

**PUBLIC WORKS AND SAFETY
STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Monday, August 28, 2023**

The meeting of the Public Works and Safety Standing Committee was held on Monday, August 28, 2023, at 5:00 p.m. The following members were present: Commissioner Bynum, Chairman; Commissioners Ramirez, Johnson, Kane, Markley and BPU Board Member Groneman. The following officials were also in attendance: Laura Cromwell, Fiscal Manager, Police Department; Wendy Medina, Program Supervisor, Victim Services Unit, KCKPD; Ramat Abanishe, Lethality Assessment Program Coordinator, KCKPD; Angel Ferrara, Director of Parks and Recreation; Shaya Lockett, Recreation Division Manager; and Monica L. Sparks, Deputy UG Clerk.

Chairman Bynum said before I call our meeting to order, I want to announce that some of our committee members, staff, and public are attending remotely by Zoom and some are on site. All participants joining electronically should mute phones and computers when not speaking to avoid background noise. During this meeting make sure you announce yourself by name and title when you speak, so that the public knows who's speaking. Be sure and speak directly into a microphone so that all of our comments are heard and that the record of the meeting is accurate. This is critical given the number of remote participants, it's also guidance from our Kansas Attorney General.

The public is allowed to participate by Zoom or submit comments by email prior to the meeting and those are included in the record of the meeting. The public can indicate their intent to provide remote public comment by contacting our Clerk's Office by 5:00 PM the Thursday prior to the meeting. The public will also have an opportunity to provide brief comments, either electronically or here in the 5th Floor Conference Room of our Municipal Office Building.

Chairman Bynum called the meeting to order. Roll call was taken and all members were present as shown above.

Chairman Bynum said we do not have revisions on our agenda.

Approval of standing committee minutes from October 24, 2022. **On motion of Commissioner Kane, seconded by Commissioner Ramirez, the minutes were approved.** Roll Call was taken and there were six “Ayes,” Groneman, Kane, Markley, Johnson, Ramirez, Bynum.

COMMITTEE AGENDA

Item No. 1 – 212642...GRANT: FY23 EDWARD BYRNE MEMORIAL JUSTICE ASSISTANCE GRANT (JAG) PROGRAM

Synopsis: The Kansas City Kansas Police Department has been allocated \$103,380 in federal grant funding for FY2023. The project period spans from 10/1/2022-9/30/2026, with no match required, submitted by Laura Cromwell, Fiscal Manager, Kansas City, Kansas Police Department.

Laura Cromwell, Fiscal Manager, Police Department, said we are seeking approval to apply for and accept the federal fiscal year ‘23 Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant through the Bureau of Justice Assistance. This particular grant is considered both a Formula Grant and an Entitlement Grant. The allocated amount for KCK is based on a formula that incorporates both our population and violent crime statistics and it is a non-competitive grant program. This year our allocated amount is \$103,380 and the Police Department plans to utilize this funding to purchase one additional ATV for our Patrol Stations. This will give us a total of six for two at each station, as well as the necessary associated equipment and training for proper use. Funding will also be used to purchase a TruNarc drug scanner, as well as rifle grade ballistic vests for our Special Operations Unit. Remaining funding will be used for command staff leadership training through the Senior Management Institute for Police. The performance period for this grant will extend through September 30th, 2026 and there is no match requirement from the UG

Chairman Bynum said question, the TruNarc, what drugs will it identify? **Ms. Cromwell** said any illicit narcotic that you might find on the streets. It's a very forward thinking, advanced technology item in that officers don't have to open up the material that a substance might be contained within whether it be plastic, glass, paper, anything. Just for officer safety reasons, it uses a laser to penetrate any sort of packaging and is able to identify it.

Commissioner Ramirez said here in the staff request, it says to deploy ATVs, we will need to amend the ordinance, correct? **Ms. Cromwell** said so that may have been incorrect. I think there was some confusion when this first went through if it had been already amended. We had purchased five ATVs with the JAG Grant last year and when that JAG Grant went through we amended the ordinance at that time. Since then, we've had a new Assistant Chief come in and we weren't sure if that policy had been updated, but we found since that was submitted that it has been updated to include language for law enforcement use. **Commissioner Ramirez** said okay, that's what I thought because I remember us talking about the policy and the change. **Ms. Cromwell** said that's been taken care of, so we can check that off the list.

