

OTTAWA COUNTY, KANSAS

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONER'S MINUTES

APRIL 14, 2025

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

2. Jerry Moran Visit

Senator Jerry Moran stopped in to meet the Commission and speak with them for a few minutes on his way through the County.

3. FCMI Quarterly Review of Health Insurance

Julie Yarmer and Darrin Booth, FCMI, gave a quarterly review of health insurance. They went over the current insurance plan and stated the county is running 2.9% below where the rates were set in 2025 in the traditional plan and 9.03% under for the HSA plan. Commissioner Grund asked about how projections were made. Yarmer stated its divided into the 12 months, it is not weighted by end of year compared to beginning of year. Yarmer also reviewed the dental insurance and costs up to February 2025. Commissioner Grund stated we had significant increase in Blue Cross and Blue Shield premiums over the last three years. Yarmer stated yes, they look at claims that came in and other claims that were covered just under Blue Cross Blue Shield. Grund asked what we can do as a county to reduce our medical costs. Yarmer the reserves can be used to offset; claims are why there was a jump. She stated the medical trend is 12-18%.

4. Axon Camera Contract

Sheriff Russell Thornton presented an Axon Camera contract. The Axon camera contract is due to renew in August; renewing early doesn't change anything about the renewal. He stated the contract is a five-year contract and the price is going up. The last contract was \$4,700.00 per year; the new contract is \$8,000.00 per year. This is mainly due to going from limited storage to unlimited storage. He stated the Sheriff's Office has used Axon for ten years and it is a good camera system. Sheriff Thornton also stated the Sheriff's Office received \$500.00 from Rock the Park for the K-9 program.

5. Speed Limit Sign for 180th

Undersheriff Jerry Ziolkowski stated he looked into the speed limit on 180th and found a resolution from June of 2018 where the speed limit was changed to 40 mph. He will work with the Road and Bridge Department to add more signs.

6. Department Head Meeting

The following elected officials/department heads met with the Commissioners to give a monthly update: Truette McQueen, County Appraiser; Jeff Ebel, County Attorney; Sarah Hodges, Health Department Director; Marie Ballou, Emergency Management Director, Sherriff Rusell Thornton; Chris Smith, Public Works Director; Shelby Walker, Register of Deeds; Keith Coleman, Facilities Director; Tammi Cox, County Clerk; JoDee Copple, County Treasurer.

7. Unfilled Positions in Road and Bridge

Chris Smith, Public Works Director, discussed three open positions: Blade Operator, Mechanic, and Laborer. Right now, the starting rate is \$15.00 without a CDL and \$16.00 with a CDL.

8. 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 wages for 15 minutes to return at 10:26 a.m. to the Commissioner’s Room with Chris Smith, Public Works Director and Joe Mullens, Road and Bridge Supervisor.

MOTION BY– Commissioner Grund

SECONDED BY – Commissioner Morris

MOTION PASSED 3-0

MOTION – To extend the executive session under the non-elected personnel exception to the Kansas Open Meetings Act to discuss non-elected personnel for 8 minutes to return at 10:35 a.m. to the Commissioner’s Room with Chris Smith, Public Works Director and Joe Mullens, Road and Bridge Supervisor.

MOTION BY– Commissioner Grund

SECONDED BY – Commissioner Morris

MOTION PASSED 3-0

No action taken

9. Approval of Accounts Payable and Commission Minutes

MOTION – To approve accounts payable for \$133,814.86

MOTION BY– Commissioner Grund

SECONDED BY – Commissioner Morris

MOTION PASSED 3-0

MOTION – To approve the minutes of April 07, 2025

MOTION BY– Commissioner Grund

SECONDED BY – Commissioner Morris

MOTION PASSED 3-0

10. Clerk Comments

Tammi Cox, County Clerk, stated the Kansas National Resource Coalition is hosting a dinner in Manhattan on April 21st. Commissioner Grund stated she would attend. Cox also reminded the Commission of the budget meeting this afternoon from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. with department heads.

11. Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Grund noted she attended a Bennington Fire Department and EMS meeting and was given a tour of the facility. Commissioner Grund and Morris discussed the regional Commission meeting held last week. They discussed the county coroner, tax sales, EMS, housing development, and employee benefits. Commissioner Morris discussed the museum and stated he would be attending their next meeting. Commissioner Grund discussed the employee benefits committee and solid waste. Commissioners Mortimer, Grund and Morris will be attending the Solid Waste Meeting and Commissioner Grund and Morris will be attending the upcoming budget meeting with Scot Loyd this afternoon.

12. Adjournment

MOTION – To adjourn the meeting at 11:30 a.m.

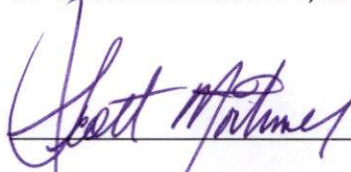
MOTION BY– Commissioner Mortimer

SECONDED BY – Commissioner Morris

MOTION PASSED 3-0

ADOPTED this 21 day of April 2025.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF OTTAWA COUNTY, KANSAS



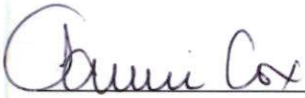
Scott Mortimer, Chairman

Carla Grund, Member



Duane Morris, Member

ATTEST:



Tammi Cox, County Clerk



April 2025 Proclamation for Sexual Assault Awareness Month

WHEREAS, April is designated as Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM), a time to educate the public, honor survivors, and raise awareness about the prevalence of sexual violence; and

WHEREAS, 1 in 2 women and nearly 1 in 3 men will experience some form of contact sexual violence in their lifetime, revealing the widespread and far-reaching impact of sexual assault on individuals and communities; and

WHEREAS, in the state of Kansas, one incident of rape is reported to law enforcement every 7 hours, 51 minutes, and 23 seconds, underscoring the urgent need for continued awareness, education, and efforts to prevent sexual violence; and

WHEREAS, according to the Kansas Bureau of Investigations, a rape victim is most often female (94.6%), with 62.3% of victims under the age of 25. Offenders are typically male (88.7%), with 18.9% of them being between the ages of 15 and 20 years old; and

WHEREAS, the crime of rape is spread relatively evenly throughout the week, with Saturdays being the highest day of occurrence, accounting for 18.1% of all reported incidents. The majority of these incidents occur between midnight and 2:00 AM, a critical time for prevention, intervention, and awareness; and

WHEREAS, within DVACK's 7 county catchment area served by the Concordia satellite office, 11 incidents of rape were reported in 2023, yet only 2 arrests were made, representing just 18.2% of reported cases resulting in an arrest. This statistic highlights the need for stronger enforcement of justice, better support for survivors, and improved law enforcement response to sexual violence; and



WHEREAS, we recognize the many challenges faced by survivors of sexual violence, including fear of not being believed, societal stigma, lack of resources, and barriers in the legal system, which contribute to underreporting and impede justice for many; and

WHEREAS, as a community, we must work together to address the issues surrounding sexual violence, support survivors in their recovery, and advocate for a justice system that holds offenders accountable while providing necessary services and protections for victims;

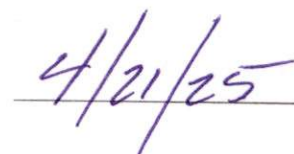
WHEREAS, the Domestic Violence Association of Central Kansas, also known as DVACK, provides 24/7/365, free and confidential services to victims of sexual violence in Ottawa County; and

WHEREAS, DVACK advocates are available 24/7 at (785)827-5862 or toll free at 1-800-874-1499.

NOW, THEREFORE, the Ottawa County Board of Commissioners, do hereby proclaim the month of April 2025 as **Sexual Assault Awareness Month**.

 Signature
 Signature

Signature

 Date