



**Board of Riley County
Commissioners
Regular Meeting
Minutes
April 08, 2024**

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

Cindy Kabriel
785-565-6200

Commission Chambers

8:30 AM

[District 1 – John Ford, Chair](#)

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

[District 3 – Kathryn Focke, Member](#)

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
Clancy Holeman	Counselor/Director of Administrative Services	Present	8:30 AM
Vivienne Leyva	PIO	Present	8:30 AM
Shelley Woodard	Deputy County Counselor	Present	8:30 AM
Gina Snyder	Downtown Manhattan Director	Present	8:30 AM
Russel Stukey	Emergency Management Director	Present	8:30 AM
Anna Burson	County Appraiser	Present	8:30 AM
Brittany Phillips	Budget and Finance Officer	Present	8:35 AM
Elizabeth Ward	Human Resources Director	Present	8:52 AM
Jan Scheideman	Child Care Facilitator/Manager	Present	9:24 AM
Julie Gibbs	Health Department Director	Present	9:27 AM
David Adams	EMS/Ambulance Director	Present	9:58 AM
Shilo Heger	Treasurer	Present	10:03 AM

Pledge of Allegiance

Public Comment

1. Public Comments

Stukey reported on a couple fires this weekend. Stukey said there was one fire in Manhattan which burned down a house.

Stukey said the second fire, the Axelton Road Fire, one house was lost.

Stukey estimated 3,000 plus acres burned. Stukey stated statewide resources were used including helicopters.

Stukey thanked all the volunteer firefighters and staff for their work.

Stukey said the EOC was activated Saturday and Sunday.

Leyva stated we will continue to keep the public informed. Leyva discussed education for homeowners to make their homes safer from wildfires.

Stukey thanked Megan Fink-Larsen for supplying volunteers with food and drinks.

Stukey recommended leaving the Disaster Declaration in place.

Stukey stated the Riley County radio system is now functioning at partial capacity.

Commission Comments

2. Commission Comments

Focke's Comments:

Thursday afternoon I had a physical therapy session and then worked on my taxes later in the afternoon. In the evening, I had a committee meeting at the church.

Friday, I had a PT session in the morning, worked on taxes in the afternoon and did some yard clean-up.

I had a phone conversation with the Kansas Department of Commerce about upcoming broadband grants. I have been inquiring about eliminating the process of companies (and government entities) digging up streets and roads numerous times to put in infrastructure such as electrical, broadband, plumbing, etc. I learned that some communities have put in conduits for entities to use, called the “Dig Once” or Dig Smart” program. There may be grants available for underserved areas such as Keats or other rural areas. I am following up with my contact today on this. I specifically think that if we get the grant from the water office for Keats, then we could possibly do this in conjunction with the sewer infrastructure design.

The weekend was spent cleaning, doing some yard work, and shopping. I went to Parkside Station for dinner on Saturday. The building was a former gas station that was on the historical register for its unique building design. They did a great job with it and have a good menu.

Sunday, I attended church, did some paperwork, and went over the documents for our meeting today. That evening, I went to a friend's 80th birthday party.

McKinley's Comments:

Thursday afternoon I attended the retirement ceremony for Robbin Cole. There was a large crowd including her kids and grandkids. Several speakers talked about all she has done for the area at Pawnee and in other groups across the city.

The weekend was spent trying to avoid the wind.

Ford's Comments:

Thursday evening, I attended the Manhattan Retirement Reception and Celebration for Pawnee Mental Health CEO Robbin Cole at the Manhattan Entertainment Company. As we all are aware Robbin will be officially retiring and turning Pawnee Mental Health over to the new CEO Michael Rezkalla. This was the first of several opportunities for the communities of the 10-county service area to celebrate her 28 years with the agency. It was very well attended as you can imagine, and it was nice to have a final chance to chat and say a few words.

Friday morning, I spoke with Matt Mackeprang, Engineer from KDOT who is working on the construction project out on 1-77. There have been some community concerns in recent weeks over traffic control efforts in the area as they work to complete the necessary repairs to the highway. He did inform me that their measures are temporary and not permanent and only there to help divert the flow of traffic while construction has it down to one lane on both sides.

Also Friday morning I met and visited with my doctor. It has been a struggle of sorts over the last couple of weeks with one of the new medications I'm on so we have and will be making a few adjustments to hopefully relieve those issues but continuing to keep on track with everything else that has been planned otherwise.

Friday afternoon we had our monthly Riley County Police Department (RCPD) Pre-Law Board meeting at the Law Enforcement Center. We had an upfront and one on one discussion on the FY 2025 budget and everything that has gone into putting it together, that followed with a presentation on the area Criminal Assessment Threat and all of those breakdowns, and then we discussed and finalized the agenda for the April 15th Law Board Meeting.