Action: **Commissioner Kane made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Ramirez, to approve.** Roll Call was taken and there were six "Ayes," Groneman, Kane, Markley, Johnson, Ramirez, Bynum.

Item No. 2 – 212660...GRANT: VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT (VAWA)

Synopsis: Approval to apply for a Violence Against Women Act grant in the amount of \$34,304, with a match of \$9,090.00, submitted by Wendy Medina, Program Supervisor, Victim Services Unit, Kansas City, Kansas Police Department.

Wendy Medina, Program Supervisor for the Victim Services Unit, Kansas City Kansas Police Department, said with me is Ramat Abanishe. I am here to request approval to apply for the Violence Against Women Act Grant. In early 2021, the Kansas Governor's Advisory Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Violence Response as well as the Kansas City Kansas Police Department and Friends of Yates, our local domestic violence agency, we came together to enhance the response to domestic violence cases in Kansas City via a grant received at that time by the Governor's Grants Office. It was the ICJR, Improving Criminal Justice Response Grant. The purpose for this was to develop a lethality assessment program in response to domestic violence.

Lethality assessments for domestic violence aimed to assess the risk for lethality so robust intervention can take place. Lethality assessments will provide officers with tools to help them

understand the context of domestic violence as a pattern, a series of abusive events instead of isolated calls for service. The first goal in this pilot was to establish a model community in Kansas using best practices in ensuring victim safety and offender accountability and create efforts to reduce domestic violence related homicides through strengthened and revitalized coordinated community responses and multidisciplinary teams. This project would go on as it has to inform future frameworks and toolkits to implement lethality assessments and multidisciplinary teams through other Kansas jurisdictions. Because of this pilot, the KCKPD was given the opportunity to spearhead this initiative, which I've often proudly referred to as my baby. The number of domestic violence related homicides in our city mobilized us and continues to demand that we take action and response. We've had six intimate partner related homicides since 2021. So via this pilot, we created the lethality assessment program that exists right now.

For this project we created a project team comprised of representatives from stakeholder agencies, Kansas City and Wyandotte County Criminal Justice Systems, the local domestic violence program from Friends of Yates as I mentioned, and community-based and culturally specific area partners. We're talking about Catholic Charities, Avenue of Life. I'm thankful and proud of the engagement that took place and brought all of these professionals from different disciplines together to end domestic violence and we want to keep the momentum now that we have everyone at the table. The project team was able to oversee the implementation of this lethality assessment program and created a high-risk team. The purpose of the high-risk team was to review the specific cases forwarded from the lethality assessments and collaborate and share information to mobilize the support of domestic violence victims from each person's area of expertise. Ramat will share some data.

Ramat Abanishe, Lethality Assessment Program Coordinator for the Victim Services Unit, Police Department, said it has been a privilege to be a part of the implementation of the lethality assessment. The lethality assessment first started in March of this year. We started in south patrol because they had the lowest number of domestic violence calls. Then after that, we went to west patrol and east patrol. Since March we have had a total of 280 lethality assessments given by officers. Out of that 280, 100 was high risk, 93 was elevated risk, and then 67 declined. Out of that number, our high-risk team was able to help 34 survivors of domestic violence by creating safety

plans such as shelter, relocation assistance, medical assistance, and other things they needed to be safe.

Ms. Medina said very valuable work, hands on, with the high-risk team. In Victim Services, we already have the victim advocates that dedicate time to reaching out to all of our victims of domestic violence, but this made sure that it wasn't only our domestic violence advocates at the Police Department, but that we had folks from the Order of Protection Office, from Municipal Court, from the DAs Office, from CIT, mental health professionals, Department of Corrections, Probation, Parole, everyone is at the table to review the cases that are forwarded that are high risk. The ICJR project that started this pilot is set to end on September 30th of 2023. We have made great strides in enhancing services to domestic violence victims with our lethality assessment project and the dedicated people that came to the table for it.

To secure a smooth transition after the completion of this pilot, I'm requesting approval to submit an application to the Kansas Governor's Grants Office for the Stop VAWA Grant to fund the period of October, November, and December. I am asking for \$34,304, the federal portion request is \$25,214 because VAWA does require 25% match. What we decided to do was report a portion of two KCKPD Captain salaries as match. These two captains participate in the high-risk team. They participate in the project team and the Coordinated Response. One of them, Captain Yarsulik said she was going to be here today, but she had a family emergency. She's highly involved in the training and implementation of the assessments in our department. The sum of 15% of these Captain salaries more than satisfies that 25% match requirement. Therefore, I'm not asking for any additional funding from the UG other than what already exists.

