



**Board of Riley County
Commissioners
Regular Meeting
Minutes
May 18, 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
Derick Schroller	IT Specialist	Present	8:30 AM
Michele Reid	Human Resources Manager	Present	8:30 AM
Gary Olds		Present	8:30 AM
Anna Burson	Appraiser	Present	8:30 AM
Russel Stukey	Emergency Management Director	Present	8:30 AM
John Ellermann	Public Works Director/County Engineer	Present	8:30 AM
Rob Voelker		Present	8:30 AM
Stephanie Peterson	Manhattan City Planning Director	Present	8:49 AM
Ben Chmiel	Manhattan City Planner	Present	8:49 AM
David Adams	Emergency Services Director	Present	9:12 AM
Brittany Phillips	Budget and Finance Officer	Present	9:17 AM
Cathy Jones	WIC Dietitian	Present	9:17 AM
Doug Russell	Deputy Fire Chief	Present	9:50 AM
Josh Gering	Assistant EMS/Ambulance Director	Present	9:50 AM
Jake Konrardy	Deputy Fire Chief	Present	9:50 AM

Alex Protzman	EMS/Ambulance Staff Development Specialist	Present	9:50 AM
Michael Boller	Noxious Weed/HHW Director	Present	10:25 AM

Pledge of Allegiance

Public Comment

Stukey reported on the firefighters who traveled to help fight fires in southwest Kansas.

Stukey stated they are expecting severe weather hitting today around 3:00-4:00 p.m. Stukey said the Board may want to consider letting staff go around 2:00-3:00 p.m. to avoid the severe weather.

Olds stated property taxes are the primary issue. Olds discussed the concern he has of local government that does not represent the people. He said costs and expenses are going up. He asked the Board to make some tough decisions including a reduction in force of employees.

Ellermann reminded the Board that the shades are coming in to be installed.

Ellermann said the bid opening for IT/GIS department is June 18, 2026.

Commission Comments

Business Meeting

1. Tax Roll Corrections

Move to approve the Tax Roll Corrections.

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

2. Mobile Device Reimbursement Request Form

Move to approve the Mobile Device Reimbursement Request Form.

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

Review Minutes

3. Board of Riley County Commissioners - Regular Meeting - May 14, 2026 8:30 AM

Move to approve the minutes of May 14th as presented.

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

Review Tentative Agenda

4. Tentative Agenda

Press Conference Topics**9:00 AM****Amanda Webb, Planning/Special Projects Director**

5. East Manhattan Gateway Future Land Use Map Amendment

Chmiel presented the East Manhattan Gateway Future Land Use Map Amendment.

Move to approve the City of Manhattan's proposal and approve "Resolution No. 051826-17, A Resolution amending the current Comprehensive Plan for the development or redevelopment of the Manhattan Urban Area and the City of Manhattan, Kansas, entitled the "Manhattan Urban Area Comprehensive Plan, dated March 2025" by amending the future land use map."

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

9:15 AM**Jacob Hansen, County Counselor**

6. Administrative Work Session

Hansen reported on June 16, 2026 the City of Manhattan will be presented the STAR Bonds and TIF for the Edge District. He stated the Board will have 30 days to approve or deny the proposal. He said he will draft policies for the Board to consider.

7. Staff Update

9:30 AM**Press Conference**

8. AG use maps mailed May 15th - Anna Burson (2 minutes)

Burson reported AG use maps were mailed May 15, 2026.

9. Public Notice - Evan McMillan (1 minute)

Ellermann said the Transfer Station will be closed Monday, May 25, 2026, in observance of Memorial Day. The Transfer Station will reopen for business at 7:00 a.m. on Tuesday, May 26, 2026.

9:35 AM**David Adams, Interim Health Department Director**

10. Memorandum of Agreement with Ft. Riley

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

Adams presented the Memorandum of Agreement with Ft. Riley.

Move to approve the Memorandum of Agreement between Riley County and United States Army Garrison - Fort Riley.

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

11. FFY27 WIC Budget Application

Phillips presented the FFY27 WIC Budget Application.

The Board asked for staff to bring it back with the corrected information.

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

9:55 AM

David Adams, Emergency Services Director

12. Position Descriptions for EMS Division Chief and Deputy Chief

Adams presented the position descriptions for EMS Division Chief and Deputy Chief.

Move to approve the updated position descriptions as presented for the EMS Division Chief and Deputy Chief.

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 Riley County Position Action Forms for

the following:

- an EMS Division Chief, in the Emergency Services Department
- an EMS Deputy Chief, in the Emergency Services Department

10:05 AM Jacob Hansen, County Counselor

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

10:05 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 Resource Director; Michele Reid, Human Resources Manager; and Brittany Phillips, Budget and Finance Officer, recess into executive session for personnel matters of non-elected personnel, an exception to the Kansas Open Meetings Act, and to protect the privacy of the employee(s), to discuss the conduct of employees, the open meeting to resume in the County Commission Chambers at 10:25 a.m.

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

10:25 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

10:25 AM Michael Hawthorne, Assistant County Counselor

14. Data Center and Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) Moratorium

Hansen presented the Data Center and Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) Moratorium resolution.

Move to approve "Resolution No. 051826-18, A Resolution establishing an interim development control and providing for the suspension of certain types of use applications and building permits and consideration on any land within the

unincorporated area of Riley County; and directing that new potential amendments to the Riley County Land Development Regulations be reviewed and developed.”

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

Ward asked the Board for any direction for staff if the storm forecast is potentially dangerous for staff.

Adjournment

Move to adjourn.

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

12:00 PM **Law Enforcement Agency Meeting**
15. Law Board Agenda Packet