

# Bourbon County Commission Meeting Agenda

## Meeting minutes January 12, 2026, 5:30 PM

210 S National Avenue, Fort Scott, KS 66701

### Citizen Attendance (for all or some of the meeting)

Clint Walker, Rachel Walker, Jackson Tough, Mark McCoy, Joseph Smith, Mike Wunderly, Tim Emerson, Michael Hoyt, Marlon Merida, Jennifer Hawkins, Jason Silvers, Adam Couch, Teri Hulseley, Anne Dare, Joe Allen, Trey Sharp, Bill Martin, Sheriff.

### Call Meeting to Order

Chair David Beerbower called the Bourbon County Commission meeting to order at 5:30 PM on Monday, January 12, 2026.

### Roll Call

Commissioners present included Samuel Tran, David Beerbower, Mika Milburn-Kee, and Greg Motley. County Clerk Susan Walker and various department heads were also in attendance.

### Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chair David Beerbower.

### Prayer

Chair David Beerbower led the opening prayer, asking for guidance and wisdom for the commissioners.

### Oaths of Office

County Clerk Susan Walker administered the oaths of office to:

#### Commission District 5 - Mika Milburn-Kee

Before taking her oath, Commissioner Milburn-Kee formally resigned from the office of Bourbon County Commissioner District 3, effective immediately prior to taking the oath of office for District 5.

#### Commission District 4 - Greg Motley

Commissioner Motley took his oath of office.

Katie Bowers, Chairperson of the Republican Party, welcomed the newly sworn commissioners and read a quote by Theodore Roosevelt about "the man in the arena."

### Reorganization of Board

#### Appoint Chairman

David Beerbower opened the floor for nominations for chairperson.

David Beerbower nominated Samuel Tran for Chairman. Mika Milburn-Kee seconded the nomination. The motion passed with Commissioners Milburn-Kee, Beerbower, and Motley voting in favor, and Commissioner Tran abstaining.

#### Appoint Vice Chairman

Samuel Tran nominated David Beerbower for Vice Chairman. Mika Milburn-Kee seconded the nomination. The motion passed with Commissioners Tran, Milburn-Kee, and Motley voting in favor, and Commissioner Beerbower abstaining.

## Board Memberships

Commissioner Tran asked if anyone wanted to change their current board assignments. Commissioner Beerbower indicated he would like to stay on the SEK Mental Health Department but would be willing to relinquish the Southeast Kansas Health Department and Juvenile Detention Center positions. Commissioner Motley expressed interest in the SEK Regional Planning Commission based on his economic development background, which Commissioner Tran was willing to relinquish. After discussion about all the various board positions, the commissioners agreed on assignments.

Mika Milburn-Kee moved to adopt the following board membership assignments: Bourbon County Senior Citizens - Samuel Tran; Fair Board - Mika Milburn-Kee; Juvenile Detention Center - Greg Motley; SEK Area on Aging - Samuel Tran; SEK Regional Planning Commission - Greg Motley; Soil Conservation - Mika Milburn-Kee; Southeast Kansas Health Department - David Beerbower; SEK Mental Health Department - David Beerbower and Samuel Tran. Samuel Tran seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

## Liaison Assignments

The commission discussed liaison assignments, particularly regarding adding finance responsibilities for Commissioner Motley who has a background in finance and economic development. Commissioner Motley explained his vision for the finance liaison role, including getting an earlier start on budget planning and aligning the budget with strategic priorities. He mentioned his goal would be to have the budget completed by the end of the third quarter. There was discussion about potentially creating an economic development and grant writing liaison position for the upcoming fifth commissioner.

