

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

Meetings Live Streamed through **Microsoft Teams** at the following link: <https://bit.ly/3SpXw1J>

June 16, 2026

The Board of Barton County Commissioners convened this 16th day of June, 2026, at the Barton County Courthouse.

Members present:

Duane Reif, Commissioner, 1st District, Chairman

Barb Esfeld, Commissioner, 2nd District

Shawn Hutchinson, Commissioner, 3rd District

Tricia Schlessiger, Commissioner, 4th District

Donna Zimmerman, Commissioner, 5th District, *(Chairman Pro-Tem)*

Bev Schmeidler, County Clerk

Matt Patzner, County Administrator

Casey Hubbard, Assistant County Administrator

I. OPENING BUSINESS:

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

Commissioner Hutchinson moved to add Item G to the agenda, Façade Improvement Project Round IV.

Commissioner Zimmerman seconded the motion.

All voted aye. Motion passed.

Minutes of the June 9, 2026, Regular Meeting were not available.

II. OLD BUSINESS:

There was no Old Business.

III. APPROVAL OF APPROPRIATIONS:

-Bev Schmeidler, County Clerk, will present details. An Accounts Payable Register will be submitted to the Commission for the period of June 2, 2026, and ending June 16, 2026.

Bev Schmeidler, County Clerk, presented details and asked for approval.

Commissioner Schlessiger moved to approve appropriations for the period of June 2, 2026, to June 16, 2026. Authorize the Chairman to sign on behalf of the Commission.

Commissioner Esfeld seconded the motion.

All voted aye. Motion passed.

IV. NEW BUSINESS:

A. PROCLAMATION 2026-09: Honoring the Central Plains High School Track and Field Medalists:

-Coach Dustin Robison will present details. When students excel in any area it is vital that the community recognize the commitment of the student, their family, their school and their coaches. At this time, the Commission will be asked to honor the Central Plains student athletes for their positive contribution to include placing at the annual State Track event and setting school records.

Coach Dustin Robison thanked the commissioners for recognizing the athletes and introduced Assistant Coach Avery Gates. Robison said other coaches were Pat Simpson and Fred Smith. Coach Robison introduced Boston Robison, Taylin Davis, Keeton Robison, Teagan Schepmann, Aevyn Siemsen, Emery Siemsen, Kambree Nixon, Haley Nash and Ashtyn Robl. He talked about each of their achievements and said they all worked very hard this year, a very competitive group.

Commissioner Zimmerman asked if it was common to break that many school records. Robison said a lot of those were set in 2012, the first year they consolidated.

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Commissioner Schlessiger thanked the group for coming and said she was glad they could honor them.

Commissioner Reif said it was important as they represented Barton County.

Commissioner Schlessiger moved to adopt Proclamation 2026-09, Honoring the Central Plains High School Track and Field Medalists.

Commissioner Zimmerman seconded the motion.

All voted aye. Motion passed.

B. LETTER OF SUPPORT: Rise Up Central Kansas – Kansas Fights Addiction (KFA) Peer Navigation Grant:

-Commissioner Barb Esfeld will present details. The Commission has been asked to support Rise Up Central Kansas in their effort to secure Kansas Fights Addiction (KFA) Peer Navigation Grant funding. The opportunity to expand recovery support services for individuals affected by substance use disorders throughout Barton County aligns with several programs supported by local tax dollars. At this time, the Commission will be asked to issue a letter of support.

Commissioner Barb Esfeld said she was speaking on behalf of Amy Ferguson, she was at work. Commissioner Esfeld said Rise Up was a peer group and asked Marissa Woodmansee to give a little more information.

Woodmansee said Rise Up did such things as giving rides, someone to attend a meeting with and even helping those coming from an incarcerated state to get new documents such as a driver's license among other documents. Woodmansee said Ferguson was doing those things now, but she was always in favor of an opportunity to get grant funding.

Commissioner Esfeld said members had been here before. They were individuals that were doing well but had this peer group to help them and keep them accountable. She asked Woodmansee who else helped Ferguson. Woodmansee said there were a couple of ladies who had also been through the recovery process that offered local support.