The VAWA dollars will cover the salary and fringe benefits of our Lethality Assessment Coordinator without VAWA funding unless the UG is willing to absorb the cost, which I'm open to receiving that approval as well if we want to shift gears. This valuable position would cease to exist without additional funding. The Program Coordinator oversees all referrals of high-risk cases identified in the lethality assessment that the officers are completing with victims in the field. They guide, support coordination, management, and utilization of the lethality assessments in the field each time there's a domestic violence call. The Program Coordinator also provides data control and tracking in accordance with grant reporting requirements, and most importantly, they provide support to our responding officers and direct victim services to those who score higher elevated on that lethality scale.

VAWA dollars during this three-month period will also cover office supplies for the coordinator emergency hotel and door lock replacement for victims, as well as other crisis intervention supplies for victims, such as meals, clothing, diapers, new cell phones, transportation. Because the Kansas Governor's Grants Office was who processes the oversight of the ICJR Grant their Head Administrator, Julie Maska, was very involved in each step of this program and deeply cares about this program. So happens that KGGP also holds and manages the VAWA Grant. Because the VAWA fiscal year is actually January through December, the KGGP is making a grant for the period of October through December, so we can apply. Historically in the Unified Government, the Municipal Court and the District Court advocates are who receive the VAWA funding and we apply for VOCA. However, I'm very confident that KGGP will approve our grant application, as I have been receiving direct guidance and support from KGGP for this application. I look forward to coming back before you again later this year, when I'm ready to apply for VAWA for the complete fiscal year. This pilot has been historical for our community and Kansas as a whole, and I'm very proud to be in leadership as our county implements these innovative strategies to address intimate partner violence and put an end to domestic violence related homicides.

Chairman Bynum said just a comment, the Police Department does, I think, an amazing job and we have amazing people working in the Police Department, but people don't understand that that includes people like you who are doing this incredible work. I wish we had a way to share that better with the community, but we appreciate it, and the lethality assessment sounds like a pretty innovative tool. You've reached a third of the high risk that you've identified, if that's what I understood, and if only we could reach more. Would money help us help more? **Ms. Medina** said absolutely.

Chairman Bynum said okay. I mean, I just want you to know how much it's appreciated. Several of us have had opportunity to do things like attend Drug Court graduations and things like that that are sort of outside the norm of our day to day Commission work, but whenever I can go and see these things up close and personal, I'm reminded there are so many people inside this government doing pretty amazing things, and I certainly would include you and your team in that. So thank you very much for that. Any other questions or comments on the item? Is there a motion?

Action: Commissioner Johnson made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Ramirez, to approve.

Chairman Bynum said we have a motion and a second, and before I call roll, I failed to do this on the last item. Is there any person from the public who wishes to speak on the item, either online or in person? **Monica L. Sparks, Deputy UG Clerk**, said we have no hands raised online. We received no comments in the Clerk's Office. **Chairman Bynum** said thank you very much, roll call.

Roll Call was taken and there were six “Ayes,” Groneman, Kane, Markley, Johnson, Ramirez, Bynum.

Item No. 3 – 212652...REPORT: PARKS AN RECREATION QUARTERLY UPDATE

Synopsis: The Parks and Recreation team will provide a quarterly update on new initiatives, programs, and challenges, submitted by Angel Ferrara, Director of Parks and Recreation.

Angel Ferrara, Director of Parks and Recreation, said we are excited to share our quarterly report with you. We've really enjoyed being able to come before the Commission standing committee just more regularly for our updates and also any feedback. I will pass it off to Shaya Lockett, our Recreation Division Manager, who will cover updates in Recreation.

Shaya Lockett, Recreation Division Manager, said we're going to start with a few highlights from the past several months since we last came to do our quarterly update. It has been a very busy season, a very busy summer for our staff, but we've enjoyed every moment of it.

