

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/3U3YbXT>

September 29, 2026

The Board of Barton County Commissioners convened this 29th day of September, 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
Casey Hubbard, Assistant County Administrator
Todd Powell, County Counselor

Members absent:

Matt Patzner, County Administrator

I. OPENING BUSINESS:

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

Commissioner Zimmerman moved to approve the agenda with the addition of Item F, a resolution lifting the Temporary Burn Ban.

Commissioner Hutchinson seconded the motion.

All voted aye. Motion passed.

Commissioner Schlessiger moved to approve the minutes of the September 15, 2026, and the September 2026, Regular Meetings.

Commissioner Esfeld seconded the motion.

All voted aye. Motion passed.

II. OLD BUSINESS:

There was no Old Business.

III. NEW BUSINESS:

A. PROCLAMATION 2026-13: National 4-H Week:

-Michelle Beran, Family Community Wellness Agent, Cottonwood Extension District – Barton County, will be joined by JoAnn Gaunt, 4H Youth Development Agent, and area youth in presenting the proposed Proclamation. 4-H, as delivered by area Cooperative Extension agencies, has helped thousands of youth become true leaders, entrepreneurs and visionaries. By declaring October 4 – 10, 2026, as National 4-H Week, the Commission recognizes the importance of using the Head, Heart, Hands and Health, the four core values of the 4-H mission, to become beyond ready.

Michelle Beran, Family Community Wellness Agent, Cottonwood Extension District – Barton County, said she always appreciated the opportunity to come and address everyone in anticipation of National 4-H Week. Beran introduced Samantha Negaard, 4-H Ambassador and a state award winner for her project record last year. That is a record that involved an entire year of work, keeping track of things and financial pieces among others. Beran also introduced JoAnn Gaunt, new 4-H Agent, started right before the fair. Jay Harris, Cottonwood Extension Director, was also present.

JoAnn Gaunt, 4-H Youth Development for Cottonwood District in Barton County, said Negaard was the State Project Award winner in Performing Arts. Gaunt said there was only one winner in each category statewide per project. Gaunt said they actually had two State Award Winners this year. The other one was Russell Kern; he was the food project winner. Kern could not attend the meeting but he sent

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, serves for the commissioners. Gaunt said she was proud of both of them; it was a major accomplishment.

Samantha Negaard said she spent the past year preparing, planning a video, writing a resume and cover letter to submit. She said it involved a lot of work, the actual activity, all of her forensics results, dance results, orchestra trip to New York, choir trip to DC that all went in the project record. She qualified for regionals and then had to write cover letters and resumes encompassing things specifically related to performing arts. Negaard was honored to receive the state award. She will get to attend the National 4-H Congress in Atlanta, Georgia as a representative and delegate.

Commissioner Reif said that was an impressive accomplishment.

Commissioner Zimmerman asked Negaard how many years she had been in 4-H. Negaard said for 6 years.

Commissioner Zimmerman said she had a professional demeanor, her poise and delivery, she understood why she received the award.

Commissioner Schlessiger moved to adopt Proclamation 2026-13, National 4-H Week.

Commissioner Zimmerman seconded the motion.

All voted aye. Motion passed.

B. PROCLAMATION 2026-14: National Domestic Violence Awareness Month, October, 2026:

-Rocio Hernandez, Domestic and Sexual Violence Program Director, Family Crisis Center, will present details. It is suggested that a Proclamation be adopted recognizing October, 2026, as National Domestic Violence Awareness Month. If approved, the Proclamation will aid in raising awareness, encouraging community support of survivors, promoting healthy relationships, and working toward the prevention and elimination of domestic violence in our homes and communities.

Rocio Hernandez, Domestic and Sexual Violence Program Director, Family Crisis Center, said she had been with the Family Crisis Center for three years, recently becoming Program Director. Hernandez read the proclamation.

Hernandez said Saturday, October 3rd would be the Fall Fest at Jack Kilby Square.

Commissioner Zimmerman moved to adopt Proclamation 2026-14, National Domestic Violence Awareness Month, October, 2026.

Commissioner Esfeld seconded the motion.

All voted aye. Motion passed.

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

-Bev Schmeidler, County Clerk, 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 #11	VALUES	ESCAPED TAXES	ADDED / ABATED	REFUNDS
Gas				
Oil	(72,403)			
Personal Property	(13)			
Real Estate	(75,427)			
16/20 M Trucks	14,558			
State Assessed Utilities				
Special Assessments				
Grand Totals	(133,285)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total Taxes	\$0.00			
Total Records Selected	52			

Commissioner Esfeld 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. 20th JUDICIAL DISTRICT JUVENILE SERVICES: Juvenile Detention Housing Agreement between Johnson County, Kansas, and Barton County, Kansas:

-Marissa Woodmansee, Juvenile Services Director, will present details. Kansas [House Bill 2329](#) amends portions of the State's 2016 Juvenile Justice reforms by increasing penalties, lengthening detention limits and shifting placement rules for juvenile offenders. As a result, detention placement will be affected across the State. It is suggested that Barton County, as the Administrative County of the 20th Judicial District, contract with Johnson County for the provision of juvenile housing.