Commissioner Esfeld said she had been asked if Ferguson was paid and she told them no, she volunteered as everyone did on Rise Up. She said the commissioners were asked to write a letter of support to help their efforts and help fight addiction.

Commissioner Hutchinson said anytime they could support a good cause that only required a letter of support, they should do it.

Commissioner Hutchinson moved to approve a Letter of Support for Rise Up Central Kansas in their effort to secure Kansas Fights Addiction (KFA) Peer Navigation Grant funding.

Commissioner Esfeld seconded the motion.

All voted aye. Motion passed.

C. COUNTY CLERK'S OFFICE: Request for Approval – Added / Abated / Escaped / Refunded Taxes:

-Ms. Schmeidler will present a listing of Added / Abated / Escaped / Refunded Taxes. Orders for these actions are kept on file in the County Clerk's Office. These are used to correct assessments and are requested by the County Appraiser's Office or the County Clerk's Office.

Bev Schmeidler, County Clerk, presented details and asked for approval.

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CH #8	VALUES	ESCAPED TAXES	ADDED / ABATED	REFUNDS
Gas				
Oil				
Personal Property	(31,457)		(\$4,961.00)	\$675.30
Real Estate	(43,597)		(\$7,024.12)	\$5,870.79
16/20 M Trucks				
State Assessed Utilities				
Special Assessments				
Grand Totals	(75,054)		(\$11,985.12)	\$6,546.09
Total Taxes	(\$11,985.12)			
Total Records Selected	18			

Commissioner Zimmerman moved to approve the Listing of Added / Abated / Escaped / Refunded Taxes as reviewed by the County Appraiser and presented by the County Clerk's Office. Direct the Chairman to sign on behalf of the Commission.

Commissioner Hutchinson seconded the motion.

All voted aye. Motion passed.

D. COUNTY WORKS: Award of Request for Quotes for Bridge and Low Water Crossing Repairs:

-Chris Scharz, County Works Director, will provide details. On April 30, 2026, the County released a Request for Quotes for Bridge and Low Water Crossing Repairs. Included were repairs on a Stone Arch Bridge located on NE 50 Avenue, 0.13 miles south of NE 230 Road; Bridge 218 located on NE 220 Road, 0.11 miles west of NE 60 Avenue; and a low water crossing on NW 130 Road, 0.04 miles east of NW 50 Avenue. Vendor is to provide all equipment, labor, supplies, insurance and incidentals necessary to complete the work, as well as traffic control and dewatering of sites if needed. Quotes were received from L&M Contractors and KS Construction.

Chris Scharz, County Works Director, said two historic bridges were straight north of Beaver, just south of the county line. The low water crossing was northwest of Hoisington. Scharz said quotes were received from L&M Contractors and KS Construction. Scharz said the arch bridge needed a concrete slab on the top of the bridge. The bridges are native stones built in the 1930's and the stones were starting to show. Scharz said the other bridge had a lot of water going through it and water also sat on the bridge, causing the grout and stones to deteriorate. Scharz said the Kansas Historical Society would like the bridges to be preserved as much as possible and not replaced.

Scharz said for the arch bridge needing a concrete slab, they received a quote for \$16,510 from L&M Contractors and \$11,474.29 from KS Construction. Scharz said L & M Contractors were in Great Bend with KS Construction being in Nickerson.

Scharz said for Bridge 218, they received a quote of \$44,365 from L&M Contractors and \$23,571.43 from KS Construction.

Scharz said he recommended L&M Contractors for Bridge 218 even though KS Construction was less. L&M Contractors had done work on the same type of bridge previously and with the historic nature of these bridges and trying to preserve them, he preferred someone with experience with the work required for the structure.

Commissioner Hutchinson asked if the bids were the same on the other bridge. Scharz said KS Construction bid the same amount on Bridge 218 and the low water crossing, \$23,571.43 on both

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jects. Schartz said that was not common, so he did contact them to be sure it was accurate. Schartz said that on the north side of it, the culvert was washed out and rusted out.

Commissioner Reif asked Schartz if KS Construction had done any work for Barton County in the past. Schartz said they had not for Barton County. He learned from Kirkham Michael that they had done low water crossings in Rice County and there had been no issues. L&M Contractors have done a lot of projects for Barton County.

