



**Board of Riley County
Commissioners
Regular Meeting
Minutes
June 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
Brittany Phillips	Budget and Finance Officer	Present	8:30 AM
Michael Hawthorne	Assistant County Counselor	Present	8:30 AM
Elizabeth Ward	Human Resources Director	Present	8:31 AM
John Ellermann	Public Works Director/County Engineer	Present	8:38 AM
David Adams	Emergency Services Director	Present	8:41 AM
Michele Reid	Human Resources Manager	Present	8:48 AM
Shilo Heger	Treasurer	Present	9:00 AM
Bruce McMillan	Baker McMillan Architects	Present	9:50 AM
Daniel Skucius	Extension Director	Present	10:00 AM
Rob Voelker		Present	10:15 AM
Major Brad Jager	RCPD	Present	10:15 AM
All Health Department Staff		Present	11:00 AM

Pledge of Allegiance
Public Comment
Commission Comments

Ford's Comments:

Monday afternoon I listened in on the National Association of Counties webinar “Policy Insider”. It is a bi-weekly online offering an overview of full federal policy landscape impacting counties. This week’s webinar discussed policy on affordable housing, artificial intelligence, the data center conversation taking shape around the nation, and land surface infrastructure just to name a few. It was a robust presentation and very informational as we head into summer. Also, they discussed the upcoming Annual Conference and Exposition in New Orleans next month.

Tuesday morning, I came down to get some work done here at the office. I also followed up with Brittany Phillips, Budget and Finance Officer and several others to discuss the budget and its current challenges we are facing.

Tuesday afternoon I spent at Stormont Vail to finish up some of the lab tests I still need to get done. The results are coming back one by one and seem good at this point, so there will be more to come apparently.

Wednesday afternoon I met with Jeff Wick from WTC at Flight Crew to talk and discuss some economic development ideas and other things related.

Also Wednesday afternoon I met with my nutritionist online to continue developing a plan for a new diet, with other issues we are just going to hold and serve and wait till July’s appointment to start getting into specific details that will match up with any given prognosis.

Later Wednesday I attended the June Board of Directors Meeting of the Flint Hills Metropolitan Planning Organization via Zoom. After some opening welcomes and introductions, we got a financial update from the organization including a monthly financial update and major expenses and revenue, staff updates from the MPO, and KDOT's major discussion was the Blue River 2nd Connection Study which they have completed 13 of the 24 scheduled meetings. Action items included approval of the April meeting minutes, approval of the 2026-2029 Transportation Improvement Plan Amendment #5, and the Unified Planning Work Program Revision B. The only discussion item on the agenda was the Fort Riley Safe Passage program and the May ridership number to start out.

McKinley’s Comments:

Monday was a three and a half hour Law Board meeting. Obviously it took a lot of discussion but the budget for next year was finalized.

Tuesday I met with Brittany Phillips to go over some budget items. In the evening, I attended and commented at Manhattan City's discussion of the Edge 3.0 district and the Star Bonds and TIF district financing. It passed Manhattan City 5-0. Now that the district is set up they will see the finances of the district and vote again on August 18th.

Wednesday I attended the board meeting for the Juvenile Detention Facility. The facility serves a 15 county area. The main discussion was to open more detention facility in the Ottawa County Jail. The number of juveniles being detained has skyrocketed. The 5-year average use is 4,300 days. This year in 5-months they have used 3,870 days. Riley County has already used

113% of our 5-year average. The average number housed has been 12 per day. Today they have a total of 25.

Focke's Comments:

Monday, after our BOCC meeting, I went to the Law Board meeting at Manhattan City Hall. It was a long meeting that included several executive sessions. Afterwards, I had a physical therapy session and then went home for the evening.

Tuesday afternoon I met with Brittany Phillips on some analysis of some 2027 budget numbers and her suggestions going forward. She will make a presentation to the Board in a public session.

That evening, I watched the Manhattan City Commission meeting on television and the presentation of the proposed "Edge District" across from the football stadium.

