

ADJOURNED MEETING OF THE GEARY COUNTY COMMISSION MINUTES
February 23rd, 2026

Commissioners Present: Keith Ascher, Trish Giordano, and Kathy Tremont

Others present: Therese Hoff, Deputy County Clerk, Betsy Edwards, County Counselor

Chairman Tremont called the County Commission meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

The pledge of allegiance was recited.

Commissioner Ascher moved to amend the agenda to add an executive session for legal contracts after public comment; Commissioner Giordano seconded and all voted aye.

Chairman Tremont moved to amend the agenda to add Crimestoppers banquet sponsorship discussion; Commissioner Giordano seconded and all voted aye.

Commission review and update:

Ascher: Attended the Risk Management meeting last week. Mr. Berges pointed out that the last time the Everbridge test was done, there was only about 50% participation. He is going to try again and hopefully will get more.

Stated the Severe Weather training will be Monday, March 16, 2026, at 7:00 p.m. at the 4H-Senior Center.

Stated fire alarm testing will be done. It will not be done when the public is in the building.

Stated Public Works has a new Facebook page.

Attended the MPO organizational meeting. There are quite a few new participants on the board. They had election of officers-Commissioner Ford from Riley County will be the chairman again, Commissioner Ascher is vice chair. They received an update on the I70-K18 interchange-amount now is \$35.2 million dollars.

Giordano: Attended a meet and greet with the 4-star General Donahue and then the elected officials were invited to a town hall with all the commanding officers.

Spoke at the high school at the JAG classes-great program for career development.

Attended Business during Hours at Honor Screen Printing-was very well attended.

Tremont: Attended the Juvenile Detention Board meeting-the Director had an update to the bylaws- to show a change of payment for insurance of retirees-when the employee retires, they will pay the 100% of their health insurance premiums and pay for the spouse and any children covered under the health insurance.

Discussed the bathroom bill passed by the State Kansas, asked the county counselor to investigate it. The bill says the counties need to have a plan on how to enforce it.

Discussed HB 2433-it was brought to the commission attention by a citizen-state owns the water and basically restricts what counties can do, but they are tasked with local zoning, the bill is going to go to the Senate.

Commissioner Ascher talked about HB 2745, which is the property tax discussion.

Chairman Tremont asked the commission about sponsoring a table at the Crimestoppers Banquet-Commissioner Giordano and Chairman Tremont cannot attend. **Commissioner Giordano moved to sponsor a table to the Crimestoppers Banquet for \$350.00; Commissioner Ascher seconded and all voted aye.** Commissioner Ascher plans to attend.

Desree and Randy Pettera arrived at the meeting.

Crystal Malchose, Human Resources Director, presented the weekly report:

- Employee task force discussed publishing a county newsletter every quarter. The 4th quarter is done, and she passed it out to them, it is also on the county's website.
- The County Attorney will be out all week.
- Stated the last Monday of the month, new hires are usually brought in, but there are no new hires for the month, turnover has decreased, which is good.
- Reported next Tuesday-Commissioner Giordano, Chairman Tremont, and herself will be at County Day at the Capital. Ms. Malchose left the meeting.

Jeremie Myers, Public Works Administrator and Kalyn Ross, Administrative Services Manager, arrived at the meeting.

Tami Robison, Financial Director, presented the bi-weekly report:

- Discussed the 2025-year end numbers: everything went smoothly with closing the year out, the auditors should start in March. The county will not be required to have a single audit for 2025, did not spend enough federal funds. The ARPA funds are finished, the LATCF funds are being used for a piece of land, should be completed this year. For 2025- the percentage of funds used in comparison to the budget in the general fund was 79.57%. Ms. Robison reviewed the general fund by department, District Court fund shows going over 100%, but they receive reimbursement from other counties in the 8th judicial district that is not included in the report. She stated that in the revenue collected, the general fund is over what is budgeted, mainly because of the tax sale proceeds.
- The CPM classes will be in Manhattan this year and will start in July, if any department heads want to go since it is close.
- Reported she is gathering information concerning transporting non-employees with KCAMP.
- Discussed the CPIU which is used for COLA consideration for employees. The rate for 2025 is 2.8%, 2024-2.7%. This does not lock the commission into anything; she just brings it to the commission for consideration at budget time. Mr. Robison left but will return later for the special CIP session.

