

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

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May 13, 2025

The Board of Barton County Commissioners convened this 13th day of May, 2025, at the Barton County Courthouse.

Members present:

Duane Reif, Commissioner, 1st District, (Chairman Pro-Tem)

Barb Esfeld, Commissioner, 2nd District

Shawn Hutchinson, Commissioner, 3rd District

Tricia Schlessiger, Commissioner, 4th District, Chairman

Donna Zimmerman, Commissioner, 5th 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 Zimmerman moved to approve the minutes of the April 29, 2025, and the May 6, 2025, Regular Meetings.

Commissioner Reif seconded the motion.

All voted aye. Motion passed.

II. OLD BUSINESS:

There was no old business.

III. NEW BUSINESS:

A. PROCLAMATION 2025-12: National Prevention Week:

-Tyler Morton, Prevention Advocate, 20th Judicial District Juvenile Services, will be joined by Central Kansas Partnership task force members and area teens to present this Proclamation. What affects adults, affects children. The 2025 Kansas Communities that Care report shows that Barton County, through the use of prevention initiatives, coalition efforts and professional development, has assisted in providing resources to those in need.

Tyler Morton, Prevention Advocate, 20th Judicial District Juvenile Services, said with him today were members of Youth Crew, Juvenile Services and Rise Up Central Kansas to help with the proclamation. Morton said according to the 2023 National Survey of Drug Use and Health, an estimated 167.2 million Americans, ages 12 and over, used tobacco, vaped nicotine, used alcohol or illicit drugs within the past month. Morton said Kansas had been doing a great job with prevention efforts. Last year Kansas was ranked last and at this time was ranked 22nd in mental health. Kansas was ranked 16th in terms of youth reporting at least one major depressive episode. 4.02% of youth in Kansas report having a substance abuse problem compared to the national average of 4.08%. Morton said this demonstrated that the services being brought to Barton County and the state were helping improve the statistics. 17.3% of adults in Barton County reported they binge drink, 15.4% of residents surveyed reported they were in frequent mental distress and 17% of residents surveyed reported they were in fair or poor health. Morton said they were hoping that there would be more resources available soon with the changes being made at The Center. Morton said the survey they used was called the Kansas Communities That Care Survey. It had results from the most recent one done in 2025. It showed that Barton County had a lower

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percentage than the state rate for students in grades 6th, 8th, 10th and 12th for alcohol, vaping, marijuana and prescription drug use. Morton said they had seen these trends go down since 2022, staying below the state average, showing their efforts were working. He said they want to work harder at collecting data and would appreciate the commission's support. Barton County's participation rate has fallen increasingly low in the past several years. In 2022, participation in the KCTC Survey was right around 80%. Between 2023 and 2025, the highest participation rate was 49% in 2025 with the lowest being 13%.

Amy Ferguson, Rise Up Central Kansas, members of Youth Crew, Morton and Marissa Woodmansee, Juvenile Services Director, read the proclamation.

Commissioner Schlessiger thanked them all for coming today and speaking.

Commissioner Esfeld said she was proud of them for participating in Youth Crew and Rise Up, it took their time but was very rewarding.

Commissioner Reif said they did an amazing job and were future leaders in Barton County.

Commissioner Esfeld moved to adopt Proclamation 2025-12, National Prevention Week.

Commissioner Reif seconded the motion.

All voted aye. Motion passed.

Commissioner Esfeld said Kiwanis had a Leadership Camp for students that have finished 8th grade. It was held at Rock Springs July 18 – 20. She said if they were interested to contact herself or Morton. The cost was \$250 and Kiwanis had scholarships available.

PROCLAMATION 2025-13: Mental Health Awareness Month, May, 2025:

Holly Bowyer, Accounting Specialist, The Center, will present details. The Center for Counselling & Consultation has submitted this year's proclamation dealing with Mental Health Awareness Month, May, 2025. The Proclamation details the prevalence of mental health conditions in our community and recognizes the need for intervention, awareness and inclusivity.

Holly Bowyer, Accounting Specialist, The Center, said she was also part of the Central Kansas Partnership, and those kids do an amazing job in the communities. Bowyer said Mental Health Awareness Week was May 12-16. They were doing spirit week and encouraged other businesses to participate. Bowyer said their big event was Mental Health Awareness Day on Tuesday, May 20th, in the courthouse square from 3:30 – 7:30. There would be approximately 20 other businesses attending to talk about the resources available in the community with hot dogs and popcorn provided. It was a family-oriented event. Bowyer said the theme this year was Turn Awareness Into Action.

