

Board of Crawford County Commissioners

Commissioners' Journal

2026, **FIFTH** MEETING

CRAWFORD COUNTY COURTHOUSE, COMMISSIONERS' BOARD ROOM
Girard, KS. **Friday, January 16, 2026 at 10:00 AM**

The Crawford County Board of Commissioners met pursuant to Kansas Statutes.

Annotated Chapter 19, Article 2, Section 18 in due and regular session with open doors.

Commissioner Bruce Blair served as the presiding officer.

Commissioners Carl Wood and Tom Moody were in attendance.

County Clerk Lisa Lusker and County Counselor Jim Emerson were seated with the Board.

Chairman Moody led the Pledge of Allegiance.

UNDER THE HEADING BUSINESS FROM A PREVIOUS MEETING CONSENT AGENDA

On motion (26-027) of Commissioner Moody and the second of Commissioner Wood that the consent agenda be approved including:

1. Approval of the **January 13, 2026** minutes of the Board of County Commissioners, and
2. Approval of the accounts payable warrant numbers 642775 to 643020 dated January 15, 2026 in the total amount of \$630,402.65, and
3. Authorizing the Chairman to sign the previous week's vouchers.

Yeas: Commissioners Moody, Wood, and Blair

Nays:

Present but not voting:

Absent or not voting:

The motion prevailed and the consent agenda was approved.

SIGNING OF MOTIONS

The County Clerk presented the following motions for Commissioners' signatures:

Motion 26	21	That the consent agenda be approved including: Approval of the January 09, 2026 minutes
Motion 26	22	To recess this open meeting and go into a closed executive session for 30 minutes to discuss Sheriff's Department pursuant to the non-elected personnel exception, K.S.A. 75-4319(b)(1), to protect the privacy of

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		the individual employees. The County Commissioners, County Counselor Jim Emerson, Sheriff Billy Tomasi, Undersheriff Jason Vanbecelaere, and Sheriff’s Department Human Resources/Finance Officer Adam Harrison attended the executive session. The open meeting will resume at 10:35 AM. The Motion passed 3-0
Motion 26	23	To approve the Tax Roll Correction, correcting an error in the assessing of personal property owned by Hunter Parker and to request a refund in the amount of \$166.34 from the 2024 tax rolls and \$212.62 from the 2023 tax rolls and authorizing the Chairman to sign
Motion 26	24	To approve the Property/Casualty insurance quote from Traveler’s Insurance
Motion 26	25	To recess this open meeting and to go into a closed executive session for 10 minutes to discuss alternative energy which would be deemed privileged in the attorney-client relationship pursuant to the consultation with attorney exception, K.S.A. 75-4319(b)(2), with the County Commissioners and County Counselor Jim Emerson, present. The open meeting will resume at 11:05 A.M. The motion passed 3-0
Motion 26	26	To recess this open meeting and go into a closed executive session for 10 minutes to discuss EMS pursuant to the non-elected personnel exception, K.S.A. 75-4319(b)(1), to protect the privacy of the individual employees. The County Commissioners and County Counselor Jim Emerson attended the executive session. The open meeting will resume at 11:17 AM. The Motion passed 3-0

UNDER THE HEADING NEW BUSINESS

PROCLAMATION AND ORDERS OF THE BOARD

PUBLIC HEARINGS AND OPENING OF ANNOUNCED BIDS

MESSAGES FROM CRAWFORD CO LOCAL BOARD OF HEALTH

MESSAGES FROM OTHER GOVERNMENTAL ENTITIES

MESSAGES FROM THE PUBLIC

Item One: Mr. Joshua Albin addressed the Commissioners via zoom. Commissioner Blair stated their reason for meeting with Mr. Albin today is for an update regarding the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Albin stated they have already established all visions and goals and what they are doing now is the last couple of steps in their development plans. He explained these processes, what they have done, and are currently doing. Mr. Albin stated a lot of this process is currently relying on Planning & Zoning and without those regulations being completely set, it is a bit of a setback. He stated he will be meeting with Zoning Administrator May Smith and County Counselor Jim Emerson to discuss the zoning regulations. Mr. Albin stated his goal is that he will be able to have a Comprehensive Plan draft by end of April or early May. Commissioner Blair reiterated he will be meeting with Ms. Smith and Mr. Emerson soon and that some of the public hearings will be taking place sometime in March with the goal being a draft created late April or early May and Mr. Albin explained there are two sets of public hearings. He stated there will be a public hearing in February that will be specifically for planning and zoning to adopt new regulations, and then another public hearing in March geared specifically towards the policies that will be implemented with the comprehensive plan. He stated several public hearings will come up in February and March. Commissioner

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Wood asked what the most significant changes between the old book and the new book are and Mr. Albin discussed some of the changes. Commissioner Wood stated if any decision needs to be made it should come to the Commissioners because they were put in their position by the people of Crawford County. He also mentioned agricultural, industrial, and residential and how people who want to develop in agricultural areas that have to go through several hoops and he does not agree with that and he has not seen the complete plan but that he knows that will not work here in Crawford County.