Wednesday I picked up some information at Be Able. It was a very busy place so didn't stay too long. They are always busy when I've been there, and a great asset to the community. Afterwards, I stopped into the Riley County Offices and had a short meeting with Jacob Hansen and later, a phone call with Michael Hawthorne.

Business Meeting

1. Riley County Employee Action Forms

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

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

- Barbara Johnson, an Election Worker, in the Clerk/Election Department, for Separation from County Service, effective June 15, 2026.
- Dakota Marteney, a new hire, as a Volunteer Firefighter, in the Fire District #1 Department, at a Range TASND.
- Josh Aguero, a new hire, as a Volunteer Firefighter, in the Fire District #1 Department, at a Range TASND.

Review Minutes

2. Board of Riley County Commissioners - Regular Meeting - Jun 15, 2026 8:30 AM

Move to approve the minutes of June 15, 2026 as presented.

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

Review Tentative Agenda

3. Tentative Agenda

Press Conference Topics

9:00 AM

Shilo Heger, Treasurer

4. Staff Update

Heger presented the Treasurer's Office staff update.

9:15 AM

Jacob Hansen, County Counselor

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

9:15 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 Michele Reid, Human Resources Manager, 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 employee(s), the open meeting to resume in the County Commission Chambers at 9:20 a.m.

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

9:20 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

9:20 AM

Jacob Hansen, County Counselor

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

9:20 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, Michele Reid, Human Resources Manager, and David Adams, 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 working condition of employee(s), and 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 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

9:30 AM

Jacob Hansen, County Counselor

7. Executive session for attorney-client consultation

9:30 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 Michele Reid, Human Resources Manager, recess into executive session pursuant to the attorney-client consultation an exception to the Kansas Open Meetings Act, regarding confidential legal advice with respect to a confidential investigation, the open meeting to resume in the County Commission Chambers at 9:50 a.m.

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

NAYS:	None
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9:50 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

9:50 AM

John Ellermann, Public Works Director/County Engineer

8. Bid opening for Riley County IT & GIS Offices Remodel

The Board of County Commissioners opened the following bids for the Riley County IT & GIS Offices Remodel:

Company	Base Bid	Working days	Start Date
Riley Construction 201 6 th Street Wamego, KS 66547	\$1,365,540.00	180 days	07/06/26
Schultz Construction 4345 Rory Circle Manhattan, KS 66502	\$1,287,900.00	190 days	08/03/26
BHS Construction 301 South 4 th Street, Suite 210 Manhattan, KS 66502	\$1,326,700.00	180 days	09/01/26

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

10:00 AM

Daniel Skucius, Extension Director

9. Extension Staff Report

Skucius presented the Extension staff report.

10:15 AM

Brian Peete, RCPD Director

10. RCPD Update

Jager presented the Riley County Police Department update.

Hansen announced the address for the 11:00 a.m. meeting will be held at 2101 Claflin Road where the Riley County Commission Meetings were previously held.

Adjournment

Move to adjourn after the 11:00 a.m. meeting at 2101 Claflin Rd.

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

10:30 AM Travel to Health Department at 2101 Claflin Road**11:00 AM Health Department Staff Meeting at 2101 Claflin Road**

Focke said the Board wanted to update the staff on the Health Department investigation conducted. She stated the investigation has now been completed and thanked everyone who went through the interview process. She said the details of the investigation will remain confidential.

Focke said the Board has received the resignations of the Health Department Director, WIC Supervisor, and MCH Supervisor. She stated Adams will remain as the interim director. She said we will now work on moving forward.

Ford stated he agreed with Focke's remarks.

Adams said he has withdrawn his name as a candidate for the Health Department Director position.

Adams thanked staff for all their work on the various programs. He said we need to keep moving things forward.

The Board discussed potential restructuring within the Health Department.

11:23 Adjourned.

Announcements

Riley County Offices will be closed Friday, June 19th in observance of Juneteenth Day holiday.