



**Board of Riley County
Commissioners
Regular Meeting
Minutes
May 19, 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
Jacob Hansen	Deputy County Counselor	Present	8:30 AM
Vivienne Leyva	PIO	Present	8:30 AM
Gary Olds		Present	8:30 AM
Anna Burson	County Appraiser	Present	8:30 AM
Evan McMillan	Assistant County Engineer	Present	8:30 AM
Troy Coberly		Present	8:30 AM
John Ellermann	Public Works Director/County Engineer	Present	8:37 AM
Emma Loura	Manhattan Mercury	Present	8:38 AM
Brittany Phillips	Budget and Finance Officer	Present	8:39 AM
Elizabeth Ward	Human Resources Director	Present	8:39 AM
Alvin Perez	Public Works Operations/Fleet Manager	Present	8:55 AM
Shilo Heger	Treasurer	Present	9:00 AM
David Adams	EMS/Ambulance Director	Present	9:00 AM
Lori Muir	Administrative Services Manager	Present	9:30 AM
Diane Hinrichs-Toburen	Pawnee Mental Health Services	Present	9:30 AM
Christine Benne	Flint Hills Veterans Coalition	Present	9:55 AM
Christian Bishop	Chamber of Commerce	Present	9:55 AM
Megan Lewis	Community Corrections Director	Present	10:00 AM
Erin Kurtz	Health Department Fiscal Analyst	Present	10:10 AM
Diane Creek	Health Department Director	Present	10:10 AM
Katharine Hensler	Museum Director	Present	10:10 AM
Jacob Clarke	Clinic Supervisor	Present	10:10 AM
Cory Meyer	IT/GIS Director	Present	10:00 AM
Barry Wilkerson	County Attorney	Present	10:29 AM
Craig Cox		Present	10:34 AM

Pledge of Allegiance

Public Comment

1. Public Comments

Coberly discussed issues they are having with short-term rentals in residential areas and Riley County Planning & Development.

Olds discussed the outside appropriations and encouraged the Board to make cuts on them.

Olds encouraged to keep it at or below revenue neutral.

Olds asked the two commissioners on the Law Board to reduce the tax impact.

McMillan said the Transfer Station will be closed Monday, May 26, 2025, in observance of Memorial Day. The Transfer Station will reopen for business at 7:00 a.m. on Tuesday, May 27, 2025.

Commission Comments

2. Commission Comments

Ford's Comments:

Thursday we had that RHID and Area Housing Task Force discussion over at the Lincoln Center with officials and staff from USD 383 and the City of Manhattan. We also had several members of Riley County staff present including Interim County Counselor Jacob Hansen, and Riley County Planning Director Amanda Webb. Former State Senator Tom Hawk moderated the event as well. Discussions centered around the need to develop a streamline policy that all the governing bodies can agree to and to better understand the needs overall for each entity. There will be some follow up with staffs from the various boards and a possible follow up meeting sometime in June.

Sunday morning, I did listen in on the National Weather Service's weather webinar as everyone was preparing for this next round of severe weather that took place yesterday and is supposed to stretch through Monday and Monday evening as well. Much like the last one that took, they were really spot on with their research and analysis on what to expect and the hazards that would take place including tornadic activity.

Monday morning, I was able to get in and get my taxes and tags paid in the Riley County Treasurer's Office. As usual they did not disappoint as the entire process took less than five minutes from check in to done, and it was amazing to see how many people were waiting for services at 7:30 a.m. first thing Monday as well.

Speaking of disappointing, K-State dropped 2 of 3 to Cincinnati in Cincinnati ending their season in sixth place in the Big 12 with a final record of 31-23 and 17-13 in conference play.

I wanted to send my thoughts to our friends in Kiowa, Reno, and Gove counties as they got struck hard last night with severe weather and tornadoes.

Focke's Comments:

Friday morning, I had water physical therapy. Later I did some shopping and worked in the yard. I also followed up on phone calls and messages from the past several days.

Saturday a friend came over for a visit and lunch. I spent time later on household chores and reviewed the agenda and documents for today's Law Board meeting.

Sunday the bell choir did its final performance of the academic year. We will start again in September. Later, I went with a friend to Wamego to the Friendship House for lunch. In the afternoon, I reviewed today's agenda and documents.

McKinley's Comments:

Thursday evening was the welcoming reception for Ben Kohl the new administrator for the Riley County Historical Society.

Saturday we attended the Riley County High School graduation. It was a great ceremony and the speaker had recorded messages from their Kindergarten, third and fifth grade teachers. This was the kindergarten teachers first class.

Sunday was our grandson's Manhattan High graduation. The morning was spent outside with a lot of friends and family. No hat let me with a sunburned head. The graduation ceremony itself was interesting.

