



**Board of Riley County
Commissioners
Regular Meeting
Minutes
February 5, 2026**

2101 Claflin Road
Manhattan, KS 66502
www.rileycountyks.gov

Cindy Kabriel
785-565-6200

Family Child and Resource Center RM #124

8:30 AM

[District 1 – John Ford, Vice-Chair](#)

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

[District 3 – Kathryn Focke, 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	County Counselor	Present	8:30 AM
Vivienne Leyva	PIO	Present	8:30 AM
Michael Hawthorne	Assistant County Counselor	Present	8:30 AM
Brittany Phillips	Budget and Finance Officer	Present	8:30 AM
Elizabeth Ward	Human Resources Director	Present	8:30 AM
Alvin Perez	Operations and Fleet Manager	Present	8:30 AM
Rob Voelker		Present	8:30 AM
Anna Burson	Appraiser	Present	8:30 AM
Evan McMillan	Assistant County Engineer	Present	8:30 AM
Michael Boller	Noxious Weed/HHW Director	Present	8:51 AM
Amy Manges	Register of Deeds	Present	9:25 AM
Breva Spencer	Maternal and Child Health Supervisor	Present	10:50 AM
Diane Creek	Health Department Director	Present	10:50 AM
Cory Meyer	IT/GIS Director	Present	10:50 AM

Pledge of Allegiance

Public Comment

Leyva announced that Riley County has two employees, Michelle Horstmeier, Health Department, and Melanie Highsmith, Museum Department, that have the Flint Hills Regional Leadership Program Graduation today.

Hansen asked the Board to amend the agenda today to expand today's executive session from 10:00 a.m. - 10:50 a.m.

Move to amend the agenda to expand the executive session from 10:00 a.m. - 10:50 a.m. today.

RESULT:	Passed
MOVER:	Commissioner John Ford
SECONDER:	Commissioner Greg McKinley
AYES:	Greg McKinley, Kathryn Focke, John Ford
NAYS:	None

Commission Comments

Ford's Comments:

Monday afternoon I attended the National Association of Counties first Policy Insider Webinar Series to listen to their legislative discussion in length and overview of current federal policy and in the immediate future and how these decisions are impacting the nations counties. There was a discussion on the partial shutdown as well which now thankfully is a moot point.

I spent Tuesday and Wednesday working, and that might be the first time all year I've worked back-to-back on my scheduled time.

Also, on Tuesday and I think most of us are aware the City of Manhattan completed its annual retreat and while doing so discussed and released some data from the recent Parks and Recreation survey they did. I thought looking at that information was rather compelling and would urge everyone to check it out as well.

Wednesday we had a special Teams call of the National Association of Counties Community Economic and Workforce Development Committee. After some opening dialog and welcomes from our Chair Angela Conley, Commissioner, Hennepin County, Minnesota we heard from several commissioners from around the county discuss their policy resolutions that will be discussed and voted on during NACo's Annual Legislative and Policy Conference in Washington, D.C. at the end of the month. Several of these resolutions included workforce housing initiatives, a resolution fully funding the Department of Housing and Urban Development, also supporting the funding of the CDBG at last year's rate, asking Federal Emergency Management Agency to provide direct assistance to counties when disasters strike, and a workforce development bill for those with specific mental and or physical disabilities so they can stay in the workforce. Jared Grigas, Legislative Assistant for the CEWD, NACo gave an update and preview of the upcoming Legislative and Policy Conference and who will be joining us for our National Steering Committee meeting Sunday, February 21st.

Wednesday evening, I met with my usual group of concerned citizens to discuss some various topics and current event items including elections, local taxes and affordability, and other

county projects. Had a great and insightful dialog as well as some interesting questions that also came up. Certainly, enjoy engaging and I'm sure we will again somewhere down the road too.

McKinley's Comments:

Monday, I had an email from a church in Riley that is having property tax problems and wanted to set up a meeting to discuss them. The primary problem is the need to do a lot replat to separate the parsonage from the church. To prepare for the meeting and their questions I talked to Anna Burson in the Appraiser's Office to learn more about the problems. I then went to Bob Isaac in Planning to review some of their questions and he took me over to Register of Deeds to search the records. I also checked in with the City of Riley for more information.

