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# OTTAWA COUNTY, KANSAS

## BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONER'S MINUTES

### FEBRUARY 10, 2025

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#### **Commissioners Present:**

Commissioner Carla Grund, First District

Commissioner Scott Mortimer, Second District

Commissioner Duane Morris, Third District

#### **1. Call To Order**

Commissioner Mortimer called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m., followed by the flag salute.

Commissioner Grund led the group in opening prayer.

#### **2. Executive Session – Confidential Data**

MOTION – To move to executive session under the Confidential Data exception to the Kansas Open Meetings Act to discuss trade secrets for 30 minutes to return at 8:32 a.m. to the Commissioner's Room with Katie Vanderoff, Owen Kindall, and Cade Rensink from Choose Ottawa County and Tammi Cox, County Clerk.

MOTION BY– Commissioner Grund

SECONDED BY – Commissioner Morris

**MOTION PASSED 3-0**

MOTION – To extend the executive session under the Confidential Data exception to the Kansas Open Meetings Act to discuss trade secrets for 5 minutes to return at 8:37 a.m. to the Commissioner's Room with Katie Vanderoff, Owen Kindall, and Cade Rensink from Choose Ottawa County and Tammi Cox, County Clerk.

MOTION BY– Commissioner Grund

SECONDED BY – Commissioner Morris

**MOTION PASSED 3-0**

No action taken

#### **3. Public Forum**

Jerry Ayers proposed as a starting point to the budget to have department heads cut their budget by at least 7.5% in good faith except the clerk's office due to extra duties and the Road & Bridge department due to the need to update bridges.

#### **4. Choose Ottawa County Goals Update**

Katie Vanderhoff, Owen Kindall, and Cade Resnick from Choose Ottawa County reviewed their 2024 accomplishments and 2025 goals. In 2024, Choose Ottawa County wrote/facilitated 22 different grants, created table tents that are placed on tables in eating establishments in the county to direct people to the Choose Ottawa County website, ordered sidewalk QR codes to be placed when it gets warmer, created a page for Travel KS website, has sold \$11,550.00 in Choose Ottawa County cards since November 2023, hosted listening tours in the different cities, increased social media followings, facilitated clean up days in Minneapolis and Delphos, created 10 different routes on Gravel KS, update the Minneapolis Housing Assessment Tool, wrote an application to have Rock City Park to become part of the Sunflower Summer program, created a county-wide gift guide for Christmas, completed the Choose Ottawa County website, along with working with other organization and attending meetings. The goals for 2025 include the Delphos splash pad grants and fundraising, work on housing, the Kansas Entrepreneurship Challenge, and marketing Ottawa County in various ways. Cade Resnick mentioned the opportunity for tourism with the World Cup coming to Kansas City.

#### **5. North Central Flint Hills Area Agency on Aging Update**

Sarah Hodges, Health Department Director, gave information regarding the North Central Flint Hills Area Agency on Aging (NCFHAAA). Commissioner Grund asked how much we pay to NCFHAAA. Hodges stated we pay them \$3,000.00 - \$4,000.00 but have not received an invoice for 2025. They should be meeting with the county every year. Commissioner Mortimer stated that people are not getting their food from the program. Hodges stated we have two representatives on the board of NCFHAAA and have been kept up on what is happening. We have requested a list of items that shows everything they do or provide for Ottawa County. Hodges suggested not paying for 2025 until we receive the list. Commissioner Mortimer asked if we are still paying for a site manager. Hodges stated yes, the employee is an NCFHAAA employee, and they have interviews set up for a cook this week and next week. She presented a letter she drafted to the Executive Director for NCFHAAA. Commissioner Grund stated the letter needs to include we have gone four months without meals for our seniors and we have concerns. Hodges stated we need to get the right people at the table and ask how this happens. She stated Saline County is interested, but there are pieces that need to be figured out and what that system looks like. Hodges stated we need to ensure services are provided; Golden Wheel is just the host for those services. Commissioner Grund stated the County does not want to begin purchasing food or providing meal services. She desires NCFHAAA to hire a cook and restore the meal service. Commissioner Mortimer stated that by not serving people, they aren't getting the nutrition that they should. Commissioner Morris asked about alternative programs to replace NCFHAAA. Hodges stated Cloud County has a relationship with the grocery store and work with them to keep the cost of food down. She stated if NCFHAAA would hire a cook, we would be in business. Hodges stated we need to find a way to tap into state funds and go around NCFHAAA. Commissioner Morris stated we need to let the state know our regional office is not providing the services. Commissioner Grund asked the letter to the NCFHAAA be firmer and to work with the County Clerk on finalizing the letter.

