

Board of County Commissioners Regular Meeting

January 30, 2026

CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Chairman Mike Baughn called the REGULAR Commissioners Meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. at the Thomas County Historical Courthouse on Friday, January 30, 2026; followed by the flag salute (Pledge of Allegiance) with Commissioner Brian Luedke, Commissioner Brad Flipse, County Clerk Keesa Mariman, Landfill Supervisor Tom Fischer, Emergency Management Director David Becker, Treasurer Layn Bruggeman, Undersheriff Kirt Nichols, Brice Cronn, Morgan Owen, Jenny Lyndon, and Sunflower Standard Reporter Derek White (via Teams).

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS: Chairman Mike Baughn reported November Sales Tax for the ½ cent was received in the amount of \$112,831.93, and the ¼ cent was received in the amount of \$56,415.97.

PUBLIC COMMENT: No comments.

AGENDA ADDITIONS/REVISIONS: Commissioner Brian Luedke made a motion to approve the agenda as presented; the motion was seconded by Commissioner Brad Flipse, with no further discussion the motion carried unanimously.

APPROVE AP: Commissioner Brad Flipse made a motion to approve the Accounts Payable Payment Registers as follows: Courthouse General PY13 (2025 Invoices) in the amount of \$36,081.93, Courthouse General (2026 invoices) in the amount of \$287,550.45, Road and Bridge PY13 (2025 Invoices) in the amount of \$7,065.03, and Road and Bridge (2026 invoices) in the amount of \$12,841.96 (as reviewed by both County Attorney Chris Rohr and Commissioner Brad Flipse); the motion was seconded by Commissioner Brian Luedke with no further discussion the motion carried unanimously.

SANITARY CODE REVIEW: The Commission discussed possible amendments to the proposed Sanitary Code. Final action will take place at the February 17th meeting.

TREASURER IDLE FUND REPORT: Treasurer Layn Bruggeman gave a quarterly treasurer's report to the Commission and recommended moving the rest of the Oil and Gas Depletion fund into the Employee Benefits fund. Commissioner Brad Flipse made a motion to authorize and move the Oil and Gas Depletion fund dollars into Employee Benefits; the motion was seconded by Commissioner Brian Luedke, with no further discussion the motion carried unanimously. Commissioner Brian Luedke made a motion to allocate \$250 per tower from Wind Farm dollars to all Townships with Wind Towers; the motion as seconded by Commissioner Brad Flipse, with no further discussion the motion carried unanimously.

TORNADO SIREN INVOICE: Commissioner Brian Luedke made a motion to approve the Federal Signal Corporation invoice for the tornado siren in the amount of \$5,175; the motion was seconded by Commissioner Brad Flipse, with no further discussion the motion carried unanimously.

UNDERSHERIFF NOTICE – SHERIFF/UNDERSHERIFF SALARIES: Chairman Mike Baughn read a letter from the Sheriff announcing the resignation of Undersheriff Ray Schweitzer and naming Sergeant Kirt Nichols as the Undersheriff. It was discussed that when Sheriff Tom Nickols assumed the Sheriff role following Rod Taylor, his salary reflected an already reduced amount as the Commission at the time had reduced Rod Taylor's salary. Since Sheriff Tom Nickols became Sheriff, he has only received standard incremental increases. Notably, last year the Road Supervisor's (Kirt Nichols) compensation, due to double-time earnings, exceeded that of the Undersheriff and was nearly equal to the current Sheriff's salary.

The Commission discussed 2025 activity from the Sheriff's Department as follows:

- 820 total cases
- 6,200 calls for service
- 150 felony cases including 4 homicide investigations
- 31 DUI arrests
- 28 drug distribution cases

In addition, K9 Deputy Lucas Taylor assisted in the seizure of over 168 pounds of marijuana and synthetic substances. The Sheriff's Office also conducted registered offender compliance checks and child pornography investigations. There has been a noticeable increase in felony and violent crime cases. Sexual crimes are often underreported or reported after the fact, and assumptions cannot be made regarding their frequency. The department has also seen an increase in battery incidents involving law enforcement officers.

COUNTY ATTORNEY – 2025 REVIEW: County Attorney Chris Rohr reported the following 2025 statistics from his office working along side law enforcement:

- 1,943 traffic cases – County Attorney Chris Rohr felt this number is actually higher than what is reported
- 16 juvenile offender cases (ages 10–17)
- 10 Child in Need of Care (CINC) cases

The lower number of CINC filings is partially attributed to the Department for Children and Families (DCF) working to provide additional services to families without court intervention. In addition, 338 adult criminal cases were filed, reflecting an increase of 30 cases compared to 2024. Overall case numbers continue to trend upward.