Saturday afternoon I had to come down to the office and sign a Declaration of Local Emergency for the wildfire that started up in northern Riley County on Axelton Road up by Fancy Creek. Though we got some rainfall the weather conditions, including the extreme wind made it impossible for it to go out and stay completely out on Sunday as it continued to rage on and spread. It of course has caused damage to property and caused both evacuation of residents in the area as well as several road closures. Huge thanks and appreciation to all the firefighters and emergency personnel from around the state who have had a hand in keeping this fire at hand at least.

Spent the weekend going through and finishing up both my state and federal taxes. That as usual was both frustrating and discouraging all at once for the same reason.

Business Meeting

3. Plaza Reservation Request for Kansas Science Festival/Downtown Manhattan, Inc.

Move to approve a Plaza Reservation Request for the Kansas Science Festival and Downtown Manhattan, Inc. for Saturday, April 27, 2024 from 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

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

4. Highway Use Permit, Evergy- Wildcat Creek Rd

Move to approve the Highway Use Permit granting Evergy permission to bore in a new underground conduit crossing 4' under Wildcat Creek Road at 457 Wildcat Creek Road.

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

5. Highway Use Permit, Twin Valley Telephone

Move to approve the Highway Use Permit granting Twin Valley Telephone permission to bury fiber optic in the town of Keats according to the details and route shown on the maps. The Board asked

for staff to coordinate with the potential sewer line for the Keats area.

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

6. Week of the Young Child Proclamation

Move to approve the 2024 Week of the Young Child Riley County Proclamation for April 7-13, 2024.

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

7. Proclamation for 2024 National County Government Month

Move to approve the National County Government Month Proclamation for April 2024.

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

8. Sign Riley County Position Action Form(s)

The Board of County Commissioners signed a Riley County Position Action Form for a Drug Endangered Children Coordinator, in the Health Department, at a Range 4.

Review Minutes

9. Board of Riley County Commissioners - Regular Meeting - Apr 4, 2024 8:30 AM

Move to approve the minutes.

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

Review Tentative Agenda

10. Tentative Agenda

Press Conference Topics

11. Discuss Press Conference

9:00 AM**Rich Vargo, County Clerk**

12. Year to date budget and expenditure reports

Vargo presented the year to date budget and expenditure reports.

9:15 AM**Clancy Holeman, Counselor/Director of Administrative Services**

13. Administrative Work Session

Holeman said the Cybersecurity Disaster Declaration will remain in effect through April 15, 2024.

Holeman stated the Fire Disaster Declaration will remain in effect until 12:01 a.m. Saturday, April 13, 2024.

Holeman discussed SB 162 and SB 384 regarding the unincorporated area nuisance abatement bill.

McKinley discussed the strip of Riley County land in Bala which needs cleaned up.

Holeman stated Woodard has worked on it.

14. Pending County Projects County Counselor

9:30 AM**Press Conference**

15. Presentation of the Week of the Young Child Proclamation - John Ford and Jan Scheideman (3-5 minutes)

Ford presented the Week of the Young Child Proclamation, April 7-April 13, 2024, to Jan Scheideman.

Scheideman expressed appreciation to the Board for their support of the Raising Riley Program.

16. Presentation of the National County Government Month Proclamation - John Ford and Vivienne Leyva (3-5 minutes)

Ford presented the National County Government Month Proclamation, April 2024, to Vivienne Leyva.

Leyva thanked the Board. She said in her role she is proud of the work the Riley County Departments provide for the citizens.

9:40 AM

John Ellermann, Public Works Director/County Engineer

17. Public Works Project Update

Ellermann provided the Public Works projects update.

Ellermann said staff is working on the CiCo dog park evaluation.

Focke suggested an area for the small dogs.

Ellermann discussed moving the location of the dog park.

McKinley asked if staff has evaluated the speed limit request at the City of Riley.

Ellermann said he will bring a speed limit resolution to the Board to consider.

9:55 AM

Katharine Hensler, Museum Director

18. Staff Report - Riley County Historical Museum

Hensler presented the Historical Museum staff report.

10:10 AM

Elizabeth Ward, Human Resources Director

19. Working session - Employee Policy Manual proposal

Ward presented the Employee Policy Manual proposals.

The Board agreed by consensus to the following items:

- 1) No change to the requirement to wear County ID badges.
- 2) Drug and Alcohol policy - approved as updated
- 3) Electronic Communication policy and Bring Your Own Device policy approved
- 4) Use of Social Media policy approved
- 5) Re-Employment after separation
 - Re-hired employees shall have their previous accrual tier assigned to their accrual rate for PTO purposes. A reinstated employee will be required to successfully complete a new 6-month evaluation.
- 6) Violence and Weapons policy - approved as proposed
- 7) Appendix - approved moving definitions to the back of the policy

Ward asked about the Dress Code Policy.

Ford said to be honest he is done with it. He is in favor of leaving as it is.

The Board asked for the original 2012 Professional Appearance Policy and the proposed changes.

Ward asked for clarification on "athletic shoes".

The Board discussed shoe styles, piercings, tattoos, and hair color at length.

11:02 AM

Adjournment

Move to adjourn.

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