



**Board of Riley County  
Commissioners  
Regular Meeting  
Minutes  
December 18, 2025**

2101 Claflin Road  
Manhattan, KS 66502  
[www.rileycountyks.gov](http://www.rileycountyks.gov)

Cindy Kabriel  
785-565-6200

**Family Child and Resource Center RM #124**

**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      | County Counselor                      | Present | 9:00 AM  |
| Vivienne Leyva    | PIO                                   | Present | 9:00 AM  |
| John Ellermann    | Public Works Director/County Engineer | Present | 9:00 AM  |
| Darrin Hobbs      | REACH Committee                       | Present | 9:00 AM  |
| Elizabeth Ward    | Human Resources Director              | Present | 9:00 AM  |
| Joshua Gering     | Assistant EMS/Ambulance Director      | Present | 9:00 AM  |
| Anna Burson       | Appraiser                             | Present | 9:00 AM  |
| Steve Schurle     | Assistant County Appraiser            | Present | 9:00 AM  |
| Brittany Phillips | Budget and Finance Officer            | Present | 9:00 AM  |
| Carleen Brewer    | Appraiser's Office                    | Present | 9:00 AM  |
| Bob Isaac         | Planner                               | Present | 9:14 AM  |
| Daniel Skucius    | Extension Director                    | Present | 9:54 AM  |
| Brian Peete       | RCPD Director                         | Present | 10:05 AM |

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**Public Comment**

Hobbs presented the Employee of the Month Award to Carleen Brewer, Appraiser's Office.

Ellermann said the Transfer Station will close at 12:00 (noon) on Wednesday, December 24, 2025, and remain closed through Thursday, December 25, 2025. We will reopen for business at 7:00 a.m. on Friday, December 26, 2025.

Ellermann said the Transfer Station will also be closed on Thursday, January 1, 2026, and reopen for business at 7:00 a.m. on Friday, January 2, 2026.

### **Commission Comments**

#### **Ford's Comments:**

Monday evening I attended the Established Business Leaders Holiday Celebration at the Hilton Garden Inn. Very well attended event and we were able to get an update on the yearly events from the EBL as well as some things going on in 2026. We also heard from Hilton Garden Inn General Manager Brad Everett who discussed the Festival of Lights and everything that goes into that year to year too.

Tuesday afternoon I attended the December Board of Directors Meeting of the Manhattan Area Chamber of Commerce. Among the items of discussion were approval of the agenda, the consent agenda which included the minutes of the October 17th meeting, financials up to November 30, 2025, and membership accounts. Discussion and action items included election of the 2026 officers for the Cooperation, Election of the Board of Directors for 2026, and one-year Board appointees as well, appointment of 2026 committee chairs and appointment of the 2026 Audit Committee and chair. Next was discussion on consideration of the 2026 Chamber budgets, and consideration action on bylaw changes. Chamber staff then gave reports on all they are working on and upcoming events. After adjournment we had a reception for outgoing City of Manhattan Mayor Karen McCulloh.

Wednesday afternoon I attended the December meeting of the Metropolitan Planning Organization Policy Board. After giving some opening welcomes and introductions we had a few public comments and followed up with both a financial and staff update from the MPO. Next we got an update from KDOT. Action items include approval of the Transportation Improvement Plan Amendment #2, 2026 Unified Planning Work Program, and the Connect 2050 Plan. Discussion items included ITS Architecture Report, KDOT/Ft. Riley Impaired Driving Partnership Grant administration, fiscal agreement updates and then we adjourned.

Thursday morning, I attended the December Policy Breakfast hosted by the Manhattan Area Chamber of Commerce at the DoubleTree by Hilton. Guest speaker was Dick Carter from the Carter Group, and he discussed items, challenges, and thoughts on legislation and the upcoming 2026 Kansas legislative session in Topeka.

#### **Focke's Comments:**

Monday afternoon, I attended the Law Board meeting. The Animal Control Officers' upcoming transfer from Manhattan City to RCPD was approved, among other items. An executive session was held to hold the yearly review of Director Peete and a salary amount for 2026 was agreed upon.

Tuesday I had a final physical therapy session for this year. We went over my exercises and progress. I will not need to schedule more sessions unless needed.

I also had a follow-up appointment for my eye surgery, and everything looks great. I will continue to use eye drops for 4 more weeks, with a final follow up after that. That evening, I attended the Winter Holiday Concert at the Fort Riley Middle School. Performances were by choirs from the Middle School, Seitz Elementary School, Junction City High School, and the JC Singers. It was a great holiday event!

