



**Board of Riley County
Commissioners
Regular Meeting
Minutes
February 26, 2026**

2101 Claflin Road
Manhattan, KS
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
Elizabeth Ward	Human Resources Director	Present	8:30 AM
Brittany Phillips	Budget and Finance Officer	Present	8:30 AM
Anna Burson	Appraiser	Present	8:30 AM
John Ellermann	Public Works Director/County Engineer	Present	8:30 AM
Rob Voelker		Present	8:30 AM
David Adams	Emergency Services Director	Present	9:50 AM
Cory Meyer	IT/GIS Director	Present	9:50 AM
Diane Creek	Health Department Director	Present	9:58 AM
Megan Lewis	Community Corrections Director	Present	10:35 AM
Jessie Hubbard	Administrative Assistant II	Present	10:35 AM
Amanda Webb	Planning/Special Projects Director	Present	10:42 AM
Randy DeWitt	Manhattan City Director of Utilities	Present	11:00 AM

Pledge of Allegiance

Public Comment

Commission Comments

Ford's Comments:

Monday morning, I started with a general session at the NACo Legislative and Policy Conference. We heard from several U.S. House Representatives including House Majority Whip Tom Emmer (R-Minn), Glenn "GT" Thompson (R-PA), Andrea Salinas (D-Oregon), and Bruce Westerman (R-Ark). Each spoke on initiatives they are working in Congress and how they apply to the nation's counties.

Monday post BOCC Meeting in which I mostly attended via Zoom I went up to Capitol Hill and first met with the staff in U.S. Senator Roger Marshall's office to discuss rural infrastructure challenges and Fort Riley.

Also, on Monday I attended the Federal Agency Expo at the Washington Hilton. There were many federal agencies in attendance to discuss local issues with including FEMA, HHS, SBA, EDA, Treasury, Veteran Affairs, and Housing and Urban Development just to name a few. It is always good to have that opportunity to reach out to these federal partners that we continue to work with on a consistent basis.

Late Monday afternoon I went back up on Capitol Hill and met with U.S. House of Representative Derek Schmidt in his office along with his Military Affairs Director. We had nearly an hour and half conversation and went through a lot of key components on Fort Riley which he represents the western side of.

Monday I was invited to attend the Midsize County Caucus reception that was there at the Hilton. I did meet some commissioners from the states Iowa, Minnesota, Nevada, and of course Kentucky. It was a real quaint and down-to-earth reception to be honest.

Tuesday morning, I started with general session number two at the NACo Legislative and Policy Conference. We heard from Alex Meyer, Deputy Assistant to the President and Director of the White House Intergovernmental Affairs, Lee Zeldin, U.S. EPA Administrator, and David Belnick, Endorsement Partner with Nationwide. We heard stump speeches from each of the three candidates vying for the 2nd Vice President position at NACo, then we heard from U.S. Representative Sam Graves (R-MO) and House Chair of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, and lastly Robert F. Kennedy Jr., Secretary U.S. Health and Human Services.

Tuesday afternoon I headed back up to the Capitol and met with U.S. Representative Tracey Mann and then U.S. Senator Jerry Moran at their offices on the same rural infrastructure and challenges up on Fort Riley. As always appreciate the time spent engaging in some very necessary dialog on some critical issues pertaining to the region.

Tuesday evening, I attended the All Attendee Closing Reception for the conference in the International Ballroom. We also had the opportunity to watch the State of the Union speech from there as well. A huge thanks to Nationwide for sponsoring the reception as well. Wednesday I headed back from Washington, D.C. and got home late afternoon here in Manhattan, got unpacked and ready for today.

McKinley's Comments:

Tuesday was the construction meeting for the EM/Fire project. The storm shelter is complete. The next few weeks are mostly mechanical and electrical rough in. Final decision on the shade structure was made. We will stay with the metal canopy as was originally in the bid. After the meeting I met with David Adams to review several things.

Tuesday evening I went to the Riley City Commission meeting. Jared Tremblay from the MPO was there. The Highway 24 corridor study has been amended. It will now stop at 4 mile corner and not continue to the intersection in Riley. They were presented the Adams Brown audit report and went over the details, and they had other miscellaneous city business.

