
OTTAWA COUNTY, KANSAS

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONER'S MINUTES

MAY 18, 2026

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. Commissioner Grund led the group in opening prayer followed by Commissioner Mortimer with the flag salute.

2. Public Forum

Taylor Belvill, Dancing Birds Studios, requested to have the Blue Store as a backup for their recital. Commissioner Mortimer asked about the number of people. Belvill stated she would limit the number of people if they had to use the Blue Store. It was the consensus of the Commission to allow it to be used as a backup and have Belvill work with Keith Coleman, Facilities Director and Tammi Cox, County Clerk.

3. Commissioner's Comments

Commissioner Mortimer discussed the upcoming storm. He stated Chris Smith, Public Works Director, discussed sending a truck to Cloud County if they need a truck and we do not need it for our county. It was the consensus of the Commission to send the truck if it is not needed. The Commission reminded the public to err on the side of caution. Commissioner Mortimer stated Alan Wedel called him about storing a fryer in the basement of the Blue Store so they can renovate the doughnut shop for a community kitchen.

4. 2027 Appropriation Request – Bennington EMS

Tony Swetson, Bennington EMS Director, gave an overview of the Bennington EMS budget request. He presented a 2027 total budget of \$369,000.00. Commissioner Grund requested additional financial information which Swetson agreed to present to the Commission on June 1, 2026.

5. 2027 Appropriation Request – Choose Ottawa County

Owen Kindall, Choose Ottawa County, gave an overview of the Choose Ottawa County budget request. They are requesting funding in the amount of \$70,000.00; this would be a \$5,000.00 increase from 2026.

6. 2027 Appropriation Request – Central Kansas Mental Health Center

Glenna Phillips, Central Kansas Mental Health Center, gave an overview of the Central Kansas Mental Health Center budget request. They are requesting funding in the amount of \$35,885.00; this would be a 3% increase from 2026.

7. Public Comment

Rich Boucek, Ada Fire Department, stated that last night, they were informed by the Sheriff's Office not to blow the tornado siren, trying not to create a panic. Boucek stated this jeopardized the public's safety.

8. 2027 Appropriation Request – Ottawa County Conservation District

Shannon Myer, Conservation District Manager, gave an overview of the Conservation District budget request. They are requesting funding in the amount of \$30,000.00; this would be a \$5,000.00 increase from 2026. Commissioner Grund requested a copy of the 2025 financial statements. Myer agreed to send this information to County Clerk Tammi Cox.

9. Executive Session – Non-Elected Personnel

MOTION – To move to executive session under the non-elected personnel exception to the Kansas Open Meetings Act to discuss Appraiser's Office position for 8 minutes to return at 9:45 a.m. to the Commissioner's Room with Tammi Cox, County Clerk.

MOTION BY– Commissioner Grund

SECONDED BY – Commissioner Morris

MOTION PASSED 3-0

MOTION – To open the data entry position in the Appraiser's Office

MOTION BY– Commissioner Grund

SECONDED BY – Commissioner Morris

MOTION PASSED 3-0

10. Sheriff's Office Discussion

Sheriff Russell Thornton discussed the tornado warning system in Ada. Ada controls their own tornado warning. He stated if they need to set it off, they need to set it off. Sheriff Thornton will review this with the Ada Fire Department.

11. Clerk Comments

Tammi Cox, County Clerk, reminded the Commission there will be no meeting May 25th in observance of Memorial Day. She stated department head budget presentations are May 26th. The Commission agreed to do a work session for appropriations after these presentations. Cox discussed participating in the Kansas State Fair. The fair is inviting counties to participate in the Kansas State Fair America 250th Celebration. There are two components: A Kansas County Map Exhibit where each county would contribute representative items to reflect the character and strengths of their community and a County America 250th Pole Banners where each county will have a banner created to showcase their county. The cost to participate is \$250.00 and Cox suggested using the Miscellaneous fund. Cox stated she has

spoken with Shelby Walker, Register of Deeds, who is also willing to help. It was the consensus of the Commission to participate in the program. Cox also discussed the 2027 Commission budget. She asked if the Commission would like to keep their 2027 Commission budget flat. It was the consensus of the Commission to present their budget as the same rate as 2026. Commissioner Grund presented a proposed budget for keeping it flat. Cox also scheduled the appropriation discussion for the June 1st meeting.

12. Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Grund stated she spoke with the Hardesty's about the landfill. She gave a history of the landfill and stated there are only 17 solid waste landfills in Kansas. Commissioner Grund stated she met with the Bennington Fire Department to work on their 2027 budget. She also noted the email from Darrell Riekenberg, our Silver Haired Legislator delegate, thanking the County for its donation. Commissioner Grund shared that she met the motorcycles heading to Washington D.C. on I-70 for Run for the Wall on Sunday and was thankful to all veterans and service members.

13. 2027 Appropriation Request – Minneapolis EMS

Karl Leech, Minneapolis EMS Director, gave an overview of the Minneapolis EMS budget request. They are requesting funding in the amount of \$648,702.00; this would be a \$199,855.00 increase from 2026. The Commission directed Commissioner Grund to meet with Barry Hodges, Minneapolis City Administrator, to get more information regarding these requested funds.

14. High Risk Rural Road Agreement for Engineering Services Discussion

Chris Smith, Public Works Director, and Joshua Beckman, Kirkham, Michael & Associates, Inc., presented an agreement for engineering services. This is for a High Risk Rural Road project for FY2028. The Kansas Department of Transportation will provide 90% of the funds for the construction of the project. The project is located on North 170th Road, from K-18 Highway to Homestead Road for three miles. The estimated design engineering costs were \$60,000.00.

MOTION – To move to approve the engineering agreement with Ottawa County and Kirkham, Michael & Associates, Inc. for the KDOT project from 170th Road to Homestead Road to be done in 2028.

MOTION BY– Commissioner Grund

SECONDED BY – Commissioner Morris

MOTION PASSED 3-0

15. Approval of Accounts Payable and Commission Minutes

MOTION – To approve consent agenda that includes accounts payable in the amount of \$118,798.05 and the Commission minutes for May 11, 2026.

MOTION BY– Commissioner Morris

SECONDED BY – Commissioner Grund

MOTION PASSED 3-0

16. Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Morris discussed purchasing a sign to put outside the door to help decrease the noise.

MOTION – To move to let the County Clerk buy the sign presented to the Commission for \$25.58.

MOTION BY– Commissioner Morris

SECONDED BY – Commissioner Grund

MOTION PASSED 3-0

17. Adjournment

MOTION – To adjourn the meeting at 11:33 a.m.

MOTION BY– Commissioner Mortimer

SECONDED BY – Commissioner Morris

MOTION PASSED 3-0

ADOPTED this 1st day of June 2026.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF OTTAWA COUNTY, KANSAS



Scott Mortimer, Chairman

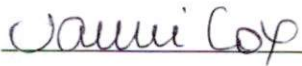


Carla Grund, Member



Duane Morris, Member

ATTEST:



Tammi Cox, County Clerk

