

**FORD COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING MINUTES**  
**MEETING OF APRIL 07, 2026**  
**MEETING NUMBER 2026-10**  
**COMMISSION CHAMBERS**  
**3:30 P.M.**



**Page 32**

The Board of County Commissioners met in regular session in the Commission Chambers at the Ford County Government Center.

Those present were:

Gary Thomas, Chairman  
Shawn Tasset, Commissioner  
Chris Boys Commissioner

JD Gilbert, County Administrator  
Tanda Bartlett, Assistant County Administrator  
Debbie Cox, County Clerk

Chairman Thomas called the meeting to order.

Father Wesley Schawe, Cathedral of Our Lady of Guadalupe, led the group in prayer, followed by Chairman Thomas leading the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Consent Agenda**

Approval of Meeting Minutes: 2026-07 & 2026-08

Adds & Abatements: Adds & Abatements: 2025 PP \$-803.22, 2025 W/C \$-64.26

Credit Card Statement

Cereal Malt Beverage License: Rancho El Palomino LLC/ Leobardo Del Real

Cereal Malt Beverage License: Rancho El Nopalito/ Noe Ochoa

Cereal Malt Beverage Application: St. Andrew Knights of Columbus 1862

Commissioner Tasset motion to approve the consent agenda as presented. Commissioner Boys seconded the motion. **Motion carried 3-0.**

**Approval of Claims for Payment: \$743,600.20**

Commissioner Tasset motioned to approve the claims for payment as presented, Commissioner Boys seconded the motion. **Motion carried 3-0.**

**Open Public Comment - None**

**Unfinished Business – None**

**Legal Counsel – None**

## County Administrator's Report

### Planning & Zoning: Garcia Recovery Conditional Use Permit, Resolution No. 2026-14

PZ Director melissa Drake presented the report on the Conditional Use permit. Ms. Drake did request this be tabled to the next meeting, as the Garcia's are not able to make this meeting due to an emergency in the family.

Chairman Thomas motioned to table this item to the next meeting. Commissioner Tasset seconded the motion. **Motion carried 3-0.**

### Ford County Engineer: Report

Ford County Engineer, Jon Halbgewachs presented his monthly report.

US Highway 50 expansion west of Dodge City to Cimarron – R&B Director and County Engineer came up with an estimated cost of \$55,000 to apply a chip seal to these access roads and the connection to 107 Road. Emailed this amount to the KDOT District 6 Engineer on March 20. He acknowledges receipt of the email and said he is talking with Headquarters about the issue.

Hot-Mix Asphalt (HMA) projects: - APAC (\$3,763,744.75 bid) has indicated the intent to start the first week of April. Road will be open during construction; traffic will be stopped by flaggers and pilot cars.

113 Road from US-50 north to Garnett Road (3.6 miles) – Have received a Geotechnical Consultant proposal to drill soil samples, perform laboratory testing on the samples, and to provide a pavement design for the reclamation. I have sent it to the County Counselor for review. Plan to present the Geotechnical proposal and a Kirkham Michael design agreement to the commissioners when they have been reviewed and approved by the County Counselor.

Pioneer Creek Wind Farm w/NextEra south of Wright – Kirkham Michael has completed load rating drainage structures and coring of existing asphalt surfaces. Now working on pre-construction haul route photo and video documentation.

Boot Hill Solar – Asphalt was placed for the entrance off Lariat Way, but the backfill material was not what the plans specified. The developer has been instructed to replace this material. Kirkham Michael presented a road damage summary to the developer and is awaiting a response.

Grain Belt Express Power Line – Developer presented a RUMA to the County. It is being reviewed by Legal Counsel and myself. No timing of construction has been conveyed.

OS Bridge 31 Reconstruction and Roadway Re-Alignment (Duck Creek on 114 Road north of Garnett) – SMH has shared a counteroffer from a landowner. Requesting an Executive Session to discuss this with the Commission.

FAS Bridge 220 Deck Repair – PCI Roads (\$441,009.38 bid) intends to start construction in June. Bridge will have one lane open to two-way traffic during construction.

Quaker Road Low Water Crossing – The Township intends to have the ditch improvement work done in Summer 2026.

