

OTTAWA COUNTY, KANSAS

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONER'S MINUTES

JUNE 09, 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 Grund led the group in opening prayer followed by Commissioner Mortimer with the flag salute.

2. Fire District Budget Discussions

Commissioner Grund shared that she had met with representatives and/or fire chiefs for each of the fire districts to discuss their budgets. She explained to them their entire budget and the impact of their cash carryover balance to the ad valorem dollars they levy. She believes the 2026 budgets will correctly levy the funds they desire. The Commission discussed communicating more with the fire districts to keep them more informed.

3. RV Sewer Dump Expense at the Fairgrounds

Tammi Cox, County Clerk, stated the previous Commission had approved to pay up to \$1,200.00 to help move the RV sewer dump move at the fairgrounds. The bill was split between the City of Minneapolis, Ottawa County Fair Board, and Ottawa County. The final cost, after the community grant of \$1,800.00 was \$2,856.22. Ottawa County, the City of Minneapolis, and the Fair Board will each pay \$952.07 of this remaining balance.

4. Employee Benefits Discussion

JoDee Copple, County Treasurer, reviewed the recommendation from the Employee Benefit Committee. Commissioner Grund stated she appreciates all the time spent, including the many meetings and hours spent by the members of the committee who served with her, including: Sheriff Russell Thornton; Marie Ballou, Emergency Management Director; Cameron Mullens, Road and Bridge; Joe Pruitt, Human Resources; JoDee Copple, County Treasurer; and Tammi Cox, County Clerk. The committee went out for request for proposals to five companies and narrowed it down to three. The three companies presented to the committee and it was the consensus of the committee to switch insurances from FCMI to Bukaty. Commissioner Grund shared that in 2025 the County pays \$53.00 per employee per month plus \$16,000 representing 10% of insurance premium savings using FCMI for administrative costs. Bukaty will charge only \$35.00 per employee per month for administrative services. These administrative costs are in addition to the insurance provider premiums. Commissioner Grund stated there is a 120 day window

to make this change to Bukaty for 2026 to enable them to provide options and a smooth rollout to employees. After the Commission decides to switch insurance agencies, a contract will be drafted by Bukaty, reviewed by the County Attorney, and presented to the Commission to approve. FCMI will be notified of the termination of their contract for 2026 and Bukaty will then begin requesting claim information from FCMI to search for insurance providers. The Employee Benefits Committee will work with Bukaty and review their proposals and bring their recommendations to the Commission.

MOTION – To switch employee insurance from FCMI to Bukaty Insurance for 2026

MOTION BY– Commissioner Morris

SECONDED BY – Commissioner Grund

MOTION PASSED 3-0

5. 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 policies for 10 minutes to return at 8:58 a.m. to the Commissioner's Room with Chris Smith, Public Works Administrator; JoDee Copple, County Treasurer; and Tammi Cox, County Clerk.

MOTION BY– Commissioner Morris

SECONDED BY – Commissioner Grund

MOTION PASSED 3-0

No action taken

6. Elder Abuse Awareness Month Proclamation – June 2025

Tanya Paul, DVACK, presented the Elder Abuse Awareness Month Proclamation for June 2025.

According to the National Council on Aging, one in ten seniors in America experiences mistreatment or abuse – including domestic and sexual violence, financial exploitation, and neglect. Abusers of older adults are both women and men and are usually family members, caregivers, health care workers, or other trusted individuals – and due to the shame, fear, and other barriers elders face in reporting abuse, only a limited number of victims are able to get the help they need. Elders throughout the United States lose an estimated \$2.9 billion or more annually due to elder financial abuse and \$28.3 billion annually due to financial exploitation – such as the illegal taking, misuse, or concealment of funds, property, or assets of a senior for another's benefit. Too often, elder abuse threatens the livelihoods of older individuals, erodes their extraordinary potential, and increases their risk of death by 300% compared to seniors who have not been mistreated. Ottawa County's vulnerable and older adults of all social, economic, racial, and ethnic backgrounds may be targets of abuse, neglect, or exploitation, which can occur in families, long-term care communities, and medical settings. We all have a responsibility to support the safety, welfare, and dignity of vulnerable and older adults and must work toward ending elder abuse by assisting victims in accessing the information and supportive services they need, creating better and more resources for older adults in need, instituting effective intervention and prevention policies, and engaging in discussion with family members and peers to promote awareness and prevention of the quiet epidemic of elder abuse.

MOTION – To proclaim Elder Abuse Awareness month for June 2025 in Ottawa County

MOTION BY– Commissioner Grund

SECONDED BY – Commissioner Morris

MOTION PASSED 3-0

7. Budget Discussion

Commissioner Morris presented an overview of the monthly budget's reports from each department.

8. Approval of Accounts Payable and Commission Minutes

MOTION – To approve accounts payable for \$116,745.49

MOTION BY– Commissioner Grund

SECONDED BY – Commissioner Morris

MOTION PASSED 3-0

MOTION – To approve the minutes of June 02, 2025

MOTION BY– Commissioner Grund

SECONDED BY – Commissioner Morris

MOTION PASSED 3-0

9. Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Grund stated that last Friday she; JoDee Copple, County Treasurer; Tammi Cox, County Clerk and Phil Hayes with The Arnold Group met with each department head and elected official to review the wage study process and the potential wage adjustments for their staff. She noted that the majority of the feedback from the wage study was positive. Commissioner Grund plans to meet with Public Works Director Chris Smith to create a five year capital improvement plan for the road and bridge department., noting the road and bridge department is a significant part of the budget. She stated she walked through the county fairgrounds area and shared that they are very well maintained.

10. Department Head Meeting

The following department heads gave a monthly report: Chris Smith, Public Works Administrator; Sheriff Russell Thornton; Marie Ballou, Emergency Management Director; Shelby Walker, Register of Deeds; Keith Coleman, Facilities Director; Trisha Smith, Health Department; Jeff Ebel, County Attorney; JoDee Copple, County Treasurer; Tammi Cox, County Clerk. It was decided to move the department head meetings to every other month.

11. Sales Tax Discussion

The Commission discussed a possible sales tax to fund EMS services with Jeff Ebel, County Attorney, and asked him to bring back information regarding this option.

12. 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 32 minutes to return at 11:45 a.m. to the Commissioner's Room.

MOTION BY– Commissioner Grund

SECONDED BY – Commissioner Morris

MOTION PASSED 3-0

No action taken

13. Budget Discussion

The Commission discussed the wage study and discussed including a \$8,000.00 governor on the wage study to reduce the cost of implementation. It was the consensus of the Commission to use these numbers with the governor in the budget.

14. Adjournment

MOTION – To adjourn the meeting at 12:21 p.m.

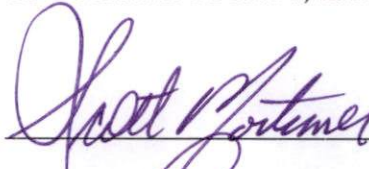
MOTION BY– Commissioner Morris

SECONDED BY – Commissioner Grund

MOTION PASSED 3-0

ADOPTED this 16 day of June 2025.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF OTTAWA COUNTY, KANSAS



Scott Mortimer, Chairman




Carla Grund, Member



Duane Morris, Member

ATTEST:



Tammi Cox, County Clerk

