



**Board of Riley County
Commissioners
Regular Meeting
Minutes
March 27, 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	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
Bryant Parker	Counselor/Director of Administrative Services	Present	8:30 AM
Anna Burson	County Appraiser	Present	8:30 AM
Alvin Perez	Public Works Operations/Fleet Manager	Present	8:30 AM
John Ellermann	Public Works Director/County Engineer	Present	8:30 AM
Emma Loura	Manhattan Mercury	Present	8:32 AM
Michele Reid	Payroll, Benefits & Employee Relations Manager	Present	8:35 AM
Brittany Phillips	Budget and Finance Officer	Present	8:03 AM
Elizabeth Ward	Human Resources Director	Present	9:00 AM
David Adams	EMS/Ambulance Director	Present	9:19 AM
Jacob Hansen	Deputy County Counselor	Present	9:26 AM

Pledge of Allegiance

Public Comment

1. Public Comments

Commission Comments

2. Commission Comments

Ford's Comments:

Monday afternoon I attended the Intergovernmental Luncheon at

Rockin K's up on the K-State campus and hosted this year by Riley County. We first heard from Anne Smith, Director of the aTa Bus and her staff. They gave an in-depth and solid update on everything that's going on with the agency. Next we heard from Major Scott Hajek with RCPD and Chief of Patrol and he went through some numbers, data, and metrics in regard to Fake Patty's Day that took place on Saturday March 8th. We quickly discussed a couple of legislative items of interest and discussed the (potential) August Rock the Plains concert at Tuttle Creek State Park. We finished by hearing updates from the various entities and what they are currently working on.

Tuesday afternoon I attended the Board of Directors meeting for Pawnee Mental Health Services via Zoom. I started out with a Finance Committee meeting where we went through the 990 Audit Report with April Swartz and then the January financials of the agency with CFO Lindsay Miller. Items in the regular meeting included introductions of some new board members, approval of the February board minutes, followed by a Chief Financial Officers report from Lindsay Miller, Audit and 990 report from April Swartz, a business insurance presentation from Chris Conrade, a Chief Executive Officers report from Mike Rezkalla, a marketing and development from Di-Hinrichs-Toburen, committee reports including were Finance Oversight with a review of the February 2025 financials, and Audit/990 Report and bi-annual review of investments. Other business included approving limits for directors and officers General and Professional Liability coverage and distributing county and commission sign-up sheets for Mental Health month. The meeting ended with an executive session on non-elected personnel.

Also Tuesday afternoon I attended the Board of Directors meeting of the Manhattan Area Chamber of Commerce. Meeting items included approval of the January meeting, update on both the financials through February and membership accounts. Other discussion items included presentation of a potential RHID project from Tyler Holloman, consider support for both for a project park, permitting software, update on military and talent metrics, consideration of an amended GMEP agreement, a growth strategy update and Strategic Organizational Project update.

Spent Wednesday emailing many in the regional state legislators on the potentially dangerous impacts HB 2125 will have on both counties and local units of governments as a whole. My dialog with several of them have been prompt and positive.

Focke's Comments:

Monday afternoon I attended the Intergovernmental Luncheon.

Presentations were made by Anne Smith, Director of the aTa Bus System. She and her team presented the new “wrap” on some of the buses, ridership, routes and financial information. We also had a “Fake Patty’s Day” presentation by RCPD. Overall, it was more contained than in previous years.

Most of Tuesday afternoon was spent in the dental office getting some work done.

Wednesday morning, I had a meeting with John Ellermann at Public Works. Specifically, we discussed several issues that I had heard from constituents, which he addressed. Generally, we discussed how the department was doing, and getting caught up to speed.

Later Wednesday afternoon I had an appointment with my primary care doctor to discuss upcoming surgical information and how their office will be involved. I also went through today’s meeting packet documents.

Wednesday evening, I practiced with the Bell Choir and later attended Lenten services at my church.

McKinley's Comments:

Monday after our meeting I attended the Intergovernmental Luncheon. The main presentation was by aTa Bus. They gave a good overview of the service and improvements they are making. We also had a Fake Patty's Day update by Scott Hajek. Sounds like it was better controlled than last year.