Recreation Division



This page just highlights some of the activities we've had, both in our parks and in our facilities. We were able to host two separate clinics, one for basketball at Joe Amayo Community Center and a volleyball clinic at Eisenhower Community Center. We also had our youth sports as well as adult sports, particularly softball, and then we had adult soccer as well over the last quarter. We also opened the pool under the contract with the management agreement with Midwest Pool for the second year and they were able to obtain the lifeguards necessary for us to operate successfully through this season. We brought back our second year for our GEHA, YMCA, and Hunt Family Foundation partnership, the Joe Delaney Learn to Swim program, which allowed 168 youth in our community to come to Parkwood Pool and obtain swim lessons at no cost. They were enrolled in summer program at Kansas City, Kansas Public Schools and they provided the transportation to them to the pool, so it was a great partnership with other community partners.

We also were able to hold several special events throughout the community in our parks. Speaking of the pool, we had two Sheriff's Days at the pool in which the Sheriff's Department covered admission for the first 200 participants who came to the pool that day, as well as provided food and drinks and other Public Safety Departments attended as well to interact with our community. We also hosted a Kids to Park Day, which is a national day where we celebrate encouraging kids to go out to the park, to play outdoors, to get off the screens and be active. We saw a great turnout at that with over 150 people coming to that event. We had our Movies in the Parks and Christmas in July, which continue to be staples for us as well.

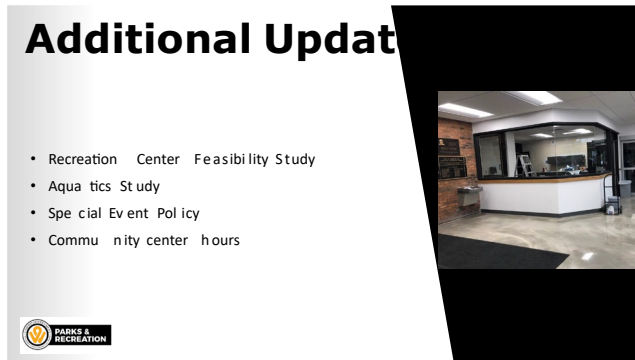


Summer Camp

- Rec Division has worked closely with UG Health Dept. & KDHE to meet State Child Care Licensing Regulations
- KDHE State Regulated programs are designed to protect & preserve the public's health, safety & well-being
- Two State Licensed Summer Camp Sites
 - Beatrice Lee Community Center
 - Eisenhower Community Center

We really wanted to highlight our summer camp program. As you know, over the past several years, our department has worked diligently to receive state licensing in our community centers in order for us to continue to offer summer camp programs to our community. This year, we were able to have two state license camp sites, Beatrice Lee Community Center and Eisenhower Community Center. Those programs, by having the state license, we were also able to apply for grant funding that helped us be able to add enrichment to our program. All of the participants were able to receive weekly performing arts training where there were dance and theater classes as a part of summer camp. They also were able to go to different events, Monarchs games, Kaleidoscope, and Bonner Aquatics Facility.

Ms. Ferrara said I just want to add a little bit to that too. As the Commission knows, we've been working very hard over the last few years to get several things in order with our facilities as it relates to code footprints, to be able to be state licensed we've had to put that work in. So that has been an investment by the Unified Government and we've been doing that work behind the scenes to make this possible. We're still working on a few more centers, but this is monumental to be able to say we have these quality programs that meet state license so we know our kiddos and the community are in good hands. With that being said too, Shaya mentioned that because we are state licensed we are eligible for grant funding, which we've now started to leverage to be able to improve our programs.



Ms. Lockett said then there's a few other updates we wanted to make sure we brought back with this quarterly update. Our Recreation Center Feasibility Study is something that we've been working on for the past year as a part of the Infrastructure Action Subcommittee. We do have the final report for that and it is currently under internal review. We will come forward with presentations at a later date. We've also talked about the aquatic study in which we are taking a proactive approach to determine what the future of aquatics looks like in our community and the first phase of that is the aquatic study at Parkwood Pool. We have received a draft report of that, but we anticipate receiving the final report after staff has had an opportunity to review it in the next 30 days.

Then, just an update to our Special Event Policy. This year, we've come before Park Board as well as standing committee with updates and to receive feedback on our Special Event Policy. That policy has been approved and we now have that updated information online, as well as an online open forums application for the community to utilize as well.

