



**Board of Riley County
Commissioners
Regular Meeting
Minutes
April 9, 2026**

115 N 4th Street
Manhattan, KS 66502
www.rileycountyks.gov

Cindy Kabriel
785-565-6200

Commission Chambers
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
Kathryn Focke	County Commissioner	Present	8:30 AM
John Ford	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
Gary Olds		Present	8:30 AM
Michael Hawthorne	Assistant County Counselor	Present	8:30 AM
Anna Burson	Appraiser	Present	8:30 AM
Cory Meyer	IT/GIS Director	Present	8:30 AM
Derick Schroller	IT Specialist	Present	8:30 AM
Terese Parker		Present	8:30 AM
Evan McMillan	Assistant County Engineer	Present	8:32 AM
Rob Voelker		Present	8:32 AM
Brittany Phillips	Budget and Finance Officer	Present	8:38 AM
Elizabeth Ward	Human Resources Director	Present	8:40 AM
Jake Voegeli	Manhattan Brewing Company	Present	9:20 AM
Shilo Heger	Treasurer	Present	9:20 AM
Donna Borgerding	Vehicle Supervisor	Present	9:20 AM
Tande Lentz	Assistant Vehicle Supervisor	Present	9:20 AM
John Ellermann	Public Works Director/County Engineer	Present	9:40 AM
Daryn Soldan	Manhattan Area Chamber of Commerce	Present	9:40 AM
Christian Bishop	Manhattan Area Chamber of Commerce	Present	9:40 AM

Diane Creek	Health Department Director	Present	9:40 AM
Michelle Horstmeier	Public Health Emergency Preparedness Coordinator	Present	9:40 AM
Stacy Kohlmeier		Present	10:13 AM
Mike Dodson		Present	10:13 AM
John Armbrust		Present	11:10 AM
Sean Drew		Present	11:10 AM
Scott Seel		Present	11:10 AM
Neil Horton		Present	11:10 AM
Joseph Godown	Real Estate Specialist	Present	11:10 AM
Amy Manges	Register of Deeds	Present	11:10 AM
Kent Glasscock		Present	11:10 AM

Pledge of Allegiance

Public Comment

Olds discussed receiving his appraisal valuation. Olds stated how everyone really rents, because if you don't pay your taxes the government owns it. He asked the Board to keep in mind those who cannot pay their property taxes.

Olds complemented the improvements to the Courthouse Plaza East facility.

Parker requesting Lot 70 be returned to Tatarrax. She stated the community with children could use to lot for the Tatarrax Association. She said it could be done by Quit Claim Deed or she is willing to purchase it.

Hansen said if the Board would like he will research how to proceed on disposing of the Tatarrax Lot 70.

The Board agreed by consensus for Hansen to work on disposing of the Tatarrax Lot 70.

Meyer reported GIS is no longer in the Courthouse Plaza East Building. He said GIS has moved to the 3rd floor of the Courthouse Office Building.

Commission Comments

Ford's Comments:

After 9 months I have to admit it is great to be back home downtown finally, and I will also say how wonderful all the improvements are and will be moving forward. Thanks to everyone at the health department for being gracious hosts over the last 9 months or so as well.

I did spend Monday and Wednesday afternoons getting back to the office and getting things

reset up for business and getting updated on today's agenda and document packet.

Also Wednesday afternoon I attended the April meeting of NACo's Community and Economic Development Committee via Microsoft Teams. After some opening remarks and introductions from our Chair Angela Conely, Commissioner, Hennepin County, Minnesota we got an update from Kenan Fikiri, Senior Fellow, Economic Innovation Group on NACo's Opportunity Zones that followed by a legislative update from Capitol Hill with Jared Grigas, Associate Legislative Director NACo, and Kevin Moore, Legislative Assistant, NACo. We then had a general update and discussion with question and answers to end the meeting.

Wednesday evening, I did attend the April Business After Hours hosted by the Manhattan Area Chamber of Commerce out at the Sunset Zoo and the Sunset Wildlife Conservation Trust. Well attended as always and an absolute beautiful evening to be out at the zoo as well.

