

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
MONTGOMERY COUNTY, KANSAS  
OFFICIAL MINUTES**

March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2025

The Board of County Commissioners, three members and the County Clerk present, met in regular session at 9:00 AM.

**CALL TO ORDER:** Commissioner Cordray

**INVOCATION:** Reverend Melvin Simpson, Coffeyville 1<sup>st</sup> Church of God in Christ

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Commissioner Bever

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**CONSENT AGENDA APPROVAL:**

**ACTION:** *A motion was made by Commissioner Cordray to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Clubine.*

*ROLL CALL VOTE - Commissioner Bever - Yes  
Commissioner Cordray - Yes  
Commissioner Clubine - Yes*

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**-OLD BUSINESS-**

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**REVIEW STOP LOSS POLICY/CONTRACT FOR 2025-2026 HEALTH INSURANCE**

**ACTION:** *A motion by Commissioner Bever for the Chairman to sign the Stop loss Policy/Contract for 2025-2026 Health Insurance on behalf of the Board. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Clubine.*

*ROLL CALL VOTE - Commissioner Bever - Yes  
Commissioner Cordray - Yes  
Commissioner Clubine - Yes*

Res. 25-036

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**-NEW BUSINESS-**

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**PRESENTATION OF KDOC GRANT FOR COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS**

The corrections and fiscal year 2026 documents were sent for review and required approval. The application essentially replicated the numbers from fiscal year 2024, with updates to contact information, but there were no significant changes to the financials. While there was a slight increase compared to fiscal year 2024, funding for fiscal years 2025 and 2026 remained at the same level as the current year. The budget shared with the team was largely the same as the previous year's, totaling \$778,006.79. This amount included two grants from Katie OC: the Comprehensive Plan grant of \$723,682 and a Behavioral Health grant of \$54,000. Both grants were guaranteed, though there was a possibility that the funding model could change. According to the most recent update, the funding level for fiscal year 2026 was expected to remain consistent with fiscal year 2025.

**ACTION:** *A motion by Commissioner Bever to approve the budget for 2026 for Community Corrections. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Clubine.*

*ROLL CALL VOTE - Commissioner Bever - Yes  
Commissioner Cordray - Yes  
Commissioner Clubine - Yes*

Res. 25-037

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**APPROVAL TO PURCHASE SKID UNIT FOR SYCAMORE FIRE STATION**

Last year, a job was secured for the pre-part by schedule unit, with plans to install it at the back. The team aimed to purchase the same model previously bought for other PBS units, specifically the Q-Tech brand. The unit was priced at \$4,695, with shipping costs bringing the total to \$5,400. Other alternatives were considered, priced at \$6,750 and \$5,004.95, but these units were not Q-Tech models. The previous purchase of a Q-Tech unit was favored due to its effectiveness in UTVs. The recommendation was to approve the Q-Tech unit, priced at \$5,495, with the unit itself priced at \$4,695. Concerns were raised about the weight capacity of the UTV. It was noted that the previously purchased Q-Tech unit had a weight capacity of 45 gallons, which was deemed insufficient for larger fire emergencies. The team recommended considering a higher-capacity unit, such as one with a 65-gallon tank, provided the UTV could handle the added weight. One member shared that they had used a 65-gallon tank on a Kubota UTV without encountering weight issues, although they ran out of water quickly in fire situations. The team discussed the importance of weight capacity, especially in challenging weather or terrain, and suggested the 65-gallon tank as a better option to reduce the need for frequent refills. It was advised to check the UTV's weight capacity specifications to confirm if a 65-gallon tank could be accommodated. Additionally, the team requested approval to offer bids for a skid unit to be installed on a pickup truck in Independence. The truck, which lacked a water pump and was no longer needed for rescue operations, was to be equipped with a skid unit and sent to Havana. The truck in question was a utility bed truck, but it was unclear whether the utility compartments would need to be removed to install the equipment. It was suggested that a flatbed might be a better option to avoid issues when driving in pastures, as the utility bed might be too narrow for a large tank. The team was advised to take measurements and review specifications before proceeding, ensuring that the skid unit could be properly installed. The goal was to maintain consistency in the equipment across different fire departments and avoid having too many varying units.

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**APPROVAL OF TRANSFER OF FUNDS**

A resolution was presented for the transfer of funds from the rural fire budget to the special rural fire equipment fund. Although \$350,000 had been allocated for the transfer, as permitted by the KSA statute, the decision was made to transfer \$300,000 at this time after consultation with Michael. This approach was chosen to ensure there were sufficient funds available for both ongoing grants and future matching costs. Prior to the transfer, the special rural fire equipment fund had just over \$36,000, and the transfer would bring the total to over \$336,000. The rural fire budget had already accounted for this transfer, ensuring it would not affect the budget's normal operations. The decision to transfer \$300,000, instead of the full amount, was made because no transfer had been conducted the previous year. For instance, funds intended for renovations at the Deering fire station were not transferred. To avoid catching up throughout the year, it was decided to transfer \$300,000 now and allocate \$300,000 annually starting next year. Any unencumbered cash left at the beginning of fiscal year 2026 would be transferred to the rural fire equipment fund for future capital improvements, such as trucks, skids, or equipment, with a primary focus on capital improvement plans.