Marissa Woodmansee, Juvenile Services Director, said she had been notified by Sedgwick County that they were at capacity for their facility. Woodmansee said while attending an administrative contact meeting, a peer in Johnson County advised her they would like to partner with them to offer an alternative for housing. Todd Powell, County Counselor, had reviewed the agreement. She was grateful to Diana Watson, Administrative Assistant, for working on it and creating a polished product. Woodmansee said Johnson County was willing to come in at \$150/day to detain the youth. She said locally, it was at \$175/day and continued to go up across the state. Woodmansee said they continued to educate law enforcement partners as it related to Notice to Appear as opposed to going straight to an arrest. She was mindful these were taxpayer dollars and the Sheriff's budget, that was not lost on her. Woodmansee asked for permission to enter into the agreement as another alternative if needed.

Commissioner Hutchinson asked Woodmansee with the new statute in place, had they had to detain more youth. Woodmansee said they had not yet because she was trying to educate law enforcement about the Notice to Appear. She was trying to get ahead of it for when it did occur.

Commissioner Zimmerman asked Woodmansee how many facilities we currently partnered with, was it just Bob Johnson's, and were we guaranteed a certain number of spaces. Woodmansee said we partnered with Reno County Youth Services and Garden City. Those were partnerships and collaborations. Woodmansee said about a decade ago, they went away from the contracted, secured bed, because it was not really needed.

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Commissioner Hutchinson moved to approve the Juvenile Detention Housing Agreement between Johnson County, Kansas, and Barton County, Kansas.
Commissioner Schlessiger seconded the motion.
All voted aye. Motion passed.

No Executive Session Held

E. 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 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.

F. RESOLUTION 2026-18: A Resolution Lifting the Temporary Burn Ban in Barton County, Kansas, Established by Resolution 2026-17, Adopted September 15, 2026:

-Sean Kelly, Emergency Management Director, will present details. After receiving moisture throughout Barton County over the last week, local Fire Chiefs have asked that the Commission lift the current burn ban.

Sean Kelly, Emergency Management Director, said with the current rain and what was predicted to come, the Fire Chiefs were in favor of lifting the burn ban.

Commissioner Reif said he was thankful the Fire Chiefs put the burn ban in place. He said it saved a lot of time and equipment that would have been used for grass fires.

Commissioner Esfeld moved to adopt Resolution 2026-18, A Resolution Lifting the Temporary Burn Ban in Barton County, Kansas, Established by Resolution 2026-17, Adopted September 15, 2026.

Commissioner Hutchinson seconded the motion.

All voted aye. Motion passed.

IV. ENDING BUSINESS:

1. Announcements
2. Appointments

V. OTHER BUSINESS:

Commissioner Esfeld – would be attending SDSI meeting in Garden City Wednesday.

Commissioner Esfeld - 6th Annual United on the Diamond on Saturday at Vet's Park. A softball tournament between law enforcement, fire and EMS against the Great Bend Recovery Community.

VI. ADJOURN:

Commissioner Hutchinson moved to adjourn at 9:31 A.M.

Commissioner Zimmerman seconded the motion.

All voted aye. Motion passed.

ATTEST:


Bev Schmeidler
Barton County Clerk


Duane Reif, Chairman

PROCLAMATION 2026-13
NATIONAL 4-H WEEK

WHEREAS, 4-H is America's largest youth development organization, inspiring and connecting six million 4-H'ers, 500,000 volunteers and more than 3,000 local Extension staff and professional support personnel across the globe; and

WHEREAS, 4-H is delivered by the Cooperative Extension – a community of more than 100 US public universities that provide experiences where young people take on critical societal issues, such as addressing community health inequities, engaging in civil discourse and advocating for equity and inclusion for all; and

WHEREAS, 4-H is a youth development program that ensures 4-Hers are beyond ready and encourages family participation and involvement through select programming and parental volunteerism; and

WHEREAS, National 4-H Week showcases the incredible experiences that 4-H offers young people, and highlights the remarkable 4-H youth in Kansas and throughout America who work each day to make a positive impact on those around them; and