County Attorney Chris Rohr stated the following was purchased with Diversion funds which are generated from traffic fines and first-time offenders:

- Pocket guidebooks for officers: \$673
- Ammunition: \$19,247
- Tactical boots for Kansas Highway Patrol (KHP): \$1,029
- School zone safety initiative (¼ of total cost): \$4,285
- Law enforcement training support: \$1,000
- National internet safety program for children (with one or two deputies participating)

UNDERSHERIFF NOTICE – SHERIFF/UNDERSHERIFF SALARIES: Following the County Attorney's review, County Attorney Chris Rohr requested a salary increase for Sheriff Tom Nickols to \$90,000 annually and for Undersheriff Kirt Nichols to \$85,000 annually. Commissioner Brad Flipse stated he wanted to show support and acknowledge that the Sheriff's Office is operating in a difficult environment. Commissioner Brad Flipse made a motion to approve the salary increases effective January 23, 2026; the motion was seconded by Chairman Mike Baughn. Commissioner Brad Flipse also expressed concern about the shrinking pool of qualified law enforcement candidates and emphasized the importance of doing what the County can to attract and retain qualified personnel. Sheriff Tom Nickols expressed appreciation for his deputies, noting that they do not shy away from any case and stating that he believes they have some of the best deputies. With no further discussion, the motion carried 2 to 1 with Commissioner Brian Luedke voting NAY. Commissioner Brian Luedke stated his vote was based on wanting additional time to research comparable salaries in other counties before approving the substantial increases.

2026 WAGES: Chairman Mike Baughn read the 2026 Employee Wages as follows:

Department	Name	Rate	Hourly or Monthly Salary
COMMUNITY VAN			
	FAUS, JASMINE M	22.05	HRS
	HENRY, SHARON MARIE	20.86	HRS
	HERNANDEZ, LORI	18.85	HRS
	MARIMAN, KEESA	941.16	SAL
	SAZANOWICZ, TINA	15.00	HRS
	SHULL-LOWE, DONNA	17.60	HRS
IT Dept			
	BECKER, DAVID	365.99	SAL
Landfill			
	BERENS, TYSON	18.00	HRS
	ELFERS, ROY L	21.29	HRS
	FISCHER, THOMAS	4833.34	SAL
	GILL, TERESA J	20.95	HRS
	LUNA, BILL L	18.03	HRS
	MARKER, MAKAIL	20.03	HRS
	MURRAY, CHRIS	18.00	HRS
	SHAINA, DAVID	18.76	HRS
	ZELLER, SCOTTY	18.00	HRS
County Clerk			
	HELUS, KAYDEE	16.50	HRS
	MARIMAN, KEESA	1120.60	SAL
	MARIMAN, KEESA J	4933.46	SAL
Building Maint / Custodian			
	HALING, JODI LYNNE	17.14	HRS
	INFANTE, JAIME	5197.81	SAL
	NICHOLS, KIRT	17.14	HRS
County Commissioners			
	BAUGHN, MICHAEL L	2152.98	SAL
	FLIPSE, BRAD R	2109.23	SAL
	LUEDKE, BRIAN L	2109.23	SAL
Emergency Management			
	BECKER, DAVID L	25.48	HRS
County Treasurer			
	ASHFORD, JESSICA N	24.47	HRS
	BOWERS, AMANDA M	21.69	HRS
	BRUGGEMAN, LAYN	5336.33	SAL
	BRUGGEMAN, LAYN	500.00	SAL
	ELLIS, MARGARET	19.23	HRS
	GILLEY, EMILY	18.49	HRS
Assessor (Appraiser)			
	BEAMER, KATHERINA	27.30	HRS
	CAPE, MAIA	15.00	HRS
	MORRIS, MICHELLE L	28.21	HRS
	SCHINDLER, RAYMOND J	22.24	HRS
	STANDLEY, RACHELLE LYN	7186.10	SAL
Register of Deeds			
	HERSCHBERGER, SUZANNE A	22.91	HRS
	VOLK, LORA L	5539.90	SAL
Noxious Weed			
	MCDUGAL, JOHN	20.87	HRS
	SCHROCK, CLAIR L	648.90	SAL
Road and Bridge			
	ANDREWS, DARREN	20.87	HRS
	BELL, DARRIN E	22.53	HRS
	GLASSMAN, MOLLY	17.14	HRS
	JACKSON, CLINTON P	22.93	HRS
	KOON, JOSHUA T	21.05	HRS
	MARIMAN, EDWARD W	30.51	HRS
	MCLAUGHLIN, MICHAEL	21.40	HRS
	MORA, MARIO A	21.05	HRS