Wednesday afternoon, I was downtown for lunch and checked out the progress on our offices. Everything is pretty torn up but moving forward. The windows are finished and look great. Afterwards, I went upstairs and checked in with Jacob Hansen on various projects, including Keats.

Thursday morning, I attended the Chamber Policy Breakfast at DoubleTree.

#### McKinley's Comments:

Monday after the commission meeting I attended the RCPD Law Board meeting. Major French reported that the new scanner or the jail is working well for better security. The animal control contract with Manhattan was approved. Manhattan City Commissioners had suggested the Aggieville substation be moved to the parking garage instead of the hotel. The Law Board was not in favor of this and directed RCPD to continue working with the hotel. Executive session was held for the annual performance review of Director Peete.

Tuesday and Wednesday I visited the departments to view and judge the door decorating contest. They are all very good and it will be hard to pick a winner. A few tried to bribe me with cookies, and one gave me a whole container of cookies, caramel corn and other treats. Every department was very proud of their work and all wanted to explain what they did. This was a great team building exercise that everyone enjoyed being a part of. I want to thank Amy Manges for putting this together it was a real success.

Tuesday afternoon was the EM/Fire remodel update with BHS Construction. They are making good progress on the site. Most of the framing is done and the will be pouring the new floor in the EOC soon.

Tuesday evening there was a meeting in Randolph organized by Representative Bloom. An aide from Speaker of the House Hawkins was there to discuss legislation being worked on. There were Rural Fire Department officials from Riley, Pottawatomie, and Marshall Counties and others interested. The proposal is to move the State Forestry out from under K-State and put it in Department of Wildlife and Parks. The intent is to work together to better mitigate fire risks on State managed property. This would involve cutting fire breaks and other prevention measures.

Wednesday was the Juvenile Detention facility board meeting. The director will be retiring next summer and asked for the facility to keep paying their share of the health insurance until he turns 65 in three years. After reviewing the state insurance plan it was agreed that he can

stay on the plan but must pay the full premium himself. We also discussed the transition and how the advertising to fill the position will be handled.

### Business Meeting

#### 1. Judicial Services Needs Assessment Contract

Move to approve the Agreement with BBN Architects, Inc. for the Riley County Judicial Services Needs Assessment.

|                  |                                         |
|------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| <b>RESULT:</b>   | <b>Passed</b>                           |
| <b>MOVER:</b>    | Commissioner John Ford                  |
| <b>SECONDER:</b> | Commissioner Kathryn Focke              |
| <b>AYES:</b>     | Greg McKinley, Kathryn Focke, John Ford |
| <b>NAYS:</b>     | None                                    |

#### 2. CPE Window Replacement Project

Move to approve the Certificate of Substantial Completion with Baker McMillan Architects and BHS Construction and Change Order No. 1 with BHS Construction for the CPE Window Replacement project.

|                  |                                         |
|------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| <b>RESULT:</b>   | <b>Passed</b>                           |
| <b>MOVER:</b>    | Commissioner Kathryn Focke              |
| <b>SECONDER:</b> | Commissioner John Ford                  |
| <b>AYES:</b>     | Greg McKinley, Kathryn Focke, John Ford |
| <b>NAYS:</b>     | None                                    |

#### 3. Tax Roll Corrections

Move to approve the Tax Roll Corrections.

|                  |                                         |
|------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| <b>RESULT:</b>   | <b>Passed</b>                           |
| <b>MOVER:</b>    | Commissioner Kathryn Focke              |
| <b>SECONDER:</b> | Commissioner John Ford                  |
| <b>AYES:</b>     | Greg McKinley, Kathryn Focke, John Ford |
| <b>NAYS:</b>     | None                                    |

#### 4. Advisory Board appointment letters and Resolution

Move to approve the following appointments and "Resolution No. 121825-51, A Resolution appointing Riley County representatives to Council/Advisory Boards."