Focke's Comments:

No comments.

Business Meeting

1. Recommendation — Tractor

Move to approve the low bid submitted by PrairieLand Partners for a Compact Utility Tractor in the amount of \$53,893.93.

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

2. University Park Lagoon Construction Agreement

Move to approve the Agreement Form with Bayer Construction Company, Inc. for the University Park Wastewater Lagoon Facility 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

3. Riley County Employee Action Form

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

- Bethany Stansell, a new hire, as an Appraiser I - Residential, in the Appraiser's Department, at a Range 6, at \$24.02 per hour.
- Courtney Alford, a new hire, as an EMT, in the EMS/Ambulance Department,

at a Range EMT.

- Ramsey McVey, for a position change, as a Customer Service Representative, in the Public Works Department, at a Range 4, at \$21.93 per hour.

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

Review Minutes

4. Board of Riley County Commissioners - Regular Meeting - Feb 23, 2026 8:30 AM

Move to approve the minutes of February 23, 2026 as presented.

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

Review Tentative Agenda

5. Tentative Agenda

Press Conference Topics

9:00 AM Barry Wilkerson, County Attorney

6. Staff update

Wilkerson presented the County Attorney update.

9:15 AM Jacob Hansen, County Counselor

7. Administrative Work Session

8. Executive session to discuss personnel matters of non-elected personnel

Move that the County Commissioners, including Chairwoman Focke, Vice Chairman Ford, and Commissioner McKinley, with Jacob Hansen, County Counselor, 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, and to protect the privacy of the employees, the open meeting to resume in the County Commission Chambers at 9:50 a.m.

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

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

9:50 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 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

9:50 AM Cory Meyer, IT/GIS Director

9. IT/GIS Staff Update

Meyer presented the IT/GIS staff update.

10:05 AM Executive Session to discuss department head evaluation

10. Diane Creek, Health Department Director

Move that the County Commissioners, including Chairwoman Focke, Vice Chairman Ford, and Commissioner McKinley, with Jacob Hansen, County Counselor, Elizabeth Ward, Human Resources Director, and Diane Creek, Health Department Director, recess into executive session pursuant to the non-elected personnel matters exception to the Kansas Open Meetings Act, in order to evaluate a department head, and to protect the privacy of the employee, the open meeting to resume in the County Commission Chambers at 10:35 a.m.

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

10:35 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 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

10:35 AM Megan Lewis, Community Corrections Director

11. FY27 KDOC Comprehensive Plan and Case Plan for Adult Services

Lewis presented the FY27 KDOC Comprehensive Plan for Adult Services.

Move to approve the FY 2027 Comprehensive Plan Grant Application for Adult Services.

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

12. FY27 KDOC Comprehensive Plan and Case Plan for Juvenile Services

Lewis presented the FY27 KDOC Comprehensive Plan for Juvenile Intake.

Move to approve the FY 2027 Comprehensive Plan Grant Application for Juvenile Services

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

10:55 AM Amanda Webb, Planning/Special Projects Director

13. Discuss Extension of Contract for Recycling Services with Bison Ridge Recycling

Webb presented the extension of contract for Recycling Services with Bison Ridge Recycling.

The Board discussed subsidizing the recycling of glass.

The Board agreed by consensus to schedule a meeting with Greg Wilson to discuss the glass recycling program.

14. Stadel Road benefit district (proposed) - update & petition

Webb presented the Stadel Road Sewer Benefit District petition.

DeWitt discussed the Stadel Road Sewer Benefit District project.

The Board discussed the project.

Move to sign the petition.

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

11:30 AM Megan Lewis, Community Corrections Director

15. Staff Update

Lewis presented the Community Corrections staff update.

Lewis presented a letter from the Board to the Clay County Commissioners to fund Community Corrections services in Clay County.

Move to approve the letter of support to the Board of Clay County Commissioners requesting to share in funding for Community Corrections.

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

Adjournment

11:37 a.m. Move to adjourn.

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