



**Board of Riley County
Commissioners
Regular Meeting
Minutes
May 15, 2025**

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

Cindy Kabriel
785-565-6200

Commission Chambers

9:00 AM

[District 1 – John Ford, Member](#)

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

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

9:00 AM

Call to Order

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
John Ford	County Commissioner	Present	9:00 AM
Kathryn Focke	County Commissioner	Present	9:00 AM
Greg McKinley	County Commissioner	Present	9:00 AM
Rich Vargo	County Clerk	Present	9:00 AM
Jacob Hansen	Deputy County Counselor	Present	9:00 AM
Diane Creek	Health Department Director	Present	9:00 AM
Emma Loura	Manhattan Mercury	Present	9:00 AM
Evan McMillan	Assistant County Engineer	Present	9:00 AM
Anna Burson	County Appraiser	Present	9:00 AM
Rob Voelker		Present	9:00 AM
Brittany Phillips	Budget and Finance Officer	Present	9:00 AM
John Ellermann	Public Works Director/County Engineer	Present	9:00 AM
Michele Reid	Payroll, Benefits & Employee Relations Manager	Present	9:00 AM
Ashlyn Easterday	Payroll Clerk	Present	9:07 AM
Brian Peete	RCPD Director	Present	10:00 AM
Jared Tremblay	Flint Hills MPO Planning Manager	Present	10:14 AM
Elizabeth Ward	Human Resources Director	Present	11:02 AM
Judge Grant Bannister	District Court	Present	11:15 AM
Kathy Oliver	Court Administrator	Present	11:15 AM
Bethany Yarnell		Present	1:15 PM
Scott Carmichael	Riley County Conservation District Director	Present	1:15 PM

Pledge of Allegiance

Public Comment

1. Public Comments

Commission Comments

2. Commission Comments

Ford's Comments:

Monday afternoon I had my doctor's appointment. I went through all the necessary screenings and tests with the team and passed everything with flying colors. As I got the results back on Wednesday, no red flags, or issues so we are at least good on the front. Not sure what direction we are going to be planning but we shall figure it out shortly.

Tuesday afternoon I met with Major Daryl Asher from RCPD, Marty Martel and Andrew Brookens from Stormont Vail and several other staff to discuss the Crisis Intervention Team and area mental and behavior health. I had a wonderful dialog on numerous topics and challenges and will be planning a follow up sometime in the near future after July's CIT training here in Manhattan.

Wednesday afternoon I had my monthly Teams call with NACo's Community Economic and Workforce Development Committee. After some open remarks and welcomes from our Chair Anegla Conley, Commissioner, Hennepin County, Minnesota we heard from Allison Lenocker, Executive Director for the Coalition for Compassion and Justice (Yavapai County, Arizona). She discussed her program out in Arizona and how they solve housing and various other related challenges within the community without government dollars, grants, and loans. Next we heard from Eryn Hurley, Managing Director, Government Affairs, NACo and Kevin Moore, Legislative Assistant, CEWD, NACo and they gave a very in-depth legislative update from Capitol Hill including detailing both the President's budget and the reconciliation bill that's working through Congress. Discussion was also had on recent and past Presidential Executive Orders and how that is impacting county related programs and services, and federal agency funding and program cuts and how it may affect counties as well. Wednesday evening there was Business After Hours out at Good Shepherd Homecare and Hospice in the new and updated Foundation Park off Vanesta Drive.

Thursday morning, I attended the May Policy Breakfast hosted by the Manhattan Area Chamber of Commerce at the DoubleTree by Hilton. This month there was a round table discussion and summary of the 2025 Kansas Legislative Session. Panel included State Senators Brad Starnes and Kenny Titus, House Representative Megan Steele from the 51st District and House Minority Leader Brandon Woodward. Thanks to Olsson for being this month's sponsor for the event as well.

Focke's Comments:

Tuesday morning, I attended the personnel committee meeting at the church. We are reviewing and updating the employee handbook. After that I came down to the county offices to meet with Amanda Webb in planning. We went over the Keats project and legal easements that have to be approved by the property owners in the sewer district. There will be several months of delays as Charlson Wilson reviews ownership records. We plan to get information out to the district on updates. Timewise we will still be on schedule.