Commissioner Zimmerman asked Schartz if she remembered correctly from study session that KS Construction only had experience with low water crossings and no experience with the other two projects. Schartz said that was correct. When he met them at the locations, they said they wanted to branch out to do more projects but had never done bridges.

Commissioner Zimmerman said with the investments Barton County had made with the historic bridges; it was important to go with an experienced contractor on the first two projects.

Commissioner Hutchinson suggested going with KS Construction for the low water crossing and L&M on the bridges.

Commissioner Schlessiger said the footing for that bridge seemed to be one of the most important parts of it and L&M had experience with that particular bridge.

Commissioner Schlessiger moved to approve the following quotes:

Structure 1, Arched Bridge, and Structure 2, Bridge No. 218, repairs totaling \$60,875.00 awarded to L&M Contractors. Total cost to be paid from the Special Bridge Replacement Fund, Construction Related Items Line, 003-92-6191-92.

Structure 3, Low Water Crossing No. 125, repairs totaling \$23,571.43 awarded to KS Construction. Total cost to be paid from the Special Bridge Replacement Fund, Construction Related Items Line, 003-92-6191-92.

Commissioner Esfeld seconded the motion.

All voted aye. Motion passed.

E. JUVENILE SERVICES: Out-of-State Travel, American Probation and Parole Association (APPA) Summer Institute:

-Marissa Woodmansee, Juvenile Services Director, will provide details. The American Probation and Parole Association (APPA) fosters honesty and integrity to transform lives and builds strong communities under the community corrections umbrella. In doing so, the APPA's training institute delivers a comprehensive learning experience through a wide range of accredited workshops and focused intensive sessions. Ms. Woodmansee has been invited to serve as a panelist for the "Stepping up for Youth" track in Chicago in August, 2026. This will include three sessions showcasing Kansas' implementation of the strategies. Costs of travel will be covered by the Council of State Governments Justice Center.

Marissa Woodmansee, Juvenile Services Director, said in March of 2025, she asked if Barton County could become a pilot project for the Stepping Up Initiative. She was granted permission and began work on the project. Woodmansee said in the last year, they had gone through four guided questions with the help of the council, state government. Those questions included, did they have buy-in and absolutely, they did. With city, local government, area mental health, education, many local therapists and law enforcement partners, all ready to have the really tough conversation as it related to the overall best interests when they worked with youth and considered where they go, whether it was detainment or a

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hospital setting. The next question was best practices and strategies as they aligned with the processes. She said that was not easy and took several meetings. The council state government did a sequential intercept map where they were able to identify their strengths and weaknesses. Woodmansee said something that came out of that model was there were a lot of early interventions in this community. The third question was regarding data. She said you have to make data driven decisions. You want to be able to show that what you are doing was based on data received from those sectors. The last question was looking at policies. Woodmansee said the pilot ended in March and since that time, she had the opportunity to speak at a symposium in Topeka and present to her peers at a meeting in Hutchinson. Now she had been invited to speak at a national conference in Chicago, so she was here to ask permission to travel out of state. Woodmansee added that all costs would be covered at no expense to Barton County taxpayers. She said it really was an honor. Kansas was leading the path with this initiative being the first state.

Commissioner Esfeld said she was proud of Woodmansee and her entire team.

Commissioner Esfeld moved to approve out-of-state travel for Ms. Woodmansee to attend the APPA Summer Institute in Chicago, Illinois, in August, 2026. Associated costs to be paid by the Council of State Governments Justice Center.

Commissioner Schlessiger seconded the motion.

All voted aye. Motion passed.

No Executive Session Held

F. EXECUTIVE SESSION:

-Chairman Duane Reif 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 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.

G. FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT ROUND IV: FIG 26 with Claflin, Ellinwood, Great Bend and Hoisington:

-Matt Patzner, County Administrator, will provide details. Last night, the Cities of Claflin and Great Bend took action and officially approved inclusion in Round IV of the Façade Improvement Grants. Joining Ellinwood and Hoisington, this round brings extended autonomy for local Cities with increased funding, differing corridors and even more opportunity for growth in our communities. Focusing on continued success, FIG 26 includes a \$120,000 investment on behalf of the County and the opportunity for the Cities of Claflin, Ellinwood and Hoisington to support up to two projects each and the City of Great Bend to support another six. This totals to a possible \$240,000 in investment funding and 12 more businesses receiving an updated façade. The Commission will be asked to open the program and begin accepting applications.