Tuesday I had to get up early because I had a 7:00 a.m. check in at the hospital in Topeka for some heart surgery. Everything went well and was able to get back in time to attend the Leonardville City Council meeting. I gave them the information about the combining of EMS, Fire and Emergency Management. I also reviewed the construction projects completed and under way. This included the new EMS Station and Headquarters, the EM/Fire remodel, University Park Fire Station, University Park lagoon, and the Keats Sewer project. I also pointed out all of these projects that have been completed with federal and state funds and that no ad valorem taxes were used.

Wednesday I met with the church council at the Riley Methodist Church to review their problems. The problem started because the Keats and Riley churches had been combined as one entity and when they split a lot of details did not get completed. The lot replat had not been done correctly and is in the process of correction. They will be paying under protest and the last two years taxes will be reviewed. I think we have the process set up to get it all straightened out but it will take a while.

Focke's Comments:

Monday afternoon I took flyers to most of the residents in Keats, announcing the February 12th community meeting on the sewer improvements project.

Tuesday I reviewed some Law Board documents and followed up on some e-mails and phone messages. Tuesday afternoon, "Team Keats" met to discuss the upcoming meeting agenda. Sam Johnson of BG Consultants announced that we have all the necessary approvals to go "out to bid" on the project. A project schedule was finalized between the consultants, Amanda Webb, Jacob Hansen, and myself. Sam Johnson forwarded it to us on Wednesday.

Wednesday I attended the Military Relations Luncheon at the DoubleTree by Hilton. The guest speaker was COL Gerald Nunziato, Jr., Fort Riley Garrison Commander. He gave an update on deployments and other activities at Fort Riley. He also presented an overview of the financial impact of Fort Riley on our economy. Also making comments were the KSU Military Affairs director and the Combined Scholarship Fund for soldiers attending KSU.

After the luncheon, I attended the Westloop Business Association meeting at Rockin K's.

Short presentations were made by Capital Federal and McCown Gordon on their construction projects in the region. The final and most extensive presentation was made on the Wareham Hall renovation project. There were some real interesting and informative slides dating back to the 1880's. The project is at an estimated cost between \$34-40 million, completing in the second ½ of 2027.

Wednesday evening, I finished reviewing today's agenda and documents and went to bell choir practice.

Business Meeting

1. Recommendation — Steel Materials for Airport Road Bridge

Move to accept the bid submitted by Oden Enterprises, Wahoo, Nebraska for steel materials for the Airport Road Bridge in the amount of \$101,573.41.

RESULT:	Passed
MOVER:	Commissioner John Ford
SECONDER:	Commissioner Greg McKinley
AYES:	Greg McKinley, Kathryn Focke, John Ford
NAYS:	None

2. Recommendation — Steel Materials for Airport Road Bridge Decking

Move to approve the quote submitted by Welborn Sales of Salina, Kansas for bridge decking for Airport Road Bridge in the amount of \$49,868.50.

RESULT:	Passed
MOVER:	Commissioner Greg McKinley
SECONDER:	Commissioner John Ford
AYES:	Greg McKinley, Kathryn Focke, John Ford
NAYS:	None

3. Recommendation — University Park Lagoon Construction

Move to approve the low bid submitted by Bayer Construction for the University Park Wastewater Lagoon project in the amount of \$1,980,090.20.

RESULT:	Passed
MOVER:	Commissioner John Ford
SECONDER:	Commissioner Greg McKinley
AYES:	Greg McKinley, Kathryn Focke, John Ford
NAYS:	None

4. CIP Project Amendment

Move to approve two CIP Project Amendment Forms for the Public Works/Parks Department in the amount of \$10,000.00 each for the Leonardville Park and the Ogden Community Park.

RESULT:	Passed
MOVER:	Commissioner Greg McKinley
SECONDER:	Commissioner John Ford

AYES:	Greg McKinley, Kathryn Focke, John Ford
NAYS:	None

5. Advisory Board appointments

Move to sign appointment letters and approve "Resolution No. 020526-04, A Resolution appointing Riley County representatives to Advisory Boards."