KDOT Southwest Kansas Highway Mobility and Expansion Strategy- At the March 25 SW KS Hwy Officials meeting, KDOT said they are planning to have the next meeting for this project in Fall 2026.

Stellar Forge RUMA – No date has been given for start of construction.

Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) – Kirkham Michael has collected videos of the roads to be included in the plan and are in process of reviewing the videos to notate potential safety improvements.

New Business: Working with Legal Counsel on a Road Use Maintenance Agreement for the Grain Belt Express electrical transmission line. I am also working with Planning and Zoning to discuss permitting requirements for several potential future rural development projects.

**Ford County Engineer: Engineering Agreement, Boot Hill Battery Energy Storage System**

Ford County Engineer, Jon Halbgewachs, presented for approval the engineering agreement between Kirkham Michael and Ford County for the Boot Hill Energy Storage System (BESS).

Commissioner Boys moved to approve the Engineering Agreement for the Boot Hill Battery Energy Storage System as presented. Chairman Thomas seconded the motion. **Motion carried 3-0.**

**Ford County Engineer: Engineering Agreement, Off-System Bridge 101 Construction**

Ford County Engineer, Jon Halbgewachs, presented for approval, the engineering agreement between Kirkham Michael and Ford County for the construction of Off System Bridge 101.

Commissioner Tasset motioned to approve the Engineering Agreement for construction of Off-System Bridge 101 as presented. Commissioner Boys seconded the motion. **Motion carried 3-0.**

**Information Technology: Smartnet Renewal**

IT Director Matthew Brackey presented for approval invoice for Smartnet in the amount of \$46,959.34. This is a budgeted item.

Chairman Thomas moved to approve the invoice for Smartnet as presented. Commissioner Tasset seconded the motion. **Motion carried 3-0.**

**Sheriff Office: Resolution No. 2026-15, Increasing the Booking or Processing Fee at the Ford County Detention Center**

Sheriff Bill Carr and Undersheriff Dale Colman presented Resolution No. 2026-15, A Resolution Increasing the Booking or Processing Fee at the Ford County Detention Center. This was discussed at the work session before the meeting.

Commissioner Boys moved to approve Resolution No. 2026-15, as presented. Commissioner Tasset seconded the motion. **Motion carried 3-0.**

**Sheriff Office: Resolution No. 2026-16, To Establish a Standard Housing Rate for Inmates in the Ford County Detention Center.**

Sheriff Bill Carr and Undersheriff Dale Coleman presented for approval, Resolution No. 2026-16, A Resolution to Establish a Standard Housing Rate for Inmates in the Ford County Detention Center. This was discussed in the work session before the meeting.

Commissioner Tasset moved to approve Resolution 2026-16, as presented. Commissioner Boys seconded the motion. **Motion carried 3-0.**

**Upcoming Meetings**

**Board of County Commission meeting:** Tuesday April 20, 2026, 3:30 p.m. Commission Chambers  
**Kansas County Commissioners Assn. Conference:** April 22-24, 2026, Hutchinson, KS  
**Community Facilities Advisory Board (CFAB):** May 19, 2026 6:30 p.m., Dodge City Municipal Services Building.  
**NACo Annual Conference:** July 17-20, 2026, New Orleans, LA

**Executive Session: Preliminary Discussion of the Acquisition of Real property**

Chairman Thomas moved the Board recess into executive session for 20 minutes, to discuss the acquisition of real property for the Off-System Bridge Project pursuant to the preliminary discussion of the acquisition of real property exception to the Kansas Open Meetings Act, K.S.A. 75-4319(b)(6).

The open meeting to resume in this location at 4:39 p.m.

In addition to the Commissioners, the County Administrator, Assistant County Administrator, County Counselor, Assistant County Counselor, County Engineer and County Road and Bridge Superintendent should be included in the executive session. Commissioner Boys seconded the motion. **Motion carried 3-0.**

Commission returned to regular session at 4:49 p.m. No action taken.

Commissioner Tasset motioned to adjourn at 4:40 pm. Commissioner Boys seconded the motion. **Motion carried 3-0.**

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
FORD COUNTY, KANSAS**

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**Gary Thomas, Chairman**

**Attested:**

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**Debbie Cox, County Clerk**