	NICHOLS, DAWN A	24.28	HRS
	PEARCE, MARC	22.18	HRS
	ROGERS, LARRY D	23.09	HRS
	SCHROCK, CLAIR L	6721.70	SAL
Sheriff			
	COLLINS, CODY S	26.66	HRS
	COX, JAKE A	24.98	HRS
	DIBLE, KENT D	20.60	HRS
	GWINN, JEREMY	26.66	HRS
	NICHOLS, KIRT	7083.33	SAL
	NICKOLS JR, JOEL T	7500.00	SAL
	OWEN, MORGAN	22.24	HRS
	SCHWEITZER, RAYMOND D	5623.48	SAL
	SHAW, CODY	26.66	HRS
	STAAB, SHERI R	32.09	HRS
	TAYLOR, LUCAS C	27.45	HRS
Jail			
	ALVAREZ, JESSE	20.00	HRS
	AVERY, DAYMEN	22.50	HRS
	COLLIER, MICHAEL	22.50	HRS
	DAVILA, MAXIMILIANO	20.25	HRS
	FIELDS, BRAYLAN	20.00	HRS
	FROMAN, JUDAH	20.00	HRS
	GERBITZ, BRETT S	26.34	HRS
	GUTHRIE, PEYTON MICHAEL	21.54	HRS
	HAGGARD, KARSON	23.47	HRS
	HILLIS, ASHTON	21.43	HRS
	JIRAK, LEO	24.76	HRS
	JONES, CHRISTIAN L	24.29	HRS
	KITCHEL, RICHELLE G	22.50	HRS
Jail			
	MILLIARD, ALLISON	20.00	HRS
	MORTON, WILLIAM	21.75	HRS
	WALKER, MARK A	28.81	HRS
County Attorney			
	FIELDS, KATEY M	5278.75	SAL
	ROHR, CHRISTOPHER A	9166.67	SAL
	ROHR, GEOFFREY S	22.95	HRS
	ROHR, WILLIAM	20.35	HRS
EMS			
	ACKERMAN, DANI	7.25	HRS
	BECKER, DAVID L	7.47	HRS
	BURKHOLDER, LEANNA R	20.71	HRS
	CARPENTER, LEISHA K.	7.47	HRS
	DAVID, ALAN L	7693.21	SAL
	GRIBBLE, LUCAS	7.47	HRS
	HILL, BILLY P	7.47	HRS
	JORGENSEN, SARAH	7.47	HRS
	KEENAN, JAMES M	20.91	HRS
	KEENAN, LETITIA	20.70	HRS
EMS			
	KNOWLES, JOHN W	21.70	HRS
	KNOWLES, KATINA R	7.47	HRS
	KRAFT, KAYLIE A	25.34	HRS
	MORTON, JR, DON M	7.47	HRS
	NICHOLSON, ERICKA	7.47	HRS
	PLUMISTO, BRANDI L	24.61	HRS
	REESE, SCOTT	8827.75	SAL
	RICHARD, TIFFANY M	20.70	HRS
	ROMO, LINDA	7.47	HRS
	SELBY, DEVAN A	7.25	HRS
	SELBY, JOEL	7.47	HRS
	STARNS, SARAH	7.25	HRS
	STRAIGHT, JESSICA	19.78	HRS

	TOTH, PATRICK A	7.47	HRS
	UNRUH, BRIAN	30.00	HRS
	VOSS, DAVID	7.47	HRS
Health			
	BANGE, ISABEL	32.47	HRS
	EATON, MONIQUE	36.55	HRS
	GLASSMAN, KENDRA M	6700.13	SAL
Health			
	JACKSON, LAUREL A	24.35	HRS
	STRANGE, EMILY J	34.63	HRS

STRAY ANIMAL CLARIFICATION: The Commission previously adopted a Dangerous Dog Ordinance. Commissioner Brian Luedke stated that a taxpayer reported stray dogs near her property. Deputy Lucas Taylor was contacted and advised to reach out to the Logan County Animal Shelter. County Attorney Chris Rohr asked whether the County is responsible for picking up stray animals countywide. Chairman Mike Baughn stated that his interpretation of the resolution applies specifically to dangerous animals, not for non-threatening strays. He further noted that if an animal poses a traffic hazard or public safety concern, the County would take action. However, he does not believe the County is obligated to pick up all stray animals throughout the county. Commissioner Brian Luedke indicated he would continue to inquire in situations where animals may present a danger. The County will continue addressing these matters on a case-by-case basis.

