

ADJOURNED MEETING OF THE GEARY COUNTY COMMISSION MINUTES
March 9th, 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.

Commission review and update:

Tremont-attended County Day at the Capitol last week, was able to talk to the legislators.

EDC board meeting-the second Epic Challenge event will be on June 23 from 5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

They talked about coordinating more efforts with the Chamber, getting new members and working with businesses.

Ascher: Did not have any meetings. Received complaints from citizens about Boller Road because of the construction.

Giordano: She was invited to an open house for the new military family clinic in Manhattan, which is a grant funded program for veterans and their families and much needed in the community.

Attended County Day at the Capitol, Geary County was very well represented.

Attended the CVB board meeting-marketing campaign was discussed, something we need to move forward with, wants the whole community involved.

Attended the Mo Town show at the Opera House-very good show, Stated there were lots of good events going on in the community including the Murder Mystery and the Comedy Show.

Discussed the regional tabletop exercise funded through the OLDCC installation resilience grant. Flint Hills Regional Council has procured Matrix Design Group to implement the project in accordance with grant requirements. The total project budget is \$100,000.00, with a required 10% local match divided evenly among participating communities, with the estimated match not to exceed cost per community of \$833.00. **Commissioner Giordano moved to approve the Memorandum of Agreement for Geary County to participate in the tabletop exercise included in the OLDCC grant, not to exceed \$833.00; Commissioner Ascher seconded and all voted aye.** This supports Fort Riley and there needs to be a community point of contact. Commissioner Giordano would like to have the GIS/Zoning Director, Troy Livingston, be the community point of contact. The commissioners agreed to that.

Crystal Malchose, HR Director gave the weekly report:

- Stated County Day at the Capitol went very well and was very successful.
- Reminded the commission that Bukaty will be here today to review health insurance.
- Stated Tiffany Havener will have her county issued phone while she is gone on vacation.
- Reminded the commission, the Employee Task Force meeting is tomorrow, and Commissioner Tremont will be there. Ms. Malchose left the meeting.

Tami Robison, Finance Director, gave the bi-weekly report:

- Reviewed financial reports for February: presented the unaudited summary statement of receipts, expenditures and unencumbered cash for the year ending December 31, 2025. The ending cash balance was \$38,723,396.35. The cash is lower in the General Fund than last year by about \$2.1 million, due largely to not having the overage in salaries that we had in the past. Commissioner Giordano said we are not overcharging the taxpayers. The auditor will be picking up the reports to start the audit. Presented the composition of cash balances and investments which balances with the treasurer's statement, vouchers sheet, the vouchers daily statement, and the fund status report.

- Discussed the sales tax collections: we are 16.67% into the year, and the county has received almost 23% of the budget in the general fund, and 18.89% of the debt service fund for the hospital.
- Presented the county facilities cash flow analysis-2026 beginning unencumbered cash-\$440,539.75, 2026 revenue-\$251,836.80, less 2026 expenditures/encumbrances-\$22,811.92, with a 2026 ending unencumbered cash-\$669,564.63 less remaining approved projects \$12,000.00 (courthouse boiler room door) with a 2026 projected unencumbered cash balance of \$657,564.63.
- Presented the CIP cash flow analysis-2026 beginning unencumbered cash-\$4,081,826.02, 2026 revenue-\$86,171.96 with a 2026 ending unencumbered cash balance of \$4,167,997.98, less remaining approved projects-\$834,423.77 with a 2026 projected unencumbered cash balance of \$3,333,574.21 and the projected 2026 cash w/out reserves of \$2,489,062.46. There is \$500,000.00 in the CIP reserves, \$328,094.27 (HME & I-70/K18 land sale) and \$16,417.48 for elections. Reviewed the 2026 CIP detailed expenditures per project and per department.
- Presented the year-to-date budget activity- there are three funds that are over the 16.67% for the year, but it is mostly due to the larger expenditures in January for liability insurance and worker's comp. insurance.
- Presented the year-to-date expenditure budget activity and department by department budget activity reports. There are a few departments that are over the 16.67% for the year, but there was a third payroll in January and some larger expenditures in January, she feels it will balance out.
- Presented the revenue budget activity report by fund and the revenue collections are good. Ms. Robison left the meeting.

