



**Board of Riley County
Commissioners
Regular Meeting
Minutes
May 22, 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
Anna Burson	County Appraiser	Present	8:30 AM
Rob Voelker		Present	8:30 AM
Emma Loura	Manhattan Mercury	Present	8:39 AM
Brittany Phillips	Budget and Finance Officer	Present	8:41 AM
Ben Ledo	MakeMyMove	Present	8:30 AM
John Ellermann	Public Works Director/County Engineer	Present	8:57 AM

Pledge of Allegiance

Public Comment

1. Public Comments

Commission Comments

2. Commission Comments

Ford's Comments:

Monday afternoon I had a phone conversation with former RCPD Director Dennis Butler as he was in town to shore up a few personal things. We had a very pleasant dialog as he was very complimentary of

the work and efforts provided during his tenure including the building and construction of the firing range and just the overall support that was rendered during his time. I really appreciated the call and the comments and hope that work and effort continues.

Tuesday afternoon I attended the monthly Board of Directors meeting of the Manhattan Area Chamber of Commerce. After approval of the consent agenda which included the minutes from the April 15th meeting, financials through April 30th and membership accounts; the Huddle-Up Group gave a comprehensive presentation on the area sports tourism, Daryn Soldan discussed GMEP appointments as well the Amazon project which will be a new 70,000 square foot facility out the business technology park next to Florence that should be built in the next three years with absolutely zero incentive or abatement that will provide 146 new jobs to the area at competitive wages, Jason Smith and Tom Phillips discussed the RHID testimony that was presented to the Manhattan City Commission Tuesday evening, Tom Phillips discussed the Chamber's Core Principles and provided an update, and updates from staff on everything they continue to work on. Tuesday evening, I did take time to watch the Manhattan City Commission. I watched the discussion both on the Amazon Facility agreement which passed and the RHID application that was presented and that passed as well.

Wednesday afternoon I met with Jacob Hansen, Interim County Counselor on a few items on today's agenda to give him some personal thoughts and ideas and we also had a call with Leavenworth County Commissioner Jeff Culbertson to discuss several related and non-related county issues we both face. Also, I chaired the May meeting of the Flint Hills Metropolitan Planning Organization. After some openings and the welcome, we opened the meeting up to public comments. We got a financial and staff update from the organization as well, and an update from KDOT. Several action items included were the approval of the minutes from the April 16th meeting and the May 5th Special Meeting, and approval of Amendment #5 of the Connect 2040 Plan. Discussion items included updates on the US-24 Corridor Management Plan and the 2nd Connection Cost-Benefit Analysis which will include both an MOU and a Letter of Commitment due to KDOT sometime in mid-June and other timelines and schedules for both projects.

Wednesday evening, I met with Ben Ledo, and Peter Lazarz from MakeMyMove and Daryn Soldan from the Manhattan Area Chamber of Commerce at Tallgrass Taphouse to discuss some initiatives and timelines they are working on.

Thursday morning, I attended the Advantage Manhattan Investor Meeting hosted by Manhattan Area Chamber of Commerce at the

Hilton Garden Inn to get an update on some recent developments taking place in the Flint Hills Region and the new PTMW Manufacturing firm from Topeka that is coming.

Focke's Comments:

Monday afternoon I participated in the Law Board meeting at City Hall. Major discussions were on the 2026 budget, the School Resource Officers and the Animal Control operations. After a long discussion with no resolutions, we voted to have a special meeting. It will be held on Wednesday, May 28th. Later that day, I met with Scott Seel who has filed for a seat on the City Commission. We had a general discussion of issues facing the city and county.

Tuesday, I had a doctor's appointment and then had a water physical therapy session.

Wednesday, I went through today's meeting agenda and documents and followed up on several issues, including several on the Animal Control issue before the Law Board, as well as the Riley County Commission.

In the afternoon, I attended an Elected Officials Board meeting of Workforce One. They are proposing to increase the district by more counties, which was increased last year by quite a few counties. After a lengthy conversation, the CEOB decided to take some time for consideration and make a determination at a later date. That evening, I attended a "Hand Bell Polishing" at the church, followed by the choir having some dinner together to end the season.

McKinley's Comments:

Monday, we had the Law Board meeting. The main topic was the budget and Animal Control Officers. We have a special meeting on the budget next week to finalize it. After Law Board I had a series of meetings with Elizabeth Ward, Brittany Phillips, and Anna Burson to go over miscellaneous items.

Tuesday evening, I watched the Manhattan City Commission with their RHID approval with no questions asked. I can't wait until we have our meeting on this because I further run the numbers and will have lots of questions.

Wednesday was the Juvenile Detention Center meeting. As all other groups are doing right now, we had our first review of the budget. It will be finalized at our June meeting. Riley County has increased use

of this facility dramatically in the last few years. I gave Brittany Phillips, Budget and Finance Officer the numbers to use in our budget. John Matta had requested a meeting which we did later. Most of the conversation was about the Law Board budget and ACOs.