RECESS: The Commission stood at recess at 10:23 for 5 minutes.

Chairman Mike Baughn made a motion to amend the agenda to add an Appraiser discussion to the meeting; the motion was seconded by Commissioner Brian Luedke. Chairman Mike Baughn withdrew his motion. Commissioner Brian Luedke withdrew seconding the motion.

TAX ROLL CORRECTIONS: Commissioner Brad Flipse made motion to approve the following Tax Roll Corrections:

- 2025 Personal Property abatement for Leo Stephens with a net change in tax dollars of -\$619.00.
- 2025 Personal Property abatement for Brittany and Renier Dekock with a net change in tax dollars of -\$2,664.40.
- 2025 Personal Property abatement for Christina and Rhett Hickert with a net change in tax dollars of -\$63.60.
- 2025 Personal Property abatement for Bellamy Brothers with a net change in tax dollars of -\$57.22.
- 2025 Personal Property abatement for Bellamy Farms with a net change in tax dollars of -\$389.04.
- 2025 Real Estate abatement for Lana and Michael Johnson with a net change in tax dollars of -\$1,320.42.
- 2025 Real Estate abatement for Jody and Trent McCain with a net change in tax dollars of -\$82.52.
- 2025 Real Estate abatement for Tom and Ladonna Sloan with a net change in tax dollars of -\$783.12.
- 2025 Real Estate abatement for Tom Sloan with a net change in tax dollars of -\$1,058.02.
- 2025 Real Estate abatement for Tom Sloan with a net change in tax dollars of -\$143.38.
- 2025 Real Estate abatement for Jeffery and Rebecca Klippert with a net change in tax dollars of -\$147.76.
- 2025 Real Estate abatement for Linda Smith with a net change in tax dollars of -\$384.14.
- 2025 Real Estate abatement for Adam and Megan Horinek with a net change in tax dollars of -\$395.66.
- 2025 Real Estate abatement for Leo Stephens with a net change in tax dollars of -\$135.56.
- 2025 Real Estate abatement for Ryan and Megan Jacques with a net change in tax dollars of -\$1,997.00.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Brian Luedke, with no further discussion the motion carried unanimously.

MISC: Jenny Lyndon with the Museum mentioned she would like to have all elected officials and department heads meet at the Prairie Museum following the Commission meeting on February 27th.

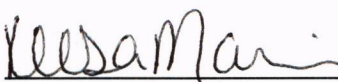
APPROVE JAN PAYROLL: Commissioner Brian Luedke made a motion to approve the January Payroll in the amount of \$555,341.62; the motion was seconded by Commissioner Brad Flipse, with no further discussion the motion carried unanimously.

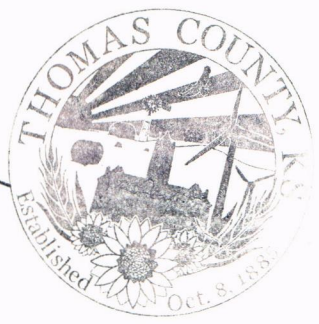
APPROVE DEC 31 & JAN 2 & 12 MINUTES: Commissioner Brad Flipse made a motion to approve the December 31, January 2 and 12 minutes as presented; the motion was seconded by Commissioner Brian Luedke, with no further discussion the motion carried unanimously.

MISC: The Commission received an annual report from Tracy Mann, an Options Newsletter, a KCAMP Annual Meeting Book, and a letter from Sunflower Electric.


ADJOURNMENT: With no further business Commissioner Brad Flipse moved to adjourn at 10:48 a.m.; the motion was seconded by Commissioner Brian Luedke, with no further discussion the motion carried unanimously.

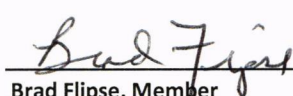
ATTEST:

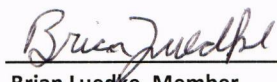

 Keesa Mariman, County Clerk
 Dated: 2/17/2026



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS, THOMAS COUNTY


 Mike Baughn, Chairman


 Brad Flipse, Member


 Brian Luedke, Member