Tuesday evening K-State baseball picked up a solid win in Wichita vs. Wichita St. 10-6. Always good to win those weekday non-conference games.

Hoping for some rain over the weekend as my allergies have been something fierce over this last week and something needs to knock all the stuff out of the air.

McKinley's Comments:

Tuesday was the construction meeting for the EM/Fire building. The sheetrock is all installed and they should finish taping and finishing this week. They were installing the roofing on the storm shelter. Metal panels are being installed and that work will continue for a few weeks. Their estimated completion is the end of June.

Monday and Wednesday I spent a lot of time getting moved back into the remodeled office. Still a little work to be done but it is functional.

Focke's Comments:

Monday afternoon I went to the new offices. I had brought some things from our temporary space and started organizing my space. It's so good to be back!

Later that afternoon, I had the laser procedure on my left eye lens. Everything has gone okay and I'm seeing much better.

Wednesday morning, I came to the office and continued the office organization. I need to go through and purge a lot of old materials and supplies and that will take some time. I also reviewed the agenda and documents for today's meeting. Wednesday evening, I attended my bell choir practice.

Business Meeting

1. Bid Recommendation 2026 Asphalt Overlay

Move to approve the low bid submitted by Shilling Construction for the 2026 asphalt

overlay projects in the amount of \$1,633,393.46.

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

2. Bid Recommendation — Chip Seal 2026

Move to approve the low bid submitted by Vance Brothers, LLC for the bituminous chip seal projects in the amount of \$425,133.19.

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

3. Riley County Purchasing Card Request

Move to approve the Riley County P-Card Request.

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

4. 2026 GAAP Waiver Resolution

Move to approve "Resolution No. 040926-10, A Resolution exempting Riley County, Kansas from the provisions of K.S.A. 75-1120a(a)" (2026 GAAP Waiver Resolution).

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

5. Riley County Employee Action Form

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

- Joel Taylor, a new hire, as a Volunteer Firefighter, in the Fire District #1 Department, at a Range TASND.
- Michael Shuman, a Volunteer Firefighter, in the Fire District #1 Department, for Separation from County Service, effective April 6, 2026.

Move to approve the requested Riley County Employee Action Forms.

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

6. Discuss Joint City/County/County Meeting at Riley County Offices Thursday, April 16th at 4:00 p.m.

7. City/County/County Meetings

The Board agreed by consensus to not host the next City/County/County Meeting.

Move to approve the letter to the City of Manhattan and Pottawatomie County.

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 - Apr 6, 2026 8:30 AM

Move to approve the minutes of April 6, 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

9. Tentative Agenda

Press Conference Topics

9:00 AM

Jacob Hansen, County Counselor

10. Administrative Work Session

Hansen discussed the bathroom bill which is in litigation.

Hansen discussed the Citizen Agenda Item Policy. He said department heads will review and present a recommendation to the Board.

Hansen said he has been working on the resolution for the Little Apple Mayfest. He said it will need to be clear what kind of alcohol is to be allowed.

Hansen reported HB 2745 on taxes was vetoed.

9:20 AM Jake Voegeli, Manhattan Brewing Company

11. Signage for Little Apple Mayfest

Voegeli asked about the signage for the Little Apple Mayfest.

Move to approve the signage placement for the Little Apple Mayfest.

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

The Board agreed by consensus to allow the sale of cereal malt and liquor at the Little Apple Mayfest.

Hansen asked about the tent enclosure.

Voegeli said they would like to have a tent set up.

The Board asked to check to be sure it does not impact other events.

9:30 AM Shilo Heger, Treasurer

12. Staff Update

Heger presented the treasurer's report.

Heger discussed SB 404.

The Board agreed by consensus to set the Riley County Treasurer fee for motor vehicle transactions at \$5.00 effective July 1, 2026.

