

Photo ID to be required for all health service workers

Norton County Commissioners

Acting Chairman Matchett called the meeting of the Norton County Board of Commissioners to order at 9:00 a.m. on January 30, 2026, in the Commission Room. Those in attendance included: Acting Chairman Marvin Matchett; Commissioner Garrett Beydler; County Clerk Craig Renner; County Attorney Abigail Horn; and appointed Hospital Board members Julie Campbell and Lee Juenemann.

General Discussion

Weekly correspondence, fund balances and month end vouchers were distributed to the commissioners.

Norton County Hospital

Lee Juenemann and Julie Campbell attended the meeting to complete their oath of office. Clerk Renner administered and signed the oaths. Lee and Julie left the meeting at 9:03 a.m.

Solid Waste

Solid Waste Supervisor Ted White joined the meeting at 9:03 a.m. Ted updated the commission on the security cameras. It is time to update the county's solid waste management plan with KDHE. Ted asked County Attorney Horn to help him revise the



Norton County Courthouse.

construction demolition and inspection forms. Ted left the meeting at 9:18 a.m.

County Health

County Health Supervisor Leslie Pfannenstiel joined the meeting at 9:26 a.m. She informed the commission that Melissa Delimont is retiring on April 1, 2026. Leslie is advertising the position. Marvin updated Leslie on Kansas Senate Bill 254 that is going to require photo identification for all health

services. In addition, there is a rural health grant from the federal government being considered. Leslie left the meeting at 9:41 a.m.

Executive Session

At 9:48 a.m., Commissioner Beydler moved to go into executive session to discuss non-elected personnel with Commissioner Matchett, Commissioner Beydler and County Attorney Horn to be present and to return to the meeting at 9:53 a.m.

Commissioner Matchett seconded the motion. Motion carried 2-0. At 9:53 a.m. the commission came out of the executive session. No action was taken.

County Insurance Premiums

Some of the department heads were upset at how the County's insurance premiums had been divided amongst the departments. Clerk Renner explained that he wanted a

uniform way to divide any premiums that could not be assigned by a specific premium line. The overall increase to the county was 24% from last year's premiums. Clerk Renner implemented the practice of dividing the premiums based on the department's budget. After discussion, Commissioner Matchett moved that the premium charged to the County Attorney's budget and the Appraiser's budget be paid out of the Courthouse budget. Commissioner Beydler seconded the motion. Motion carried 2-0.

Minutes/Bills/Adjournment

Commissioner Beydler moved to approve the January 19, 2026, minutes as amended. Commissioner Matchett seconded the motion. Motion carried 2-0. Commissioner Beydler moved to approve the January 26, 2026, minutes as presented. Commissioner Matchett seconded the motion. Motion carried 2-0. Commissioner Matchett moved to pay the month end vouchers. Commissioner Beydler seconded the motion. Motion carried 2-0. Commissioner Beydler moved to adjourn the meeting, with no further business, Acting Chairman Matchett adjourned the meeting at 11:35 a.m.

Area students among 229 winners in Hansen Foundation scholarship awards

The Dane G. Hansen Foundation of Logan, has named 229 high school seniors from 47 Northwest Kansas schools as winners in its 51st annual scholarship competition.

In selecting award winners, the Scholarship Committee considered proficiency in verbal and writing skills. Other important factors are academic records, test scores, and community service in which the student may have participated.

Thirty-five Hansen Scholar winners were selected for the stipend of \$6,500. The scholarship is granted for one year and may be renewable for three additional years. Renewal of scholarships is based upon continued regard for the principles which guided the success of the late Dane G. Hansen, a 3.00 or better GPA at the college level and a progress update describing progress towards educational goals. The local winners are: Sakari Newman, Goodland H.S.; Hope Biermann, Goodland H.S.

