



**Board of Riley County
Commissioners
Regular Meeting
Minutes
July 30, 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
Vanessa Gray	PIO	Present	8:30 AM
Derick Schroller	IT Specialist	Present	8:30 AM
Molly Mathis	REACH Vice Chair	Present	8:30 AM
Cory Meyer	IT/GIS Director	Present	8:30 AM
David Adams	EMS/Ambulance Director	Present	8:30 AM
Rob Voelker		Present	8:34 AM
Elizabeth Ward	Human Resources Director	Present	8:36 AM
Arturo Mauricio	KMAN	Present	8:39 AM
Shilo Heger	Treasurer	Present	9:55 AM
Tande Lentz	Assistant Vehicle Supervisor	Present	9:55 AM
Donna Borgerding	Vehicle Supervisor/Deputy Treasurer	Present	9:55 AM
Michael Boller	Noxious Weed/HHW Director	Present	10:00 AM
Amanda Webb	Planning/Special Projects Director	Present	10:00 AM
Anna Burson	Appraiser	Present	10:00 AM
Lori Muir	Administrative Services Manager	Present	10:00 AM

Amy Manges	Register of Deeds	Present	10:15 AM
Gary Olds		Present	10:25 AM
Megan Lewis	Community Corrections Director	Present	10:27 AM

Pledge of Allegiance**Public Comment**

Mathis presented the Employee of the Month to Ethan Eastes, EMS/Ambulance Department.

Commission Comments

Ford's Comments:

Spent Monday at home not feeling overly well so I did some work from home and stayed out of the extreme heat. I did check out Session Three of the Kansas Department of Health and Environment series "A Commissioner's Guide-Public Health Funding: How Public Health is Financed in Kansas". It was a very interesting Zoom call with a lot to still unpack. I still have a lot of the same questions, and it has provided me with several more. I do have a lot of respect for those working in this area of public health and I will honestly say it can and by in large is very convoluted at times. I will get with their staff to have some of my questions answered and will catch up on the previous two series before as well.

Also, on Monday I took time to go through the entire recap of the Community Economic and Workforce Development Committee meeting recap at the Annual Conference and Exposition in New Orleans. The CEWD Policy Steering Committee hosted presentations focused on housing, workforce development, community revitalization, and rural economic development. Speakers shared practical strategies for addressing housing challenges, leveraging technology to improve decision-making, strengthening community connections, and advancing economic opportunity across urban and rural counties just to name a few.

Tuesday and Wednesday I also worked for most of the day, generally improving my work and efforts across the board which is encouraging.

Tuesday afternoon I attended the July Board of the Directors meeting of Pawnee Mental Health. As usual we started with a Finance Oversight Committee to discuss the financials, budget, and various other items. The general meeting started with call to order, approval of minutes, new introductions followed by a program presentation by Colleen O'Connell on school-based services, followed by a Chief Financial Officer report by Lindsay Miller and the Finance Oversight Committee report as well to review the up-to-date June financials. We then got a Chief Executive report from Mike Rezkalla, a FY26 Annual Report for Kristin Higbee, a Market and Development report, and discussed other business including sign-up sheets for city and county commissions for Recovery Month Proclamations. We will meet again in September.

Also Tuesday afternoon I spoke with Ben Ledo from MakeMyMove in regard to the Home in the Heartland grant. I know we will be discussing that a bit later in the meeting so I will leave the details out until then.

Extremely grateful of the cooler temperature and the couple of rounds of rain we have enjoyed over the last few days as well.

McKinley's Comments:

Monday afternoon I met with Jacob Hansen to go over some things discussed at the meeting earlier. I then went to Health Department to see how things are going and get some feedback on the reorganization. I had good discussions with Jan Scheideman, Shanika Rose, and AJ Gamino. I believe we are headed in the right direction.

Tuesday I went to the Riley City Council meeting. They had some questions about the Health Department and I was able to answer their questions and relieve their concerns.

Wednesday I had a call with the Riley Countian. She is working on an article on the fairground proposal that was shown during the fair and had some questions.

Focke's Comments:

Monday I attended the Intergovernmental Luncheon meeting (didn't make the lunch), with a presentation by Jim Gandt from the Manhattan Area Technical College. It was a good update on the many programs they have going and are planning to initiate.

I've had several conversations with constituents on the proposal for the fairgrounds and also for the RCPD grant application; however, I don't have a copy of the application and will pick up the packet from the Law Board Meeting on Thursday.

Wednesday, I came into the office to try and organize all the papers from our budget discussions but finally gave up and made some return phone calls and e-mails. I also got the flyers from Vanessa Gray for the Keats meal on Wednesday night. I took most of the flyers to the meal for handouts and left the rest in the Community Center.

