



**Board of Riley County
Commissioners
Regular Meeting
Minutes
March 19, 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
Michael Hawthorne	Assistant County Counselor	Present	8:30 AM
Derick Schroller	IT Specialist	Present	8:30 AM
Vivienne Leyva	PIO	Present	8:30 AM
Amanda Webb	Planning/Special Projects Director	Present	8:30 AM
Elizabeth Ward	Human Resources Director	Present	8:30 AM
Evan McMillan	Assistant County Engineer	Present	8:31 AM
Bob Isaac	Planner	Present	8:35 AM
Brett Beam		Present	9:00 AM
Brandon Peoples	KMAN/Manhattan Mercury	Present	9:16 AM
John Ellermann	Public Works Director/County Engineer	Present	9:16 AM
Kent Glasscock	Flint Hills Regional Council	Present	9:16 AM
Janna Williams	Flint Hills Regional Council	Present	9:16 AM
Breva Spencer	Maternal and Child Health Supervisor	Present	9:45 AM
Diane Creek	Health Department Director	Present	9:45 AM
Jarad Garren	Be Able	Present	9:50 AM
Scott Voos	Be Able	Present	9:50 AM

Daniel Skucius	Extension Director	Present	10:00 AM
Scott Hajek	RCPD	Present	10:12 AM
Cory Meyer	IT/GIS Director	Present	10:30 AM
Bruce McMillan	Baker McMillan Architects	Present	10:30 AM
Russel Stukey	Emergency Management Director	Present	10:51 AM
Kris Schneider	Network/Systems Engineer	Present	10:30 AM
Josh Gering	EMS/Ambulance Assistant Director	Present	10:50 AM
Amy Manges	Register of Deeds	Present	11:05 AM

Pledge of Allegiance

Public Comment

Commission Comments

Ford's Comments:

Monday afternoon I did catch the new K-State men's head basketball coach Casey Alexander's press conference via livestream. I thought that went pretty well. I like the vision and direction he is laying out for the program. I'm just hopeful he is the guy that can facilitate it and get it done on behalf of Wildcat nation.

Tuesday and Wednesday I finally got back to my routine at work for the first time in nearly a month. That helps as I continue to learn a new department in a part-time role.

Tuesday afternoon I listened in on the National Association of Counties webcast discussing the U.S. Farm Bill or known as the "Farm, Food and National Security Act of 2026" which is being considered currently. The three major components discussed in the webinar were Nutrition including SNAP and other food programs, commodities, including income support for major crops, and lastly conservation including the protection of natural resources.

Wednesday afternoon I met with the Riley County Rural Economic Development Advisory Board. Listened in on their goals for 2026 which include increasing the awareness of economic development and the existence of the Riley County Together 2040 Comprehensive Plan, coordination with the BOCC, support rural revitalization as outlined in the Comprehensive Plan, and encourage incentives to draw people to Riley County (ie MakeMyMove). I then had an open dialog with the group. Discussion was had on the Home in Heartland Grant, board membership and regionalization update, and got an update from the Manhattan Area Chamber of Commerce.

Also on Wednesday afternoon I met with Riley County Human Resource Director Elizabeth Ward to discuss a handful of pertinent items to Riley County, and the future direction we may be choosing to go, as well some items in conjunction with Human Resources itself.

Appreciated the time and we had a good conversation.

Last but not least I stopped by the downtown office and chambers, and I can gladly report there is carpet in our office and work being down up in the ceiling as well.

McKinley's Comments:

After Monday's meeting I met with Elizabeth Ward to discuss the reorganization plans. After that I attended a marathon Law Board meeting. A lot of time was spent on what will be in the budget. One of the big steps is breaking down the personnel costs. They now have it broken down into number of positions and costs broken down by division, similar to how we do the budgeting. I talked to the finance manager and deputy director after the meeting and they said it was good for them to see the breakdown. Later I met with Cory Meyer for a little while.

Tuesday I spent a lot of time looking into how other counties organize with a county administrator. Also discussed with Elizabeth Ward some more.

Wednesday was the Juvenile Detention Center board meeting. We approved the budget for next year and worked on some modifications to the employee handbook. After the meeting I went to Salina and met with the Saline County Administrator to see how they operated. On the way back from Salina I had a call with Russel Stukey about the emergency services and other reorganization items.