Commissioner Wood stated Ms. Smith should not be making the decisions, although she has a job she should not be the final decision on anything in the zoned areas and that it should always come through the Commissioners. He also asked Mr. Albin to elaborate on county wide zoning and Mr. Albin explained his job is to produce recommendations to the planning board to present to the Commissioners as the Commissioners have the ultimate authority. Mr. Albin explained his recommendation process briefly.

Commissioner Wood asked when the book will come out and Mr. Albin explained the process that still has to be done. Mr. Albin discussed county wide zoning. Commissioner Wood asked if Mr. Albin has a map for zoning that a person could look at or if he is going to present it later and Mr. Albin explained that before any type of public hearings a map will be issued. Commissioner Moody asked Commissioner Wood what he was referring to regarding agriculture and Commissioner Wood stated he does not want his district to be told they cannot propose developments in certain places because it is zoned as agriculture. Commissioner Moody stated he understands that but wanted to clarify that he is not saying that the development should not have to come to the Commissioners and Commissioner Wood stated he believes they should still have to come to the Commissioners before development. Mr. Albin mentioned there is already things in the planning that account for this issue. Commissioner Wood discussed led lighting on signs and asked if there will be anything in the new comprehensive plan that will address this and Mr. Albin explained they have regulations on signage but that a lot of the issues they will see in the county will be in the KDOT right of way. Commissioner Wood explained the situation he is referring to. Commissioners thanked Mr. Albin.

NEW BUSINESS

Item One: Commissioner Wood stated he is unaware if anyone else watched the Pittsburg Commission meeting but that he received a phone call from one of the Pittsburg commissioners. He stated it was mentioned several times that the city and county need to get together and discuss what is going to be done but that he would like to have a meeting. Commissioner Moody asked if this is something they need to discuss with the city or if they are capable of handling it themselves and Commissioner Wood stated he wants to work with the city. He stated he understands the city does not have as much invested. Commissioner Wood stated he wants Pittsburg commissioners and their attorney as well as the county commissioners and Mr. Emerson. He stated he personally knows what he wants to do but wants to get the idea of what everyone else wants to do. Commissioner Blair stated that is fair but he honestly thinks if they are going to talk about the county's portion then it is a conversation for the county commissioners. He explained the increases they would look at is EMS, Sheriff's Department, and Road and Bridge. Commissioner Blair stated he is not going to go in to a meeting and make promises to City of Pittsburg and then come back to these departments and try to cut from their budgets. Commissioner Wood stated they need each other's opinions on what they

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want to do and that he has received several calls asking what they are going to do and that he did not have an answer for them. Commissioner Moody stated they have seen what Pittsburg High School did. Commissioner Blair stated Mr. Emerson has some information that will be useful. Mr. Emerson explained he wanted to make sure the Commissioners have the facts in case of future discussions. Mr. Emerson provided the facts of the situation. Mr. Emerson stated he did not make calculations to suggest anything but strictly to provide facts. Mr. Emerson stated he thinks before they meet with City of Pittsburg they need to determine with their software vendor CIC what they can actually accomplish as far as new tax statements, issuing credits, or issuing refunds. He stated he wants to know internally if it can be done, what the cost will be, and the viability of the options. He explained County Clerk Lisa Lusker has a call in to CIC currently waiting for feedback and that he hates to promise the city or taxpayers that they can do one thing only to find out that they cannot. Mr. Emerson stated on the county's end that any option needs to come from the Commissioners. Commissioner Wood asked Mr. Emerson if it is legal to do and Mr. Emerson stated he does not know if it is legal or illegal but that he is cautious about opening up the budget discussions. He stated what he does not want to see is a total reopening of the budget and explained. Commissioner Wood stated when they were in Wichita he has the program from one of the seminars and he is going to contact and find out which county had this similar problem and what their process was. Commissioner Wood stated he had an individual call yesterday whose house he would guess is way over a million dollars and owns two businesses asking what kind of refund they would receive and he stated he had to tell her that he does not know and that he is not going to dig into people's property information. Commissioner Moody asked about the dollar amount they came up with for the budget and Mr. Emerson explained. Commissioner Blair stated the misconception is that people think they have 1.7 million in excess funding. Commissioner Wood asked if Mr. Emerson knows where that 1.7 million came from, Mr. Emerson confirmed that he does, and Commissioner Wood stated he does as well and explained its relation to assessed appraised value. Commissioner Moody stated he is aware of that as well. Mr. Emerson stated what they knew going into the budget was that they had cut the mill levy and eventually due to increase costs, unexpected expenses, 8% increase in insurance, and working with Mr. Randy Sandberg to get back to full crew at EMS and that if they had not cut the mill levy a few years ago they would have had plenty of money. Commissioner Moody stated he appreciates Mr. Emerson putting this information together because it shows yearly what was done. Commissioner Moody stated they scrutinize over these numbers for weeks on end trying to do the best that they can and when they talk about making some of these cuts he understands the impact. He mentioned that there is not anything warranted in the budget. Ms. Lusker stated she would like to add something as she has been looking in to this for a while. She explained that she put together the top 10 taxpayers in the county and that the first top taxpayer is Everygy and that if they did a refund over \$100,000 of the money would go to businesses like Everygy, Kansas Gas Service, Kansas Crossing Casino, and Pitt Plastics. She explained she believes a majority of the county would get less than \$1.00 back and then you have to look at what it would cost to make that happen. Commissioner Moody asked Ms. Lusker to repeat the last part of her statement and she reiterated a majority of people would receive absolutely less than \$5.00 but most less than \$1.00. Commissioner Wood discussed the individual with the house over a million dollars and two businesses and that they would get a chunk back and Ms. Lusker confirmed that they probably would but that when this was proposed, and she is not

