



**Board of Riley County
Commissioners
Regular Meeting
Minutes
June 4, 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
Michael Hawthorne	Assistant County Counselor	Present	8:30 AM
Rob Voelker		Present	8:32 AM
Michael Boller	Noxious Weed/HHW Director	Present	9:00 AM
Amanda Webb	Planning/Special Projects Director	Present	9:25 AM
Cory Meyer	IT/GIS Director	Present	9:35 AM
Brittany Phillips	Budget and Finance Officer	Present	9:45 AM
Oleg Alba	AcreStrong	Present	10:20 AM
Darrin Hobbs	Zoning Enforcement Officer	Present	10:20 AM
Bob Isaac	Planner	Present	10:20 AM
Jake Voegeli	Manhattan Brewing Company	Present	10:50 AM
Daniel Skucius	Extension Director	Present	10:55 AM
Andrea DeJesus	Fair Board	Present	10:55 AM

Pledge of Allegiance

Public Comment

Hawthorne provided a family-friendly joke to the Board.

Commission Comments

Ford's Comments:

Monday morning, I left our meeting early to attend the American Legion Boys State of Kansas up on Kansas State University. Had the opportunity to meet with a group of student who are centered on civic engagement on county related issues. I gave them a high-level overview of what a county commissioner does and explained our duties and responsibilities. Had a great dialog with the group and they asked some very detailed question. I was impressed by just how engaged and informed they are. We also had state level officials and municipal officials there for this discussion as well.

Tuesday afternoon I listened in on the National Association of Counties new webinar "Grassroots Academy Series." This webinar highlighted to us county officials the tools and resources available to properly engage in federal advocacy. We also received a practical overview of existing platforms and features that support outreach and engagement with the guidance on how to use them. It was rather informative to say the least.

I spent Tuesday and part of Wednesday at work. It is starting to pick up and get rather busy as it typically does this time of the year.

Wednesday evening, I met and had dinner with my group of concerned constituents once again. We had a good dialog on the topic of data centers, the possible Green Valley annexation, funding of emergency services, the upcoming Supreme Court Constitutional Amendment and the 2026 mid-term elections in general.

Also had a conversation with a rural county citizen who has some issues with neighboring short-term rentals that is in their neighborhood. Not for sure what we can do there and I have to admit that is rather frustrating on my part.

McKinley's Comments:

Tuesday morning, I spent a lot of time at the Health Department talking to five different employees. We have good people working there. In the afternoon we had the meeting with the contractor on the EM/Fire remodel. There were a lot of people working there getting things finished up. Tuesday evening, I attended the Leonardville City Council meeting. They are held up on a few things because the attorney quit last month.

Wednesday I went to a meeting at ATA bus. As someone there told me, my calendar lied to me. I met with one of the employees and caught up on some things they are doing and will be back in 3 weeks for the actual meeting.

Focke's Comments:

Tuesday I had to cancel some appointments to go to my dentist. I will need to go back on Monday, June 8th and have a tooth extracted. After that appointment, I came into the office to get some work done. I also met with Elizabeth Ward to go over the upcoming schedule for PIO interviews.

Wednesday, I had an appointment with my orthopedic doctor (must be the week for doctor appointments) and then came downtown to meet with the screening group for the PIO position. We interviewed an applicant and then discussed it afterwards. We have about four more to meet with next week.

Business Meeting

1. Riley County Employee Action Forms

Move to approve the requested Riley County Employee Action Forms.

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 Riley County Employee Action Forms for the following:

- Liam Shill, a new hire, as a Seasonal Laborer, in the Public Works/Parks Department, at a Range Seasonal, at \$14.00 per hour.
- Michael McNatt, an Intensive Supervision Officer I, in the Community Corrections Department, for Separation from County Service, effective June 12, 2026.
- David Williams, a new hire, as an as needed Intern, in the Health Department, at a Range TASND.
- Colton Watson, a new hire, as a part time Customer Service Representative I, in the Public Works Department, at a Range 4, at \$21.09 per hour.
- Jesus Rocio Lopez, a Customer Service Representative, in the Treasurer's Department, for Separation from County Service, effective June 15, 2026.

Review Minutes

2. Board of Riley County Commissioners - Regular Meeting - Jun 1, 2026 8:30 AM

Move to approve the minutes of June 1, 2026 as presented.

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

Review Tentative Agenda

3. Tentative Agenda

Press Conference Topics

9:00 AM Russel Stukey, Emergency Management Director

4. Staff Update

Stukey presented the Emergency Management/Fire District #1 staff update.

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

5. Staff Update

Boller presented the Noxious Weed/HHW staff update.

9:30 AM Amanda Webb, Planning/Special Projects Director

6. Planning & Development Staff Update

Webb presented the Planning and Development staff update.

9:45 AM Cory Meyer, IT/GIS Director

7. Staff update

Meyer presented the IT/GIS staff update.

10:00 AM Jacob Hansen, County Counselor

8. Administrative Work Session

Hansen discussed the Riley County Counselor's Office projects.

10:20 AM Amanda Webb, Planning/Special Projects Director

9. Data center presentation

Alba presented information on data centers.

10:50 AM Jessie Hubbard, Administrative Assistant II

10. County Special Alcohol Fund Allocations

Hubbard presented the County Special Alcohol tax fund allocations.

Ford expressed concerns about funding conference attendance rather than direct impact in the community.

McKinley asked about the funding.

Hubbard said additional breweries in the county have increased the revenue.

The Board suggested moving the funding toward direct community impact rather than

paying for conference registrations.

Move to approve the recommendation of the County Special Alcohol Tax Fund allocations of \$10,000.00 to Be Able, \$5,866.95 to Riley County Community Corrections, \$5,200.00 to Pawnee Mental Health, & \$5,000.00 to The House Café. Inc.

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

10:55 AM Jake Voegeli, Manhattan Brewing Company

11. Riley County Fair Alcohol Sales

Voegeli and DeJesus stated the Fair Board approved the sale of alcohol at the Riley County Fair. They stated they would like to place a beer garden in a specific grass area.

Skucius reported as a Kansas State Employee he has to let the Fair Board handle this matter.

Voegeli said they will have two entrances with security guards to monitor alcohol staying within the area.

Focke stated the Fair should be a family event without alcohol.

Move to approve the Riley County Fair alcohol sales.

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

11:15 AM Michael Hawthorne, Assistant County Counselor

12. 2820 Nelson's Landing Nuisance Abatement

Hawthorne presented the Statement Pursuant to the Riley County Unincorporated Area Nuisance Abatement Act.

Move to approve the Statement Pursuant to the Riley County Unincorporated Area Nuisance Abatement Act.

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

Ford said apparently the City of Manhattan has a plan to de-annex residential areas due to revenue not covering expenditures.

McKinley thanked Webb for the presentation on the data centers.

McKinley asked about proceeding on the appropriations allocations and wage classifications.

Phillips said staff is bringing several things back to the Board on June 11, 2026.

Adjournment

11:29 a.m. Move to adjourn.

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