The Hansen Foundation also offered

70 scholarships for \$4,000 and may be renewed for one additional year provided that the student maintains a satisfactory academic record. The local winners of this scholarship are: Ethan Graham, St. Francis H.S.; Brayden Helton, St. Francis H.S.; Shelbi Weigel, Decatur Comm. H.S.; Lauren Linton, Goodland H.S.; Paige Fulwider, Goodland H.S.; Kinslie Blake, Colby H.S.; Keagan Glassman, Colby H.S.; Stella Kauffman, Colby H.S.; and Brittany Swartz, Colby H.S.

For students interested in seeking competence through career and technical education in one of the pre-approved schools in Northwest Kansas, the Foundation offered a scholarship for \$4,000 and may be renewed for one additional year provided the student maintains a satisfactory academic record. The local winners of this scholarship are: Kaylee Doyle, St. Francis H.S.; Cheyenne LaBarge, St. Francis H.S.; Breck Lohr, St. Francis H.S.; Naomi Straub-Marquez, St. Francis H.S.;

Sage Bryan, Decatur Comm. H.S.; Theodore Butterfield, Decatur Comm. H.S.; Myleigh Hayes, Decatur Comm. H.S.; Keely Huff, Decatur Comm. H.S.; Brylee Minnick, Decatur Comm. H.S.; Brooke Presten, Northern Valley H.S.; Maverick Rogers, Northern Valley H.S.; Kathryn Speer, Northern Valley H.S.; Jack Carter, Norton Comm. H.S.; Cadence Greeson, Norton Comm. H.S.; Tucker Harrington, Norton Comm. H.S.; Layla Puga, Norton Comm. H.S.; Ainsley Moses,

Rawlins Co. H.S.; Payton Juenemann, Rawlins Co. H.S.; Savannah Warning, Rawlins Co. H.S.; Sienna Baehler, Goodland H.S.; Cheyenne Morris, Brewster H.S.; Kalyssa Bandy, Colby H.S.; Tennyson Jackson, Colby H.S.; Zachory Kistler, Colby H.S.; Molly Norman, Colby H.S.; Landon Ritter, Colby H.S.; Makenzi Rhymer, Colby H.S.; and Talon Wark, Colby H.S.

A full list of winners can be found at www.danehansenfoundation.org.

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PUBLIC NOTICE

Prairie Dog Creek WTAP Sign-up to Open

The Kansas Department of Agriculture (KDA) will conduct a Water Right Transition Assistance Program (WTAP) enrollment in the Prairie Dog Creek target area from February 15 – March 31, 2026.

WTAP is a voluntary, incentive-based water conservation program designed to manage aquifers and streams in critical need of restoration by compensating landowners for the permanent retirement of irrigation water rights. Priority in the spring 2026 enrollment will be given to retiring irrigation water rights that have the greatest impact on the local stream / aquifer system as shown below.

To be eligible, water rights must be in good standing with the KDA Division of Water Resources. Dryland farming is permitted after a water right is retired. Limited irrigation can also be temporarily allowed to establish a permanent cover on the land being transitioned from irrigation. Partial water right reductions will also be considered for retirement grants.

WTAP grants are approved on the basis of competitive bids. WTAP grants can be considered by the KDA Division of Conservation for up to \$6,000 per acre-foot of the "Historic Consumptive Water Use" value as calculated over the last 10 years of reported annual water use of the water right(s) proposed for acceptance. To help increase incentives to landowners, WTAP grants can be combined with other government or private conservation programs which also offer financial assistance.

This WTAP enrollment is part of a special water conservation project being funded by the Bureau of Reclamation.

Maps, application forms and other details are available on KDA's Division of Conservation website at www.agriculture.ks.gov/waterconservationprograms. Contact Jake Dooling at (785) 477-4339 or jacob.dooling@ks.gov for more assistance. Water right information is also available from the Northwest Kansas Groundwater Management District No.4 in Colby at 785-462-3915, and from the Division of Water Resources field office in Stockton at 785-425-6787.