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# OTTAWA COUNTY, KANSAS

## BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONER'S MINUTES

### JANUARY 26, 2026

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#### **Commissioners Present:**

Commissioner Carla Grund, First District  
Commissioner Scott Mortimer, Second District

#### **Commissioners Absent:**

Commissioner Duane Morris, Third District

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

Commissioner Mortimer called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. Commissioner Grund led the group in opening prayer followed by Commissioner Mortimer with the flag salute.

#### **2. Public Forum**

Brandon Copple discussed hiring a grant writer. He stated Commissioner Morris and himself visited a solar farm in Beloit and discussed how they utilize their solar farm.

#### **3. Clerk Comments**

Tammi Cox, County Clerk, discussed upcoming meetings. She stated there is a township meeting on February 19<sup>th</sup>. She also stated she has been in contact with the hospital to meet with the Commission. It was decided to schedule, and at least one Commissioner attend, the hospital meeting on April 20<sup>th</sup>. Cox stated there is a regional Commission meeting on April 8<sup>th</sup>, and Ottawa County will be hosting. The meeting will still be in Concordia. The Commission picked the menu for the meeting. Cox discussed scheduling of a meeting with the Service Corps, Fair Board, Rec Commission, and USD 239. It was the consensus of the Commission to schedule the meeting for the later part of February. Cox stated Ottawa County will be receiving their first disbursement of transient guest tax funds.

#### **4. Executive Session – Attorney/Client Privilege**

MOTION – To move to executive session under the Attorney/Client exception to the Kansas Open Meetings Act to discuss confidential and privileged information for 10 minutes to return at 8:33 a.m. to the Commissioner's Room with Chris Smith, Public Works Administrator, Joe Mullen, Road and Bridge Supervisor, Jeff Ebel, County Attorney and Tammi Cox, County Clerk.

MOTION BY– Commissioner Grund

SECONDED BY – Commissioner Mortimer

**MOTION PASSED 2-0**

No action taken

## **5. Property Line Grant Township**

Commissioner Mortimer stated in the matter of the property line in Grant Township, County Attorney Jeff Ebel will contact Mr. Haney and see what we need to do to resolve the matter.

## **6. Bridge Discussion and Road & Bridge Update**

Chris Smith, Public Works Director, stated he was contacted by Cloud County about a bridge they own that is on a road maintained by Ottawa County on the county line. They are wanting to apply for a grant and negotiate with the county to split the cost. Smith stated we won't know the cost until they apply. He stated it would be good as neighbors to help with some of the cost. We helped in the past when the bridge was built. Smith stated the grant is an 80/20 grant. It was the consensus of the Commission that are interested in talking and getting more information. Smith gave a road & bridge update. He stated they have been pushing snow all weekend. Commissioner Grund asked if they started preparing before the storm. Smith stated they prep during the day but didn't go out Friday night. They don't run an overnight crew. They did run all day Saturday with no blades because they gel up, but they went out Sunday and this morning. Commissioner Grund asked about spraying down the middle of roads. Smith stated they run 20 miles an hour and wouldn't have time to run both lanes. Commissioner Mortimer stated they are doing a good job in his area.

## **7. Emergency Management Update**

Jason Gipson, Emergency Management Director, gave an emergency management update. Commissioner Grund asked what happens from an emergency management standpoint. Gipson stated he had been watching and attending meetings with the national weather service leading up to the snow event, but nothing in the event triggered any needed response. Commissioner Grund asked about going to fires. Gipson stated it depends on the severity and the need to provide services. He stated he wants to support the vision and intent of the Commission. He also stated some of the things he does to prepare includes getting the emergency management trailer ready and the vehicle ready. Commissioner Mortimer stated he thinks it's important to provide support if there are multiple agencies involved and discussed getting a vehicle that would pull the emergency management trailer better.

## **8. Buckeye Township Appointment**

Tammi Cox, County Clerk, discussed appointing Shane Campbell for Buckeye Township Trustee.