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discounting anything that Mr. Lomshek has discussed or proposed, his point was there are people hurting and will not be able to buy milk and eggs and that the bigger chunk of the rebate is not people struggling to put food on the table for their families. She explained she is not taking away from this individual at all because right is right but that if they give rebates it is mostly going to big companies. Ms. Lusker explained she does not think it would help to cut EMS services, police officers, or wages and she thinks those are all things that need considered when making this decision. Commissioner Blair stated when he went through and broke down last year's budgets he was confused about the presentation because there is not a lot of surplus in the budget. He asked Ms. Lusker if she can find the cuts they had already made to the budget and she stated they cut off the budget every time they met regarding budgets. Commissioner Wood stated they cut the mill levy but he did not realize their appraised value went up so they were cutting but still had increase in budget. Commissioner Wood stated four or five years ago the budget for the county was 27 million and Mr. Emerson stated he can find that information. Commissioner Wood asked if there is a chance Ms. Lusker can look and see what the average rebate would be. Ms. Lusker stated also something to consider is if the value of someone's house is true as she has had individuals call and say they could not get an independent appraisal to be as high or equal to what it is appraised at with the county, or that it is worth more and the county has it appraised as less. Commissioner Blair stated he is more than fine with meeting with City of Pittsburg but that if they take the \$757,000 that Mr. Emerson has calculated as the goal but that unfortunately EMS and Sheriff's Department and that he believes it is fair for those departments to explain what that is going to do to them. Commissioner Blair stated he does not want people to think the county has a large surplus and just does not want to return it, but that this is what they based their budgets on for this year.

MESSAGES FROM ELECTED OFFICIALS

Item One: Sheriff Billy Tomasi addressed the Commissioners. He stated he talked to an individual today believing he was having a heart attack who drove himself to the hospital because he saw a help wanted add regarding EMS and did not think an ambulance would be available to transport him. He stated he called 911 so that they could track him on his way to the hospital. He stated three weeks ago a deputy stopped an individual whose baby was not breathing and he took the father and baby to the Emergency Department himself because these individuals stated they heard EMS was not available. Sheriff Tomasi also stated a deputy turned in his notice today because he is going to a smaller community up north and going to be making \$32/hour instead of the \$25/hour he makes here with cost of living here continuing to rise. He stated when people believe there is no EMS or deputies around for help that is a concern to them. Commissioner Moody stated they experienced the same issue with EMS and individuals leaving to make more money somewhere else. Commissioner Blair stated that is one of the reasons they have had to increase pay to try and compete with other places to keep the employees here. Sheriff Tomasi discussed correctional officers and how if they lose those officers they will have to pay three times the amount to source their inmates elsewhere instead of paying a \$1.00/hour raise for the officers. Sheriff Tomasi discussed cuts they have made to save money. Commissioner Blair asked with the budget they have this year do they see being in the same situation as last year or what their current projection on that is and Sheriff's Department Human Resources/Finance Officer Adam Harrison answered he believes he

