

## ***Minutes of February 2, 2026***

The Board of County Commissioners met in regular session on Monday, February 2, 2026, at 9 a.m., in the Commissioners Chambers. Chairman Mark Pruett, Commissioner Keith Kelly and Commissioner Linda Gerhardt were present. County Counselor Todd Luckman was absent. County Clerk Kristie Richter recorded the minutes. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Cathleen McMahon, Ali Holcomb and Levi Henry were also present.

Commissioner Kelly made a motion to approve the agenda except for Todd Luckman who is out sick, Commissioner Gerhardt 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion. The motion carried 3/0.

The Commissioners went through some of the mail they received for the week. This included a request from United Way for funding their Junior Leader Reader program. Information from Ks Development Finance Authority on the Beginning Farmer project financed for Will A. Heinen, Information from NEK Environmental Services for a wastewater system at 13232 178<sup>th</sup> road, Mayetta stating they do not have a completed permit from the above address and a report from Jackson County Fair Association for the 2025 operating financial statement.

The Commissioners signed the Warrant Register for Banner Lake's purchase of an ATV. Keith commented that he was out at the lake and Kurt gave him a ride in it and they toured the lake. Keith wanted to state publicly how blessed we are to have Kurt as the Lake administrator. He takes great pride in his job and everything at the lake is taken care of and kept up.

Scott Kieffaber, Public Works Director and Joe Gardner, Road and Bridge Superintendent, were in to give their weekly report. Scott gave the Commissioners the bridge report for the year. Scott presented 2 bids for supplies for culverts. The first was from Welbourn Sales Inc. at \$67,350.97, the second was from Contech Engineered Solutions at \$62,854.00. Keith made the motion to approve the low bid from Contech to purchase tubes for culverts, Linda 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion. The motion passed 3/0. Scott reported that Developmental Services will no longer be cleaning at Road and Bridge but will continue to work at the Recycling Center. The office staff at the Road

and Bridge office would like a stipend to do the extra work to clean the office and bathroom. Scott didn't believe it was necessary to give them a stipend and the commissioners agreed. Scott received an answer from the BIA stating they are shorthanded and they don't have the time to look at the bridges in question right now. Scott said the bridges in question have not been inspected since 2024. Scott believes the county should go ahead and get the inspections done to cover the county for any liability issues. He said it would cost approximately \$50,000.00. Keith asked Scott to send a letter to the Tribal Department stating the County will pay half of the cost. Since it is unknown who is responsible for the bridges the county would pay half the cost and the Tribe would pay the other, then once it is decided who is the party responsible there would be reimbursement paid to them. Scott will get the inspection scheduled and the letter sent to the Tribal Road and Bridge on the proposal and the cost. Scott would like to host LTAP classes in Jackson County. He needs a commitment of a certain number of attendees before he can schedule a date. Scott will ask other counties if they are interested if training is held here in Jackson County. The cost is \$65.00 a person to attend. A lady called and asked if the speed could be reduced on old 75 Hwy. Scott said 45 miles per hour isn't a bad speed so he would suggest she call the Sheriff's Department to put a complaint in about people speeding. Scott and Joe suggested 2 options for dust control this year. Option 1 would be to cut T 142-166 road and not do it at all, option 2 is that they would reduce F 226-230, 226 F-G, G 226-230, 254 T-W, T 142-166, and 246 Q to Prairie Lake roads to half rate. Half rate is half the amount that would normally be put on the road. Joe and Scott would like to do option 2. Last year we proposed 30 miles, but since the budget was cut to stay at the RNR we don't have the money for that. He chose roads that don't have many homes on them. The commissioners agreed that option 2 would be their choice also. They also removed 222 Q4-T Road from the dust control list for this year. The roads that will be getting the full-rate application are: W 134-142, 134 W-Y, 142 R-W and U4 94-142. Keith would like to have a conversation about the leveling of the roads and what roads would be done. Scott presented the Hamm rock pricing for this year. They worked on tree cutting on 206<sup>th</sup> R-R4 road, 218<sup>th</sup> T4-V road, T4 210<sup>th</sup> -218<sup>th</sup> road, 190<sup>th</sup> U-W, 105th and U4 and 106th and U4 road. Commissioner Kelly made the motion to go into executive session for non-elected personnel matters to discuss employee performance for 10 minutes

to begin at 9:40 a.m. to reconvene in the Chambers to include Scott, Joe, Kristie and the Commissioners. Commissioner Gerhardt 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion. The motion passed 3/0. Opened session at 9:50 a.m. in the chambers. No decisions were made.

