

Commissioners Discuss Road Repairs, Grant Funding And Property Tax Issues

**Official Meeting Minutes
Regular Meeting
Submitted By Harper
County Clerk's Office
May 18, 2026**

The Harper County Board of County Commissioners met in regular session. Chairman McCurley called the meeting to order with Commissioners Struble and Waldschmidt. Ami DeLacerda, County Clerk and Shonda Larson, Board Assistant, were also present. At 8:30 a.m., Commissioner Waldschmidt moved to enter Executive Session. The justification for closing the meeting is to discuss personnel matters of non-elected personnel. The open meeting will resume at 8:35 a.m. in this room; the motion passed unanimously. Ms. DeLacerda remained in the meeting. The regular meeting resumed at 8:35 a.m. with no binding action taken.

Commissioner Waldschmidt moved to approve 5/11/2026 meeting minutes; the motion passed unanimously (Commissioner McCurley abstained).

Commissioner Struble moved to approve accounts payable in the amount of \$20,907.46; the motion passed unanimously.

The group reviewed pictures shared by Commissioner McCurley of recent

road work and discussed the condition of the road.

Mike Bennett & Faith Rothenbush, Public Works, met with the Board to open sealed bids for a new skid steer and excavator. Representatives from Foley CAT and Murphy Tractor & Equipment were present.

Bids opened for skid steer/truck loader:

- Foley - CAT 275xe, \$129,990.00

- Murphy - John Deere 331p, \$101,838.08

- Murphy - John Deere 333p, \$105,585.31

Bids opened for excavator:

- Foley CAT 336, \$391,950.00

- Murphy John Deere 380p, \$429,932.54

The Board requested a comparison spreadsheet to review and will decide next week.

The group then discussed additional areas to sample soil stabilization products, and the effect of people driving on roads closed for repair. Many signs have been damaged or destroyed, repairs have been delayed, and additional maintenance required due to this activity.

Mr. Bennett addressed the pictures reviewed earlier related to work done in the county. The Board requested that landowners be contacted and given the opportunity to remove fences or bales in the right of way.

Diana Schmidt, Anthony Landbank, updated the Board on recent activity and plans to demolish a property in Anthony. Commissioner Struble moved to waive the dumping fees at the Harper County landfill for this project; the motion passed unanimously.

Shonda Larson, Board Assistant/Finance Director, presented the title of a new Sheriff's Office vehicle for signature. Commissioner Waldschmidt moved to sign a letter of support for the Anthony Lake Restroom and Shower house project; the motion passed unanimously. The group discussed the Community Development budget, and the Board's preference to continue to fund special projects, but not staff a full-time position.

Darren Booth, Theel Insurance, met with the Board for a Quarterly Update on group health insurance utilization.

Josh Teel, IT/Building & Grounds notified the Board of a grant award in the amount of \$12,000.00 for updated firewalls. Commissioner Struble moved to sign the grant Memorandum of Agreement; the motion passed unanimously. Heather Struble, Health Department, updated the Board on April activity. 102 clients were seen in the office, 212.25 hours of housekeeping services were provided, they continue to investigate epi cases and animal bites. The department participated in the sports physical clinic held at Patterson Health Center last week. Two travel requests were reviewed and approved.

At 10:03 a.m., Commissioner McCurley moved to recess for five minutes; the motion passed unanimously. The meeting reconvened at 10:08 a.m.

Kevin Alexander, Harper County Community Foundation, met with the Board for an audit review and grant update, advising that the four deficiencies noted during the audit are in the process of being remedied.

\$165,000.00 in grant awards were issued this round. Commissioner Waldschmidt inquired about promoting the Plumb Thicket contribution to funding the scholarships awarded to all Harper County graduates.

Melinda Ewertz, City of Anthony, met with the Board to discuss the walking trail from the city to the lake. Commissioner Waldschmidt moved to approve an Ordinance Annexing Land to the City of Anthony, KS to be used for the trail; the motion passed unanimously.

Joe Pennycuff, County Appraiser, met with the Board. Commissioner Waldschmidt mentioned an email received from Harper Industries about an error in classification of the business, and concerns about lack of communication from the Appraiser's Office. Mr. Pennycuff said he would make the correction and reach out to the company.

There was discussion about a recent abatement resulting in the reduction in taxes of \$21,375.00. Mr. Pennycuff stated he did not attend the related BOTA hearing, but stipulated, which avoided the case going to court.

The group discussed the potential to change the classification of land exclusively used for hunting to recreational use and tax accordingly.

At 11:00 a.m., Commissioner McCurley moved to enter Executive Session. The justification for closing the meeting is to discuss personnel matters of nonelected personnel. The open meeting will resume at 11:10 a.m. in this room; the motion passed unanimously. Mr. Pennycuff and Ms. DeLacerda remained in the meeting. At 11:10 a.m., Commissioner Struble moved to extend the session for five minutes; the motion passed unanimously. The regular meeting resumed at 11:15 a.m. with no binding action taken.

Ami DeLacerda, County Clerk, met with the Board. Multiple Personnel Status Forms were reviewed and approved. Commissioner Struble moved to approve compensating the Special Prosecutor in excess of the original contract amount, due to time needed for two jury trials; the motion

COOKING CORNER ELISHA'S FAVORITE DISHES

Flag Cake



Ingredients - For the Cake

- 2 1/2 cups All-Purpose Flour
- 1 cup unsalted Butter, soft
- 1/2 tsp. Salt
- 2 cups Sugar
- 4 large Eggs

- 1/2 tsp. Baking Soda
- 2 tsp. Vanilla Extract
- 1 cup Buttermilk

Ingredients - For the Frosting and Topping

- 8 oz Cream Cheese (room temp)
- 1/2 cup unsalted Butter (room temp)
- 5 1/2 cups Confectioners' Sugar, divided
- 1 tsp. Vanilla Extract
- 6 oz. Blueberries
- pinch Salt
- 24 oz. Raspberries

Instructions

Heat oven to 350°F. Grease and flour a 9x13 pan. Mix flour, salt, baking soda in a bowl. Beat butter and sugar until fluffy. Mix in vanilla, then eggs one at a time. Alternately mix in flour mixture and buttermilk until combined (don't overmix). Pour into pan and bake 30-35 minutes. Cool completely.

Frosting: Beat cream cheese, butter, vanilla, and salt until smooth. Add powdered sugar gradually and beat until fluffy. Reserve 1 tablespoon frosting.

Decoration: Spread frosting over cooled cake. Dry blueberries and raspberries off with paper towel before placing. Add blueberries in one corner for "stars." Dip some blueberries in frosting + powdered sugar for white "stars," then scatter. Arrange raspberries in rows to resemble stripes, alternating red and powdered sugar-coated berries.

Finish: Cut into squares and serve from pan.

passed unanimously. Commissioner Struble then moved to approve extending the same contract to include time and work needed to complete the sentencing phases of those trials; the motion passed unanimously. The Board also discussed and rejected the option to shop property and liability insurance this year.

As there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:32 a.m. The next regular meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 26th at 8:30 a.m. in the Commissioner Room at the Harper County Courthouse.

Approved: Melinda McCurley, Chair

Attest: Ami DeLacerda, County Clerk

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Sunday Bible Study: 6:00 PM
Led by David High
Topic ~ How to Study the Bible
Wednesday Worship: 7:00 - 8:00 PM
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