

# Barton County Commission Agenda Meeting Minutes

Recorded audio is available on compact disk upon KORA request to the Barton County Clerk's Office, 1400 Main – Room 202, Great Bend, Kansas 67530.

Phone (620) 793-1835 \ Fax (620) 793-1990 \ Email [clerk@bartoncounty.org](mailto:clerk@bartoncounty.org)

Meetings Live Streamed through **Microsoft Teams**® at the following link: <https://bit.ly/3ZOBGq7>

April 1, 2025

The Board of Barton County Commissioners convened this 1st day of April, 2025, at the Barton County Courthouse.

## *Members present:*

Duane Reif, Commissioner, 1<sup>st</sup> District, (Chairman Pro-Tem)  
Barb Esfeld, Commissioner, 2<sup>nd</sup> District  
Shawn Hutchinson, Commissioner, 3<sup>rd</sup> District  
Tricia Schlessiger, Commissioner, 4<sup>th</sup> District, Chairman  
Donna Zimmerman, Commissioner, 5<sup>th</sup> District  
Chris Saenz, Deputy County Clerk  
Matt Patzner, County Administrator  
Patrick Hoffman, County Counselor

## **I. OPENING BUSINESS:**

Commissioner Schlessiger called the meeting to order at 9:00 A.M.

Commissioner Hutchinson moved to approve the agenda.  
Commissioner Zimmerman seconded the motion.  
All voted aye. Motion passed.

Commissioner Esfeld moved to approve the minutes of the March 25, 2025, Regular Meeting.  
Commissioner Reif seconded the motion.  
All voted aye. Motion passed.

## **II. OLD BUSINESS:**

There was no Old Business.

## **III. NEW BUSINESS:**

### **A. PROCLAMATION 2025-02: World Autism Acceptance Month:**

-Ros Neeland, Chairman of the Autism Committee, Autism Workshop, Pilot Club, will provide details. World Autism Acceptance Day is recognized on April 2 by Presidential proclamation in the United States of America. Autism is a complex, lifelong developmental disability affecting over five million young people and adults. This Proclamation calls for knowledge and acceptance as it allows people to understand how to be more inclusive and build better, more supportive experiences.

Ros Neeland, Chairman of the Autism Committee, Autism Workshop, Pilot Club, said anyone with a loved one on the spectrum, their level of attention increases anytime the word autism comes up. Neeland said Pilot Club strived to do more, care more and be more. One of the main missions was to encourage brain safety and health. The club provided free helmets to children to prevent traumatic brain injury and were a major sponsor of the Walk to End Alzheimers. They also provided an autism workshop and found current speakers who communicate the best practices to use in classrooms and at home. They found creative ways to encourage children to learn to their own abilities and offer encouragement to families. Neeland said the most important thing was to spread awareness. The small child screaming in the grocery store, the little girl unable to form the words to answer your questions, the stranger who stands too close to your bubble or the boy kicking your seat at a public event; ask yourself if the reason for your behavior could be autism and then let your response be informed and caring.

Neeland introduced Alyson Burkhart from Sunflower and Star, a therapy dog.

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Commissioner Esfeld moved to adopt Proclamation 2025-02, World Autism Acceptance Month.  
Commissioner Reif seconded the motion.  
All voted aye. Motion passed.

## **B. PROCLAMATION 2025-03: Sexual Assault Awareness Month:**

-Aimee Peschka, Program Director for the Domestic and Sexual Violence Center, for the Family Crisis Center, Inc., will present the Proclamation. April is designated as Sexual Assault Awareness Month to raise public awareness about sexual violence and to educate communities and individuals on how to prevent sexual violence. The Family Crisis Center provides services for sexual assault survivors at no charge and offers educational and professional training for community members and professionals.

Aimee Peschka, Program Director for the Domestic and Sexual Violence Center, for the Family Crisis Center, Inc., read the proclamation.

Commissioner Zimmerman moved to adopt Proclamation 2025-03, Sexual Assault Awareness Month.  
Commissioner Hutchinson seconded the motion.  
All voted aye. Motion passed.

Commissioner Zimmerman asked Peschka if they provided the display in the rotunda and said it was very thought-provoking. Peschka told the commission about several events going on such as Battle of the Badges hygiene drive in all of the counties they served; Denim Day, businesses allow employees to dress down in jeans on April 30<sup>th</sup> when donating a hygiene product; SANE Bag donations providing clothes to assault victims; and Spill the Tea, Queen B's Nutrition has made two awareness teas, one for sexual assault awareness and one for child abuse prevention. What Were You Wearing display at the courthouse, a collection of clothing with stories of survivors about what they were wearing in hopes of giving awareness and show support for survivors.