Sheriff Nate Boeckman, Undersheriff Justin Stopper, Corrections Officer Madison Russell, Corrections Office Blake Green, Sergeant David Stevenson, Lieutenant Damon Artavia, Chip Burgess-Jail kitchen supervisor, Madison Russell's husband, and Major Reyan Rikoric arrived at the meeting.

Undersheriff Stopper read the following sheriff's commendation: This commendation is being presented in recognition of exception professionalism, decisive action, and lifesaving efforts performed in the line of duty during a critical incident at the Geary County Detention Facility. The employees being recognized are: Corrections Officers- Madison Russell, Blake Green, Sergeant David Stevenson and Lieutenant Damon Artavia. These employees are being commended for their swift and professional response during the evening hours of February 14, 2026, when an inmate attempted suicide while in custody. Their immediate recognition of the emergency, rapid intervention, and coordinated lifesaving efforts directly resulted in the preservation of the individual's life.

Sheriff Boeckman gave the bi-weekly report: This report is for the two week period of 2-18-2026 through 3-3-2026-average number in the jail was 92, there were: 11 accidents, 54 assist outside agencies, 48 citations, served 276 papers, 1 domestic, 7 drug investigations, 2 DUI's, 7 prisoner transports, 2 shots fired, 197 traffic stops, 21 arrests, with a total of 626 primary services and 108 additional calls for service with a total of 734.

Cortny Bichelmeyer, Emily Ahlvers-Benefits Consultants from Bukaty Companies, Crystal Malchose-HR Director, and Tami Robison-Finance Director arrived at the meeting.

Ms. Bichelmeyer stated: last year there was about a 9% increase in BC-BS premiums, which was a little higher than the past. The total claims number made the increase happen. Finished 2024 with a 74% medical loss ratio, 2023 was an average 80% loss ratio, 2025 ended at 91% medical loss ratio. They typically like loss ratios of 75-80% and lower. Loss ratio is why renewal rates were higher than in past years, medical claims were higher than previous years. Bukaty has a good strong relationship with BC-BS to be able to negotiate premiums.

Overview of premiums paid \$1.8 million, claims paid \$1.7 million.

Reviewed the high claims for 2025 and the amounts paid.

Drugs review-talked about the high cost of drugs, 87% prescriptions are being filled with generics.

Plan paid-84% claims were paid by the plan, and 18% were paid by the member.

Travis Lilly, Appraiser, arrived at the meeting.

Ms. Bichelmeyer continued-discussed self-insured versus fully insured for the Geary County group. If the county was self-insured, they would have paid more in claims than fully insured. Chairman Tremont appreciates the HR Director’s due diligence working with Bukaty to get the best insurance, and a cheaper rate for the employees. Ms. Ahlvers said Bukaty works for Geary County, not BC-BS. Ms. Malchose said she appreciated Bukaty for being good to work with and they are very responsive.

Jacqie Reisinger, Register of Deeds arrived at the meeting and discussed the CPM Course.

Ms. Robison said the CPM course has been very beneficial for her.

This year it is in Manhattan, and the Register of Deeds would like to attend. She has the funds in her budget to pay for it. It starts on July 14, 2025, and meets two days a month. The appraiser stated he wants to go, too. The cost is \$3,900.00 with the early bird discount, which ends April 30, after that date, the cost is \$4,100.00. The appraiser has the funds in his budget to pay for the course. **Commissioner Giordano moved to approve the County Appraiser and the Register of Deeds to attend the CPM leadership course; Commissioner Ascher seconded and all voted aye.** Mr. Lilly, Ms. Reisinger and Ms. Robison left the meeting.

