

May 19, 2026

The Ottawa County Board of Commissioners met in special session at 1:00 P.M. on Tuesday, May 19, 2026 at the Miami CIVIC CENTER (banquet room) with the following members present: Chairman Mike Furnas, Commissioners Robert Clark and Scott Hilton. District Attorney, Doug Pewitt was also present. Notice of the meeting was posted at the south door of the Ottawa County Courthouse May 14, 2026 at 2:06 P.M. A Commissioners' Meeting Agendas and Minutes can also be found online at ottawa.okcounties.org.

1. Call to order.
2. Pledge of allegiance.
3. Motion by Furnas, second by Hilton to present Public Presentation regarding the Judgment issued against Ottawa County in the case of Austin Bond v. Sheriff of Ottawa County, NDOK Case No. 4:17-CV-00325. The Presentation will be made by District Attorney together with panel of County officials, and outside counsel.

Presentation to include:

- a. Discussion was led by Ottawa County DA Doug Pewitt, and Attorney Mr. Raley from Norman, Oklahoma of recent appellate court decision affirming judgment against County.
 - b. Discussion of what happened to result in lawsuit against County and actions taken: inadequate care of inmate Terral Eliss. The nurse ignored him and called him names while he was suffering in his cell leading to his death from sepsis.
 - c. The amount of judgment, fees and interest due: 40 million dollars.
 - d. Options open to County for payment of judgment and financial consequences of each: After Mr. Raley and the public discussed the following options, a sales tax option appears to be less hurtful to the public.
 - i. Bond funded by limited sales tax option;
 - ii. 10 year levy option;
 - iii. 3 year unlimited ad valorem levy; and,
 - iv. Bankruptcy option.
 - e. Discussion of County financial conditions including size of ad valorem tax base, size of sales tax base, and existing taxes, millages and other revenues. May include discussion of effects of options on County government.
 - f. Timeline for Voting on options available to electorate.
 - g. Discussion on recommendations concerning options available to County electorate and officials.
4. Public Comment and questions to County officials and panel members. Public Comment and any questions should not exceed 3 minutes per person. Public comments: Dillon Johnson, county rancher and farmer concerned the ad valorem would raise our taxes 70%. How could we absorb this? Shannon Duhan agreed. Sales tax would be the best way to pay. Larry Palmer (public citizen). We need to educate the citizens on way to vote. Get the information out. Gordon Williams asked Commissioner Mike Furnas how he would vote? Furnas vote will be for sales tax.

5. Motion by Furnas, second by Hilton, to Adjourn. By vote: Clark, aye; Hilton, aye; Furnas, aye.

Mike Furnas, Chairman
Robyn Mitchell, County Clerk
Miami News Record