



**Board of Riley County
Commissioners
Regular Meeting
Minutes
June 11, 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
Brittany Phillips	Budget and Finance Officer	Present	8:30 AM
Rob Voelker		Present	8:30 AM
Christian Bishop	Manhattan Area Chamber of Commerce	Present	9:40 AM
Amy Manges	Register of Deeds	Present	9:40 AM
Daryn Soldan	Manhattan Area Chamber of Commerce	Present	9:40 AM
Michele Reid	Human Resources Manager	Present	9:40 AM
Amanda Webb	Planning/Special Projects Director	Present	11:20 AM
Daniel Skucius	Extension Director	Present	11:20 AM

Pledge of Allegiance
Public Comment
Commission Comments

Ford's Comments:

Was certainly grateful to hear that no one was injured from Thursday night's EF-2 tornado near the city of Riley. Some damage to structures took place but everyone was safe.

Thursday afternoon I met with my bariatric doctor. We are putting some things on hold till we

can see what is making me feel unwell here recently.

Thursday afternoon I met with the Flint Hills Mental Health Task Force via Zoom. After some introductions and welcomes we got several community partner updates and a review of the April action including a follow-up with the Stepping Up program and jail coordination, an Area Agency invitation and educational opportunities related to insurance, Medicaid, and TRICARE resources. Had a discussion on Community Snapshot, and the barriers everyone is facing. We also discussed system barriers as well including inpatient and crisis system bottlenecks, justice system competency issues, and special population gaps, strategic initiatives included homeless coordination efforts, and behavioral health disaster response.

Friday I was at Stormont Vail going through a series of tests and labs to get caught back on things and to see what is making me feel so bad here recently.

Spent the weekend at home resting and getting caught up and hopefully prepared for the upcoming week.

Hopefully everybody is safe and sound from Monday's round of severe weather. It did quite the widespread damage in and around Manhattan and I know I was out of power for nearly four hours into Tuesday morning.

Tuesday morning, I spent time cleaning up water in my apartment as it flooded pretty good this time.

Also, on Tuesday I went up to Stormont Vail to get some more labs and testing work done.

Also, on Tuesday I spoke with Ben Ledo from MakeMyMove on some possible steps moving for us here in Riley County as we are moving way along the current restraints. They want to meet with the State Treasurer's office to see if we can push even further ahead if all possible. Ben plans to send out an email for all of us to review and decide.

Worked a half a day on Wednesday and went to see the specialist on the health issues I seem to be having.

Also, on Wednesday I attended the June Board of Directors meeting of the Manhattan Area Chamber of Commerce via Zoom. It was moved due to some items that are currently on the table. After call to order a motion was made to approve the agenda. Items on the Consent Agenda included the minutes from April 21, 2026 and finances through May 31, 2026. Discussion items included a statement on the Green Valley Incorporation by John Conley as well as a statement on Edge 3.0 by Jason Smith. There was also a discussion on data centers by Daryn Soldan and the US 24 Corridor by Nancy Burton. We also had several updates and events from other board members as well as the other Chamber staff.

Later Wednesday afternoon I attended the June meeting of NACo's Community Economic and Workforce Development. After some opening remarks from our Chair Angela Conley, we heard from Erich Chatham from NACCAD and he discussed the "Build America, Buy America" initiative. After that we got our usual legislative update from Jared Grigas Associate Legislative Director, NACo and Kevin Moore Legislative Assistant, NACo and they gave us an update on all the happening up on Capitol Hill. We finished off with general discussion and

updates from around the country

Wednesday night was also the Chamber's Business After Hours at RC McGraws Bar and Grill with the Kaw Valley Rodeo and Q103.5 Radio Station. Well attended event as it usually is and it leads up to both the Kaw Valley Rodeo and the Riley County Fair next month.

McKinley's Comments:

Tuesday morning was the Veterans Coalition meeting. More planning for the Veterans Day parade.

Tuesday afternoon I met with Trent Armbrust from K-State Foundation. He was trying to sell me on the TIF for the Campus Edge project.

Wednesday was a Special Law Board meeting. We had three executive sessions.

Focke's Comments:

Monday after our meeting I did a quick lunch and then went to the Clerk's office to join the committee interviewing two candidates for the PIO position. That night was a long one - watching and checking on the intense storm that came through the area. I have another large tree down in the backyard. Fortunately, this one isn't in the creek area and should be able to get out of the yard easily. All available people are out cleaning up the damages, which are extensive. Thanks to all our employees out there doing the hard work!

Tuesday I joined the interviewing committee for two more candidates for the PIO position. Afterwards, I went to the counselor's office to sign an Emergency Declaration for the storm damages on Monday.

Tuesday evening, I attended the monthly meeting of the Democratic Party that included a presentation by a candidate for House District 67, Brenda Bandy.