9:45 AM Jason Smith, Manhattan Area Chamber of Commerce

13. Economic Development Update

Soldan thanked the Board for the letter of support for a potential economic development out by the airport.

Soldan thanked the Board for supporting the Riley County Rural Economic Development Advisory Board.

Bishop discussed Fort Riley activities.

10:00 AM Diane Creek, Health Department Director

14. PHEP Update and Staff Update

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

Creek presented the staff update.

Horstmeier presented the PHEP update.

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

10:30 AM Budget and Planning Committee - Brittany Phillips, Budget and Finance Officer

15. Cash Flows

Phillips presented the cash flow reports.

10:40 AM Executive Session to discuss department head evaluation

16. Megan Lewis, Community Corrections Director

10:40 a.m. Move that the County Commissioners, including Chairwoman Focke, Vice Chairman Ford, and Commissioner McKinley, with Jacob Hansen, County Counselor, attorney for the commission, Elizabeth Ward, Human Resources Director, and Megan Lewis, Community Corrections 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 11:10 a.m.

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

11:10 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

11:10 AM Mike Dodson

17. Information pursuant to implementation of a Riley County Administrator

Dodson presented a PowerPoint on the implementation of a Riley County Administrator.

11:20 AM Elizabeth Ward, Human Resources Director

18. NACo High Performance Leadership Academy and Flint Hills Regional Leadership Program

Ward presented the NACo High Performance Leadership Academy and Flint Hill Regional Leadership Program recommendations.

Ward stated the recommendation is for Kris Schneider and Joseph Godown for the NACo High Performance Leadership Academy.

Move to approve Kris Sneider and Joseph Godown for leadership training programs in 2026.

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

11:25 AM Board of County Commissioners

19. Reorganization discussion

Ward presented a "County Administrator Duties Ballot" for the commissioners to select the duties of the County Administrator.

The commissioners agreed by consensus:

Administrator will:

- attend all meetings of the Board of County Commissioners;
- proposed policies, programs and plans aimed at addressing overall county needs for review, revision and approval by the board;
- present an annual recommended operating budget, capital improvements program long-range strategic plan for all county operations for review, revision and approval by the board of county commissioners;
- will identify and recommend individuals to the Board for appointment to boards and commissions;
- will recommend individuals to the Board for appointment to non-employee offices for which the board is the appointing authority by law;
- assist the Board to coordinate county programs and operations with other local governmental units, federal and state governments and other governmental and non-governmental entities;
- in conjunction with the County Counselor, will execute contracts and official documents approved by the Board;

- will monitor and provide regular reports to the board concerning adherence by county departments to the personnel, purchasing, budget, accounting and other administrative policies of the board.
- The Board of County Commissioners will interview, select, evaluate and recommend the compensation, suspension or dismissal of all employee appointed officers. (Counselor, Appraiser)
- Department Heads and Human Resources will approve the appointment, compensation, discipline and change in status of non-department head personnel in the departments of all officials appointed by the board of county commissioners. All employees affected by such decisions shall continue to have access to all appellate and other rights granted them by county personnel policies.

The Board determined with a vote of 2:1 to:

- The County Clerk will prepare the meeting agenda of the board in conjunction with the Administrator.

The Board decided to table the following points:

1. The Administrator will coordinate and supervise the administrative operations of the departments of all officials appointed by the board of county commissioners. All officers and employees therein shall be administratively responsible to the county commissioners.

OR

The Administrator will coordinate the administrative services of county departments and agencies, offices of elected officials, advisory and governing boards appointed by the board of county commissioners. The administrator will provide technical assistance to such departments, offices, agencies and boards as needed.

2. Either the Administrator or the Board of County Commissioners, with support from Human Resources, will approve the appointment, compensation, discipline and change in status of department head personnel.
3. Directly supervise, including selection, discipline, professional growth and other employment related decisions of the County Counselor office.

Move the County Commission Agenda administration be done by the County Clerk's office in coordination with the County Administrator.

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

Adjournment

12:26 p.m. Move to adjourn.

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