Commissioner Zimmerman asked if they preferred sample sizes or full-sized items for the hygiene products. Peschka said they would take anything. They put sample sizes in the SANE bags and the full-sized items at shelters.

## **C. PROCLAMATION 2025-04: Child Abuse Awareness and Prevention Month:**

-Kylee Graves, Family Crisis Center Executive Director, will present details. The Family Crisis Center and Kansas Children's Service League requests that a Proclamation be adopted declaring April, 2025, as Child Abuse Awareness and Prevention Month. The Proclamation states that child abuse and neglect can be reduced by making sure families have the support needed to raise children in a healthy environment and that there are dedicated individuals and organizations in Barton County working to counter these problems.

Kayla Bailey, Child Advocacy Program Director, Family Crisis Center, read the proclamation.

Commissioner Schlessiger congratulated them on Red Shoes and Bunco, a great event that was well attended.

Commissioner Reif moved to adopt 2025-04, Child Abuse Awareness and Prevention Month.  
Commissioner Esfeld seconded the motion.  
All voted aye. Motion passed.

Bailey said they have a Child Abuse Prevention Month event on April 17<sup>th</sup> from 4:00 P.M. to 7:30 P.M. at the Kingdom Campus. The guest speaker went through the foster care system and would share her story about the abuse she endured. There would also be food, games and family activities.

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Jaki Richardson, Kansas Children's Service League, said they were sponsoring Wear Blue Day this Friday and would be planting pinwheels.

## **D. PUBLIC HEALTH: Foundations of Public Health:**

-Karen Winkelman, Public Health Director, will provide details. The "Foundations of Public Health" training program empowers participants with the knowledge, skills and connections needed to excel as effective public health professionals in Kansas. Misty Trudeau, Public Health Financial Officer, completed program requirements and was recognized at the recent Governor's Conference.

Karen Winkelman, Public Health Director, said this was the first year for the program provided by Wichita State University in collaboration with KDHE. There were many meetings, both virtual and in person, that had to be completed, as well as homework and a final project to present to the group. Certain individuals were chosen to present their projects at the Governor's Conference and Misty Trudeau, BCHD Financial Officer, was among them. She also did her presentation for the Barton County Health Department at their staff meeting. You do not always think of the different hats that a Financial Officer wears, but her presentation was enlightening. Winkelman said they had worked on collaborating with other entities and it was fitting for the Family Crisis Center staff to be here this morning. Trudeau found a grant that could pass through the Health Department, but the Family Crisis Center did the work. Winkelman shared a note written by one of the co-directors praising Trudeau and presented her certificate.

Trudeau said she loved helping people and was passionate about helping people in the public health realm.

Commissioner Schlessiger thanked Trudeau.

Commissioner Zimmerman said Trudeau was the perfect person to fill the role.

Commissioner Esfeld asked Trudeau what she enjoyed the most about the program. Trudeau said there were eight different foundational capabilities created for public health that they studied. They really dug in to learn all the aspects of public health.

Commissioner Reif said a lot of things could be done without money but many more could be done with money. Commissioner Reif said that was where Trudeau came in and she did an excellent job.

Commissioner Hutchinson moved to recognize Ms. Trudeau upon completion of the Foundations of Public Health programming.

Commissioner Zimmerman seconded the motion.

All voted aye. Motion passed.

## ***No Executive Session Held***

## **E. EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

-Chairman Tricia Schlessiger will present. Any Commissioner may make a motion for the board to recess to executive session at this time as allowed by K.S.A. 75-4319. Any motion must contain the justification for the executive session, the subject matter to be discussed, any individuals in addition to the board who will attend the executive session and the time at which the regular session shall resume.

## **IV. ENDING BUSINESS:**

1. Announcements
2. Appointments

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## **OTHER BUSINESS:**

There was no other business.

## **VI. ADJOURN:**

Commissioner Zimmerman moved to adjourn at 9:28 A.M.

Commissioner Reif seconded the motion.

All voted aye. Motion passed.