Tuesday evening, I attended the Riley City Council meeting. They had some questions about the appropriations letter we had sent but no major items on the agenda.

Business Meeting

3. Bid Recommendation for Hydraulic Dovetail Trailer

Move to accept the low bid submitted by Hoyt Trailer Center of Topeka, Kansas in the amount of 41,600.00 for a hydraulic dovetail trailer.

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

AYES:	Ford, Focke, McKinley
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Review Minutes

4. Board of Riley County Commissioners - Regular Meeting - Mar 24, 2025 8:30 AM

Move to approve the minutes.

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

Review Tentative Agenda

5. Tentative Agenda

Press Conference Topics

6. Discuss Press Conference

9:00 AM

John Ellermann, Public Works Director/County Engineer

7. KDOT Cost-Share Program Application - Spring 2025

Ellermann presented the letter of support for the Cost-Share Program application.

Move to approve moving forward with the Cost-Share Program application, with the letter of support from Riley County.

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

8. Building Maintenance Tech II

Ellermann presented the request for the Building Maintenance Tech II position pay approval.

Move to approve the pay rate of \$28.49 for the Building Maintenance Tech II candidate.

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

9:15 AM Bryant Parker, Counselor/Director of Administrative Services

9. Administrative Work Session

Parker discussed HB 2125, regarding property tax and related tax bills.

Parker stated the bill to amend the statewide constitution has died.

Parker discussed Ellermann's and other departments' work on the RFP's for facilities.

9:35 AM David Adams, EMS/Ambulance Director

10. Request To Fill Open Position

Adams presented the request to fill the EMS/Ambulance paramedic position.

Move to approve the request to fill these positions.

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

The Board of County Commissioners signed a Riley County Position Action Form for a Paramedic (1 full time, 2 PRN paramedic positions), in the EMS/Ambulance Department, at a Range Paramedic.

9:40 AM Elizabeth Ward, Human Resources Director

- 9:40 AM 11. Executive session to discuss a performance matter involving non-elected personnel

Move that the County Commissioners, including Chairman McKinley, Vice Chairwoman Focke, and Commissioner Ford, with Bryant Parker, County Counselor, and Jacob Hansen, Deputy County Counselor, attorneys for the Commission, and Rich Vargo, County Clerk; Elizabeth Ward, Human Resources Director; and Brittany Phillips, Budget and Finance Officer recess into executive session on a performance matter of non-elected personnel, an exception to the Kansas Open Meetings Act, for the purpose of discussing employee performance, and to protect the privacy of the employee, the open meeting to resume in the County Commission Chambers at 10:15 a.m.

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

- 10:15 AM Move the Board of County Commissioners come out of executive session.

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

Move the record reflect no binding action was taken during the executive session.

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

- 10:16 AM Executive Session

Move that the County Commissioners, including Chairman McKinley, Vice Chairwoman Focke, and Commissioner Ford, with Bryant Parker, County Counselor, and Jacob Hansen, Deputy County Counselor, attorneys for the Commission, and Rich Vargo, County Clerk; Elizabeth Ward, Human Resources Director; and Brittany Phillips, Budget and Finance Officer recess into executive session on a performance matter of non-elected personnel, an exception to the Kansas Open Meetings Act, for the purpose of discussing employee

performance, and to protect the privacy of the employee, the open meeting to resume in the County Commission Chambers at 10:40 a.m.

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

10:40 AM

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

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

Move the record reflect no binding action was taken during the executive session.

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

10:41 AM

Executive Session

Move that the County Commissioners, including Chairman McKinley, Vice Chairwoman Focke, and Commissioner Ford, with Bryant Parker, County Counselor, and Jacob Hansen, Deputy County Counselor, attorneys for the Commission, and Rich Vargo, County Clerk; Elizabeth Ward, Human Resources Director; and Brittany Phillips, Budget and Finance Officer recess into executive session on a performance matter of non-elected personnel, an exception to the Kansas Open Meetings Act, for the purpose of discussing employee performance, and to protect the privacy of the employee, the open meeting to resume in the County Commission Chambers at 10:45 a.m.

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

10:45 AM

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

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

Move the record reflect action shall be taken consistent with the consensus reached in executive session.

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

10:45 AM **Adjournment**

Move to adjourn.

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