#### **6. Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month Proclamation**

Tanya Paul, Outreach Specialist for DVACK, presented the Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month Proclamation. 1 in 3 adolescents in the United States is a victim of physical, emotional, or verbal abuse from a dating partner, a figure that far exceeds victimization rates for other types of violence affecting

youth. 1 in 10 high school students have been purposefully hit, slapped, physical or emotionally abused by a dating partner. High school students who experience physical violence in a dating relationship are more likely to use drugs and alcohol, are at a greater risk of suicide and are much more likely to carry patterns of abuse into future relationships. Young people victimized by a dating partner are more likely to engage in risky sexual behavior and unhealthy dieting behaviors and the experiences may disrupt normal development of self-esteem and body image. Nearly half of teens who experience dating violence report that incidents of abuse took place in a school building or on school grounds. Only 9% of teens who are in an abusive relationship ever tell anyone about the abuse, and 81% of parents surveyed either believe teen dating violence is not an issue or admit they do not know if it is one. By providing young people, parents, and professionals with education about healthy relationships, warning signs of abuse, and relationship skills and by changing attitudes that support violence, we recognize that dating violence can be prevented. The Domestic Violence Association of Central Kansas needs all of Ottawa County to work toward ending teen dating violence by empowering young people to develop healthier relationships, assisting victims in accessing the information and supportive services they need, creating better and more resources for young people in need, instituting effective intervention and prevention policies in schools, and engaging in discussion with family members and peers to promote awareness and prevention of the quiet epidemic of teen dating violence. Paul stated tomorrow is wear orange day to bring awareness to teen dating violence awareness month.

**MOTION – To declare February 2025 as Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month in Ottawa County**

**MOTION BY– Commissioner Morris**

**SECONDED BY – Commissioner Grund**

**MOTION PASSED 3-0**

## **7. Emergency Management Update**

Marie Ballou, Emergency Management Director, gave an overview of the job for Emergency Management along with some additional responsibilities she performs. She also provided the statute that requires a county to have emergency management and a list of some duties and training requirements for the job. Ballou reviewed upcoming trainings. Commissioner Grund asked if the EMPG is a reoccurring grant and if it is used for anything specific. Ballou stated the amount of the grant fluctuates every month and it is used for her salary. Commissioner Grund asked about the KCEM. Ballou stated it is a requirement to become a Kansas certified emergency manager. There is a two-year completion requirement and recertified every two years after. Commissioner Morris asked if being a part of the Local Emergency Planning Committee is a requirement. Ballou stated yes, it is a federal requirement, she also discussed the risk management meetings and the importance of those to get back part of the premiums from KCAMP. Ballou stated the emergency operation plan is scheduled to be redone this year.

## **8. Recess**

**MOTION – To recess for five minutes**

MOTION BY- Commissioner Mortimer  
SECONDED BY - Commissioner Morris  
**MOTION PASSED 3-0**

#### **9. Department Head Monthly Meeting**

The following departments provided a monthly update to the Commission: County Attorney, Register of Deeds, Road & Bridge, Sheriff's Department, Health Department, Emergency Management, Appraiser, Facilities, and Clerk/Election Office. Sheriff Thornton asked about the meeting Commissioner Grund attended with Karl Leech, Minneapolis EMS Director, regarding the proposed closing of the Miltonvale EMS. Sheriff Thornton noted that if the Miltonvale EMS closes, changes will be needed to the 911 mapping. Commissioner Grund handed out spreadsheets for each department to fill out for initial budget preparation. She stated if department heads/elected officials have ideas on how to streamline the budget or cut costs to bring it to the Commission.

#### **10. Executive Session - Non-Elected Personnel**

MOTION - To move to executive session under the Non-Elected Personnel exception to the Kansas Open Meetings Act to the discuss non-elected personnel for 10 minutes to return at 11:24 a.m. to the Commissioner's Room with Marie Ballou, Emergency Management Director.

MOTION BY- Commissioner Morris  
SECONDED BY - Commissioner Grund  
**MOTION PASSED 3-0**

MOTION - To extend the Executive Session under the Non-Elected Personnel exception to the Kansas Open Meetings Act to the discuss non-elected personnel for 10 minutes to return at 11:37 a.m. to the Commissioner's Room with Marie Ballou, Emergency Management Director.