Mika Milburn-Kee moved to adopt the commissioner liaison assignments as: Samuel Tran - Public Works; David Beerbower - Public Safety (Emergency Management, EMS); Mika Milburn-Kee - Courthouse and auxiliary functions; Greg Motley - Finance; and Economic Development with Grant Writing for the new member to be appointed. Samuel Tran seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

## Approval of Agenda

Commissioner Milburn-Kee requested adding KPERS responsible party and Kansas Department of Labor unemployment items to the agenda under new business. Commissioner Beerbower mentioned needing to add the Schwab Eaton bridge inspection letter to new business as well. After discussion about weekly radio duties, the commission agreed on these additions.

Mika Milburn-Kee moved to approve the agenda as amended. Samuel Tran seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

## Approval of Minutes

The commissioners discussed the minutes from January 5, 2026.

Samuel Tran moved to approve the minutes as presented. Mika Milburn-Kee seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

## Approval of Consent Agenda

Greg Motley moved to approve the consent agenda for tax corrections and Accounts Payable totaling \$102,704.29. Samuel Tran seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

## Public Comments

Mark McCoy addressed the commission regarding emergency management and the importance of having a trained emergency manager in place. He explained his role as the community emergency response team (CERT) leader and emphasized that emergencies don't work on a shared schedule. He stressed the importance of preparedness and noted that the emergency manager coordinates with other entities in the county, including hospitals and schools. McCoy also explained how the county's emergency operations center functions and why proper protocols must be followed when opening emergency locations.

Commissioners asked questions about funding for CERT (approximately \$500 in the past but none for the last three years) and about MOUs between nursing homes and hospitals for emergency transfers.

Commissioner Beerbower noted that the emergency manager position is currently posted on the county website as a part-time position.

Susan Walker presented information about Hey Gov agenda minutes maker, a software option for managing meeting agendas and minutes. She demonstrated how the system works, showing that it allows commissioners to add agenda items, upload attachments, and helps generate meeting minutes from YouTube videos. The system costs approximately \$1,100, which is significantly less than an alternative system that was previously considered at around \$8,000.

## Executive Session

Samuel Tran moved to enter into executive session pursuant to K.S.A. 75-4319(b)(1) to discuss personnel matters of individual non-elected personnel to protect their privacy, for 15 minutes until 6:35 PM. The motion was seconded by Mika Milburn-Kee and passed unanimously.

Samuel Tran moved to return to open session at 6:35 PM with no action. The motion was seconded by Mika Milburn-Kee and passed unanimously.

## Old Business

### Handbook Review

The commission discussed the county employee handbook that is being revised. County Treasurer Jennifer Hawkins provided a detailed review of concerns with the draft handbook, including issues regarding confidentiality agreements, termination of elected officials, anonymous reporting procedures, the length of the introductory period (365 days), employee benefits eligibility, vacation accrual, sick leave payout, and other policy matters.

Sheriff William Martin expressed concerns that elected officials needed more time to review the handbook and ensure their suggestions were incorporated. He noted specific concerns about military leave, take-home cars, and courthouse closure policies.

After extensive discussion, the commission agreed that a special meeting was needed to address handbook concerns with elected officials and department heads present.

Samuel Tran moved to schedule a special meeting on Thursday, January 15, 2026, at 4:30 PM to discuss the handbook, with a two-hour time limit, including elected officials and department heads. Greg Motley seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

## New Business

### KPERS

Commissioner Milburn-Kee explained the need to designate a responsible agent for KPERS.

Samuel Tran moved to allow the Commissioner's Executive Assistant, Laura Krom, to be the designated agent for KPERS with Commissioner Milburn-Kee as the alternate. The motion was seconded by Greg Motley and passed unanimously.

## Kansas Department of Labor

Commissioner Milburn-Kee discussed the need to designate someone to handle unemployment claims for county employees under the commission's authority. Sheriff Martin and County Clerk, Susan Walker, explained that they handle unemployment claims for their own departments.

Mika Milburn-Kee moved to allow Dr. Cohen (HR) to handle Kansas Department of Labor unemployment claims for commission departments. Greg Motley seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

## Disposition of Body K.S.A. 22a-215

County Clerk Susan Walker explained that according to statute, when a body has no next of kin, the county must pay for disposition. She presented a case where the county paid \$1,650 for cremation of an individual whose brother was later located. The brother, who is on a fixed income, requested a waiver of the fee so he could have the body released for a proper burial.