Bowyer and other staff members read the proclamation.

Commissioner Schlessiger said this was another very important proclamation as everyone knew someone with mental health issues that needed help.

Commissioner Hutchinson moved to adopt Proclamation 2025-13, Mental Health Awareness Month, May, 2025.

Commissioner Zimmerman seconded the motion.

All voted aye. Motion passed.

C. PROCLAMATION 2025-14: National Bike Month, May, 2025:

Be Well Barton County committee members will present details. The bicycle is an economical and environmentally sound form of transportation and an excellent tool for health, recreation and enjoyment of

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Barton County's scenic beauty. Throughout the month of May, citizens are urged to be mindful of bicyclists in an effort to reduce collisions, injuries and fatalities and improve health and safety for everyone on the road.

Bev Frizell, Barton County Health Department and a Be Well Barton County member, said she was also a coach for a youth mountain biking team that was recently started. Frizell said they were part of a national organization called NICA, National Interscholastic Cycling Association. It was a group of 6th to 12th graders who get together and go to races. Frizell said in addition to riding races and scoring points by getting on the podium, they scored points by being involved in building and maintaining trail systems. Frizell said they practiced at the Rotary Trail as well as at Lake Barton. Frizell shared pictures of things they had done this year. They were trying to build biking in the community. Frizell read the proclamation.

Commissioner Schlessiger said bicycling was one of the best forms of exercise and it was a cool project they had started. She asked Frizell if they got grants for the bikes or if participants provided their own. Frizell said they provided their own or some members had extra bikes that they loaned to participants.

Commissioner Reif said Hoisington received a grant for bicycles that could be checked out at no cost. They were available at the city office, the walking path and the Hoisington Activity Center.

Commissioner Esfeld asked Frizell how someone could join their group. Frizell said they could contact her and they also had a Facebook page called Golden Belt Badgers. Frizell said they had seven kids on the team currently and hoped to grow, they had more coaches than kids.

Commissioner Zimmerman said she had always seen people riding the bike trails at Lake Wilson but recently noticed there were more families riding together.

Commissioner Zimmerman moved to adopt Proclamation 2025-14, National Bike Month, May, 2025. Commissioner Esfeld seconded the motion. All voted aye. Motion passed.

D. COUNTY ENGINEER: Bridge Repair – Off-System Bridge No. 258:

-Barry McManaman, County Engineer, will provide details. Off-System Bridge No. 258 is a reinforced concrete box structure that crosses Little Cheyenne Creek on NE 100 Avenue just south of NE 30 Road. The downstream end of the box has severe channel erosion that requires a repair to prevent possible undermining of the structure. L&M Contractors, Inc. submitted a cost proposal to install sheet pile across the channel on the downstream end and to place concrete between the end of the box and the sheet pile to form a protection wall. Road and Bridge will prepare the site by removing the existing riprap rock prior to L&M's work and then reshape the riprap after L&M's work is completed. L&M's \$44,730.00 proposal includes providing 43 feet of 3/8 inch sheet pile, driving it to a depth of 15 feet and placing the concrete. Their cost does not include the concrete, which is to be paid by the County, at an estimated cost less than \$4,000.00. Monies are available in the Special Bridge Fund for this project.

Barry McManaman, County Engineer, said the bridge was about 3 miles north of Ellinwood. McManaman said the downstream end of the box had severe erosion. Over the years, Road & Bridge had done some repairs to try to seal it up. McManaman said at the west end, the water was very shallow and not a problem, but the east end was really starting to wash out. McManaman said he met with Curt Mauler, L & M Contractors, and Chris Schartz, Barton County Road & Bridge, on site and they estimated approximately 5 feet of erosion. They discussed Road & Bridge staff removing several feet of riprap, getting it back to bare dirt. Then L & M Contractors could come in with a crane and drive sheet pile into it and fill the void with concrete. McManaman said the fear was if there ever was a large flow and the water started getting under the west end, the box could be undermined, and we could lose the box.

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Commissioner Zimmerman said she could not imagine the cost to completely replace the bridge and it made sense to repair it and keep it.

Commissioner Schlessiger said she appreciated them catching it early and a bigger expense was probably prevented.

Commissioner Reif moved to authorize L&M Contractors, Inc. to repair Off-System Bridge No. 258 at a cost of \$44,730.00. Cost to be paid from the Special Bridge Fund, Construction Related Items Line, 003-92-6191-92.