|                             |                                              |                                         |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| Cindy Sias<br>Comm Dist 2   | Riley County Public Health Council<br>3 year | December 18, 2025-<br>December 31, 2027 |
| Eric Martin<br>Comm Dist 2  | Riley County Public Health Council<br>3 year | December 18, 2025-<br>December 31, 2027 |
| Arthur Thowe<br>Comm Dist 3 | Hunters Island<br>3 year                     | December 18, 2025-<br>December 31, 2026 |

|                               |                      |                                        |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------------------------|
| Andrea DeJesus<br>Comm Dist 1 | Fair Board<br>4 year | January 1, 2026 -<br>December 31, 2029 |
| AJ Berry<br>Comm Dist 2       | Fair Board<br>4 year | January 1, 2026 -<br>December 31, 2029 |

|                                      |                                                          |                                        |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| Kristin Holt<br>Comm Dist 3          | Fair Board<br>4 year                                     | January 1, 2026 -<br>December 31, 2029 |
| Alan Adolph<br>Comm Dist 3           | Hunters Island Water District<br>3 year                  | January 1, 2026 -<br>December 31, 2028 |
| Patricia Peterson<br>Comm Dist 2     | Museum Board of Trustees<br>3 year                       | January 1, 2026 -<br>December 31, 2028 |
| Barbara DeSanto<br>Comm Dist 1       | North Central Flint Hills Area Agency on Aging<br>2 year | January 1, 2026 -<br>December 31, 2027 |
| Steven Graham<br>Comm Dist 3         | Pawnee Mental Health<br>3 year                           | January 1, 2026 -<br>December 31, 2028 |
| John Ford – alternate<br>Comm Dist 1 | Pawnee Mental Health<br>3 year                           | January 1, 2026 -<br>December 31, 2028 |
| Philip Preston<br>Comm Dist 3        | Riley County Council on Aging<br>3 year                  | January 1, 2026 -<br>December 31, 2028 |
| Eric Peck<br>Comm Dist 1             | RC Planning Board/Board of Zoning Appeals<br>3 year      | January 1, 2026 -<br>December 31, 2028 |
| Nick French<br>Comm Dist 1           | Public Health Advisory Council<br>3 year                 | January 1, 2026 -<br>December 31, 2028 |
| Natalia Sotomayor<br>Comm Dist 3     | Public Health Advisory Council<br>3 year                 | January 1, 2026 -<br>December 31, 2028 |
| Jennifer Hancock<br>Comm Dist 2      | Road & Bridge<br>3 year                                  | January 1, 2026 -<br>December 31, 2028 |

|                  |                                         |
|------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| <b>RESULT:</b>   | <b>Passed</b>                           |
| <b>MOVER:</b>    | Commissioner Kathryn Focke              |
| <b>SECONDER:</b> | Commissioner John Ford                  |
| <b>AYES:</b>     | Greg McKinley, Kathryn Focke, John Ford |
| <b>NAYS:</b>     | None                                    |

#### 5. Riley County Employee Action Forms

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

- Julie Martin, a Volunteer Firefighter, in the Fire District #1 Department, for Separation from County Service, effective December 12, 2025.
- Whitney Phebus, a Temporary As-Needed Human Resources Assistant, in the Clerk's Office, for Separation from County Service, effective December 19, 2025.

Move to approve the requested Riley County Employee Action Forms.

|                  |                                         |
|------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| <b>RESULT:</b>   | <b>Passed</b>                           |
| <b>MOVER:</b>    | Commissioner John Ford                  |
| <b>SECONDER:</b> | Commissioner Kathryn Focke              |
| <b>AYES:</b>     | Greg McKinley, Kathryn Focke, John Ford |
| <b>NAYS:</b>     | None                                    |

#### Review Minutes

#### 6. Board of Riley County Commissioners - Regular Meeting - Dec 15, 2025 8:30 AM

Move to approve the minutes of December 15, 2025 as presented.

|                  |                                         |
|------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| <b>RESULT:</b>   | <b>Passed</b>                           |
| <b>MOVER:</b>    | Commissioner Kathryn Focke              |
| <b>SECONDER:</b> | Commissioner John Ford                  |
| <b>AYES:</b>     | Greg McKinley, Kathryn Focke, John Ford |
| <b>NAYS:</b>     | None                                    |

**Review Tentative Agenda**

7. Tentative Agenda

**Press Conference Topics****9:30 AM****Jacob Hansen, County Counselor**

8. Administrative Work Session

Hansen reported there are 90 properties currently on the upcoming Tax Sale.

9. Variance Request: Carson and Shelby Lang, 5721 N 48<sup>th</sup> Street, Manhattan, Kansas 66503

Hansen presented the variance request for Carson and Shelby Lang.