Focke's Comments:

Monday afternoon was the Law Board meeting at City Hall. Members present had a lengthy discussion on budget items and other proposals. The Aggieville substation lease was discussed and sent back to the BOCC for approval. Lease will start in January, 2027. Later that evening, I took several remaining temporary easements to a property owner in Keats. We should get them back the first part of next week.

Tuesday, I spent time in my office going over various county reorganizational issues and then met with some friends in the afternoon. Stayed home in the evening as I wasn't feeling up to celebrating St. Patrick's Day. Will go to the parade on Saturday.

Wednesday, I had a dental appointment for my 6-month check-up. Several teeth will have to be worked on in the next couple months. In the afternoon, I reviewed today's agenda and documents and continued to work on paperwork for my taxes.

Business Meeting

1. KDOT Cost-Share Program Application - Spring 2026

Move to approve the KDOT Cost Share Program Construction Reimbursement Grant Application for Spring 2026.

RESULT:	Passed
MOVER:	Commissioner John Ford

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

2. Letter of support for Keats materials donation

Move to approve signing the letter of support for a possible PVC sewer pipe donation from JM Eagle for the Keats Sanitary Sewer Improvements Project.

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

3. New Aggieville Substation Lease

No action taken.

4. Letter in Support of Industrial Business Park

Move to approve the Letter of Support for the Industrial Business Park.

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

5. Riley County Employee Action Form

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

- Natalie Roderique, a new hire, as an EMT, in the EMS/Ambulance Department, at a Range EMT.
- Calin Martinez, a new hire, as a Traffic Control Technician, in the Public Works Department, at a Range 5, at \$22.26 per hour.
- Steven Bartel, a new hire, as a Volunteer Firefighter, in the Fire District #1 Department, at a Range TASND.
- Joshua Aguero, a new hire, as a Volunteer Firefighter, in the Fire District #1 Department, at a Range TASND.

Move to approve the requested Riley County Employee Action Forms.

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

6. Approve payroll/accounts payables (when completed)

Move to approve the payroll vouchers in the amount of \$783,543.45 and the

following warrant vouchers for March 20, 2026:**2025 Budget**

County General	\$	2,873.64
Carson Sewer Benefit Dist		833.33
TOTAL.	\$	3,706.97

2026 Budget

County General	\$	902,906.45
Disaster Fund		5,536.35
Health Department		81,656.89
Court Services		150.00
County Auction		336.15
Motor Vehicle Operations		614.39
Capital Improvements Fund		57,916.46
Economic Development		1,000.00
Emergency 911		3,892.57
Solid Waste		359,331.69
County Building		16,962.89
Road & Bridge Cap Project		30,931.80
RCPD Levy/Op		31,205.35
Landfill Closure		12,644.47
Riley Co Fire Dist #1		32,380.23
2023 R&B Project Sales Tx		41,205.97
University Park W&S		7,863.66
Hunters Island Water Dist		1,680.73
Carson Sewer Benefit Dist		1,575.03
Deep Creek Sewer		398.39
Moehlman Bottoms		353.85
Valleywood Operations		695.58
Terra Heights Sewer		507.93
Konza Water Operations		2,029.77
Lakeside Heights Sewer		37.64
University Park Lagoon		2,405.76
KDOC Adult Services		22,382.43
KDOC Juvenile Services		10,161.11
KDOC Juv Reinvestment		1,852.71
BJA Grant		4,404.02
21st Jud Dist DC ADSAP		538.22
City Alcohol Funds		821.87

Caroline Peine Grant	179.98
Adult Services Carry-Over	78.49
Juvenile Svcs Carry-Over	78.49
TOTAL	\$ 1,636,717.32

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

Review Minutes

7. Board of Riley County Commissioners - Regular Meeting - Mar 16, 2026 8:30 AM

Move to approve the minutes of March 16th as presented.

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

Review Tentative Agenda

8. Tentative Agenda

Press Conference Topics

9:00 AM Bob Isaac, Planner

9. Rezone from AG (Agricultural) to SF-1 (Single Family)

Isaac presented the rezone from AG to SF-1 in Manhattan Township.

Move to approve "Resolution No. 031926-08, Resolution amending the zoning map of Riley County concerning the use of certain real estate located in Manhattan Township" from AG (Agricultural District) to SF-1 (Single Family Residential).