**ACTION:** (PARAPHRASED) *A motion by Commissioner Cordray to approve the Transfer of Funds from the Rural Fire Budget to the Special Rural Fire Equipment Fund for Montgomery County, KS. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Clubine.*

*ROLL CALL VOTE - Commissioner Bever - Yes  
Commissioner Cordray - Yes  
Commissioner Clubine - Yes*

*Res. 25-038*

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**REGISTER OF DEEDS QUARTERLY REPORT**

In January, the audit for 2024 was reviewed and accurately filed ahead of the scheduled audit. Additionally, attendance at the RLD Legislative Coffee in Topeka provided an opportunity for a meet-and-greet with representatives and senators to discuss upcoming issues and foster good working relationships. In February, the deputy attended the Rest of Deeds Deputy School, which is held annually during the typically slower month for the office and title personnel. The office began scanning old records starting in 2007 to create better digital copies, but with the reduction to three staff members, finding time for this task has become more challenging. Discussions with the imaging company, US Imaging, are ongoing to explore options for improving the records. As of March, the office is starting to pick up the pace again, and the title personnel have noted that Montgomery County has always been particularly busy. Though the reasons are unclear, it remains a consistently high-volume office.

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**APPRAISER QUARTERLY REPORT**

The value notices for Montgomery County were mailed out on March 1. The team worked diligently to ensure timely distribution. Taxpayers have 30 days, until March 31 at 5:00 PM, to file informal appeals, and any requests received before the deadline will be honored. This year, significant changes in property values were noted. For Montgomery County, dry land values decreased by approximately 6%, consistent with the trend in District 90 (Southeast Kansas). However, pasture and range land values increased by around 2%. A spreadsheet with market sales data, broken down by soil type, is available to assist farmers with inquiries. Additionally, new properties, including a home with a swimming pool and a farm implement building, were captured through aerial imagery just before the notices were sent, which may lead to inquiries from taxpayers. Bartlett's valuation came in at \$213 million, and they have filed for Industrial Revenue Bonds (IRBs) for 10 years. However, they are still responsible for Senate Bill 19 related to school capital outlay. The office is preparing for informal appeals, and it is important to remind taxpayers that property values reflect current market sales, not individual decisions made by the office. Preliminary numbers show that overall valuations for 2025 have increased by 4-6%, and the office expects some calls about these increases. On the legislative front, a bill passed by the Senate may exempt trailers, golf carts, and watercraft from property taxes, which could reduce county revenue by about half a mill. This legislation is still in early stages. Furthermore, Kansas state law no longer requires the mailing of personal property rendition forms, saving significant costs for the county. Personal property forms for items like golf carts, heavy trucks, and farm equipment are now only provided upon request. A letter explaining this change was included with personal property tax bills. The office has settled into its new location, and foot traffic has increased. Being located across from the Treasurer's Office has made it more convenient for taxpayers to inquire about their property values. Recreational land values are between \$5,000 and \$8,000 per acre, with a 2-3% increase in value. The office has been actively verifying land use through site visits, aerial imagery, and communication with landowners. Regarding office operations, discussions have focused on GIS mapping and training. There was a transition from two GIS staff members to one, and cross-training for staff members is a priority. This is part of a broader effort to address "single points of failure" by ensuring that key tasks, such as those related to oil and gas, personal property, and assessments, are cross-trained. The goal is to prevent disruptions due to staff absences and ensure continuity. Concerns about rising property valuations and their financial impact on taxpayers, especially those on fixed incomes, were raised. Legislative action to address property tax concerns for primary residents was discussed, and engaging with lawmakers like Senator Tyson was recommended. The discussion also covered how property valuation changes affect school districts, particularly their ability to fund capital improvements. In terms of personal property assessments, there was a focus on evaluating rail lines and equipment for accurate classification. Lastly, long-term planning for economic development and neighborhood revitalization in Montgomery County was emphasized. The goal is to create a stable, sustainable future for the community, even if progress is gradual.