The final thing we would like to discuss is community center hours as it relates to Recreation. The first thing I know that there have been rumors and we've received several calls about community centers closing. I just want to say that we are not closing any community centers at all. That has never been the intent of our department. We are experiencing staff and challenges. We currently have five FTE employees to cover six centers. We are working very diligently with Human Resources and our Administration to address those staffing challenges. We have not disrupted programming. Our supervisors have stepped in to cover to make sure that current programming is being covered, which means extended days for a lot of our supervisors, myself and Angel included, have been at community centers to make sure that we have the centers open for existing programs, but we are exploring alternative center hours to address two of our biggest challenges, which include safety and then to be able to move our staff to a five day work week.

The staff that work in our Community Center currently work six day work weeks and they have been working six day work weeks for as long as we can remember. As we've gone through recruitment and trying to recruit for the position, that is some of the feedback that we have received from those applicants is they are not interested in six day work weeks, but we are still actively recruiting and working with Administration and Human Resources to address these issues.

Ms. Ferrara said now we'll provide a few updates on the Park Division. It's also been an equally busy time of year and season for the Parks Division, so we've had a number of park improvements taking place. We've done, I think, four playground replacements, which we'll walk through over the next few slides, just highlighting those.



Two projects on this slide, you'll see is the new handicapped dock at Wyandotte County Lake. This is just providing a lot safer experience and more accessible experience for our community and our user group. Then also here on this slide, you'll see a new fuel tank which was also installed at the Marina. This has allowed us to meet state regulations and we worked with the Fire Department as well on that project.

Project Highlights

- City Park 18-hole Disc Golf Course
- Playground Projects
 - Hope Park
 - Westlight
 - WYCO Lake Main



Just touching on a few project highlights that we've had over the summer, we installed an 18-hole disc golf course at City Park. You might have been invited and were out at the ribbon cutting, but this project was made possible through CDBG dollars in the amount of a \$150,000 investment. We also worked really closely with Dynamic Disc and Kansas City Disc Golf Club, who put in over 500 hours of volunteer time towards this project and also additional dollars, probably in the tune of \$15-20,000 to make this amenity happen. Disc golfers are kind of like pickleballers, they are very active and they're an awesome group of people and they're always willing to help. So there's actually an app called UDisc, it's very cool. It tracks basically every disc golf course across the United States and I think maybe even globally.

I just want to run off some numbers for City Park's disc golf course on June 4th specifically, 102 rounds were played at the City Park disc golf course. A few more statistics, 54 players came from 30 plus miles away, 31 players came from 150 plus miles away, 21 players came from 300 plus miles away. Then we've had players from 17 plus states log in that they have visited and played this course. So this is a very popular amenity and my opinion, I think you can ask staff, is it's really brought some positive traffic into the park and into this area specifically. If you haven't been out, get out, check it out. Pretty awesome course.

We've had a number of playground projects happen this summer, more than we normally have, but we're excited. That means we're being able to address some of our deferred maintenance as it relates to our playgrounds. Earlier this summer, we kicked off Parks and Rec Month with the ribbon cutting at Hope Park. This was a new playground. Also, with this project we've resurfaced the basketball court and added new goals. This project was made possible through the Wyandotte

County Park Foundation. They donated 80% of the total project cost to make this playground happen. Also, over the summer we replaced Westheight playground and also Wyandotte County Lake main playground. So those are just a few project highlights.



Upcoming Projects

- Kaboom Build @ Parkwood, August 17th
- Clifton Park splash pad
- Kaw Point Park ramp repair
- Pickleball courts at WYCO Lake
- Rock wall at WYCO Lake

I'll also talk about some upcoming projects we have. We just had the KABOOM Build at Parkwood. I think we saw some of you there and got some mementos of support. This, again, is a really important partnership that we have with KABOOM. I believe this is the fourth project that we've done with KABOOM. Over the three days that this community build took place, we had 200 volunteers. Our Volunteer Coordinator also works on gathering donations. She was able to get about \$2,000 worth of donations in food to support the volunteers with food, drink, beverages, snacks over these three days. Our local community funder on this project was Carmax. They also partnered with us on Bill Clem and then also our local community partner was Vibrant Health. Over the three days, if you were there, actually, KABOOM said that was the fastest playground ever been put in place and it was under six hours, five and a half hours. It's really an amazing experience and it allows us to really work with the community. We did a number of community engagements on, what do they want to see, what kind of equipment do they want? It's just a really unique way to go about replacing a playground. Also, it doesn't hurt that about 90% of the cost is covered through the grant.