Commissioner Hutchinson seconded the motion.

All voted aye. Motion passed.

E. COUNTY ENGINEER: Bridge Repair – Three Native Stone Bridges:

-Mr. McManaman will provide details. Three native stone bridges north of Beaver need repair work to remove and replace deteriorated grout lines and reset limestone blocks for preservation. L&M Contractors, Inc. has submitted a daily price of \$5,305.00 that includes equipment, labor, supplies, insurance and taxes for the limestone block work. There are also areas of spalling concrete and exposed rusted reinforcing steel on the underside of the bridge decks that need concrete surface repair at an additional cost. L&M's price for concrete surface repair is at a unit cost of \$170.00 per square foot. Estimating that the limestone block repair can be completed in 10 days, with concrete surface repair that could exceed \$10,000.00, it is requested that L&M Contractors be approved for work not to exceed \$65,000.00. Monies are available in Special Bridge for this project.

Barry McManaman, County Engineer, said the biggest one was 3 miles north of Beaver, it was a double barrel bridge and tall. McManaman said that over time, the grout joints had started to deteriorate, especially in the bottom couple rows. On the north side, the wings had started to separate, and stones had moved. McManaman said there was no good way for a contractor to bid on these because it was unknown what you would run into. Mauler worked up a cost on a daily basis for their crew. McManaman said they estimated it to take about 10 days to work on the 3 bridges.

McManaman said the next bridge was on the County blacktop and the deterioration was not quite as bad. This bridge has problems on the underside of the concrete deck. The repairs would be to remove the loose concrete, sandblast it getting it down to the bare steel and then spray on the product.

McManaman said the third bridge had been hit on the wing and displaced it. He wanted to start on the bigger bridge, seeing how many days it takes and how far they get in the 10 days. McManaman said if they could not get everything done in that time, he would be back to talk to the commissioners.

Commissioner Schlessiger asked McManaman if these bridges were on the state historic registry. McManaman said they were.

Commissioner Schlessiger asked if they had to be notified. McManaman said he did contact them to make them aware of the planned repairs. He felt this was maintenance work and hoped there would be no issues. McManaman said at one time, Barton County had 7 of the native stone bridges on the historic registry, 3 of them had been replaced.

Commissioner Reif said he hoped we could keep the historic bridges. He asked McManaman how many bridges the county took care of. McManaman said we had 372 bridges. A structure 20 feet long or more was called a bridge with a lot of concrete boxes and large culverts as well.

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Commissioner Zimmerman moved to authorize L&M Contractors, Inc. to repair bridges FAS 640, OS 218 and OS 222 at a cost not to exceed \$65,000.00. Cost to be paid from the Special Bridge Fund, Construction Related Items Line, 003-92-6191-92.

Commissioner Hutchinson seconded the motion.

All voted aye. Motion passed.

F. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY: Computer Replacement for Public Health:

-Dereck Hollingshead, Information Technology Director, will present details. On April 28, 2025, the County opened a Request for Proposal to replace certain computers at the Health Department. That included 16 Dell laptops, docks and privacy screens.

Dereck Hollingshead, Information Technology Director, said in late 2024, they went out for bids to replace a large majority of computers. The Health Department was not included because they did not have funds available at that time. Hollingshead said that in 2025, they found a grant to replace computers. A couple of weeks ago, the IT Department went out for bids to replace 16 laptops, docks and privacy screens. They received 6 bids and would like the approval of one of the bids.

Commissioner Esfeld said there were two local bids and a third one from a company we have worked with before.

Commissioner Hutchinson said he looked at them all thoroughly and the only difference between SHI and Central Plains Computer Services was that SHI had the Ultra 7 processor, and Central Plains Computer Services was using the i7. Hollingshead said they were both i7, just slightly larger, slightly faster.

Commissioner Hutchinson said if Hollingshead recommended the SHI bid, he would commend him for giving them the best possible deal. One of the lower prices for a local bid would be Central Plains Computer Services, who met the minimum qualifications for the RFP, he would always be in favor of reinvesting dollars back to a local vendor.

Commissioner Schlessiger said they did not have to go with the lowest bid since it was grant funds. The lowest bid was a company we had never worked with before. Hollingshead said he did not realize one line in the specs had two variations, he always tried to get them as close as possible.

Commissioner Schlessiger said she was surprised at the difference in the dock prices. Hollingshead explained that some were factoring in future tariff prices with their bids.