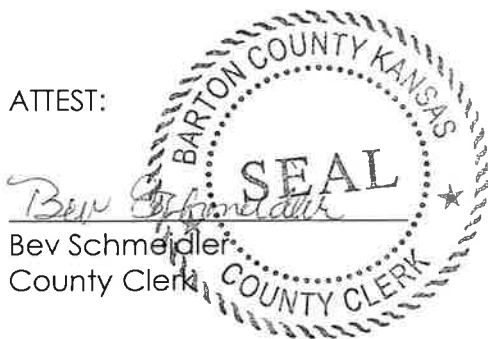
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED by the Board of County Commissioners of Barton County, Kansas, that October 4 – 10, 2026, is hereby known as NATIONAL 4-H WEEK throughout Barton County; and

FURTHER, that the Commission recognizes the importance of using the Head, Heart, Hands and Health, the four core values of the 4-H mission, to become beyond ready; and

FURTHER, that the Commission encourages all citizens to recognize 4-H for the significant impact it continues to make by empowering youth to learn by doing.

ADOPTED this 29th day of September, 2026.

ATTEST:



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Duane Reif
Duane Reif, Chairman

Barb Esfeld
Barb Esfeld, Commissioner

Shawn Hutchinson
Shawn Hutchinson, Commissioner

Tricia Schlessiger
Tricia Schlessiger, Commissioner

Donna Zimmerman
Donna Zimmerman, Commissioner

PROCLAMATION 2026-14

National Domestic Violence Awareness Month ~ October, 2026

WHEREAS, domestic violence is a serious and preventable public health and community safety issue that affect individuals and families of every age, race, gender, background, and socioeconomic status; and

WHEREAS, in Barton County in 2025 the Family Crisis Center provided direct services to 592 women, children, and men of domestic violence; and

WHEREAS, in the State of Kansas in 2024, 20 people were killed as a direct result of domestic violence, representing 17.1% of the 117 homicides reported statewide according to the Kansas Bureau of Investigation. 1 of the 20 homicides was in Barton County; and

WHEREAS, domestic violence affects the trust, self-esteem, and sense of safety of victims; and

WHEREAS, women, men, and children deserve safe, healthy relationships free of physical, emotional, sexual, and financial abuse; and

WHEREAS, through our 24-hour hotline, the Family Crisis Center answered 395 domestic-violence- related calls in Barton County in 2025 and was able to provide domestic violence survivors with life-saving services and linkages to local community resources; and

WHEREAS, victims of domestic violence continue to need the support of their families, friends, neighbors, and most of all...their communities.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED, that the Board of County Commissioners of Barton County, Kansas, do hereby recognize October, 2026, as National Domestic Violence Awareness Month and urge all residents to join together in raising awareness, supporting survivors, promoting healthy relationships, and working toward the prevention and elimination of domestic violence in our homes and communities.

ADOPTED this 29th day of September, 2026.

BARTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS


Chairman Duane Reif

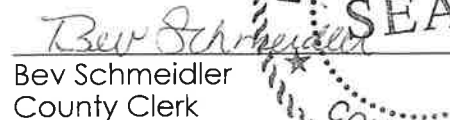

Commissioner Barb Esfeld


Commissioner Shawn Hutchinson


Commissioner Tricia Schlessiger


Commissioner Donna Zimmerman

ATTEST


Bev Schmeidler
County Clerk



RESOLUTION 2026-18

A RESOLUTION LIFTING THE TEMPORARY BURN BAN IN BARTON COUNTY, KANSAS,
ESTABLISHED BY RESOLUTION 2026-17, ADOPTED SEPTEMBER 15, 2026

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners of Barton County, Kansas, is authorized by K.S.A. 19-101(a) to perform all powers of location legislation and administration it deems appropriate, subject to certain limitations; and

WHEREAS, the Commission recognizes the need to establish burn bans when necessary due to extremely dry weather conditions in Barton County, Kansas; and

WHEREAS, the Commission recognizes that moisture has been received in Barton County and that removal of the burn ban is advisable.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of County Commissioners of Barton County, Kansas, that the burn ban established by Resolution 2026-17, A Resolution Establishing a Temporary Burn Ban in Barton County, Kansas, is hereby lifted effective as of 10:00 a.m., September 29, 2026.

DECLARED by the Board of County Commissioners, Barton County, Kansas, this 29th day of September, 2026.

BARTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS


Chairman Duane Reif


Commissioner Barb Esfeld


Commissioner Shawn Hutchinson


Commissioner Trisha Schlessiger


Commissioner Donna Zimmerman

ATTEST:


Bev Schmeidler, County Clerk



APPROVED AS TO FORM:

APPROVED ELECTRONICALLY
Todd Powell, County Counselor