Also upcoming, we have the Clifton Park Splash Pad. Many of you might remember this project. It has been some time in the making. We did have to navigate some conversations to make sure we had the right vendors that met the requirements for the project because this project is

funded through CDBG dollars, it's really important that we follow guidelines as it relates to those stipulations. We are in motion on the project. We'll be working with ASCO on this. They actually broke ground last week. While we know splash pads last day is this Monday, we'll be working on this project over the next two months and we will be very excited to open this up and hit the ground running in spring of 2024.

Next on the list, another large project we have coming up is we have the repair to the ramp at Kaw Point Park. That will be taking place over the next six to eight weeks. We also have the pickleball courts at Wyandotte County Lake. We did have to take a step back on this project over the summer and just truly evaluate our approach. After doing so, we realized we need to make some adjustments and we still had time to do so. So we will be working with McConnell and Associates on this project. They are known in the metro area for being one of the top contractors for sport courts. When this project is all said and done, there will be four state of the art pickleball courts at Wyandotte County Lake. Also, with this being the first true pickleball courts that our department is introducing to our inventory, it's really important that we got this right. We want to make sure that we're giving our community the best product and we're going to be very excited to see this project through here at the end of the year. We are meeting out on site with them actually this Friday and putting together the construction timeline. We are hopeful that this project will get done this year. Pickleball players will play almost anywhere in any weather. They are always looking for spaces to play. We do know the community is anxious about this one, but I promise they will not be disappointed when it's finished, it's going to be an awesome project.

Then lastly, I want to update on the rock wall at Wyandotte County Lake. We are working with another consultant just to get a second opinion. So we are out there having some conversations and most likely needing to do some geo-tech work on this project, just to have an understanding of the soil and maybe the rock foundation of this area. We want to make sure that we are well informed with this project so that our repair is not just to fix this, the picture that you see up here, but that we are really addressing the big picture with this wall so that our investment will be long lasting and sustainable. We're going to continue to navigate those conversations, but I was actually out there last week and looking with a contractor myself and they were pointing out some areas behind the wall where the land and the ground is bulging and so that is just something that we need to make sure that we are aware of as we move forward and determine what the best approach to

repair this wall is. So, still gathering information and we'll be keeping the Commission updated along the way.



Challenges

Center Coverage

Staffing six centers
opened six days/week
with limited staff

Deferred Maintenance

Keeping up with the
Department's aging
infrastructure

Vandalism

Ongoing reports of
vandalism, damage,
and theft

I just want to touch on some challenges that our department experiences. We have a lot of great things going on, but of course like every other department we have our fair set of challenges. Shaya mentioned a little bit, the community center coverage, so we are working proactively with Human Resources and County Administration to develop some solutions to implement some of those. You know, really trying to see what we can do to address the six day work week, bring it down to a five day work week. Then also, something that we've noticed too, is we've had these conversations in infrastructure subcommittee and spoke openly a little bit just in front of the Commission, about the challenges with staffing at the rec centers and usually it's only one Recreation Specialist staffed at the center. The second issue on that is safety, so we are really trying to as we move forward towards a more sustainable staffing structure, ensure that we are setting new standards and having two people at the center so that we're also meeting some of those safety issues that our staff is bringing to us. We'll be working really closely and making updates along the way. No decisions have been made on what that will look like because we're still working through how to achieve that. Staffing is hard. I know Shaya has gone through a number of interviews for Rec Specialists. We did identify this issue last year in '22 and we were very grateful to go through the budget process and get four additional FTEs. So now we're just working on a better strategy to recruit and retain those staff. I wish I could solve it overnight, but I can't, but I can tell you we are working on it.

Our second challenge is deferred maintenance. Keeping up with the department's aging infrastructure is just an ongoing challenge. You might have seen already in the budget that we did request some funding for an asset tracking software system, specifically as it relates to Parks and Recreation. I do believe that being able to obtain and having the opportunity to explore some different software that can really meet our department's needs will allow us to better track our assets so that we can bring more real time information to the Commission and make more informed decisions as it relates to our deferred maintenance and also our priorities. We are working towards that, looking forward to, hopefully, having the opportunity to move forward with that.

Then the last challenge on here is vandalism. This is just ongoing in our parks. We do receive daily reports of vandalism, damage, and sometimes the occasional theft. So just want to be transparent as some of those issues—challenges that we have in the department.