Wednesday I spent most of the day reviewing today's agenda and documents and the budget presentations. I also caught up on phone calls and e-mails. Later in the day, I had a water physical therapy session and in the evening I practiced with the church bell choir.

McKinley's Comments:

After our meeting Monday I met with Anna Burson about some appraisal issues.

Tuesday morning, I met with Elizabeth Ward about a personnel issue. That was followed up by several calls and emails. Went to Flint Hills Veterans Coalition meeting. A few preliminary items on the parade. I then had a meeting with Rich Vargo to go over several county issues. In the afternoon we had our contractors meeting on the EMS. A few recent change orders. It is getting close to completion inside but there is a lot of concrete paving left. No Emergency Management meeting because the architect is working on plans. Later I attended the NBAF Community Liaison Group meeting. The staff said there is a lot of turbulence right now. A number of employees were let go earlier but later all were returned. Since then, there have been a few leave for the buyout. The biggest hold up now is the hiring freeze. Some Plum Island transfers will be later this year but more in 2026. With all of this, their work is still taking place and overall things are moving forward. Tuesday evening, I attended the Riley City Council meeting.

Wednesday evening, I attended the Comprehensive Plan update at Pottorf Hall. There were about twenty five people there. The consultant presented an overview of the existing conditions study and then took questions. There was a good discussion on a number of items.

Finally, because Bryant Parker is not here to make his announcement, I will. Bryant Parker has taken another job and his last time as County Counselor will be the end of this month. The commission has been working on how this position will be filled and are still working on the

details.

Business Meeting

3. N.5-22.5 Kitten Creek Culvert Replacement Change Order Reece Const. Co

Move to approve Change Order Number 1 Final with Reece Construction Co., Inc. for the Kitten Creek culvert replacement project in the amount of -\$225.00 for a total adjusted contract price of \$190,754.78.

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

4. Sign a Tax Roll Corrections

Move to approve the Tax Roll Corrections.

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

5. Sign Riley County Employee Action Form(s)

The Board of County Commissioners signed a Riley County Employee Action Form for Wesley Proctor, a Paramedic, in the EMS/Ambulance Department, for Separation from County Service, effective May 12, 2025.

6. Approve payroll/accounts payables (when completed)

Move to approve the payroll vouchers in the amount of \$746,720.32 and the following warrant vouchers for May 16, 2025:

2025 Budget

County General	\$990,201.50
Disaster Fund	89,556.84
Health Department	94,737.76
Court Services	150.00

Motor Vehicle Operations	1,918.69
Special Alcohol	10,054.37
Capital Improvements Fund	703,662.35
Economic Development	8,059.25
Emergency 911	4,952.48
Solid Waste	9,022.78
County Building	8,386.91
Road & Bridge Cap Project	2,463.50
RCPD Levy/Op	28,502.65
Landfill Closure	510.25
Riley Co Fire Dist #1	17,453.14
University Park W&S	5,035.69
Hunters Island Water Dist	8.76
Carson Sewer Benefit Dist	249.85
Deep Creek Sewer	101.35
Valleywood Operations	244.40
Terra Heights Sewer	1,158.52
Konza Water Operations	354.11
Peterson Ranch-Ben Dist	55.00
KDOC Adult Services	14,663.92
KDOC Juvenile Services	5,622.62
KDOC Juv Reinvestment	1,189.24
BJA Grant	8,609.82
21st Jud Dist DC ADSAP	5.10
Kansas Fights Addiction	39,454.00
City Alcohol Funds	1,143.19
Caroline Peine Grant	-35.00
Adult Services Carry-Over	91.50
Juvenile Svcs Carry-Over	91.50

TOTAL. \$2,047,676.04

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

7. KDHE Solid Waste Grant- Composting

Move to approve the application for the 2026 KDHE Solid Waste Grant for composting equipment.