Move to adopt the findings of the Hearing Officer and grant Carson and Shelby Lang a variance from Riley County Sanitary Code, Article 2, Section 3.5, allowing a secondary dwelling to connect to a private wastewater disposal system on the subject parcel, and such variance to expire when the dwellings no longer share singular ownership, or the parcel is subdivided.

|                  |                                         |
|------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| <b>RESULT:</b>   | <b>Passed</b>                           |
| <b>MOVER:</b>    | Commissioner John Ford                  |
| <b>SECONDER:</b> | Commissioner Kathryn Focke              |
| <b>AYES:</b>     | Greg McKinley, Kathryn Focke, John Ford |
| <b>NAYS:</b>     | None                                    |

**9:50 AM****Brittany Phillips, Budget and Finance Officer**

10. P-Card Policy

Phillips presented the P-Card Policy revision.

The Board asked for the policy to state in the policy what is allowed for personal reward points.

The Board agreed for the Budget and Planning Committee to draft some language to address the personal points earned and present to the department heads and then present to the Board.

**10:00 AM****Daniel Skucius, Extension Director**

11. Staff Update

Skucius presented the Extension staff update.

**10:15 AM Brian Peete, RCPD Director**

## 12. RCPD Update

Peete presented a Riley County Police Department update.

Peete discussed Manhattan City pulling back on locating the RCPD substation in the parking garage.

Peete stated RCPD and Riley County staff will present a proposed substation in the new hotel in Aggieville.

Peete asked the Board to consider holding Law Board meetings in the County Commission Chambers in the future.

**10:30 AM Amanda Webb, Planning/Special Projects Director**

## 13. Public Hearing: Adoption of Riley County Together - Comprehensive Plan 2040

Webb presented the resolution adopting the Comprehensive Plan.

McKinley opened the Public Hearing.

No public comment.

McKinley closed the Public Hearing.

Move to approve "Resolution No. 121825-52, A Resolution adopting a Comprehensive Plan for the unincorporated areas of Riley County, Kansas, by the adoption, by reference, of that certain document known as "Riley County Together – Comprehensive Plan 2040", and repealing all resolutions or parts of resolutions in conflict herewith" with grammatical corrections to the Comprehensive Plan.

|                  |                                         |
|------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| <b>RESULT:</b>   | <b>Passed</b>                           |
| <b>MOVER:</b>    | Commissioner John Ford                  |
| <b>SECONDER:</b> | Commissioner Kathryn Focke              |
| <b>AYES:</b>     | Greg McKinley, Kathryn Focke, John Ford |
| <b>NAYS:</b>     | None                                    |

**10:45 AM Bob Isaac, Planner**

## 14. Final Plat - Blue River Hills Unit Eight

Isaac presented the final plat for Blue River Hills Unit Eight.

Move to approve "Resolution No. 121825-53, A Resolution approving the Blue River Hills Unit Eight Plat and accepting the street rights of way, easements, and licenses as shown to be dedicated on said plat."

|                  |                            |
|------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>RESULT:</b>   | <b>Passed</b>              |
| <b>MOVER:</b>    | Commissioner Kathryn Focke |
| <b>SECONDER:</b> | Commissioner John Ford     |

|              |                                         |
|--------------|-----------------------------------------|
| <b>AYES:</b> | Greg McKinley, Kathryn Focke, John Ford |
| <b>NAYS:</b> | None                                    |

**11:00 AM****Bob Isaac, Planner**

15. Final Plat Mill Cove Park Unit Three

Isaac presented the final plat for Mill Cove Park Unit Three.

Move to approve "Resolution No. 121825-54, A Resolution approving the Mill Cove Park Unit Three Plat and accepting the street rights of way, easements, and licenses as shown to be dedicated on said plat."

|                  |                                         |
|------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| <b>RESULT:</b>   | <b>Passed</b>                           |
| <b>MOVER:</b>    | Commissioner John Ford                  |
| <b>SECONDER:</b> | Commissioner Kathryn Focke              |
| <b>AYES:</b>     | Greg McKinley, Kathryn Focke, John Ford |
| <b>NAYS:</b>     | None                                    |

### Adjournment

11:10 a.m. Move to adjourn.

|                  |                                         |
|------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| <b>RESULT:</b>   | <b>Passed</b>                           |
| <b>MOVER:</b>    | Commissioner Kathryn Focke              |
| <b>SECONDER:</b> | Commissioner John Ford                  |
| <b>AYES:</b>     | Greg McKinley, Kathryn Focke, John Ford |
| <b>NAYS:</b>     | None                                    |

### Announcements

The Policy Breakfast will be held today 7:15 a.m. - 8:30 a.m. at the DoubleTree by Hilton, 530 Richards Drive.