RESULT:	Passed
MOVER:	Commissioner John Ford
SECONDER:	Commissioner Greg McKinley
AYES:	Greg McKinley, Kathryn Focke, John Ford
NAYS:	None

6. Riley County Employee Action Forms

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

- Toni Murphy, a new hire, as a Medical Billing and Coding Specialist, in the Health Department, at a Range 8, at \$23.67 per hour.
- Joshua Roeser, a new hire, as a Volunteer Firefighter, in the Fire District #1 Department, at a Range TASND.

Move to approve the requested Employee Action Forms.

RESULT:	Passed
MOVER:	Commissioner Greg McKinley
SECONDER:	Commissioner John Ford
AYES:	Greg McKinley, Kathryn Focke, John Ford
NAYS:	None

7. Approve payroll/accounts payables (when completed)

Move to approve the payroll vouchers in the amount of \$837,273.54 and the following warrant vouchers for February 6, 2026:

2025 Budget

County General	\$ 138,040.33
Health Department	1,574.13
Court Services	725.00
Solid Waste	2,465.73
Riley Co Fire Dist #1	-30,481.36
University Park W&S	3,638.24
Hunters Island Water Dist	1,163.47
Carson Sewer Benefit Dist	553.31
Deep Creek Sewer	269.54
Moehlman Bottoms	261.41
Valleywood Operations	148.98

Terra Heights Sewer	426.23
Konza Water Operations	1,781.10
Lakeside Heights Sewer	27.57
KDOC Adult Services	189.00
KDOC Juvenile Services	189.00

TOTAL. \$ 120,971.68

2026 Budget

County General	\$ 930,730.30
Disaster Fund	31,473.01
Health Department	82,523.21
Capital Improvements Fund	138,980.00
Emergency 911	14,449.07
Solid Waste	6,126.35
County Building	250.00
RCPD Levy/Op	2,609.70
Riley Co Fire Dist #1	29,348.21
University Park W&S	694.00
Hunters Island Water Dist	25.26
Moehlman Bottoms	11.79
Valleywood Operations	59.57
Terra Heights Sewer	316.66
Konza Water Operations	72.40
KDOC Adult Services	6,278.30
KDOC Juvenile Services	4,956.00
KDOC Juv Reinvestment	1,165.91
BJA Grant	1,074.15

TOTAL. \$1,251,143.89

RESULT:	Passed
MOVER:	Commissioner John Ford
SECONDER:	Commissioner Greg McKinley
AYES:	Greg McKinley, Kathryn Focke, John Ford
NAYS:	None

Review Minutes

8. Board of Riley County Commissioners - Regular Meeting - Feb 2, 2026 8:30 AM

Move to approve the minutes of February 2, 2026 as presented.

RESULT:	Passed
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MOVER:	Commissioner Greg McKinley
SECONDER:	Commissioner John Ford
AYES:	Greg McKinley, Kathryn Focke, John Ford
NAYS:	None

Review Tentative Agenda

9. Tentative Agenda

Press Conference Topics**9:00 AM Elizabeth Ward, Human Resources Director**

10. HR Monthly Update

Ward presented the Human Resources update.

9:15 AM Michael Boller, Noxious Weed/HHW Director

11. Riley County Noxious Weed Staff Update

Boller presented the Noxious Weed/HHW staff update.

9:30 AM Anna Burson, Appraiser

12. Appraiser's Office February Staff Update

Burson presented the Appraiser's Office staff update.

9:45 AM Amy Manges, Register of Deeds

13. 2025 Year End Revenue

Manges presented the Register of Deeds revenue report.

10:00 AM Amanda Webb, Planning/Special Projects Director

14. Planning & Development Staff Update

Cancelled per Hansen.

10:15 AM Jacob Hansen, County Counselor

15. Administrative Work Session

Cancelled per Hansen.

16. Executive session to discuss confidential legal advice regarding personnel matters

10:00 a.m. Move that the County Commissioners, including Chairwoman Focke, Vice Chairman Ford, and Commissioner McKinley, along with Jacob Hansen, County Counselor, and Michael Hawthorne, Assistant County Counselor, attorneys for the Commission, and David Cooper of Fisher Patterson Saylor and Smith recess into executive session for legal consultation regarding personnel matters, an exception to the Kansas Open Meetings Act, the open meeting to resume in the

County Commission Chambers at 10:50 a.m.