Commissioner Esfeld moved to award the Computer Replacement for Public Health RFP to Central Plains Computer Services for a total cost of \$21,720.00 Cost to be paid from the Public Health Infrastructure Grant Fund, Equipment Line, 910-52-6165-60.

Commissioner Hutchinson seconded the motion.

All voted aye. Motion passed.

G. PUBLIC HEALTH: Public Health Family Planning Equipment Purchase:

-Karen Winkelman, Public Health Director, will provide details. In March, 2025, the Health Department received notice that the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, Division of Public Health, awarded Barton County \$21,155.00 as a part of the Family Planning Grant. County staff requested the funding to purchase, in part, an autoclave needed to sterilize Family Planning instruments. The autoclave (sterilizer) and software upgrade cost \$5,397.96 from McKesson – just over the \$5,000.00 purchasing threshold. The Commission will be asked to approve the purchase from the Public Health Family Planning Fund.

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Wendy Winkelman, Public Health Director, said early this year they were notified by KDHE Family Planning Program that there were funds available for various opportunities. Winkelman said they expressed interest in multiple things, one of which was an autoclave to sterilize instruments. In their proposal, they gave an approximate cost of \$7,000. It came in under that at \$4,400 but they also needed the software so that put it over the \$5,000 threshold.

Commissioner Hutchinson moved to approve the \$5,397.96 autoclave (sterilizer) and software upgrade cost from McKesson. Cost to be paid from the Public Health Family Planning Fund, Equipment Line, 006-60-6165.

Commissioner Zimmerman seconded the motion.

All voted aye. Motion passed.

H. 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.

At 9:45 A.M., Commissioner Zimmerman moved that the Commission enter into Executive Session for a period of fifteen minutes. The subject to be discussed will be non-elected personnel. The reason this needs to be discussed in Executive Session is to discuss the performance of a county non-elected employee. The Governing body, the County Counselor, the County Administrator are to be included in said meeting. The Open Meeting will resume at 10:01 A.M. in this room.

Commissioner Reif seconded the motion.

All voted aye. Motion passed.

At 10:01 A.M., Commissioner Zimmerman moved to return to Regular Session with no action taken.

Commissioner Hutchinson seconded the motion.

All voted aye. Motion passed.

IV. ENDING BUSINESS:

1. Announcements
2. Appointments

V. OTHER BUSINESS:

Commissioner Esfeld – Farm Bureau would be sponsoring legislative updates. One will be May 30th at Miller Time in Beaver and May 31st at 9:00 A.M. at Long's Pumpkin Patch.

Commissioner Reif – school is out, watch out for children when driving.

Commissioner Schlessiger – Jason Brown would like to talk to the commission about a road use agreement in the future.

VI. ADJOURN:

Commissioner Reif moved to adjourn at 10:04 A.M.

Commissioner Esfeld seconded the motion.

All voted aye. Motion passed.

ATTEST:


Chris Saenz
Barton County Deputy Clerk


Tricia Schlessiger, Chairman

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EXECUTIVE SESSION: (Done in Study Session)

Notes from County Administrator

Commissioner Zimmerman moves that the Commission enter into Executive Session for a period of (10) ten minutes. The subject to be discussed will be non-elected personnel. The reason this needs to be discussed in Executive Session is to discuss the performance of a county non-elected employee. The Governing body, the County Counselor, the County Administrator and the CKCC Director are to be included in said meeting. The Open Meeting will resume at 11:36 A.M. in this room.

Commissioner Hutchinson seconds

All in favor aye from all.

Commissioner Zimmerman makes motion to come out of executive session with no action taken

Commissioner Hutchinson seconds.

All in favor aye from all.

PROCLAMATION 2025-12

National Prevention Week

WHEREAS, according to the SAMHSA National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 48.5 million people aged 12 or older, or 16.5 percent of the population, met the criteria for having a substance use disorder. 28.9 million people who were classified as having an alcohol use disorder and 25.4 million people who were classified as having a drug use disorder; and

WHEREAS these problems do not discriminate and can affect people in all walks of life no matter age, race or status; and

WHEREAS Kansas ranks 22nd in the US in mental health due to high rates of mental illness and barriers to accessing care; and

WHEREAS Kansas Health Matters reports that 17.3% of adults in Barton County binge drink, with 15.4% of residents in frequent mental distress and 30.5% of adults with disabilities living in poverty; and