Lastly, I know it's August, but we've been really busy this summer and if you followed us or on Facebook or the UG you probably saw that we were celebrating Parks and Rec Month in July. We've really taken an intentional approach as the department to really celebrate that, not just with the community in July, but also with our staff. I've got a quick video, I promise it's not an hour long, but I do want to show it because I really think it's a good display of the talented staff that we have and all of their hard work, dedication, and passion that they're doing every day.



Video played.

<https://www.youtube.com/live/oG0AcSvVwHA?si=WUAYVUFe6K8k9eqD&t=2499>

Ms. Ferrara said you might have saw that video, but I just wanted to take a chance to show it here tonight and really recognize our staff because it takes everyone and they're the ones out there doing the hard work. With that, we'll take any questions.

Commissioner Kane said could you go back to the upcoming projects, please? And why we're going back there, my wife does ceramics and they do walk those ladies in and out. She doesn't even talk to me on Wednesday nights till she gets home because she likes it that much. I wish she did it more, but I'm missing something here. On upcoming projects, Angel, you know what that would be? **Ms. Ferrara** said I believe it would be your park out west.

Commissioner Kane said what I'd like you to do from here on out when you show upcoming projects, I want you to put that there and then put a blank next to it because we haven't done anything, but I believe we own some property that we could do this and I'm tired of talking about it. It's a need. Like he said, people in the community want to go, well, if you live out west, you want to go to a close park and we don't have one. I don't know why we don't have one and I'm going to bark on this until the day I'm done being a commissioner because we pay a boatload of taxes. We don't have a spray park, we don't have nothing. It's sad that you can't stay in your community because they all head south. They got stuff over there we don't have. Like the one lady says, I pay enough money to have a pool, let alone a water park, some sort of spray park. I think we should put that on the list until at least I'm not a commissioner anymore or until we got a park out west. I don't know why we've sat on this this long and I'm starting to get a little pissy about it.

Chairman Bynum said Angel, last week at the budget workshop, Piper Park came up and Commissioner Kane and I were saying that it's our understanding that several years ago there was money set aside for the Piper Park, and we asked so, you know, because you need to be invited into the meeting that we hope to have with the Administrator, so that we can kind of all get on the same page and get something moving. Because, again, we think there's money that's been held and then we're hoping to keep your funding stable. It might be just the time to get going. I don't want to interrupt you or keep you from what you might know about it, but I'm just telling you, this is the conversation we had last Thursday night in the budget session.

Commissioner Kane said the frustrating part, I'm not mad at you. I don't want you to think I'm mad at you. We have all these parks all around the community. It costs a huge amount of money to run those parks. All I'm asking for is a small portion.

Ms. Ferrara said yes and thank you for that, Commissioner. I appreciate both those remarks and to confirm, yes, \$250,000 was allocated. We still have it in our budget item for Hutton Park or park out west, and so I'll be looking forward to follow up and being a part of those conversations.

Chairman Bynum said okay great, so we will do our part to sort of move that along if you will. The Administrator, I'm pretty sure took note, but we'll just remind him that that was part of the discussion we had held last week because, again, he's new and he doesn't have the history of the back and forth and the things that we've talked about in the many years we've talked about it. Let's just get the meeting scheduled, we'll all get on the same page, and we'll make something happen.

Commissioner Ramirez said first off, I want to commend you on getting two centers licensed. I know what that's like. Being over in Johnson County and being a director of after school program of my site location, it was my job to maintain licensing and everything and go through the checks, yearly, quarterly, however many checks we did. I know what it's like, so I commend you for the work and continuing to work and try to get the remainder of our centers licensed. It's really important, as you said. Now that we're licensed we're able to apply for those types of grants that will help and it's just overall important just to have licensed programs, licensed community centers so that parents and community members know that when they take their child to these programs, into these centers, that they know it's going to be a healthy, safe, and the centers and programs are following state regulations. I commend you for that. That's not easy work, it's not. It has taken us years to get here just so that we could get our community centers up to speed, up to par with what the state requires. Just overall, thank you, as always, for what Parks and Rec does.

