

STATE OF KANSAS)
WYANDOTTE COUNTY)) SS
CITY OF KANSAS CITY, KS)

SPECIAL MEETING, THURSDAY, MARCH 28, 2024

The Unified Government Commission of Wyandotte County/Kansas City, Kansas, met in Special Meeting, Thursday, March 28, 2024, with nine members present: Bynum, Commissioner At-Large First District; Townsend, Commissioner First District; Burns, Commissioner Second District; Hill, Commissioner Fourth District; Kane, Commissioner Fifth District; Lopez, Commissioner Sixth District; Stites, Commissioner Seventh District; Davis, Commissioner Eighth District; and Burroughs, Commissioner At-Large Second District and Mayor Pro Tem; presiding. Ramirez, Commissioner Third District; and Garner, Mayor/CEO; were absent. The following officials were also in attendance: David Johnston, County Administrator; Bridgette Cobbins, Assistant County Administrator; Angela Lawson, Interim Chief Counsel; Meaghan Shultz, Municipal Court Administrative Judge; Dominic Geniuk, Municipal Court Administrator; and Monica Sparks, Interim Unified Government Clerk.

Mayor Pro Tem Burroughs said before I call the meeting to order I want to announce that we do have individuals attending remotely as well as on-site. All participants joining by phone, should please mute your phones when not speaking to avoid background noise. During the meeting, make sure you announce yourself by name and title every time you speak so the public that is participating knows exactly who is speaking. This is critical given the number of remote participants and is also current guidance from the Kansas Attorney General's Office. I would also like to remind, especially here on the 5th floor, that you please be sure to speak loudly and clearly into the microphone to ensure that your comments are being captured by the Clerk for an accurate record of the meeting.

Mayor Pro Tem Burroughs called the meeting to order at 5:45 p.m.

ROLL CALL: Hill, Kane, Lopez, Stites, Davis, Bynum, Townsend, Burns, Burroughs.

NOTICE OF SPECIAL MEETING of the Unified Government of Wyandotte County/Kansas City, Kansas, to be conducted in a hybrid format on Thursday, March 28, 2024, at 5:45 p.m. for

an executive session regarding litigation followed by the Municipal Court State of the Court presentation. The executive session will be conducted in the fifth-floor conference room of the Municipal Office Building and the State of Court presentation will be conducted in the Commission Chambers of the Municipal Office Building.

CONSENT TO MEETING of the governing body of Wyandotte County/Kansas City, Kansas, accepting service of the foregoing notice, waiving all and any irregularities in such service and in such notice, and consent and agree that we, the governing body, shall meet at the time and place therein specified and for the purpose therein stated.

Mayor Pro Tem Burroughs said at this time the Commission will go into Executive Session for discussion regarding Litigation.

Commissioner Bynum made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Townsend, to go into Executive Session until 6:00 p.m. in the 5th floor conference room to consult with our attorneys and to discuss confidential matters related to pending claims and litigation, as permitted under the Kansas Open Meetings Act; and that David Johnston, County Administrator, Angela Lawson, Acting Chief Counsel, Joni Cole and Ross Stewart, both Senior Counsel, and David Cooper, Outside Counsel; be present to participate in the discussion and that we reconvene in open session at 6:00 p.m. here in the 5th floor conference room. Roll call was taken and there were eight “Ayes,” Hill, Kane, Lopez, Stites, Davis, Bynum, Townsend, Burns.

Present for the Executive Session: Bynum, Commissioner At-Large First District; Townsend, Commissioner First District; Burns, Commissioner Second District; Hill, Commissioner Fourth District; Kane, Commissioner Fifth District; Lopez, Commission Sixth District; Stites, Commissioner Seventh District; Davis, Commissioner Eighth District; and Burroughs, Mayor Pro Tem presiding. **Staff Present:** David Johnston, County Administrator; Angela Lawson, Acting Chief Counsel; Joni Cole, Senior Counsel; Ross Stewart, Senior Counsel. **Also Present:** David Cooper, Outside Counsel.

Mayor Pro Tem Burroughs reconvened back into Special Meeting at 6:00 p.m.

Commissioner Bynum made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Hill, to extend the Executive Session until 6:15 p.m. Roll call was taken and there were eight “Ayes,” Hill, Kane, Lopez, Stites, Davis, Bynum, Townsend, Burns.