Commissioner Giordano said that Jordan with Mainstreet asked if the county would mind putting a link to Mainstreet on the county’s website, the Commission agreed to this and the HR Director will handle it. Chairman Tremont talked about per diem reimbursements and the county moving to that. She asked Ms. Malchose to ask other counties how they handle per diem. Commissioner Ascher said yes, he would like to know what other counties do also. Commissioner Giordano said for transparency purposes, she likes the way the county handles it now, employees need receipts for any purchases, and it must be vouchered. Chairman Tremont agrees there needs to be accountability and transparency; she would like to see how other counties handle it. Commissioner Giordano wants them to be accountable as to what they are spending on food or drinks.

Garry Berges, Emergency Management Director/Rural Fire Chief and Curt Janke, Assistant Emergency Management/Rural Fire Chief arrived at the meeting and to open the RFP’s for Fire Station #4 at 11:30 a.m.

Riley Construction	Wamego, KS	\$249,839.00
N.F, Construction	Marion, KS	\$427,700.00
Kindlesparger Construction	Salina, KS	\$335,240.00

Mr. Berges will take the bids back to review, show them to the architect, Brett Deam and bring his recommendation back to the commission at a later meeting.

Mr. Berges said the Rural Fire Department assisted the City of Junction City with the big apartment fire, and everyone is working well together. Mr. Berges and Mr. Janke left the meeting.

John Moyer, and Clarice Longhofer-Senior Citizens Building committee, and Kyler Langvardt-Extension Agent arrived at the meeting.

Mr. Langvardt discussed the last year: thanked the county for their support of the facility. The upgrades completed were: Public Works secured the HVAC to the roof, replaced ceiling tiles, removing aging signage in the facility, general maintenance and repair. The building upgrades is entirely donation based. They participated in match day and received \$13,000.00. Mr. Langvardt stated they want to have the six entities that use the facilities and grounds get together to bring everyone to the table on March 31, and Public Works will also be attending. Ms. Longhofer said they are doing good, entities are getting along

better that a few years ago, Mr. Moyer stated he appreciates the support from the county. Commissioner Ascher asked what needs to be done in the future? Mr. Langvardt said the painting of the outside of the building is the big thing that needs done, and there are other smaller projects that need done. Mr. Moyer said the building is used a lot. Commissioner Giordano talked about allowing alcohol in the building to users. Ms. Longhofer said there is a lot of requirements to have alcohol in the building. It might cost more than what they make in rental fees. Ms. Longhofer thinks security cameras would be useful in the building. Mr. Moyer, Mr. Langvardt and Ms. Longhofer left the meeting.

Public Comment (5 minutes per person): Rick Dykstra, citizen arrived to talk about: He cares about the future of Geary County, and feels it is a good opportunity to market Geary County and Junction City- why do people choose to visit Geary County. He proposes a two-team approach concerning building a market plan-CVB working with the Chamber could lead a visitor convention meetings and special event track with the Junction City Mainstreet working with EDC leading a resident business track, both would work with Military Affairs. The teams would talk to everyone-the schools, hospital, individuals and businesses - before a final plan is made. He would be happy to share information with the groups he has learned over 45 years. Mr. Dykstra left the meeting.

Deputy Clerk Hoff presented tax roll correction change orders for real estate, personal property and trucks to correct clerical errors for approval. **Commissioner Giordano moved to approve change orders #2026000095-2026000156; Commissioner Ascher seconded and all voted aye.**

Margie Pinaire and Jim Sands arrived at the meeting.

Chrysann Phipps, Community Corrections Director arrived at the meeting to discuss the FY27 Adult comprehensive plan and Juvenile comprehensive plan and budgets and comp plans.

Commissioner Giordano moved to approve the FY27 Adult budget; Commissioner Ascher seconded and all voted aye.

Commissioner Ascher moved to approve the FY27 Juvenile budget; Commissioner Giordano seconded and all voted aye.

Commissioner Giordano moved to approve the adult comprehensive plan; Commissioner Ascher seconded and all voted aye.

Commissioner Ascher moved to approve the juvenile comprehensive plan; Commissioner Giordano seconded and all voted aye.