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will have to do more calculations. He discussed the impact of insurance and his concerns with that. Commissioner Blair discussed KPNF and how many different entities are they fighting with the same benefit and Mr. Harrison explained all of them have the same benefit. Sheriff Tomasi explained that the 3% cost of living raise is sometimes the only raise these officers will get and that there has been years where they did not even get that. He stated this is something he needs to do for his officers and does not care if he receives the 3% raise himself or not as long as the others are taken care of. Commissioner Blair asked if he told the Sheriff's Department their budget is \$200,000 after meeting with City of Pittsburg what does that do to their department and Mr. Harrison stated nobody will get a raise, costs of equipment keeps increasing as well as technology. Mr. Harrison explained they would have to look at reducing body camera footage due to the cloud storage required and how much those costs themselves. Commissioner Blair stated what he is getting at is there is not a lot of fluff in the budget. Mr. Harrison explained they could be in \$30,000 just getting an individual properly equipped. Sheriff Tomasi stated it is the same situation for EMS with individuals worried there is not ambulances available to help them.

MESSAGES FROM APPOINTED OFFICIALS

Item One: EMS Director Randy Sandberg addressed the Commissioners. He stated if they gave them a \$200,000 budget only the only place he has to cut is a crew. Mr. Sandberg explained this would place them where they were before where they did not have availability for transfers and would be longer getting to calls with a slower response time. He stated he is fortunate the Commissioners allowed him to increase his staffing and that he really does not want to go backwards as it does not do the community justice to do so. Mr. Sandberg gave some statistics on transfers.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Item One: EMS Director Randy Sandberg requested an executive session for 15 minutes to discuss Non-Elected Personnel.

On motion (26-028) of Commissioner Blair and the second of Commissioner Moody to recess this open meeting and go into a closed executive session for 15 minutes to discuss EMS pursuant to the non-elected personnel exception, K.S.A. 75-4319(b)(1), to protect the privacy of the individual employees. The County Commissioners, County Counselor Jim Emerson, and EMS Director Randy Sandberg attended the executive session. The open meeting will resume at 11:17 AM. The Motion passed 3-0.

Yeas: Commissioners Moody, Wood, and Blair

Nays:

Present but not voting:

Absent or not voting:

The motion prevailed.

The Commissioners went into Executive Session at 11:02 AM and reconvened the Open Session at 11:17 AM with no action taken except to go back into open session.

NEW BUSINESS CONTINUED

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Item Two: Mr. Emerson stated he is on the agenda for two resolutions today both regarding Planning and Zoning and Joint Board of Zoning Appeals. He first presented Resolution #2026-001, a Resolution reappointing Bonnie Houk to the Crawford County Planning and Zoning Board and Joint Board of Zoning Appeals effective January 1, 2026 through January 1, 2029.

On motion (26-029) of Commissioner Blair and the second of Commissioner Moody to adopt Resolution #2026-001, a Resolution reappointing Bonnie Houk to the Crawford County Planning and Zoning Board and Joint Board of Zoning Appeals effective January 1, 2026 through January 1, 2029.

Yeas: Commissioners Blair, Moody, and Wood

Nays:

Present but not voting:

Absent or not voting:

The motion prevailed.

Mr. Emerson presented Resolution #2026-002, a Resolution appointed Tracy Caldwell to the Crawford County Planning and Zoning Board and Joint Board of Zoning Appeals effective through January 1, 2026 through January 1, 2029.

On motion (26-030) of Commissioner Moody and the second of Commissioner Blair to adopt Resolution #2026-002, a Resolution appointed Tracy Caldwell to the Crawford County Planning and Zoning Board and Joint Board of Zoning Appeals effective January 1, 2026 through January 1, 2029.

Yeas: Commissioners Moody, Blair, and Wood

Nays:

Present but not voting:

Absent or not voting:

The motion prevailed.

Item Three: Commissioner Wood asked the Commissioners if they want him to set up a meeting with the City of Pittsburg's commissioners and their attorney. Commissioner Blair stated he is fine with that and Commissioner Moody stated he is always open to have a meeting with any town in the county but that he does not feel he needs anyone directing him on this decision however he is completely open to it. Commissioner Wood stated he will push for Wednesday or Thursday night next week around 5:30 PM and he will provide more information in Tuesday's meeting and asked if the Commissioners will be available. Commissioner Blair stated Thursday would be better for him but that he will make himself available either way. Commissioner Wood stated this particular city commissioner asked if they want to televise the meeting and he stated he will have to look into this. Commissioner Moody mentioned he met with a city council member yesterday to discuss a few topics and he believes they are on the same page.

