204 Cary, NC 27513
Matthew and Associates, Inc 1137 N Prospect Ave Itasca, IL 60143-1437
GBS Corp 1035 North Meridian Road Youngstown, OH 44509

SmartTracker 4327 S. Hwy 27 Unit 146 Clermont, FL 34711

Monks Tech Service 36 Lakeridge Drive Orchard Park, NY 14127
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Move to refer the requests for proposals to staff for evaluation and recommendation.

RESULT:	Adopted Passed
MOVER:	Commissioner John Ford
SECONDER:	Commissioner Kathryn Focke
AYES:	Greg McKinley, Kathryn Focke, John Ford
NAYS:	None

Move to recess as the Board of Health and reconvene as the Board of County Commissioners.

RESULT:	Adopted Passed
MOVER:	Commissioner John Ford
SECONDER:	Commissioner Kathryn Focke
AYES:	Greg McKinley, Kathryn Focke, John Ford
NAYS:	None

Vargo said he sent an email to all the department heads in the Courthouse Office Building about permanently removing the furniture on second floor. He stated all department heads are okay with permanently removing the furniture due to cost of moving the furniture each time and lack of use. The Board agreed by consensus to have the furniture permanently removed from the second floor of the Courthouse Office Building.

Adjournment

12:11 Move to adjourn.

RESULT:	Adopted Passed
MOVER:	Commissioner John Ford
SECONDER:	Commissioner Kathryn Focke
AYES:	Greg McKinley, Kathryn Focke, John Ford
NAYS:	None