

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/48b6CVm>

April 21, 2026

The Board of Barton County Commissioners convened this 21st day of April, 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 Zimmerman moved to approve the agenda.

Commissioner Hutchinson seconded the motion.

All voted aye. Motion passed.

Commissioner Esfeld moved to approve the minutes of the April 7, 2026, and the April 14, 2026, Regular Meetings.

Commissioner Schlessiger seconded the motion.

All voted aye. Motion passed.

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 April 7, 2026, and ending April 21, 2026.

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

Commissioner Zimmerman moved to approve appropriations for the period of April 7, 2026, to April 21, 2026. Authorize the Chairman to sign on behalf of the Commission.

Commissioner Hutchinson seconded the motion.

All voted aye. Motion passed.

IV. NEW BUSINESS:

A. PROCLAMATION 2026-07: National Crime Victims' Rights Week:

-Camila Komarek, Victim Advocate, will provide details. In recognition of National Crime Victims' Rights Week, the County Attorney's Office has requested that the Commission adopt Proclamation 2026-07.

The week of April 19 – 25, 2026, has been selected to reaffirm the County's commitment to listen, act and advocate in protecting victims and serving communities.

Camila Komarek, Victim Advocate, said this marked the 45th year. First proclaimed in 1981 by President Ronald Reagan, this week was to bring people together to recognize the impact of crime on our survivors and renew our commitment to victims' rights and services. Komarek said crime deeply affected victims

survivors in many ways, physically, financially, emotionally, spiritually and socially. No one should have to face the trauma alone. She said across the country, over 12,000 victim service programs helped

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Survivors rebuild their lives and support public safety. Komarek said National Crime Victims Rights Week was a time to look back on the advances over the last 45 years, honor the strength and resilience of survivors and renew our promise to support victims' rights. Komarek said this year's theme was Listen, Act, Advocate, protect victims and serve communities. Komarek said the Barton County Attorney's Office, along with community agencies, provided support to help guide victims throughout the criminal justice process from the beginning to the end. Komarek then read the proclamation.

Commissioner Reif said it was a great job they did for victims.

Commissioner Esfeld said it was appropriate to recognize National Crime Victims' Rights Week and noted it came at a very important time for our community and thanked Komarek for what she does for victims.

Commissioner Hutchinson said Komarek's presentation was very good.

Commissioner Esfeld asked Komarek if she came up with the theme. Komarek said that came from the state level, the Attorney General's Office.

Commissioner Esfeld moved to Adopt Proclamation 2026-07, National Crime Victims' Rights Week.

Commissioner Hutchinson seconded the motion.

All voted aye. Motion passed.

B. ROAD AND BRIDGE: Venture and Cold Mix Preparation:

-Chris Schartz, County Works Director, will provide details. In 2025, it was determined that the County would move asphalt preparation to Venture. Continuing that process into 2026, Venture will mix the asphalt and provide all aggregates and sand. This allows the County to receive fresh asphalt prepared with purer ingredients. In addition, the County avoids costs associated with on-site production, storage and material aging. It is suggested that the Commission approve the agreement for mixing up to 25,000 tons of cold mix at a price of \$33.00 per ton.

Chris Schartz, County Works Director, said Venture will make it as the County needed it. Schartz said they planned to do approximately 30 miles of overlay this season and asked for approval.

Commissioner Zimmerman asked Schartz if we were held to buy 25,000 tons if that much was not needed. Schartz said no, only what they would need for the projects. Schartz said last year they used 23,945 tons.

Commissioner Reif asked for public awareness, they overlay and seal about ¼ of the county blacktops each year. Schartz said this year, they would be in the southeast and go north to the Odin area. Schartz said they seal ¼ every year and overlay the worst miles.

Commissioner Reif said as someone who grew up in the country, blacktop roads were important. Schartz said Barton County was in the top four in number of blacktop miles.

Commissioner Zimmerman said we were in the top four out of 105 counties. Schartz said Reno, Sedgwick and Kearney counties were the ones with more miles.

Commissioner Schlessiger asked Schartz how they notify the public about where they were working. Schartz said it was posted on the Barton County website; he tried to post the general area they would be working in. Schartz said the Barton County Facebook page also alerted people where to look for the information.

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Commissioner Schlessiger moved to purchase up to 25,000 tons of cold mix at a price of \$33.00 per ton from Venture Corporation, as outlined in the March 24, 2026, Venture memorandum reference 2026 Cold Mix Asphalt. Cost to be paid from the Road and Bridge Fund, Contract Construction Line, 002-92-6250. Commissioner Zimmerman seconded the motion. All voted aye. Motion passed.

C. FIRE DISTRICT NO. 2: Appointment of a Board of Trustees:

-Matt Patzner, County Administrator, will provide details. Per Resolution 2026-05, A Resolution Expanding Fire District No. 2, the members of the Fire District Board of Trustees shall consist of not more than one (1) appointee from each participating entity. The Fire District now consists of the Albion, Eureka, Fairview, Grant, North Homestead, South Homestead, Union and Wheatland Townships and the Cities of Galatia, Hoisington, Olmitz and Susank. There is one unexpired term ending December 31, 2026, open for North Homestead Township. Kevin Polzin has applied for the Galatia appointment and Tim Maier, for Wheatland Township, both terming December 31, 2026. David Keil has applied for the Fairview Township appointment, terming December 31, 2027. The Grant Township appointment remains open.

Matt Patzner, County Administrator, presented details and asked for consideration to appoint the board members.