Item Four: Commissioner Wood discussed infant care and that he hears there are a few more employees who will be increasing their family so he would like to schedule for next Friday to discuss policy either a work session or in the open meeting. Commissioner Moody asked what the policy allows and Commissioner Wood explained they can take

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12 weeks maternity leave and then children up to 6 months can be brought with them to work if they have an agreement but that his concern is if an infant gets hurt on county property who is liable. Commissioner Moody stated ultimately the county would be liable and Mr. Emerson explained the policy would allow for more protection with a waiver or agreement. Commissioner Moody stated he believes this is a benefit. Mr. Emerson stated he would like to do this as a work session first to narrow down some details. Commissioner Wood asked if he would like to do it next Friday at 9:00 AM and Commissioners confirmed.

Item Five: Commissioner Wood stated the following Tuesday he would like to discuss county per diem policy in a work session before discussing it in a meeting. Mr. Emerson asked if he is wanting the work session on January 27th and the Commissioners agreed to 9:00 AM work session on January 27th.

Item Six: Commissioner Wood stated he thinks Mr. Joshua Albin is doing a good job and that he would like to see the book before a public meeting. Commissioner Moody stated it will be interesting to see how the county feels about county wide zoning if it is the direction that they go. Mr. Emerson stated he remembers the old zoning book not being too big and then their next book was very lengthy. He stated he agrees with Mr. Albin wanting to make a comprehensive plan customized to the sign of the county.

OLD BUSINESS

Item One: Mr. Emerson stated he was asked on Tuesday to find the last mowing bids that is two years old. He explained it was a two year deal sent out February of 2024 and the two years will be up and it will be time to discuss mowing again. Mr. Emerson stated he would be happy to have Noxious Weeds Department Tommy Scales look at the information as well as Maintenance Director Robert Gorentz. Mr. Emerson stated they will go through this information again soon but that they did specify regulations on mowing the grass as well as mulching being on an as needed basis.

Item Two: Commissioner Moody thanked Ms. Lusker for the work she has done on the numbers and figures she has provided to the Commissioners regarding the current discussion on property taxes.

EXECUTIVE SESSION CONTINUED

Item Two: County Counselor Jim Emerson requested an executive session for 20 minutes to discuss items that would be deemed privileged in the Attorney-Client Relationship.

On motion (26-031) of Commissioner Blair and second of Commissioner Moody to recess this open meeting and to go into a closed executive session for 20 minutes to discuss Economic Development Policies and CVB which would be deemed privileged in the attorney-client relationship pursuant to the consultation with attorney exception, K.S.A. 75-4319(b)(2), with the County Commissioners and County Counselor Jim Emerson, present. The open meeting will resume at 11:51 A.M. The motion passed 3-0. Yeas: Commissioners Wood, Blair, and Moody

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Nays:

Present but not voting:

Absent or not voting:

The motion prevailed.

The Commissioners went into Executive Session at 11:31 AM and reconvened the Open Session at 11:51 AM with no action taken except to go back into open session.

UNDER THE HEADING FUTURE BUSINESS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS FUTURE BUSINESS:

Item One: January 20, 2026- 9:30 AM Work Session with Road and Bridge Coordinator Alyssa Edwards to discuss Road and Bridge.

Item Two: January 23, 2026- 9:00 AM Work Session to discuss county infant policy.

Item Three: January 23, 2026- 9:45 AM Work Session with Director of Fiscal Services Randi Ryan to discuss ARPA.

Item Four: January 27, 2026- 9:00 AM Work Session to discuss county per diem policy.

Item Five: January 30, 2026- Rock bids due by 10:00 AM and will be opened during the regular session.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Item One: January 17, 2026- An event will be taking place in the evening at Palluccas Event Center in Frontenac. One or more Commissioners may be in attendance.

Item Two: January 19, 2026- The Crawford County Courthouse will be closed in observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

Item Three: January 28, 2026- Kansas Association of Counties Local Government Day. All three Commissioners may be in attendance.

UNDER THE HEADING MOTION TO ADJOURN MOTION TO ADJOURN

Item One: Adjournment

On the motion of Commissioner Moody and the second of Commissioner Wood to adjourn the [January 16, 2026](#) meeting of the Board of Crawford County Commissioners at 11:53 AM and to reconvene at the next regularly scheduled time with open doors.

Yeas: Commissioners Moody, Wood, and Blair

Nays:

Present but not voting:

Absent or not voting:

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The motion prevailed.

In Testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused to be affixed my official seal and submitted these minutes for the approval of the Board of Crawford County Commissioners.

Lisa Lusker
County Clerk

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This submission completed at the Crawford County Courthouse in Girard.

[Taken RJA 1/16/2026 3:25 PM/amended BKW 1/16/25 3:42 PM](#)