RESULT:	Passed
MOVER:	Commissioner John Ford
SECONDER:	Commissioner Greg McKinley
AYES:	Greg McKinley, Kathryn Focke, John Ford
NAYS:	None

10:50 a.m. Move the Board of County Commissioners come out of executive session.

RESULT:	Passed
MOVER:	Commissioner John Ford
SECONDER:	Commissioner Greg McKinley
AYES:	Greg McKinley, Kathryn Focke, John Ford
NAYS:	None

Move the record reflect action shall be taken consistent with the consensus reached in executive session.

RESULT:	Passed
MOVER:	Commissioner John Ford
SECONDER:	Commissioner Greg McKinley
AYES:	Greg McKinley, Kathryn Focke, John Ford
NAYS:	None

10:35 AM Russel Stukey, Emergency Management Director

17. Staff Update

Cancelled per Hansen.

10:50 AM Brea Spencer, Maternal and Child Health Supervisor

18. KSU Social Work Field Practicum MOU

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

RESULT:	Passed
MOVER:	Commissioner John Ford
SECONDER:	Commissioner Greg McKinley
AYES:	Greg McKinley, Kathryn Focke, John Ford
NAYS:	None

Spencer discussed the KSU Social Work Field Practicum MOU.

Move to approve the MOU between the Riley County Health Department and Kansas State University for Social Work Field Practicum placements.

RESULT:	Passed
MOVER:	Commissioner John Ford
SECONDER:	Commissioner Greg McKinley
AYES:	Greg McKinley, Kathryn Focke, John Ford

NAYS:	None
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Move to recess as the Board of Health and reconvene as the Board of County Commissioners.

RESULT:	Passed
MOVER:	Commissioner John Ford
SECONDER:	Commissioner Greg McKinley
AYES:	Greg McKinley, Kathryn Focke, John Ford
NAYS:	None

10:55 AM Michele Reid, Human Resources Manager

19. Out of State Travel Request

Ward presented the out of state travel request.

Move to approve the Out of State Travel Request for Michele Reid to attend the Annual Conference hosted by the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) in Orlando, Florida.

RESULT:	Passed
MOVER:	Commissioner Greg McKinley
SECONDER:	Commissioner John Ford
AYES:	Greg McKinley, Kathryn Focke, John Ford
NAYS:	None

11:00 AM Executive Session to discuss department head evaluation

20. Cory Meyer, IT/GIS Director

11:00 a.m. Move that the County Commissioners, including Chairwoman Focke, Vice Chairman Ford, and Commissioner McKinley, along with Jacob Hansen, County Counselor, attorney for the commission, Elizabeth Ward, Human Resources Director, and Cory Meyer, IT/GIS Director recess into executive session pursuant to the non-elected personnel matters exception to the Kansas Open Meetings Act, in order to evaluate the performance of a department head, the open meeting to resume in the County Commission Chambers at 11:30 a.m.

RESULT:	Passed
MOVER:	Commissioner John Ford
SECONDER:	Commissioner Greg McKinley
AYES:	Greg McKinley, Kathryn Focke, John Ford
NAYS:	None

Move the Board of County Commissioners come out of executive session.

RESULT:	Passed
MOVER:	Commissioner John Ford
SECONDER:	Commissioner Greg McKinley
AYES:	Greg McKinley, Kathryn Focke, John Ford
NAYS:	None

Move the record reflect no binding action was taken during the executive session.

RESULT:	Passed
MOVER:	Commissioner John Ford
SECONDER:	Commissioner Greg McKinley
AYES:	Greg McKinley, Kathryn Focke, John Ford
NAYS:	None

Adjournment

11:36 a.m. Move to adjourn.

RESULT:	Passed
MOVER:	Commissioner John Ford
SECONDER:	Commissioner Greg McKinley
AYES:	Greg McKinley, Kathryn Focke, John Ford
NAYS:	None