Business Meeting

3. Action on Mobile Device Reimbursement Request Form

Move to approve the Mobile Device Reimbursement Request Form.

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:

- Natascha Johnson, a new hire, as an On Call Juvenile Intake Officer, in the Community Corrections Department, at a Range 1, at \$18.36 per hour.
- Kayla Beckwith, an EMT, in the EMS/Ambulance Department, for Separation from County Service, effective May 15, 2025.
- Erin Kunkleman, a new hire, as an On Call Juvenile Intake Officer, in the Community Corrections Department, at a Range 1, at \$18.36 per hour.

Review Minutes

5. Board of Riley County Commissioners - Regular Meeting - May 19, 2025 8:30 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

Ledo discussed the "MakeMyMove" program.

9:00 AM Rich Vargo, County Clerk

8. Peterson Ranch Discussion

Vargo presented the Peterson Ranch Benefit District process.

The Board agreed by consensus to republish the creation of Peterson Ranch Benefit District and send property owners the notice again.

9:15 AM Rich Vargo, County Clerk

- 9:15 AM 9. 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 Commission, Rich Vargo, County Clerk and Elizabeth Ward, Human Resources Director, 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 conduct of an employee, and to protect the privacy of the employee, the open meeting to resume in the County Commission Chambers at 9:50 a.m.

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

- 9:50 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

9:50 AM

Evan McMillan, Assistant County Engineer

10. Riley County Sales Tax Projects

McMillan presented the Riley County Sales Tax projects.

Move to approve "Resolution No. 052225-21, Resolution establishing the utilization of funds from the one-half of one percent countywide retailers' sales tax and the one-fifth of one percent retailers' sales tax."

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

10:05 AM

Evan McMillan, Assistant County Engineer or John Ellermann, Public Works Director/County Engineer

11. Bid opening for Transfer Station tipping floor and chute repair/replacement

The Board of County Commissioners opened the following bids for the Transfer Station tipping floor and chute repair/replacement.

<u>Company</u>	<u>Base Bid</u>	<u>Alternate Bid</u>
NF Construction 601 West Main St. Marion, KS 66861	\$699,981.40	\$723,425.70
Walters-Morgan Construction, Inc.	\$804,880.00	\$849,240.00

5961 Corporate Drive Manhattan, KS 66503		
Engineer's Estimate	\$176,348.76	\$219,703.79

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

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

10:10 AM Evan McMillan, Assistant County Engineer

12. KDOT Funding- RFQ Bridge Project

McMillan presented the KDOT Funding RFQ Bridge Project.

Move to approve moving forward with the Bridge Program applications.

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

10:20 AM Diane Creek, Health Department Director or Jacob Clarke, Clinic Supervisor

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

13. Maryville University MOU

Creek presented the Maryville University MOU.

Move to approve the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for Clinical Preceptorship so that Riley County Health Department can provide an internship experience for students from Maryville University in St. Louis, Missouri.

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

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

10:30 AM Elizabeth Ward, Human Resources Director

10:30 AM 14. 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 Commission, and Elizabeth Ward, Human Resources Director, 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 10:50 a.m.

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

10:50 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

10:50 AM **Jacob Hansen, Interim County Counselor**

15. Administrative Work Session

16. RHID Task Force Review

Hansen discussed the RHID Task Force meeting.

The Board agreed by consensus for staff to continue to work on the RHID Task Force.

11:10 AM **Brian Peete, RCPD Director**

17. Assimilation of Animal Control Officers into the Riley County Police Department

Peete discussed the Animal Control Officers.

The Board discussed the proposal.

The Board agreed by consensus for the Interim County Counselor to draft a letter to the City of Manhattan and Law Board stating they are against the transfer of the Animal Control Officers to RCPD.

Peete discussed the Animal Control Officers proposal.

The Board discussed the matter.

11:55 AM **Executive Session**

Move that the County Commissioners, including Chairman McKinley, Vice Chairwoman Focke, and Commissioner Ford, with Jacob Hansen, Interim County Counselor, attorney for the Commission, Rich Vargo, County Clerk and Elizabeth Ward, Human Resources Director, 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 conduct 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 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

12:17 PM

Executive Session

Move that the County Commissioners, including Chairman McKinley, Vice Chairwoman Focke, and Commissioner Ford, with Jacob Hansen, Interim County Counselor, attorney for the Commission, Rich Vargo, County Clerk and Elizabeth Ward, Human Resources Director, 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 conduct of an employee, and to protect the privacy of the employee, the open meeting to resume in the County Commission Chambers at 12:25 p.m.

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

12:25 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

12:26 PM

Adjournment

Move to adjourn.

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