Business Meeting

1. Audit Consent Authorization

Move to approve the audit consent letter as presented.

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

2. Contract Agreement with BHS Construction for the Riley County IT/GIS Office Building

Move to approve the Contract Agreement with BHS Construction for the IT and GIS Office Remodeling in the amount of \$1,326,700.00.

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

3. Appoint Michael Crimaldi to the Big Lakes Developmental Center Advisory Board

Move to sign the appointment letter and approve "Resolution No. 073026-37, A Resolution appointing a representative to the Big Lakes Developmental Center Advisory Board."

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

4. Riley County Employee Action Form

Move to approve 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:

- Hannah Coates, a Paramedic, in the EMS/Ambulance Department, for Separation from County Service, effective August 15, 2026.
- Douglas Russell, for a status change, position change, as a Division Fire Chief, in the Fire District #1 Department, effective August 1, 2026.
- Jake Konrardy, for a status change, title change, as a Deputy Fire Chief, in the Fire District #1 Department, effective August 1, 2026.

Review Minutes

5. Board of Riley County Commissioners - Regular Meeting - Jul 27, 2026 8:30 AM

Move to approve the minutes of July 27, 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

6. Tentative Agenda

Press Conference Topics

9:00 AM

Jacob Hansen, County Counselor

7. Administrative Work Session

Hansen discussed the Court's decision on the Kilner Nuisance Abatement Case, of guilty on all three counts.

Hansen said he met with Dave Lewis, Lance Sharp, and Extension on the proposed relocation of the Riley County Fairgrounds.

9:20 AM

Executive Session to discuss department head evaluation

8. David Adams, Emergency Services Director

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, and David Adams, Emergency Services 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 9:50 a.m.

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

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

Rich Vargo, County Clerk

9. Preservation of Ballots and Election Records

Vargo presented the request for the appointments for the Preservation of Ballots and Election Records.

Move to approve the Democratic Representative Lori Krause and the Republican Party Chair Betty Mattingly-Ebert to observe the destruction of ballots for the 2024 Primary and General Elections and the 2025 City/School Election.

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

10:00 AM Elizabeth Ward, Human Resources Director

10. County Clerk Pay Grade reclassification

Ward presented the county clerk pay grade reclassification recommendation from Professional Pay Grade HH to Professional Pay Grade GG.

Heger asked why motor vehicle compensation is being considered.

Ford said because of the salary and extra benefit.

Vargo spoke on the reclassification of the clerk pay grade.

Move to approve the reclassification of the County Clerk position from Professional Pay Grade HH to Professional Pay Grade FF, with an annual salary range of \$119,802 to \$192,132, effective with the appointment of a new County Clerk.

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

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

11. Home in the Heartland Grant Application Round 2

Webb discussed the Home In the Heartland Grant Application Round 2.

Ford recommended proceeding at the 15 household level.

Move to approve staff preparing an application for the next round of Home in the Heartland grant funding for 15 movers at the amount discussed: \$198,000.00 total dollar amount, and \$12,870.00 in in-kind match amount and to prepare the updated contract with MakeMyMove.

RESULT:	Passed
MOVER:	Commissioner John Ford
SECONDER:	Commissioner Greg McKinley

AYES:	Greg McKinley, Kathryn Focke, John Ford
NAYS:	None

10:30 AM Brittany Phillips, Budget and Finance Officer**12. 2027 Budget Work Session**

Phillips presented the 2027 Budget Development Worksheets.

McKinley asked if anyone had any thoughts on the 2.80% COLA.

Ford stated at the minimum of the Professional Pay Scale Employees, the total payroll is \$3,076,837.

Ward discussed the impact of pay compression when you grant a lower % increase for the professional positions rather than the rest of the staff.

Ford suggested 1.5% on the Professional Scale and 2% for the rest of the staff.

McKinley stated they also get a step which is approximately 3% increase.

Ford mentioned no merit for 2027.

Ward discussed the impacts on recruitment and retention of employees.

Focke said she would prefer to stay at the 2.8%

Move to approve the 2027 COLA of 2.8%.

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

Ford said he is a no on approving the new administrative assistant.

McKinley stated he somewhat agrees, but to just fund it to be hired on July 1, 2027.

Move to approve the administrative assistant in the administrator's office to be funded for half of 2027, effective July 1, 2027.

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

McKinley stated with the adjustments made he wants to keep the total mills at 38.012 at what they agreed on and to reduce the CIP transfer.

Phillips discussed the opioid request and how much the Board wants to fund them.

The Board agreed to discuss further on Monday.

The Board agreed the 2027 appropriations are correct.

Adjournment

Move to adjourn.

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