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

SECONDER:	John Ford, County Commissioner
AYES:	Ford, Focke, McKinley

Review Minutes

8. Board of Riley County Commissioners - Regular Meeting - May 12, 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

9. Tentative Agenda

Press Conference Topics

10. Discuss Press Conference

9:30 AM Jacob Hansen, Deputy County Counselor

11. Administrative Work Session

Hansen asked the Board when they would like to schedule the next Hargrave/Salzman fence view hearing.

Hansen said we did receive the Default Judgement for the Real Estate Tax Sale.

9:50 AM Diane Creek, Health Department Director

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

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

12. Out of State Travel Request

Creek presented the out of state travel request.

Move to approve the Out of State Travel Request for Jacob Clarke, Tasha Drake, and Leslie James to attend 340B University in Kansas City, Missouri.

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

13. Rockhurst University MOU

Creek presented the MOU with Rockhurst University.

Move to approve the Affiliation Agreement with Rockhurst University so that the Riley County Health Department can provide an internship experience for students from Rockhurst University in Kansas City, Missouri.

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

Creek asked the Board if in the future do they want to have them presented or her just approve them.

The consensus of the Board was for the MOU's for interns be presented to the Board for approval.

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

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

AYES:	Ford, Focke, McKinley
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10:00 AM Daniel Skucius, Extension Director

14. Extension staff update

Skucius presented the Extension staff report.

10:15 AM Brian Peete, RCPD Director

15. RCPD update

Peete presented the RCPD update.

10:30 AM Jared Tremblay, Flint Hills MPO Planning Manager

16. US-24 Corridor Study & Cost Benefit Analysis

Tremblay discussed the US-24 Corridor Study & Cost Benefit Analysis.

10:45 AM Michael Rezkalla, Pawnee Mental Health Services Director

17. 2026 Pawnee Mental Health Appropriation Request

Rezkalla presented the 2026 Pawnee Mental Health appropriation request.

11:00 AM John Ellermann, Public Works Director/County Engineer

18. 2026 Public Works, County Building and Auction Budget Requests

Ellermann presented the 2026 County Building and Auction budget requests.

11:20 AM Judge Bannister, District Court

19. 2026 District Court Budget Request

Bannister presented the 2026 District Court budget request.

11:40 AM Elizabeth Ward, Human Resources Director

11:29 AM 20. Executive session to discuss a performance matter involving non-elected personnel

Move the County Commission, including Chairman McKinley, Vice Chairwoman Focke, and Commissioner Ford, along with Elizabeth Ward, Human Resources Director, and Jacob Hansen, Deputy County Counselor, attorney for the Commission, 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 the work conditions of an employee and to protect the privacy of the employee, the open meeting to resume in the County Commission Chambers at 12:00 p.m.

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

12:00 PM 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

12:00 PM Executive Session

Move the County Commission, including Chairman McKinley, Vice Chairwoman Focke, and Commissioner Ford, along with Elizabeth Ward, Human Resources Director, and Jacob Hansen, Deputy County Counselor, attorney for the Commission, 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 the work conditions of an employee and to protect the privacy of the employee, the open meeting to resume in the County Commission Chambers at 12:15 p.m.

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

12:15 PM

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

1:15 PM

Scott Carmichael, Riley County Conservation District Director

21. 2026 Riley County Conservation District Appropriation Request

Carmichael presented the 2026 Riley County Conservation District appropriation request.

1:35 PM

Evan McMillan, Assistant County Engineer

22. 2026 Benefit Districts, Landfill, and Solid Waste Budget Requests

McMillan presented the 2026 Benefit Districts, Landfill, and Solid Waste budget requests.

1:55 PM Jacob Hansen, Deputy Counselor

23. 2026 Riley County Counselor Budget Request

Hansen presented the 2026 County Counselor budget request.

2:15 AM Kevin Larson, Riley County Council on Aging

24. 2026 Riley County Council on Aging Appropriation Request

Larson presented the 2026 Council on Aging appropriation request.

2:35 PM Rich Vargo, County Clerk

25. 2026 Riley County Clerk, Election and Tech Budget Requests

Vargo presented the 2026 Riley County Clerk, Election, and Tech budget requests.

2:23 PM Adjournment

Move to adjourn.

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