



**Board of Riley County
Commissioners
Regular Meeting
Minutes
September 15, 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
Vivienne Leyva	PIO	Present	8:30 AM
Kevin Bellamy		Present	8:30 AM
Elizabeth Ward	Human Resources Director	Present	8:30 AM
Brittany Phillips	Budget and Finance Officer	Present	8:30 AM
John Ellermann	Public Works Director/County Engineer	Present	8:33 AM
Rob Voelker		Present	8:33 AM
Russel Stukey	Emergency Management Director/Fire Chief	Present	8:35 AM
Shilo Heger	Treasurer	Present	9:00 AM
David Adams	EMS/Ambulance Director	Present	9:22 AM
Michele Reid	Human Resources Manager	Present	9:27 AM

Pledge of Allegiance

Public Comment

Bellamy stated he is here to strongly oppose the absorption of the City of Riley's Fire Department into the Riley County Fire District #1. He stated this will take away a city service in Riley which has been in place for 103 years. He said it will take away local control and the quality of the fire service.

Bellamy urged the Board to reject the proposal from the Riley City Council.

Commission Comments

Ford's Comments:

Thursday afternoon I attended the first NACo Veterans and Military Services Teams call of the 2025-2026 legislative cycle. After some opening remarks and introductions from our Chair Sid Conklin, Presiding Commissioner, Randolph County, Missouri. The first item of business was preparing for Operation Green Light in November. We had a presentation from Anya Malkov, Senior Manager of State and Local Policy at Amazon. She discussed Amazon's program in partnership with NACo of sending a single green light bulb to all the nation's counties and parishes. Next we heard from Seamus Dowdall, Legislative Director, NACo. He gave us a Federal Policy update from Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C.. We followed that up with a discussion on the advisory council priorities for the 2025-2026 term, and then had an open discussion and close of the meeting.

Friday evening, I watched the K-State-Arizona game on TV. Another bad loss for the Wildcats 23-17 and this is even after Arizona tried to give us this game. The loss drops us to 1-3 overall, our worst since 1989.

Saturday I went and checked out the Farmer's Market downtown. I realized I haven't been down there in a very long time, and it is amazing to see how this has progressed and the many different items and booths there are. There were some really neat items up for sell, and glad to it is mostly of local background as well.

Saturday the City Ogden had their Annual Fall Festival downtown complete with a parade to start, lots and lots of food vendors, games, and events, and later in the evening some live entertainment. Every year this event seems to keep getting bigger and bigger which is always great to see.

Sunday I stayed around the house and watched a bunch of NFL football, got caught up on some things, and prepared for this upcoming week.

Focke's Comments:

Thursday afternoon, I had a short appointment with my primary care physician to go over several issues. I also got updated COVID and flu booster shots.

Friday I came into the office to work on the Law Board agenda and packet for today's meeting. Later that afternoon, I had a physical therapy session. Friday night I watched the KSU/Arizona football game. (no comment)

Saturday, I did some rather strenuous yard work but took my time to let my back rest. Later, I went to Wildcat Park with a friend to walk our dogs. It was a nice afternoon.

Sunday, I went to church, came home for lunch and in the afternoon, went over today's agenda

and documents.

McKinley's Comments:

Friday morning was the Flint Hills Area Transportation Agency board meeting. The main item was approval of the 2026 budget. The biggest increase was 38% increase in personnel. Part of this is some added routes but also caused by increased salaries required to hire drivers. The increased overall budget was mostly covered by increased federal and state funds. I received a call from a previous employee complaining about another employee. So far what I have found out that they said is true but still asking questions.

I also had a call from a Riley City resident complaining about the possible closing of the Riley Fire Department.

Business Meeting

1. Highway Use Permit 2025-011 AT&T-McDowell Creek Rd

Move to approve the Highway Use Permit granting AT&T permission to install underground fiber optic cable by installing three 2" conduits by directional drilling on McDowell Creek Road.

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

2. Change Order #1 -2025 Bituminous Chip Seal Project

Move to approve Change Order Number 1 with APAC - Kansas, Inc. for the 2025 bituminous chip seal in the amount of -\$21,414.92 for a total adjusted contract price of \$147,089.39.

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

3. Peterson Ranch Road Improvement Contract Agreement

Move to approve the Contract Agreement with Shilling Construction for the 2025 Peterson Ranch Road Improvement.

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

4. Certification of Unpaid Fees

Move to approve the Certification of Unpaid Fees and/or Charges for Utility Services located in Terra Heights Sewer Benefit District in the amount of \$1,238.40 for the Doreen M. Ray, Trust.