ATTEST:



Chris Saenz  
Deputy Barton County Clerk



Tricia Schlessiger, Chairman

**PROCLAMATION 2025-03**

**SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS MONTH**

**WHEREAS**, sexual violence is a widespread, preventable, public health problem in Kansas; and

**WHEREAS**, sexual violence is any sexual act that is perpetrated against someone's will, which includes sexual assault, rape, unwanted touching, threatened sexual violence, exhibitionism and verbal sexual harassment; and all types of sexual violence involve victims who do not consent, or who are unable to consent, or who refuse to allow the act; and

**WHEREAS**, over half of women and nearly one in three men experience some form of contact sexual violence in their lifetimes; and

**WHEREAS**, one incident of rape is reported to Kansas law enforcement every 7 hours, 51 minutes, 23 seconds; and over 5,300 people receive services for sexual assault from Kansas victim advocacy organizations each year; and

**WHEREAS**, these statistics do not represent the true prevalence of sexual violence due to underreporting; and sex offenders often targeting people they perceive as vulnerable, less powerful or less credible; and

**WHEREAS**, the offender is known to the victim in the vast majority of cases – 80% in Kansas; and

**WHEREAS**, the effects of sexual violence may be felt directly after or for many months or years later; and confusion, anger, sadness, shame, guilt, helplessness, hopelessness and self-blame are all common reactions to sexual violence; and

**WHEREAS**, the Family Crisis Center, Inc. provide free and confidential services to victims of sexual violence in Barton, Barber, Comanche, Edwards, Kiowa, Ness, Pawnee, Pratt, Rush and Stafford Counties; and

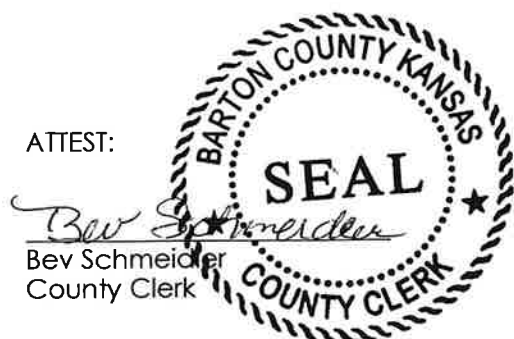
**WHEREAS**, the Family Crisis Center, Inc. is also available 24/7/365 at 620-792-1885 and the state-wide Kansas Crisis Hotline is available at 1-888-363-2287.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED** by the Board of County Commissioners of Barton County, Kansas, that the month of April, 2025, shall be known as SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS MONTH in Barton County; and

**FURTHER**, that the Commission urges citizens to participate in this observance.

**ADOPTED** this 1<sup>st</sup> day of April, 2025.

ATTEST:



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Tricia Schlessiger, Chairman

Barb Esfeld, Commissioner

Shawn Hutchinson, Commissioner

Duane Reif, Commissioner

Donna Zimmerman, Commissioner

**PROCLAMATION 2025-04**

**CHILD ABUSE AWARENESS AND PREVENTION MONTH**

**WHEREAS**, preventing child abuse and neglect is a community problem that requires all citizens to be involved; and

**WHEREAS**, child maltreatment occurs when people find themselves in stressful situations without community resources, support systems, and don't know how to cope; and

**WHEREAS**, child abuse and neglect can be reduced by making sure families have the support they need to raise their children in healthy environments; and

**WHEREAS**, in Barton County, there are dedicated individuals and organizations that work daily to counter the problem of child abuse and neglect and help parents obtain the assistance they need; and

**WHEREAS**, all children deserve freedom from verbal abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse and physical abuse and neglect; and

**WHEREAS**, all children deserve to have warm homes, loving hugs, tender care, parents and adults who listen and promote self-esteem, give quality time, provide necessary food shelter, clothing and attention; and

**WHEREAS**, effective child abuse prevention programs succeed because of partnerships created among social service agencies, schools, faith communities, civic organizations, law enforcement agencies and the business community; and

**WHEREAS**, through partnerships and collaborations, Child Advocacy Center, Kansas Children's Service League, Central Kansas Court Appointed Special Advocates, Department for Children and Families, St. Francis Community Services, The Center for Counseling and Consultation, Heart of Kansas, University of Kansas Health Systems SANE Department, USD 428, USD 431, 20<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Juvenile Services and Law Enforcement Agencies, work daily to address child abuse and neglect; and

**WHEREAS**, prevention remains the best defense for our children and families.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED** by the Board of County Commissioners of Barton County, Kansas, that the month of April, 2025, is Child Abuse Awareness and Prevention Month in Barton County; and

**FURTHER**, that the Commission calls upon all citizens, community agencies, faith groups, medical facilities, and businesses to increase participation in efforts to support families, thereby preventing child abuse and strengthening the community.

**Dated** this 1<sup>st</sup> day of April, 2025.


**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

  
Tricia Schlessiger, Chairman



  
Barb Esfeld, Commissioner

  
Shawn Hutchinson, Commissioner

  
Duane Reif, Commissioner

  
Donna Zimmerman, Commissioner

ATTEST:

  
  
Bev Schmeidler  
County Clerk