MOTION – To approve the recommendation of Shane Campbell for Buckeye Township Trustee.

MOTION BY– Commissioner Grund

SECONDED BY – Commissioner Mortimer

**MOTION PASSED 2-0**

## **9. Blue Store Discussion**

Commissioner Mortimer stated he met with the superintendent for USD 239 about uses for the Blue Store. He stated the school district is not sure if they want to buy it yet. Commissioner Mortimer

suggested having the superintendent come next week to discuss their ideas. Commissioner Grund discussed the Rural Champions grant addressing childcare needs and possible collaboration with the school district.

#### **10. Policy Review**

Tammi Cox, County Clerk, presented Policy 20.08 Consensual Relationship Policy; Policy 20.10 Workplace Lactation Policy; Policy 20.12 Position Descriptions; Policy 20.15 Post Offer Strength Test; Policy 20.16 Attendance and Punctuality; Policy 20.17 Confidentiality; Policy 20.21 Voluntary Terminations/Resignations; Policy 20.23 Exit Evaluations; Policy 30.02 Pay Deductions and Pay Corrections; Policy 50.08 Drug & Alcohol Testing; Policy 50.09 Drug & Alcohol Testing CDL Employees.

MOTION – To approve Policy 20.08, 20.10, 20.12, 20.15, 20.16, 20.17, 20.21, 20.23, 30.02, 50.08 as presented and 50.09 with recommended changes

MOTION BY– Commissioner Grund

SECONDED BY – Commissioner Mortimer

**MOTION PASSED 2-0**

#### **11. Service Corps**

Doug Plummer, Service Corps, stated they are working on insurance coverage for the carnival rides. He stated it may be possible to insure them as steel structures when they are not in use and is looking into event insurance.

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

MOTION – To approve the accounts payable in the amount of \$229,831.93

MOTION BY– Commissioner Grund

SECONDED BY – Commissioner Mortimer

**MOTION PASSED 2-0**

MOTION – To approve the minutes for January 12<sup>th</sup> as presented

MOTION BY– Commissioner Grund

SECONDED BY – Commissioner Mortimer

**MOTION PASSED 2-0**

#### **13. Executive Session – Attorney/Client Privilege**

MOTION – To move to executive session under the Non-Elected Personnel exception to the Kansas Open Meetings Act to discuss non-elected personnel for 10 minutes to return at 10:02 a.m. to the Commissioner’s Room with Tammi Cox, County Clerk.

MOTION BY– Commissioner Grund  
SECONDED BY – Commissioner Mortimer  
**MOTION PASSED 2-0**

No action taken

#### **14. Commissioner’s Comments**

Commissioner Mortimer stated he had also discussed the Blue Store with the Wedel’s out of respect, and they are happy about the possibilities. Commissioner Grund reminded the Commission about the retirement party for Marie Ballou, former Director of Emergency Management, on Friday. She also stated the Bennington Fire District, with grant writing help from Jim Davidson, received a \$6,800.00 grant for a high-performance fan to clear smoke, heat, and gases during a fire and purchasing two cordless power tower lights.

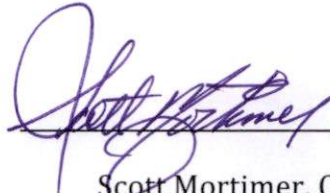
#### **15. Adjournment**

MOTION – To adjourn the meeting at 10:10 a.m.

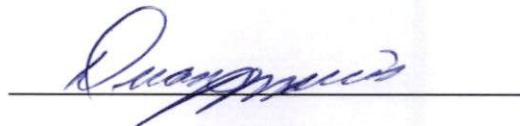
MOTION BY– Commissioner Grund  
SECONDED BY – Commissioner Mortimer  
**MOTION PASSED 2-0**

ADOPTED this 2<sup>nd</sup> day of February 2025.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
OF OTTAWA COUNTY, KANSAS

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
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