Jeremie Myers, Public Works Administrator, discussed a commercial property at 301 E. 8th Street that is for sale-he recommends to the commission to buy the property at 301 E. 8th at a price of \$15,000.00. There will be a payment of \$500.00 for earnest money due within five days, if the commission approves the purchase. **Commissioner Giordano moved to purchase the property at 301 E. 8th- for \$15,000.00; Commissioner Ascher seconded and all voted aye and also pay the earnest money of \$500.00 at this time.** Ms. Robison, Mr. Myers and Ms. Ross left the meeting.

Sheriff Nate Boeckman presented the bi-weekly report:

- Stated the two-week statistics for the time period of 2-4-2026 to 2-17-2026. The avg. daily jail population was 87. The department's activity was: 7 accidents, 39 assisted outside agencies, 2 battery/assaults, 39 citations issued, 273 civil papers served, 1 domestic incident, 5 drug investigations, 1 prisoner transport, 175 traffic stops, 21 total arrests, total primary incidents 568, with another 101 additional calls for service, for a total of 669. Sheriff Boeckman left the meeting and will return for the CIP session.

Travis Lilly, Appraiser, gave an update on the mailing of the change of value notices. The notices have been sent to be printed and mailed. They should hit the mail Friday, supposed to be mailed no later than March 1, which is on a Sunday, so they are mailing the Friday before. The bulk increase is 3-6%,

some neighborhoods could be lower. Mr. Lilly said there was a decent number of sales. Commissioner Ascher asked what the average increase is, and Mr. Lilly said around 1%. Mr. Lilly said the value as of January 1 is what is used. If there were fires after the first of the year, the value would be used as of January 1, as per the state.

Commissioner Ascher asked about the appeal process. Mr. Lilly said the taxpayer has 30 days from the postmark, which will start February 27 to appeal the value, until March 29, 2026. Mr. Lilly talked about impending legislation regarding property taxes. Mr. Lilly left the meeting.

At 10:56 a.m.: Commissioner Ascher moved to go into executive session for legal issues relating to contracts for 15 minutes to end of 11:11 a.m.; to include the county counselor; Commissioner Giordano seconded, and all voted aye. The meeting resumed at 11:11 a.m. with no action taken.

Major David Gilbert, Sheriff Boeckman, and Finance Director Robison arrived at the meeting for the special CIP work session.

Major Gilbert discussed the sheriff's department's CIP request for three patrol vehicles for 2026-the total is \$175,584.00- which is \$44,528.00 per vehicle and \$14,000.00 to upfit the vehicles with all emergency equipment, graphics, etc. The department has seven vehicles with over 130,000 miles, and an additional seven vehicles with 110,000 to 115,000 miles in the fleet. All vehicles purchased last year are in the fleet, except one that they had to use for parts for another vehicle. Outfitting the vehicles cost \$14,000.00 and Ka-Com. out of Manhattan is doing the work. Commissioner Giordano said she doesn't like having to use a Manhattan business, but the local one cannot be trusted. Sheriff Boeckman said they try to use old equipment off the vehicles used, but some will not fit the new vehicles. Commissioner Ascher asked if they use the state contract, and they said yes. **Commissioner Giordano moved to approve the purchase of the three vehicles for the sheriff's department from CIP for \$175,584.00; Commissioner Ascher seconded and all voted aye.** Major Gilbert, Sheriff Boeckman and Ms. Robison all left the meeting.

At 11:36 a.m.; Commissioner Giordano moved to go into executive session for non-elected personnel, including the County Counselor and the HR Director, for 20 minutes, to end at 11:56 a.m.; Commissioner Ascher seconded and all voted aye. The meeting resumed at 11:56 a.m. with no action taken.

Public Comment: Desree Pettera discussed a bill regarding the transmission of water issues in the State of Kansas. Ms. Pettera requested the commission vote oppose this bill, Commissioner Giordano said they do not have enough information to say no, she will look into it, and they can discuss it next week. Ms. Pettera said the legislature will have the vote on this Wednesday, so the commission cannot discuss it next week, that would be too late. Commissioner Ascher will call Senator Argabright to find out more information.

Deputy Clerk Hoff presented Tax Roll Correction Change Orders for real estate and personal property-correcting clerical errors. **Commissioner Giordano moved to approve change orders #2026000064-2026000070; Commissioner Ascher seconded and all voted aye.**

Deputy Clerk Hoff presented County Commission meeting minutes for approval. for February 17- **Commissioner Ascher moved to approve the minutes from February 17, 2026; Commissioner Giordano seconded and all voted aye.**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:20 p.m.

Kathy Tremont

Chairman-County Commission
Kathy Tremont

Therese Hoff
Deputy County Clerk *deputy*
Therese Hoff

3-2-2026

Date