Amy Entriiken, District Court Clerk, met with the commissioners to present a bid for the 4 new laptops. Commissioner Gerhardt made the motion to approve the purchase from Net at Work in the amount of \$6720.08, Commissioner Kelly 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion. The motion passed 3/0. Keith asked if she knew anything about the company as they were taking over for the prior vendor, she did not but will look into it. Amy said they would keep 2 of the older laptops to use in the courtroom. She also presented bids for the small courtroom sound system. She received 4 bids but only brought 2 down as the other 2 were much higher. The McClelland bid was at \$25,432.25 and Revive IT came in at \$14,066.80. The difference between the 2 bids is largely due to the volume control on the McClelland bid. Commissioner Gerhardt made the motion to approve the low bid from Revive IT in the amount of \$14,066.80, Commissioner Kelly 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion. The motion passed 3/0.

Rowdy Meyer was in to inform the Commissioners that on March 4th at the Evangel United Methodist Church there will be a townhall meeting and he is inviting the commissioners to attend. They all agreed they would be there. The address is 277 Pennsylvania Ave., and the meeting will start at 7:00 pm. This will be a meeting for the citizens to discuss common concerns without a time constraint for speaking. It will be an open forum discussion.

Commissioner Kelly made the motion to donate \$4000.00 out of the alcohol fund to provide books for the elementary schools in Jackson County. They will fund the Rocket Scientist program. Commissioner Gerhardt 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion. The motion passed 3/0.

Kate Immenschuh, Appraiser/Zoning Officer, met with the Commissioners to discuss moving the zoning department out of her office. They discussed revitalization and where it would be, Kate thinks it needs to stay in the appraiser's office, Keith said that he believes the paperwork should start in the zoning department. Keith said there are some changes he would like to see with Revitalization. She asked why the big rush and Keith responded that her office is extremely busy so they should separate the offices now and not later. Kate said the maps can be moved to the zoning department

and there are filing cabinets that have old building permits which are permanent records and can also be moved to the new office. Mark asked if a digital copy would be acceptable, Kate said yes but hard copies must be kept. Kate said she thinks the separation of duties will be a process as they will still maintain what they do now. It will eliminate the zoning compliance and meetings and if regulations are redone that will no longer be in her office. With her Appraisal duties, she doesn't have time to do the zoning as it has increased the workload over the last few years. The Board decided to advertise for a Zoning Administrator position.

Bethany Lee, County Attorney, came in to update the Commissioners and let them know what her requests will be for 2027 budget. Last year it became very clear that 3 full-time attorneys are needed. Bethany cited 3 other counties and their case load compared to Jackson County.

Wabaunsee County has 1 attorney with 112 criminal cases and 654 traffic, Pottawatomie County has 192 Criminal cases and 634 traffic with 3 attorneys, Jefferson County has 190 criminal cases and 480 traffic with 3 full time attorneys and 1 part time. Jackson County has 443 criminal cases and 1206 traffic with just 2 attorneys. She said she can't staff both courtrooms as needed with the number of cases they have and needs a 3<sup>rd</sup> attorney. She said her interns are great and handle what they can, but some things require her or Amy to handle. She presented some of the starting salaries for other counties that ranged from \$88,000-\$134,000. Mark asked her to check with the surrounding counties and see what the wages are for the same size county as ours. Bethany told the Commissioners that she is looking for a grant for a Victim Advocate to have in her office. She believes the grant has a 100% match waiver. She would need to reapply each year for the grant. She has a space that would be able to be converted into an office space for this individual.

Commissioner Gerhardt made the motion to approve the minutes of January 26th, Commissioner Kelly 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion. The motion passed 3/0.

Commissioner Kelly made the motion to go into executive session for personnel matters involving non-elected personnel to discuss personnel matters for 15 minutes to begin at 10:57 a.m. to reconvene in the chambers to include the clerk and the commissioners. Opened at 11:11 a.m. in the chambers. No decisions were made.

Chairman Pruett announced that the 78<sup>th</sup> Jackson County Conservation District Annual Meeting will be held on February 11th at the First United Methodist Church and dinner will begin at 6:00 p.m. with the meeting following at 7:00 p.m. He plans to attend.

Commissioner Kelly made the motion to adjourn for the day, Commissioner Gerhardt 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion, the motion passed 3/0. Meeting adjourned at 11:13 a.m.

Attest:

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Kristie Richter  
Jackson County Clerk

Board of County Commissioners  
Jackson County, Kansas

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Mark Pruett, 1<sup>st</sup> District

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Linda Gerhardt, 2<sup>nd</sup> District

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Keith Kelly, 3<sup>rd</sup> District