



**Board of Riley County
Commissioners
Regular Meeting
Minutes
March 03, 2025**

115 North 4th Street
Manhattan, KS 66502
www.rileycountyks.gov

Cindy Kabriel
785-565-6200

Commission Chambers

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	Remote	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
Bryant Parker	Counselor/Director of Administrative Services	Present	8:30 AM
Anna Burson	County Appraiser	Present	8:30 AM
Vivienne Leyva	PIO	Present	8:30 AM
Emma Loura	Manhattan Mercury	Present	8:32 AM
Joseph Godown	Real Estate Specialist	Present	8:34 AM
John Ellermann	Public Works Director/County Engineer	Present	9:11 AM
Alvin Perez	Public Works Operations/Fleet Manager	Present	9:11 AM
Mark French	RCPD	Present	9:17 AM
Scott Hajek	RCPD	Present	9:30 AM
Laurie Harrison	Emergency Management Coordinator	Present	9:30 AM
Gregg Eyestone	Extension Agent	Present	9:30 AM
Gina Snyder	Downtown Manhattan Director	Present	9:30 AM
Cory Meyer	IT/GIS Director	Present	9:34 AM
Russel Stukey	Emergency Management Director	Present	10:00 AM
Robert Cox	Emergency Management Planner	Present	10:00 AM

Pledge of Allegiance

Public Comment

1. Public Comments

Commission Comments

2. Commission Comments

Ford's Comments:

Thursday afternoon I listened to KAC's "Connecting Counties" webinar titled iAm Healthy Parents First: A Healthy Lifestyles Program for Rural Families. Christie Befort, Professor, Department of Population Health, Associate Director of Cancer Prevention and Control KU Cancer Center, University of Kansas Medical Center gave a presentation for how parents can model healthier habits on their kids and rural communities and this program teaches parents and kids skills for a healthier family lifestyle for the future.

Friday morning, I left Manhattan at 5:00 a.m. to head to Washington, D.C. for the National Association of Counties 2025 Legislative Conference at the Washington Hilton. Got into our nation's capital just after the noon hour with no hiccups in traveling and I was able to get settled in, registered for the event, set up for both national steering committee meetings I'm part of and start going through presentations and information that was provided by the association. I had dinner at the hotel and mingled with some county officials from Texas, Louisiana, Alabama, and my other home state of Kentucky.

Saturday morning was the first full day of the NACo Legislative Conference. That meant a full day meeting with the Community Economic and Workforce Development Steering Policy Committee. After a call to order, some introduction and welcomes by our Chair Angela Conley we heard from David Woll, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, Office of Community Planning and Development, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. He discussed the department housing priorities in 2025 and beyond. Next speaker was Richard Ledbetter, Director, State and Local Government Solutions with ESRI and he discussed the geographic approach to housing as well as economic development. Next Speaker was Karl Eckhart, Vice President, State and Local Government Affairs, National Association of Home Builders, and he discussed the housing market landscape and Congressional outlook for housing. Next speaker was Brett Beckerson, MSW, Senior Director Public Policy and Advocacy National Center on Mental Wellbeing and discussed the collaborative effort with NACo EDGE Program and Mental Health First Aid. Next presentation was Paige Bongiorno, Director of STARs Public Sector Hub Opportunity @ Work and Kate Emanuel, Chief Strategy Officer, the AD Council. Last presentation before lunch was a panel discussion with Kathy Valentino, and Alysson Story Councilors in their respective Canadian Cites and Moderator for the discussion Neal Comeau, Councilor, Sturgeon County, Alberta and they together discussed trade tactics and impacts on local government for the value of cross border cooperation.

Saturday afternoon we reconvened the CEWD meeting with guest speaker Benjamin Preis, Director National Housing Crisis Task Force, and discussed the National Housing Crisis Task Force and their overview and findings. That followed a committee business meeting as well as the interim policy resolution meeting and vote in which there were seven different resolutions that were voted on, all of which passed easily. Some included continued support for CDBG and WIOA reauthorization, usage of the federal government's appraisal dataset in assessments, homelessness assistance, incentivizing housing through federal tax code, and ensuring non-discrimination practices in the federal government. We then had an open floor discussion afterward and then officially closed out the meeting.