MOTION BY- Commissioner Grund  
SECONDED BY - Commissioner Mortimer  
**MOTION PASSED 3-0**

No action taken

#### **11. Recess**

MOTION - To recess for five minutes  
MOTION BY- Commissioner Mortimer  
SECONDED BY - Commissioner Morris  
**MOTION PASSED 3-0**

#### **12. Sheriff's Office Uniform Allocation**

Phillip Murrow, Sanitarian with NCKLEPG, presented a contract for sanitarian services. Commissioner Grund asked about the services they provide. Murrow stated some examples are well and wastewater permits, and they help design lagoon or lateral systems. He stated the cost to the county is \$1,500.00

for the year; but the first year would be prorated from January to June 30. NCKLEPG services seven other counties: Mitchell, Jewell, Smith, Osbourne, Rooks, Phillips, and Norton. Murrow stated well testing is not required in Ottawa County. The Commission will review the contract and discuss it at the next meeting.

### **13. North Central Regional Planning Commission Letter of Support**

Tammi Cox, County Clerk, presented a letter of support the North Central Regional Planning Commission Community Wildfire Defense Grant Program offered through the Kansas Forest Service. The development of this plan will help identify high-risk areas and improve pre-planning efforts by bringing together multiple fire districts.

MOTION – To approve to sign the letter of support for the Community Wildfire Defense Grant program through the North Central Regional Planning Commission.

MOTION BY– Commissioner Grund

SECONDED BY – Commissioner Morris

**MOTION PASSED 3-0**

### **14. Resolution 25-05 Year End Transfer of Funds**

Tammi Cox, County Clerk, presented the Resolution 25-05 End of Year Transfer of Funds. Commissioner Grund asked about budget authority limitations of the funds being transferred into budgeted funds. Cox stated she will look into it and will re-present the resolution at the next meeting.

### **15. Approval of Accounts Payable and Commission Minutes**

MOTION – To approve accounts payable for \$94,325.01

MOTION BY– Commissioner Grund

SECONDED BY – Commissioner Morris

**MOTION PASSED 3-0**

MOTION – To approve the minutes of February 03, 2025

MOTION BY– Commissioner Grund

SECONDED BY – Commissioner Morris

**MOTION PASSED 3-0**

### **16. Commissioner Comments**

Commissioner Morris discussed his meeting with the Culver Fire Department, he stated they are reluctant to dissolve the fire district and will try to see what he can do to help. Commissioner Grund asked about solid wastewater budgeted revenues and expenses. Commissioner Grund read a response from Scot Loyd with Loyd Group, LLC CPAs regarding Ottawa County doing the budget in house. Scot stated he would provide review services, if requested, at \$300.00 per hour.

### **17. Adjournment**

MOTION – To adjourn the meeting at 12:50 p.m.

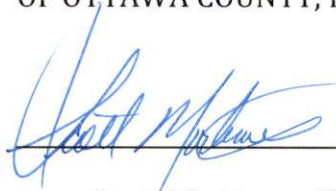
MOTION BY– Commissioner Morris

SECONDED BY – Commissioner Grund

**MOTION PASSED 3-0**

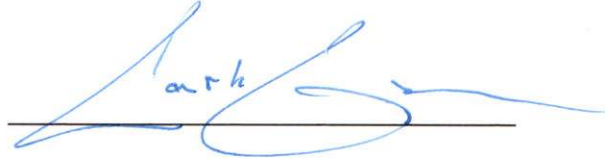
ADOPTED this \_\_\_ day of \_\_\_ 2025.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
OF OTTAWA COUNTY, KANSAS



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Scott Mortimer, Chairman



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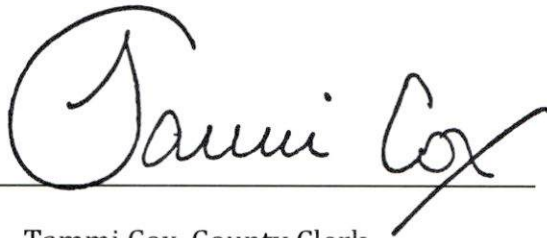
Carla Grund, Member



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Duane Morris, Member

ATTEST:



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Tammi Cox, County Clerk