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

9:15 AM Amanda Webb, Planning/Special Projects Director

10. Flint Hills Regional Tabletop Exercise

Webb presented request to participate in the Flint Hills Regional Tabletop Exercise.

Williams provided background on the grant application.

The Board agreed by consensus for Amanda Webb to serve as the Riley County contact person.

Move to approve participation in the Flint Hills Regional Council's Regional Tabletop Exercise, designate Amanda Webb as the contact person, and direct staff to complete the Memorandum of Agreement and bring it back for official signature at a future meeting.

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

9:30 AM

Amanda Webb, Planning/Special Projects Director

11. Bid opening for Keats Sanitary Sewer Benefit District Improvements Projects

The Board of County Commissioners opened the following bids for the Keats Sanitary Sewer Benefit District Improvements Project:

Company	Total Bid
Smoky Hill, LLC 645 E. Crawford, Suite E8 Salina, KS 67401	\$4,927,737.70
J&K Contracting, LLC PO Box 306 Junction City, KS 66441	\$4,752,334.00
Bayer Construction 120 Deep Creek Road Manhattan, KS 66502	\$3,774,073.90
Bennett, Inc. 103 NE 15 th Lane Lamar, MO 64759	\$5,940,123.00
Engineer's Estimate BG Consultants 4806 Vue Du Lac Place Manhattan, KS 66503	\$4,307,618.00

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

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

9:45 AM Brevia Spencer, Maternal and Child Health Supervisor

12. Request to Fill Public Health Nurse Position

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

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

Spencer presented the Public Health Nurse position.

Move to approve the request to fill the vacant Public Health Nurse position.

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

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

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

The Board of County Commissioners signed a Riley County Position Action Form for a Public Health Nurse, in the Health Department, at a Range 18.

9:50 AM Jarad Garren and Scott Voos, Be Able

13. Be Able update

Voos and Garren presented the Be Able update.

10:00 AM Daniel Skucius, Extension Director

14. Extension Staff Update

Skucius presented the Extension update.

10:15 AM Brian Peete, RCPD Director

15. RCPD Update

Hajek presented the RCPD update.

10:30 AM Jacob Hansen, County Counselor

16. Administrative Work Session

Hawthorne discussed projects in the Counselor's Office.

10:50 AM John Ellermann, Public Works Director/County Engineer

17. Manhattan Chief Sports Lease Agreement

Ellermann presented the Manhattan Chief Sports lease agreement.

Move to approve the lease with Manhattan Chief Sports to use the Fairmount Park athletic fields for the spring season.

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

18. IT/GIS Remodel Project

Ellermann presented the request to approve the IT/GIS remodel project.

The Board agreed by consensus to provide backup power for only the new IT infrastructure and Elections Office and equipment.

Move to approve the IT/GIS remodel project with an estimate of probable cost of \$2,071,991.

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

11:10 AM David Adams, Emergency Services Director

19. Request to Fill Open Position for an EMT

Gering requested to fill the full-time EMT position.

Move to approve filling the open Full Time EMT Position in the EMS/Ambulance Department.

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

The Board of County Commissioners signed a Riley County Position Action Form for an EMT, in the EMS/Ambulance Department, at a Range EMT.

20. Request to Fill Open Position for a Paramedic

Gering requested to fill the Paramedic position.

Move to approve filling the open Paramedic position in the EMS/Ambulance Department.

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

The Board of County Commissioners signed a Riley County Position Action Form for a Paramedic, in the EMS/Ambulance Department, at a Range Paramedic.

11:15 AM Greg McKinley, Riley County Commissioner

21. Reorganization discussion

McKinley discussed getting a timeline put together for the reorganization. McKinley said we need a list of items to accomplish prior to developing a timeline.

Ford said he needs more time to complete his list.

McKinley said he met with Saline County Administrator.

McKinley stated in all counties he has looked into with administrators, they do not do what our Board is wanting. McKinley said most of those counties have very few and very short meetings. McKinley said he feels we are trying to create a new position.

Focke said what she likes about Riley County is the direct access to department heads.

4:00 PM Joint City/County/County Meeting (at Manhattan City Offices)

22. Joint City/County/County Meeting Agenda

The Board attended the Joint/City/County/County Meeting.

Adjournment

Move to adjourn.

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