I have a special place for Parks and Rec in my heart. I miss my job. I, hopefully, would like to go back, but it's—thank you. You can see in the video and you can see in staff of how much they love the department. They love the work that they do and it shows the community loves you guys too. Yes, we have challenges. It doesn't matter how much money a department brings in. Over in JOCO at JC Heritage we had the same issue with staffing with our after-school programs. It was always—it was hard to find staff. I always say you have to be a special type of person to be able to deal with children and youth. Not everybody has the ability to be able to make the connections and make those relationships with the youth. But every staff member I've seen in the

community centers, everybody, they have that spark, they have that love for the youth and recreation. So thank you, thank you, thank you. You will always have a Parks and Rec advocate as long as I'm here, so thank you.

Chairman Bynum said a couple of things, to make sure you know, our next thing is not until 7:00 p.m., so we could sit here and talk to you for another hour, just so you know.

When you said five full time employees for six centers, these are the places I wrote down, and one's wrong, so you'll have to correct me, because I wrote down Beatrice Lee, Amayo, Eisenhower, Armourdale, Parkwood, Kensington, Bethany, so which one of those is not a community center? **Ms. Ferrara** said we do not staff Parkwood as a community center. We do partner with the EOF, who operates their services out of there.

Chairman Bynum said because I've been to neighborhood group meetings in there, but it's not staffed as a community center. **Ms. Ferrara** said correct. **Chairman Bynum** said if we had enough people it could be though? Because it's a beautiful location.

So tell me, the feasibility study and the aquatics study. When do you think—first of all, I'm hoping that those are going to come to this committee for a report out when they are complete. When do you think we might see them?

Ms. Ferrara said yeah, so I'll take that. The Recreation Center Feasibility Study is completed, so we are working just to get our County Administrator up to speed on that and just doing an internal review. Then we will be reporting out on that, I would imagine, probably over the fall. Then as far as the aquatics study, we are working with Water's Edge right now on the final draft review. We are hopeful that we can bring that information also before standing committee, hopefully in September, maybe October. I know we need to review that information as well internally and then we'll share with the Park Board from there.

Chairman Bynum said just a step back on both of them. What was the impetus? Was it as a result of the work of Commissioner Ramirez's subcommittee or were they sort of in swing prior to that? **Ms. Ferrara** said I would say that it's definitely a result of the Infrastructure Subcommittee. We identified that we needed to take a look at all facilities and we were working with Building and Logistics as part of that working group. They were also conducting their studies. So we also as a committee decided to take a look at recreation and the facilities. The recreation center feasibility really does focus on programmable space and what that looks like and also our

current staffing model and those types of things. Then the aquatics study, we also discussed that a little bit in the Infrastructure Subcommittee. Parkwood was never evaluated in the master plan. We don't really have—I mean, I couldn't find any data on it, so it was long overdue just to take a hard look at the infrastructure.

Chairman Bynum said so it's possible. I mean, I'm just kind of looking forward to what those studies are going to show us and how it might impact the work we do next year. **Ms. Ferrara** said yes. **Chairman Bynum** said and the work you do.

Commissioner Ramirez said that's what I said last Thursday when we were doing our budget workshop and whatnot. I said, you know, we have the feasibility study, we have the aquatic study. We have a lot of information and data that's going to be coming to us soon, that is going to be able to—not only us as the governing body, but staff, be able to have a clear picture, more clear pathway, path forward, of how we can do—I don't want to say it in this way, but do better. You know, do better for our community. Be able to provide better programming, better services for them, because, you know, Parks and Rec is something that they enjoy and love. I know there's a lot of complaints that come. I know I get some on my end of community center hours and the workers not being there. So, just to the community, be patient. We have information, we have data that's coming to us, that's going to help us, as you said, make more informed decisions and be more strategic in how we plan out our Parks and Recreation Department, programming, infrastructure, and just in general. So, I look forward to it and I'm excited. **Ms. Ferrara** said we're excited. There's some good information there that we're excited to share, so thank you.

Chairman Bynum said anything else? Thank you very much for the work you do, for your staff and for the presentation and, of course, we welcome you anytime you want to come back and tell us something, we will be glad to hear that information. Alright, anything else to come before the committee? Mr. Groneman, as always, thank you very much, appreciate your loyalty here.

Action: For information only.

Adjourn

Chairman Bynum said that concludes our meeting, and I would accept a motion to adjourn.

Action: **Commissioner Ramirez made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Johnson, to adjourn.** Roll Call was taken and there were six “Ayes,” Groneman, Kane, Markley, Johnson, Ramirez, Bynum.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:53 p.m.

RM