Mika Milburn-Kee moved to waive the fee so the body could be released to the relative. The motion was seconded by Greg Motley and passed unanimously.

## November 2025 Financials

County Clerk Susan Walker discussed the November 2025 financial reports, noting that she and the Treasurer had encountered some issues with past entries. She explained that they operate on a 13-month schedule, paying bills through the end of January, with a quarterly report due January 31st. The county audit is scheduled for the last week of February.

Commissioner Milburn-Kee asked about whether vacation rollover decisions needed to be made before the audit, which Walker confirmed. They also discussed whether departments would have leftover funds to return to the general fund, with Walker explaining that many departments make end-of-year purchases with remaining funds.

## Schwab Eaton Letter

Chairman Tran presented a letter from Schwab Eaton regarding the annual inspection of county bridges. The cost included \$19,043 for routine inspections and \$24,867 for various bridge inspection services. For a total of \$43,910.

Samuel Tran moved to sign the contract with Schwab Eaton. The motion was seconded by Greg Motley and passed unanimously.

## Hey Gov Discussion

Following the earlier demonstration of the Hey Gov agenda and minutes software:

David Beerbower moved to purchase the Hey Gov agenda software. The motion was seconded by Greg Motley and passed unanimously.

## Build Agenda for Following Meeting

The commission noted there would be no meeting on January 19 due to MLK Day. For the January 26 meeting, they discussed adding a public hearing, budget work sessions for the first quarter, and strategic planning. Commissioner Milburn-Kee suggested setting a date for a joint work session with the city.

Susan Walker also provided information about payroll approval for the January 9, 2026, payroll and reminded commissioners about inventory reviews that needed to be completed.

## Commission Comments

Commissioner Motley thanked everyone for the brownies.  
Commissioner Beerbower had no comments.

Commissioner Milburn-Kee asked the Republican chair about applications for the district 3 vacancy created by her resignation.

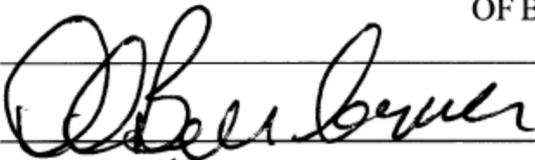
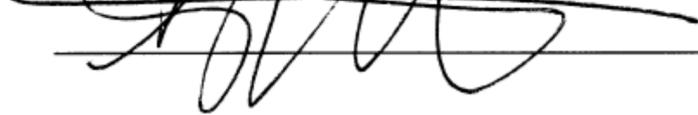
Chairman Tran reflected on the past six months, noting both positive aspects and challenges. He expressed hope that with new commissioners, the governing body could move forward positively. He emphasized the need to set standards through the handbook and in how commissioners interact with each other. He thanked former Chair Beerbower for his leadership and welcomed Commissioner Motley.

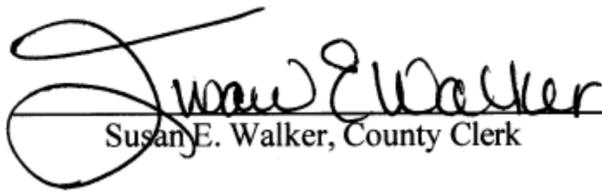
## Adjournment

Samuel Tran moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:38 PM. The motion was seconded by Mika Milburn-Kee and passed unanimously.

ATTEST:

THE BOARD OF  
COMMISSIONERS  
OF BOURBON COUNTY, KANSAS  
\_\_\_\_\_, COMMISSIONER

\_\_\_\_\_, COMMISSIONER  
\_\_\_\_\_, COMMISSIONER  
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\_\_\_\_\_, COMMISSIONER

  
Susan E. Walker, County Clerk

  
Date Approved