Matt Patzner, County Administrator, presented details and asked that the commission open the program and begin accepting applications.

Commissioner Schlessiger said it was an exciting step working together with all of the communities.

Commissioner Reif said they wanted to build Barton County and this was an excellent way of doing it.

Commissioner Hutchinson said all four cities were working together with the same goal to improve our cities. Each city needed to have a say so each program looked a little different.

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Commissioner Schlessiger asked how people apply. Patzner said they could contact the Barton County Administrator's Office, information will be on the website and posts on Facebook as well.

Commissioner Hutchinson asked if all applications would come to the county. Patzner said that was correct.

Commissioner Schlessiger moved to authorize the County Administrator to open the Façade Improvement Project, Round IV, today. Applications accepted through 5:00 p.m., Friday, July 31, 2026. Grants will be provided in the amount of up to 75% of eligible project costs, with a maximum award of \$20,000. Funding amounts are determined based on project size, match and visual impact and other factors as may be determined.

Commissioner Hutchinson seconded the motion.

All voted aye. Motion passed.

V. ENDING BUSINESS:

1. Announcements
2. Appointments

VI. OTHER BUSINESS:

There was no other business.

VII. ADJOURN:

Commissioner Hutchinson moved to adjourn at 9:38 A.M.

Commissioner Zimmerman seconded the motion.

All voted aye. Motion passed.

ATTEST:



Bev Schmeidler
Barton County Clerk



Duane Reif, Chairman

PROCLAMATION 2026-09

Honoring the Central Plains High School Track and Field Medalists

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners, of Barton County, Kansas, having long committed to the future of this County through word and deed, and having raised their own families in this area, fully support local schools and the students that bring acclaim to our community; and

WHEREAS, students have the opportunity to not only learn facts and theory at our schools, but also to participate in sports, performing arts, clubs and other activities that prepare them to be citizens of the world; and

WHEREAS, when our students excel in any area, it is vital that the community, including elected officials, recognize the commitment of the student, their family, their school and their coaches as acknowledgment; and

WHEREAS, it is known that the support of even one adult in a child's life increases resiliency and confidence, which improves the chances of academic success, healthy relationship development and the ability to navigate challenges with greater stability and self-esteem.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED by the Board of County Commissioners of Barton County, Kansas, that the following Central Plains student athletes are recognized for their positive contribution to include placing at the annual State Track event and setting school records during the season:

GIRLS

- Boston Robison, Senior, 100m HH, 13th Place
- Kambree Nixon, Freshman, 800m, 2nd Place
- Ashtyn Robl, Kambree Nixon, Emery Siemsen, Aevyn Siemsen, 4X100m Relay, 13th Place
- Ashtyn Robl, Taylin Davis, Lyden Hekele, Kambree Nixon, 4X400m Relay, 4th Place
- Ashtyn Robl, Taylin Davis, Lynden Hekele, Kambree Nixon, 4X800m Relay, 9th Place

BOYS

- Teagan Schepmann, Sophomore, Shot Put, 12th Place
- Keeton Robinson, Sophomore, 300m IH, 15th Place

COACH

- Coach Dustin Robison, Head Track and Field Coach, Sprinters and Vertical Jump
- Coach Fred Smith, Throwers
- Coach Pat Siemsen, Distance and Horizontal Jumps
- Coach Avery Gates, Hurdler and Pole Vault

FURTHER, that community members across Barton, Ellsworth, Lincoln, Rice and Russell Counties are urged to recognize the importance of participation of students in organized sporting events; and

FURTHER, that the Commission honors the medalists for their dedication to their sport, their physical and mental health and to the enduring values of teamwork, discipline and perseverance that is represented both on and off the field.

Dated this 16th day of June, 2026.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS


Chairman Duane Reif


Commissioner Barb Esfeld


Commissioner Shawn Hutchinson


Commissioner Tricia Schlessiger


Commissioner Donna Zimmerman

ATTEST  **SEAL**

Bev Schmeidler,
County Clerk