Commissioner Hutchinson said for the Board of Trustees for Fire District No. 2, Barton County, Kansas, moved to appoint Kevin Polzin for the City of Galatia position and Tim Maier for the Wheatland Township position, both terming December 31, 2026, and David Keil for the Fairview Township position, terming December 31, 2027. All positions are uncompensated.

Commissioner Schlessiger seconded the motion.

All voted aye. Motion passed.

D. MEETING RECAP: Joint Meeting with the City of Great Bend:

-Chairman Duane Reif will present details. In an effort to strengthen intergovernmental relationships, encourage collaboration and continue advancing shared priorities, Barton County and Great Bend City officials met on Wednesday, April 15, 2026. Discussion points included the McKinley Bridge Overlay, Façade Improvement Program, sharing of City and County resources, Golden Belt Humane Society, KDOT US-56 four-lane project, development projects and legislation regarding valuation and property tax.

Commissioner Reif said he was joined by his fellow commissioners at the joint meeting last Wednesday. Discussion points included McKinley bridge overlay project, Façade Improvement Grant Program, combining city and county resources, Golden Belt Humane Society, KDOT US56 four lane project and legislation regarding valuation and property taxes. Commissioner Reif said it was an interesting meeting, and both parties had a lot of positive programs. Each of the commissioners and Patzner participated in the discussions and kept the meeting on track.

Commissioner Hutchinson said it was well done and he looked forward to cooperation and partnerships with the City of Great Bend.

Commissioner Schlessiger also said it went well and added that her part was easy due to a fabulous slide show created by Elle Hutchinson and Diana Watson.

Commissioner Esfeld said she received a lot of compliments about the meeting. She said Great Bend City Council member Shelly Arnberger was willing to help with writing legislation. She said Representative Sherri Brantley would carry the bill after they wrote it and work with them.

Commissioner Zimmerman echoed the sentiments and felt it was the first step in creating partnerships.

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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.

At 9:25 A.M., Commissioner Zimmerman moved that the Commission go into Executive Session for a period of 30 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 via phone, the County Administrator and HR/Assistant County Administrator are to be included in said meeting. The Open Meeting will resume at 9:55 A.M. in this room.

Commissioner Hutchinson seconded the motion.

All voted aye. Motion passed.

At 9:55 A.M., Commissioner Zimmerman moved to return to Regular Session with no action taken.

Commissioner Hutchinson seconded the motion.

All voted aye. Motion passed.

V. ENDING BUSINESS:

Announcements

2. Appointments

VI. OTHER BUSINESS:

Commissioner Esfeld – would be attending the Kansas County Commissioner Association meeting this week.

VII. ADJOURN:

Commissioner Schlessiger moved to adjourn at 9:59 A.M.

Commissioner Esfeld seconded the motion.

All voted aye. Motion passed.

ATTEST:



Bev Schmeidler
Barton County Clerk



Duane Reif, Chairman

PROCLAMATION 2026-07

NATIONAL CRIME VICTIMS' RIGHTS WEEK

WHEREAS, National Crime Victims' Rights Week, celebrated every year in April, is dedicated to learning about victimization, the effect victimization has on individuals, families, friends and the community and to promote laws, policies and programs to help victims of crime; and

WHEREAS, every year, thousands of communities across the nation honor the dedication of those before us that established victim rights and renew the commitment to guarantee that all victims have the rights and services they need to recover from crime; and

WHEREAS, in 2026, our citizens are urged to **LISTEN. ACT. ADVOCATE**, to **Protect Victims, Serve Communities** – a powerful call to action, reminding us that supporting victims of crime requires more than awareness. It requires intentional listening, meaningful action and unwavering advocacy; and

WHEREAS, listening is the first and most important step in supporting victims and survivors. It means creating safe spaces where individuals are heard without judgment, believed without question and respected in their experiences. When we truly listen, we validate survivors' voices and recognize their strength. Listening builds trust, fosters healing and ensures that services are guided by the real needs of those impacted by crime; and

WHEREAS, listening must be followed by action. Action means providing trauma-informed services, connecting victims to resources, strengthening partnerships and working to remove barriers within systems. It means responding quickly and compassionately when someone reaches out for help. Action also includes educating our community, engaging stakeholders and implementing policies that prioritize victim safety and dignity; and

WHEREAS, advocacy ensures that victims' rights are upheld and their voices are represented in the criminal justice process and beyond. It means standing alongside survivors as they navigate complex systems. It also means promoting policies, funding and community responses that center victims' needs. Advocacy challenges stigma, confronts injustice and pushes for meaningful change so that no survivor feels alone or unseen; and

WHEREAS, when we protect victims, we strengthen entire communities. Safety, justice and healing are not individual concerns, they are collective responsibilities. By listening, acting and advocating, we create communities where survivors are supported, rights are honored and prevention becomes possible.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED by the Board of County Commissioners of Barton County, Kansas, that we observe April 19 – 25, 2026, as National Crime Victims' Rights Week; and

FURTHER, that we recommit ourselves to ensuring every victim is heard, every voice matters and every community stands together in support of healing and justice.

Dated this 21st day of April, 2026.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS



Duane Reif, Chairman



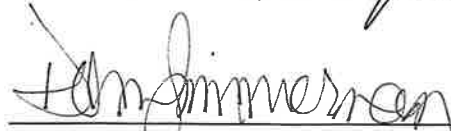
Barb Esfeld, Commissioner



Shawn Hutchinson, Commissioner




Tricia Schlessiger, Commissioner



Donna Zimmerman, Commissioner

ATTEST:



Bev Schmeidler
County Clerk