Sunday afternoon during Day 2 of the Legislative Conference the Veterans and Military Services Committee met. After a call to order, Pledge of Allegiance and opening remarks from our Chair Sid Conklin, Presiding Commissioner Randolph County, Missouri and a Former Big Red One soldier right here at Fort Riley we heard from Paul Shute, Assistant Deputy under Secretary, Office of Automated Benefits, and he discussed veteran benefits automation. Next speaker was David Clay Ward, Rural Desk Officer, Office of Rural Engagement, U.S. Department. of Veterans Affairs, he discussed rural partnerships and how to improve veteran engagement. Next speaker was Madison Moore, Senior Advisor, Elizabeth Dole Foundation, and she gave an overview of the Senator Elizabeth Dole 21st Century Veterans Healthcare and Benefits Improvement Act. Next speaker was Brett Beckerson, MSW, Senior Director Public Policy and Advocacy National Council for Mental Wellbeing and he discussed NACo Edge and Mental Health First Aid for Veterans. Last speaker was Dominick Namias, Deputy Director of Coalitions, U.S. House Committee on Veterans Affairs. He discussed this house committee and its priorities in the 119th Congress. That concluded the meeting for the conference.

Sunday evening took it easy and prepared for discussions with some of our federal partners and members of Congress.

Focke's Comments:

I don't have a lot to report. I have been dealing with a back problem and have been working through the medical system to get it solved.

Fortunately, it hasn't been a busy time for meetings but I have several scheduled this week.

McKinley's Comments:

No comments.

Business Meeting

3. Jackson Township Treasurer appointment

Move to accept Gary Hargrave's resignation, who didn't refile, and accept Frank Hagenmaier's declining the elected position as the Jackson Township Treasurer due to currently already being the Jackson Township Clerk and appoint Jamie Hageman as Jackson Township Treasurer.

RESULT:	ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Kathryn Focke, County Commissioner
SECONDER:	Greg McKinley, County Commissioner
AYES:	Ford, Focke, McKinley

4. Sign a Tax Roll Corrections

Move to approve the Tax Roll Corrections.

RESULT:	ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Kathryn Focke, County Commissioner
SECONDER:	Greg McKinley, County Commissioner
AYES:	Ford, Focke, McKinley

Review Minutes

5. Board of Riley County Commissioners - Regular Meeting - Feb 27, 2025 9:30 AM

Move to approve the minutes.

RESULT:	ACCEPTED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Kathryn Focke, County Commissioner
SECONDER:	John Ford, County Commissioner
AYES:	Ford, Focke, McKinley

Review Tentative Agenda

6. Tentative Agenda

Press Conference Topics

7. Discuss Press Conference

9:00 AM**Bryant Parker, Counselor/Director of Administrative Services**

8. Administrative Work Session

Parker discussed the nuisance abatement procedures.

Parker said his department has been helping the other departments with projects.

Ford said HB 2396 needs to be watched. Ford stated it is similar to LAVTR with requirements to keep budgets at or below RNR.

Focke asked about the Keats Sewer Project and what the hold up is with USDA.

Parker did not know the reason for the delay.

9. Pending County Projects County Counselor

9:20 AM**Alvin Perez, Public Works Operations and Fleet Manager**

10. Bid opening for corrugated metal pipe

The Board of County Commissioners opened the following bids for corrugated metal pipe.

Company	Total Bid
J & J Drainage Products Co. 110 North Pershing, PO Box 829 Hutchinson, KS 67504-0829	\$ 95,931.60
Welborn Sales, Inc. 3288 S Ave C Salina, KS 67401	\$ 81,299.18
Contech Engineered Solutions 3006 Atchison Way	\$102,907.38

Lawrence, KS 66047	
Metal Culverts, Inc. 728 Heisinger Road Jefferson City, MO 65102	\$133,210.80

Move to refer the bids to staff for evaluation and recommendation.