Wednesday I spent the first part of the day reviewing documents for the special Law Board meeting Wednesday evening. I also reviewed the agenda and documents for today's meeting, caught up on phone calls and e-mail messages, and reviewed documents for the reorganization work session.

Business Meeting

1. Municipal Advisor Agreement

Move to approve the Municipal Advisor Agreement with Greg Vahrenberg of Raymond James & Associates.

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

NAYS:	None
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2. 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:

- Zach Pielsticker, a Volunteer Firefighter, in the Fire District #1 Department, for Separation from County Service, effective June 1, 2026.
- Landon Weide, a Volunteer Firefighter, in the Fire District #1 Department, for Separation from County Service, effective June 1, 2026.
- Macy France, a new hire, as a Seasonal Laborer, in the Public Works/Parks Department, at a Range Seasonal, at \$14.42 per hour.

3. Discuss Intergovernmental Luncheon at Rockin K's at 12:00 (noon) Monday, June 22nd

4. Approve payroll/accounts payables (when completed)

Move to approve the payroll vouchers in the amount of \$801,063.79 and the following warrant vouchers for June 12, 2026:

2026 Budget

County General	\$ 1,617,412.13
Health Department	169,856.33
Capital Improvements Fund	19,454.75
Economic Development	5,000.00
Emergency 911	967.28
Solid Waste	14,525.67
County Building	23,478.45
RCPD Levy/Op	30,517.02
Riley Co Fire Dist #1	15,816.34
2023 R&B Project Sales Tx	1,085.45
University Park W&S	764.80
Hunters Island Water Dist	10.29
Carson Sewer Benefit Dist	245.59
Moehlman Bottoms	4.80
Valleywood Operations	63.39

Konza Water Operations	29.50
University Park Lagoon	75,672.00
KDOC Adult Services	20,890.02
KDOC Juvenile Services	10,970.06
KDOC Juv Reinvestment	1,245.72
21st Jud Dist DC ADSAP	75.00
City Alcohol Funds	80.00
RL Salary Appropriations	1,166.28
Adult Services Carry-Over	4,500.00

TOTAL \$ 2,013,830.87

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

Review Minutes

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

Review Tentative Agenda

6. Tentative Agenda

Don't add anything later on the 18th.

Press Conference Topics

9:00 AM

Executive Session to discuss department head evaluation

7. Jacob Hansen, County Counselor

9:00 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, and Elizabeth Ward, Human Resources 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 9:30 a.m.

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

9:30 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

9:30 AM Brittany Phillips, Budget and Finance Officer

8. 2027 Appropriation Budget Work Session

Phillips presented the 2027 Appropriation Budget request.

Ford spoke in favor of approving the Chamber's request.

McKinley recommended reducing Pawnee by \$200,000 and the Chamber reduction by \$22,000.

The Board agreed by consensus to lower the Pawnee amount to \$454,048, discuss the Chamber further and leave the other appropriations as requested.

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

9. Economic Development Update

Soldan discussed economic development activities.

Bishop presented an update on Fort Riley activities.

10:00 AM David Adams, Interim Health Department Director

10. Health Department 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

Adams presented the Health Department 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

10:20 AM Jacob Hansen, County Counselor

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

10:20 a.m. Move the County Commissioners, including Chairwoman Focke, Vice Chairman Ford, and Commissioner McKinley, with Jacob Hansen, County Counselor, Elizabeth Ward, Human Resources 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 10:52 a.m.

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

10:52 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

10:52 a.m. Move the County Commissioners, including Chairwoman Focke, Vice Chairman Ford, and Commissioner McKinley, with Jacob Hansen, County Counselor, Elizabeth Ward, Human Resources 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 11:20 a.m.

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

11:20 a.m. Move the Board of County Commissioners come out of executive session.

RESULT:	Passed
MOVER:	Commissioner John Ford
SECONDER:	None
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

11:20 AM Board of County Commissioners

12. Reorganization Work Session

Ward presented the County Administrator position description and Professional Pay Scale.

McKinley suggested II or JJ level for the County Administrator position.

Ward said she can get the pay rate of County Administrators for other counties for the Board to review.

Focke said it should be lower than the KK level.

Ford expressed concern with the quality of and number of candidates if the pay is not higher.

The Board agreed by consensus to grade the County Administrator position at a JJ.

Move to approve the organizational chart as presented.

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

Phillips presented the County Administration department budget.

The Board agreed by consensus to budget the \$34,000 for Training & Registration in

the Administrative Department.

Ward asked the Board if they want the Administrative Assistant from the Administrative Department Budget.

The Board agreed by consensus to remove the Administrative Assistant and the Human Resources Assistant from the Administrative Department budget.

Ellermann and Meyer discussed a potential permeant location for the County Administrator's Department in the downtown complex.

Discussion followed on potential locations.

The Board agreed with the relocation plan presented.

Adjournment

12:07 p.m. Move to adjourn.

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