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

Review Minutes

5. Board of Riley County Commissioners - Regular Meeting - Sept 11, 2025 9:00 AM

Move to approve the minutes.

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

Review Tentative Agenda

6. Tentative Agenda

Press Conference Topics

9:00 AM

Jacob Hansen, County Counselor

7. Administrative Work Session

8. Staff Update

Focke asked about the status of the RFQ for the First Christian Church.

Hansen said supplemental counsel said he will have it to him this week.

9. KAC Legislative Policy Committee Topics

Hansen asked the Board what their position is on each of the KAC Legislative items so he can speak to them at the KAC Legislative Policy meeting.

Hansen reviewed the list of topics for commission input.

1. Additional legislative support for County Treasurer Tag Offices - Support it
2. Property Tax Appraisal Reform - For reducing amount of exemptions, against valuation caps
3. Dangerous Animals - Local issue, do not need KAC involvement
4. Public Notice Flexibility - Support it
5. Extra Territorial Jurisdiction - No position

6. Local Sales Tax Question Legislation - Support it
7. Sales Tax Exemptions - Support it
8. Local Health Department Federal Funding - Support it
9. Ending Unfunded Mandates - Support it
10. Reforming the Revenue Neutral Rate - Add inflation number to base RNR
11. Valuation Increase Caps - Against it
12. Expanded Revenue Sources for Counties - Support it
13. Competitive Bidding for Water District Projects - Not a county issue
14. Dissolution of Fire Districts - Not worth KAC attention
15. Reinvestment Housing Incentive District - Want to change to fit "rural" purpose
16. Parental Notice for out of state minors receiving abortions in Kansas - Not a county position
17. Community Corrections funding increase - Support it

9:15 AM Shilo Heger, Treasurer

10. August 2025 Revenue Reports

Heger presented the revenue reports.

Heger reported they have officially closed the driver's license service.

9:30 AM Press Conference

9:35 AM Elizabeth Ward, Human Resources Director

11. Human Resources Update

Ward presented the Human Resources update.

9:50 AM John Ellermann, Public Works Director/County Engineer

12. Out of State Travel Request

Ellermann presented the out of state travel request.

Move to approve the Out of State Travel Request for David Willis to attend the 2025 International GIE +EXPO and Equipment Show in Louisville, Kentucky.

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

9:55 AM Diane Creek, Health Department Director

13. Kansas Perinatal Community Collaborative agreement (MCH amendment)

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

Creek presented the Maternal and Child grant.

Move to approve by accepting this amendment to the Maternal and Child grant for FY26 with KDHE.

RESULT:	Adopted Passed
MOVER:	Commissioner Kathryn Focke
SECONDER:	Commissioner John Ford
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

10:10 AM Brittany Phillips, Budget and Finance Officer

14. CIP Work Session

Phillips presented the CIP work session information.

Move to approve the following projects as presented.

	FACILITY	HVAC Replacement	\$ 150,000	
	FACILITY	Judicial Services Study	\$ 80,000	
	FACILITY	HD/FCRC Study	\$ 50,000	
	FACILITY	Commission Chambers Remodel	\$ 250,000	
	FACILITY	IT (EM/Fire) Remodel	\$ 800,000	\$1,330,000
LEC	FACILITY	HVAC Replacement	\$ 80,000	
LEC	FACILITY	Jail Camera Upgrade	\$ 15,000	\$ 95,000
PK	EQUIP	72" Front Deck Mower	\$ 25,000	
PK	EQUIP	82"x24' Gravity Tilt Top Trailer	\$ 15,000	
PK	EQUIP	3/4Ton 4x4 P/U w/Plow and Spreader	\$ 75,000	
PK	FACILITY	Playground Equipment to CICO Park	\$ 75,000	\$ 190,000
EMS	EQUIP	Ambulance Remount	\$ 327,921	
EMS	EQUIP	Zoll "X" Series Advanced Cardiac Monitor	\$ 47,367	

EMS	EQUIP	Strker PowerCot	\$ 31,506	\$ 406,794
PW	EQUIP	Sign Truck - 550 Diesel Chasis only	\$ 130,000	
PW	EQUIP	SUV - Health Department	\$ 50,000	
PW	EQUIP	3/4 Ton 4x4 P/U w/ Plow and Spreader	\$ 75,000	
PW	EQUIP	Hydro Jet - Hydro Vac Trailer	\$ 200,000	\$ 455,000
		2025 Totals	\$2,476,794	\$2,476,794

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

Adjournment

10:27 Move to adjourn.

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

12:00 PM

Law Enforcement Agency Meeting

15. Law Board Agenda and Packet