



# CHEROKEE COUNTY COMMISSIONER MINUTES

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110 W. Maple St, Room 109, Columbus, KS 66725

Date: Monday February 2, 2026

Time: 9:00 A.M.

## **CONVENE**

Chair Cory Moates called the regular session of the Cherokee County Board of Commissioners (the Board), to order at 9:00 AM on Monday, February 2, 2026, in the Commission Room, #109 of the Cherokee County Courthouse located at 110 W Maple St., Columbus, Kansas. County Deputy Clerk Michelle Mosler opened the meeting with prayer followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Commissioners Cory Moates, Jack Garner, Myra Frazier, Assistant County Counselor Ethan Manke, Road and Bridge Supervisor Cody Zook, County Deputy Clerk Michelle Mosler, Kathryn Harrington, Carey Spoon, Toby VanCleave, Denise Titus, Derek Dick, Stacy Manbeck, Karena Evans, Galena Sentinel Times Editor Machel Smith, and Columbus News Report employee Thomas Niegisch were present.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Commissioner Frazier moved to approve the minutes as presented from January 16, 2026, meeting. Commissioner Garner seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

## **APPROVAL OF PAYROLL**

Commissioner Moates moved to approve the payroll as presented. Commissioner Garner seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

## **APPROVAL OF PAYABLES**

Commissioner Frazier moved to approve the payables as presented. Commissioner Garner seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

## **ROAD AND BRIDGE**

### **NON-ELECTED PERSONNEL EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Commissioner Moates moved to enter into a 10-minute executive session for non-elected personnel with the Board, Assistant County Counselor Ethan Manke, and Road and Bridge Supervisor Cody Zook present. The session was set to return at 9:15 a.m. Commissioner Frazier seconded. Motion passed unanimously. No action was taken.

## **BUKATY HEALTH INSURANCE**

Marketing Director Derek Dick provided a breakdown comparing prior years of county insurance claims and reviewed the current status of claims.

## **PARTNERSHIP FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT**

USD 499 Superintendent Toby VanCleave approached the Board regarding a partnership for a grant to build a child care center adjacent to their new Early Childhood Facility. The Board agreed to look into the matter.

## **SPRING RIVER MENTAL HEALTH**

Stacy Manbeck and Karena Evans of Spring River Mental Health requested approval of their funding agreement. Commissioner Frazier moved to approve the funding agreement for 2025. Commissioner Garner seconded. Motion passed unanimously.



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## **MAINTENANCE NEW HIRE**

Commissioner Moates moved to approve the hire of Jaron Hanford as Columbus Courthouse Custodian, effective January 12, 2026, at a rate of \$15.50 per hour. Commissioner Garner seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

## **ELVIS INVOICE**

Commissioner Frazier moved to authorize County Treasurer Heather Sapp to issue a special check to ELVIS (Election Voter Information System) in the amount of \$6,300.00 for 2025. Commissioner Garner seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

## **SHAPEFILE**

County Appraiser Delinda White discussed with the Board the possibility of charging the City of Columbus for shapefiles. The Board agreed not to charge at this time.

## **ATTORNEY-CLIENT EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Commissioner Moates moved to enter into a 20-minute executive session for attorney-client communication with the Board and Assistant County Counselor Ethan Manke present. The session was set to return at 10:25 a.m. Commissioner Garner seconded. Motion passed unanimously. No action was taken.

## **KCAMP**

Commissioner Moates moved to authorize payment in the amount of \$414,199 to KCAMP for 2026, to be paid from the Courthouse Fund. Commissioner Garner seconded. Motion passed unanimously. The motion was amended to reflect the payment will be made from the Employee Benefits Fund.

## **SEKRPC MEMBER LIST**

County Clerk Taylor Brown and the Board updated the SEKRPC member list.

## **MEETING CHANGE**

The February 16 meeting was rescheduled to February 13, 2026, at 8:00 a.m. due to February 16 being a holiday.

## **HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

Health Department Director Peyton Kessler reported to the Board a flooding issue in the Health Department kitchen. Maintenance Director Mike Thomas will address the issue or arrange for repairs as soon as possible.

## **ROAD AND BRIDGE**

### **NON-ELECTED PERSONNEL EXECUTIVE SESSION**

- Commissioner Moates moved to enter into a 15-minute executive session for non-elected personnel with the Board, Assistant County Counselor Ethan Manke, and Road and Bridge Supervisor Cody Zook present. The session was set to return at 11:20 a.m. Commissioner Garner seconded. Motion passed unanimously. No action was taken.
- Commissioner Moates moved to approve paying Road and Bridge Supervisor Cody Zook for 9 weeks and 4 days of accrued vacation time. Commissioner Frazier seconded. Motion passed unanimously.
- Road and Bridge Supervisor Cody Zook provided an update on current projects, equipment, and overall



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department operations.

- Commissioner Moates moved to accept the resignation of Road and Bridge Supervisor Cody Zook, effective February 6, 2026. Commissioner Garner seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

## **SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT**

County Clerk Taylor Brown discussed with the Board the Solid Waste Management Annual Review and outlined the requirements needed for completion.

## **NON-ELECTED PERSONNEL EXECUTIVE SESSIONS**

- Commissioner Moates moved to enter into a 15-minute executive session for non-elected personnel with the Board and Assistant County Counselor Ethan Manke present. The session was set to return at 12:15 p.m. Commissioner Garner seconded. Motion passed unanimously. No action was taken.
- Commissioner Moates moved to enter into a 15-minute executive session for non-elected personnel with the Board, Assistant County Counselor Ethan Manke, and Road and Bridge Administrative Assistant Joni Hicks present. The session was set to return at 12:45 p.m. Commissioner Frazier seconded. Motion passed unanimously. No action was taken.
- Commissioner Frazier moved to enter into a 10-minute executive session for non-elected personnel with the Board, Assistant County Counselor Ethan Manke, and Human Resource Director Deana Randall present. The session was set to return at 12:55 p.m. Commissioner Moates seconded. Motion passed unanimously. No action was taken.

## **RESOLUTION 03-2026**


Commissioner Moates moved to approve Resolution 03-2026, a resolution by the Cherokee County, Kansas Board of Commissioners setting salaries of elected officials. Commissioner Garner seconded. Motion passed 2-1, with Commissioner Frazier voting nay.

## **ADJOURNMENT**


At 1:02 p.m., Commissioner Moates moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Garner seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

**ATTEST:** Resolved and ordered this 9 day of February 2026.

  
Commissioner Chairman – Cory Moates

  
Commissioner – Jack Garner

  
Commissioner – Myra Carlisle Frazier

  
County Clerk – Taylor Brown