Commissioner Ascher asked about any legislation that would affect Community Corrections. Ms. Phipps said there are several house bills on the juvenile side. Ms. Phipps left the meeting.

Ms. Pinaire stated there should be signage about Home of the Big Red One.

Raquel Cinco, CVB Director, and Sam Adams, CVB Marketing Director, arrived at the meeting.

Jim Sands said when he was on the city council, he went to KDOT for help with signage-there are certain requirements that need to be met, they are very stringent.

Mayor Terry Butler arrived.

Commissioner Giordano discussed the Marketing Campaign for Geary County. Alan Bontrager and Rick Dykstra want to get the entire community involved in this project. CVB is funded by the TGT, not everything they are involved with brings in overnight stays, she thinks they need to be involved bringing citizens to the area, they need to talk about everything going on in the community, and they need to be marketing. The preliminary meeting called for support of local businesses, encourage long term economic growth, she thinks it is a good time for this marketing push, she is going to request \$20,000.00 from the

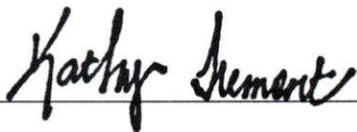
county, and the City of JC will give some money. Mr. Adams would like to bring in an outside consulting firm to assist with this marketing campaign. Commissioner Ascher said we need a brand, and Giordano wants a group to get together, come up with a brand, and have the public vote on it. needs to have Geary County and Junction City both. Mr. Adams talked about communication and the process of running a campaign. This is currently in the research phase, need to re-create the idea with the new ideas, establish tactics and goals. He is meeting with the city of Junction City marketing person to discuss the project. Commissioner Giordano stated the TGT is going down, and the marketing campaign is needed at this time. Chairman Tremont said she agrees with Mr. Adams: they need a structured plan, get the committee together to put a plan together. He will be working with Katie O’Shea from the city. Mr. Adams said this is a marketing campaign, since we want to see the return on investments. Commissioner Ascher said there are many passionate community members that could be on the committee. Ms. Cinco talked about a consulting person. The Meet KS coalition, which the county is a member of, could use a person from the group. Commissioner Ascher asked about having a Ft. Riley representative on the committee, Jordan McCann, Mainstreet wants to hire a profession media company to take pictures and videos of Geary County, maybe the marketing group could use this service, too. Chairman Tremont wants to have all groups work together and not have different groups going different directions. She thinks it is a great idea. Commissioner Giordano said it is the CVB’s job to promote the community. Ms. Pinaire suggested using a local photographer, does good work. Ms. McCann said he works for the school district.

Commissioner Giordano moved to approve the CVB giving \$20,000.00 to the marketing campaign; Commissioner Ascher seconded and all voted aye. Ms. Cinco, Mr. Adams, Ms. McCann and Ms. Butler left the meeting.

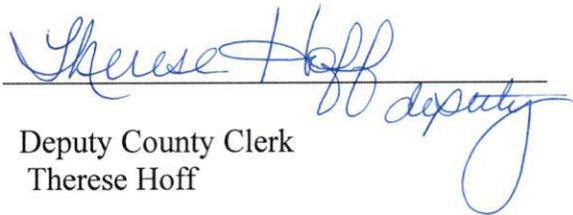
Charles Martinez, Health Department Director, arrived at the meeting to request commission approval and signature on the IAP SFY 2027, PHEP SFY 2027 and State Formula SFY 2027 grant paperwork. This is to complete Aid to local grant application, it is the same every year, this year the rate was changed. It is for 7-1-2026 to June 30, 2027. **Commissioner Ascher moved to sign the grant application; Commissioner Giordano seconded, and all voted aye.**

Deputy Clerk Hoff presented County Commission minutes for approval: **Commissioner Ascher moved to approve the March 2, 2026, minutes; Commissioner Giordano seconded and all voted aye.**

The meeting adjourned at 12:58 p.m.



Chairman-County Commissioner
Kathy Tremont



Deputy County Clerk
Therese Hoff

3-16-2026
Date