WHEREAS, prevention programs and organizations are proving to be effective as prevention program data shows a decrease in mental health/substance abuse issues; and

WHEREAS, community programs, such Central Kansas Partnership, comprised of Rise Up Central Kansas, the Suicide Prevention Task Force, Glow For Life, and Youth Crew, along with the Barton County Health Department, Central Kansas Community Corrections, the 20th Judicial District Juvenile Services and The Center of Counseling and Consultation, along with other area private and public providers, have the power and the responsibility to make community change.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED by the Board of County Commissioners of Barton County, Kansas, that May 12 – 16, 2025, is declared as National Prevention Week; and

FURTHER, that citizens are urged to become more aware and be able to recognize the signs of mental health and substance use disorders. Equally important, citizens should help build community, strengthen resilience and create hope to keep those around them and themselves healthy and safe; and

FURTHER, in recognition of the seriousness of substance use and mental health issues in our communities, the power of prevention, and the tireless efforts of those working to make a difference, we recognize, support and appreciate the programs and events that increase awareness of, and action around, mental health and/or substance use disorders.

DATED this 13th day of May 2025.

ATTEST:


Bev Schmeidler
County Clerk



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS


Tricia Schlessiger, Chairman


Barb Esfeld, Commissioner


Shawn Hutchinson, Commissioner


Duane A Reif, Commissioner


Donna Zimmerman, Commissioner

PROCLAMATION 2025-13
Mental Health Awareness Month, May, 2025

WHEREAS, mental health is an essential part of overall well-being, impacting individuals, families and communities across the State of Kansas:

- One in five American adults experiences a mental health condition each year and everyone faces challenges in life that can impact their mental health;
- Despite its prevalence, mental health remains shrouded in stigma, preventing many from seeking help; and
- Early intervention and access to quality care are crucial for managing mental health conditions and improving quality of life; and

WHEREAS, May is recognized nationally as Mental Health Awareness Month, providing an opportunity to turn awareness into action, combat stigma and promote mental health resources.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED, in collaboration with The Center for Counseling & Consultation, that the Barton County Commissioners recognize May 2025 as Mental Health Month in Barton County, Kansas; and

FURTHER, that the Commission encourages all residents of Barton County to:

- Educate themselves and others about mental health conditions, treatment options and available resources;
- Challenge stigma by speaking respectfully and inclusively about mental health;
- Seek help if they are struggling with their mental health and encourage others to do the same;
- Support organizations that provide mental health services and advocacy; and
- Create safe and supportive environments for open conversations about mental health; and

FURTHER, that together we can create a community where everyone feels empowered to prioritize their mental well-being and seek help when needed.

DATED this 13th day of May 2025.

ATTEST:


Bev Schmeidler
County Clerk



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS


Tricia Schlessiger, Chairman


Barb Esfeld, Commissioner


Shawn Hutchinson, Commissioner


Duane A Reif, Commissioner


Donna Zimmerman, Commissioner

PROCLAMATION 2025-14

National Bike Month, May, 2025

WHEREAS, the bicycle is an economical and environmentally sound form of transportation and an excellent tool for health, recreation and enjoyment of Barton County's scenic beauty; and

WHEREAS, maintaining a bicycling-friendly community has been shown to improve citizens' health, well-being, and quality of life, growing the economy of Barton County, attracting tourism dollars, improving traffic safety, supporting student learning outcomes and reducing pollution, congestion, and wear and tear on streets and roads; and

WHEREAS, Be Well Barton County, the Barton County Commission, the League of American Bicyclists, schools, parks and recreation departments, police departments, public health districts, hospitals, private businesses and civic groups will promote bicycling during the month of May, 2025, and throughout the remainder of the year.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED by the Board of County Commissioners of Barton County, Kansas, that May, 2025 is Bike Month in Barton County, and

FURTHER, citizens are urged to be mindful of bicyclists in an effort to reduce collisions, injuries and fatalities and improve health and safety for everyone on the road; and

FURTHER, that citizens are reminding that biking is a low-impact form of experience and can help protect citizens from serious diseases such as stroke, heart attack, some cancers, depression, diabetes, obesity and arthritis.

DATED this 13th day of May 2025.

ATTEST:


Bev Schmeidler
County Clerk




BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS


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Barb Esfeld, Commissioner


Shawn Hutchinson, Commissioner


Duane A. Reif, Commissioner


Donna Zimmerman, Commissioner