RESULT:	ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Kathryn Focke, County Commissioner
SECONDER:	Greg McKinley, County Commissioner
AYES:	Ford, Focke, McKinley

9:30 AM

Press Conference

11. RCPD Update - Scott Hajek and Mark French (3-5 minutes)

Hajek and French presented the Riley County Police Department update.

12. Downtown Manhattan update - Gina Snyder (3-5 minutes)

Snyder presented the Downtown Manhattan update.

13. Severe Weather Preparedness Week - Laurie Harrison (2 minutes)

Harrison reported this week is Severe Weather Preparedness Week in Kansas.

Harrison said spring is just around the corner and with it comes the possibility of severe thunderstorms, high winds, floods, and tornadoes.

Harrison said Riley County Emergency Management is reminding folks to have a plan, make a kit, and stay informed.

- Know where to take shelter (home, work, school, traveling)
 - Do that now when no emergency is occurring.
- Have an emergency supply kit (home, work, school, car)
 - What would your family need for 72 hours?
- Stay informed (AM/FM radio, NOAA weather radio, various subscriptions/apps, Everbridge emergency notification system)

You may sign up to receive alerts from the Everbridge emergency notification system at www.rileycountyks.gov. This is FREE!

Harrison said Riley County Emergency Management will be participating in the statewide tornado drill Wednesday March 5th at 10:00 a.m. We will be sounding the outdoor warning sirens and also

alerting on Everbridge emergency notification system. This is a great opportunity to practice your tornado sheltering plan whether at home, work or school)

Harrison said since we are doing this Wednesday, we will not be sounding sirens today, which is the regularly scheduled monthly test here in Riley County.

Harrison said if you have any questions about Severe Weather Preparedness Week activities, please contact Riley County Emergency Management at 785-537-6333.

Harrison said save the date for the national weather service storm safety and information presentation next Monday, March 10th at 7:00 p.m. at Pottorf Hall.

Harrison said information can be found at NWS Topeka webpage (weather.gov/top) at the top of the page (2025 spotter show schedule).

14. Youth Lawn Mowing Clinic - Gregg Eyestone (1 minute)

Eyestone said the Youth Lawn Mower clinic will be held Tuesday, March 11th in Pottorf Hall at 4:30 p.m. Youth are to sign up at riley.ksu.edu

Eyestone said there are a few openings left for the Forcing Bulbs Workshop at 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, March 6th. Register at K-State Gardens 150 website.

Eyestone said the Haybale Gardening program will be held Saturday, March 22nd at 10:00 a.m. Blueville Nursery is hosting this program.

9:45 AM

Cory Meyer, IT/GIS Director

15. BOCC Meeting Room Audio/Video Upgrade

Meyer presented the BOCC Audio Video upgrade request.

Meyer stated the upgrade can be funded through the IT/GIS budget.

Move to allow IT/GIS to proceed with the purchase of the Audio/Video Upgrade from Redi Systems in the amount of \$29,567.02 for the BOCC meeting room.

RESULT:	ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]
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MOVER:	Kathryn Focke, County Commissioner
SECONDER:	John Ford, County Commissioner
AYES:	Ford, Focke, McKinley

10:00 AM Russel Stukey, Emergency Management Director

16. February Staff Update

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

Stukey introduced Robert Cox, Planner for the Emergency Management Department.

Parker asked if the Board has consensus for the Board Chair to sign a letter of support of Home Rule Authority for Counties.

The Board by consensus agreed to wait until Thursday unless the item is scheduled to be discussed prior.

10:16 AM Adjournment

Move to adjourn.

RESULT:	ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Kathryn Focke, County Commissioner
SECONDER:	John Ford, County Commissioner
AYES:	Ford, Focke, McKinley