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**PUBLIC WORKS QUARTERLY REPORT**

Montgomery County, along with other counties in the Southeast region, applied for a federal grant through the "Safe Streets and Roads for All" program. As part of this initiative, the county was awarded a safety assessment. Consultants conducting the assessment are hosting an open house at the Basement Judicial Center (300 East Main) on Monday, March 10, from 4:00 PM to 6:00 PM. The event will allow the public to discuss road issues in Montgomery County. Initially, 12 counties had signed up, but Montgomery County, as part of a 17-county region, was included. The federal government covered 80% of the costs, with the remaining 20% funded by the state through the Bill Kansas program, leaving Montgomery County with no expenses. In response to a request from Commissioner Bever, figures from the recent snowstorm were provided. The county used 331 tons of salt and 604.75 man-hours for snow removal, including time for drivers, mechanics, and setup/cleanup. The county also finalized its 2024 year-in-review report, which included environmental efforts such as roadside weed control and household hazardous waste collection. Montgomery County collaborated with Elk and Labette counties to offer waste collection services. Special bridge projects were undertaken. Other bridge repairs, guard rail maintenance, and erosion prevention efforts were carried out throughout the county. In road work, the county used its budget for a chip-seal program instead of asphalt overlay projects, covering 57.4 miles of road at a cost of \$21,880 per mile, utilizing 198 tons of salt. The county also issued 18 permits for contractors working within the right-of-way and handled 175 "one-call" requests. Other infrastructure work included ditch maintenance at 112 locations, tree and brush maintenance at 406 sites, and road striping across 57.6 miles. The dust control program served 53 residents, with additional efforts to control dust near the Buckeye project in preparation for upcoming road work. State-funded projects include the Buckeye project, which began in mid-summer, and the ongoing Route 4700 project, expected to be completed by the end of the month. Engineering services were utilized for the Bid Build grant and other design-related tasks. Regarding equipment, the county added several new vehicles and machinery, including mowers, pickup trucks, graders, and a salt spreader. Equipment repairs, particularly for tires, amounted to \$93,660 in 2024. The report also included a breakdown of road complaints, roadwork completed, and maps showing gravel additions and chip-seal applications. Personnel changes were also noted. For the Buckeye project, asphalt is expected to begin in a week, weather permitting, with asphalt sourced from Pittsburgh. Despite some delays due to weather, the project is on schedule and is anticipated to be completed by the end of the month, allowing traffic to resume.

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**-EXECUTIVE SESSION- NONE**

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**-OTHER BUSINESS-**

County news from NACO Session

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**ADJOURNMENT: 10:47 AM**

**ACTION:** Motion by Commissioner Bever, seconded by Commissioner Clubine.

ROLL CALL VOTE - Commissioner Bever - Yes  
Commissioner Cordray - Yes  
Commissioner Clubine - Yes

**WORK SESSION**

Opened Work Session at 11:00 AM

Items discussed:  
Jail has been painted, Tour March 17<sup>th</sup>  
Handbook

Work Session Closed at 1:19 PM

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**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
MONTGOMERY COUNTY, KANSAS**


  
MIKE CORDRAY, Chairman

PHIL CLUBINE, Member

  
ROBERT BEVER, Member



**ATTEST:**

  
AMI STANDRIDGE, County Clerk

**RESOLUTION NO. 25 - 036**

**DATED** at Independence, Montgomery County, Kansas this 3<sup>rd</sup> day of March, 2025

**WHEREAS:** *A motion by Commissioner Bever for the Chairman to sign the Stop loss Policy/Contract for 2025-2026 Health Insurance on behalf of the Board. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Clubine.*

*ROLL CALL VOTE -*

*Commissioner Bever - Yes  
Commissioner Cordray - Yes  
Commissioner Clubine - Yes*

*Robert Bever*

**Robert Bever, Member**



*Mike Cordray*

**Mike Cordray, Chairman**

**Phil Clubine, Member**

**ATTEST:**

*Ami Standridge*

**Ami Standridge, County Clerk**

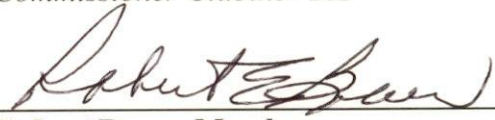
**RESOLUTION NO. 25 - 037**

**DATED** at Independence, Montgomery County, Kansas this 3<sup>rd</sup> day of March, 2025

**WHEREAS:** *A motion by Commissioner Bever to approve the budget for 2026 for Community Corrections. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Clubine.*

*ROLL CALL VOTE -*

*Commissioner Bever - Yes  
Commissioner Cordray - Yes  
Commissioner Clubine - Yes*

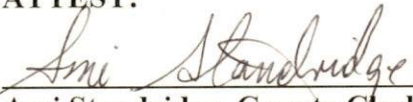
  
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**Robert Bever, Member**



  
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**Mike Cordray, Chairman**

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**Phil Clubine, Member**

**ATTEST:**

  
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**Ami Standridge, County Clerk**