Business Meeting

3. Mental Health Month 2025 Proclamation

Move to approve the Mental Health Month Proclamation for May 2025 for Pawnee Mental Health Services.

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

4. Sign Riley County Employee Action Form(s)

The Board of County Commissioners signed Riley County Employee Action Forms for the following:

- Andrea Orellana, a Drug Endangered Children Coordinator, in the Health Department, in the Health Department, for Separation from County Service, effective May 13, 2025.
- Bryant Parker, a County Counselor, in the County Counselor's Department, for Separation from County Service, effective May 16, 2025.
- Jacob Hansen, for a promotion, as Interim County Counselor, in the County Counselor's Department, at a Range LL.

Review Minutes

5. Board of Riley County Commissioners - Regular Meeting - May 15, 2025 9:00 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

6. Tentative Agenda

Press Conference Topics

7. Discuss Press Conference

9:00 AM Brittany Phillips, Budget and Finance Officer

8. OpenGov Contract

Phillips presented the request to end the contract with OpenGov.

Move to approve ending the contract with OpenGov.

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

9:15 AM David Adams, EMS/Ambulance Director

9. Staff Update

Adams presented the EMS/Ambulance staff update.

9:30 AM Press Conference

10. Recognition of John Ellermann's award for Highway Official of the Year presented by the Kansas County Highway Association – Alvin Perez (2 minutes)

Perez presented John Ellermann, Riley County Public Works Director/County Engineer the Highway Official of the Year Award.

Ellermann said it is because of Alvin Perez and his crews for the recognition.

11. Presentation of Mental Health Month 2025 Proclamation - Greg McKinley and Diane Hinrichs-Toburen (2 minutes)

McKinley presented the Mental Health Month 2025 Proclamation to Diane Hinrichs-Toburen, Pawnee Mental Health Services.

12. Transfer Station Closure - Evan McMillan (1-2 minutes)

Ellermann said the Transfer Station will be closed Monday, May 26, 2025, in observance of Memorial Day. The Transfer Station will reopen for business at 7:00 a.m. on Tuesday, May 27, 2025.

9:35 AM Jacob Hansen, Deputy County Counselor

- 9:36 AM 13. Executive session to discuss confidential legal advice regarding potential litigation issues

Move the Riley County Commissioners, including Chairman McKinley, Vice Chairwoman Focke, and Commissioner Ford, recess into executive session on potential litigation for the purpose of consultation with Jacob Hansen, Interim County Counselor, attorney for the Riley County Commission, Anna Burson, County Appraiser and John Ellermann, Public Works Director/County Engineer, which would be deemed privileged in the attorney-client relationship, an exception to the Kansas Open Meetings Act, the open meeting to resume in the County Commission Chambers at 9:55 a.m.

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

- 9:55 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

9:55 AM Christine Benne, Flint Hills Veterans Coalition**14. 2026 Flint Hills Veterans Coalition Appropriation Request**

Benne presented the 2026 Flint Hill Veterans Coalition appropriation request.

10:10 AM Jacob, Hansen, Deputy County Counselor**15. Administrative Work Session**

Hansen said the Order of Notice for the Tax Sale is filed. He said the Tax Sale is June 27, 2025.

Hansen discussed the RHID Task Force meeting.

Hansen discussed nuisance abatement case work.

10:15 AM Elizabeth Ward, Human Resources Director**16. 2026 New and Expanded Positions Request**

Ward presented the 2026 new and expanded positions request.

Hensler requested the expanded position for the As-needed Museum Assistant.

Lewis presented the request for expanded hours for the Juvenile Intake Officers.

Meyer presented the expanded Systems/Software Analyst position and a new position of Network Systems Analyst.

Creek presented the request for a Billing and Coding Clerk.

Wilkerson presented the request for the Criminal Investigator position.

Burson presented the expanded Appraisal Support I, II and III and replacement of Personal Property Appraiser I, II and II.

Ellermann presented the request for a new Custodian I position.

11:00 AM Elizabeth Ward, Human Resources Director

11:01 AM 17. 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 Jacob Hansen, Interim County Counselor, attorney for the Riley County Commission, and Barry Wilkerson, County Attorney, recess into executive session pursuant to the non-elected personnel matters exception to the Kansas Open Meetings Act, in order to discuss a personnel matter involving a Counselor's Office employee, specifically the search for and hiring of temporary outside counsel to supplement the Counselor's Office, and to protect the privacy of the employee, the open meeting to resume in the County Commission Chambers at 11:30 a.m.

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

11:30 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

11:31 AM Adjournment

Move to adjourn.

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

12:00 PM Law Enforcement Agency Meeting

18. Law Board Meeting Agenda