Mayor Pro Tem Burroughs reconvened back into Special Meeting at 6:15 p.m. in the Commission Chambers for the State of Court presentation.

Mayor Pro Tem Burroughs said before we get started I want to thank Judge Shultz for her patience with us this evening. We are no longer in Executive Session. We are now back in Special Session and tonight we will hear the State of the Court presentation from our Municipal Court. I will ask at this time if County Administrator Johnston has any opening remarks.

David Johnston, County Administrator, said just a quick introduction. We were approached by our Judge of Municipal Court who would like to give us an annual report and I know that’s something that you value as information of what’s going on within the UG and so we welcome the Judge to our Chambers.



Meaghan Shultz, Administrative Judge, said I’m going to have our Court Administrator handle the bulk of the presentation. I touch those things and things go haywire, so I try not to touch them, but I did want to give a few opening remarks. We appreciate that you’re taking the time to listen

to us to hear about what's been going on in our court. We have engaged in some programs that I feel are extremely exciting and helpful for our citizens and the people that we serve in the court and I want us to share that with you.

Some of the work that we have been doing had been funded by ARPA and there will be changes coming to them because, obviously, we don't have that same source of funding, but especially with our Suspended License Intervention Program, the fantastic news is we are still going to be able to work with Kansas Legal Services on a—it will be a more limited basis, but we will still be able to make progress in that area. It is extremely important, in my mind, for us to get people out of the issue of being suspended with their license. People that have a valid license have much better outcomes overall. It helps their financial situation so it improves their economic situation because they can get better jobs which leads to better health care and it helps bring in, honestly, revenue for our entire community. So, I'm glad that we're going to be able to continue some of that work even though it will be in a different realm and I know that Mr. Geniuk and I are open to trying to find other ways to expand that program, again whether it's through some sort of a grant. I know Judge Wittman has been kind of trying to look into that for us and I'm hoping that we'll be able to give you some positive news regarding that.

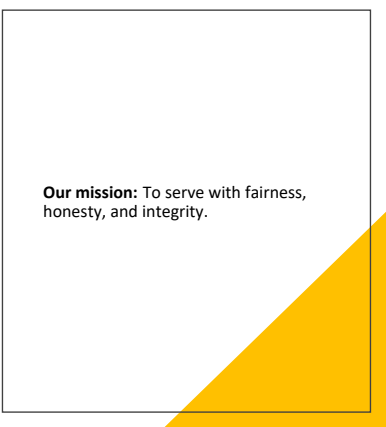
A couple of the other highlights that I think are very important to note, I was very happy and excited to have the Legal Department work with us on changing our court cost structure. We still have to charge, of course, the mandatory State fees, but eliminating that \$30 court cost I think has gone a long way to improving our interactions with the public and it has gone a long way in getting people out of our court, through our court, and not having to come back, which is also fantastic for them.

The other thing that I find really exciting that we're starting through that CCFFJ Grant that we had we are bringing some of these classes and programs that we require people to participate in as a part of probation in-house, which reduces the cost to them because it will be offered at no cost. What that means is, if somebody fails at probation, it's not going to be because they are unable to afford those classes. Now, if somebody chooses not to participate, in my opinion, that's a different situation, but I hate having to face revocation solely because you're economically unable to be successful on our probation. In fact, when motions to revoke are filed in our court, if it's just filed for non-payment of a fine, I am very reluctant to actually revoke people unless I know there is like a willful intent not to pay.

With having said all that, I'm going to turn over the bulk of the presentation to Mr. Geniuk. Thank you very much for having us. I really appreciate it and I would love to answer any questions you have at the end.

Dominic Geniuk, Court Administrator, said I just want to echo what the Judge said. We appreciate you taking the time and having us present to the Commission this evening. We prepared a slideshow presentation. I gave you a handout as well. The handout is a little more detailed. I didn't want to regurgitate and put every single word on the PowerPoint presentation nor did I want to read it to you. Just to preface this by reminding everybody of our Mission in the Municipal Court, which is to serve with fairness, honesty and integrity.

We like to remind people that it's through the Municipal Court that most citizens come into contact with the judicial system either as a defendant, a victim, or a witness. The Municipal Court is a rare opportunity. My background is in Corrections. I spent 20 years working for the Kansas Department of Corrections and I can remember many, many conversations with individuals that centered around gosh, you know, if we had only been able to intervene sooner, if we had only known this person prior to the level of trouble or the poor decision-making that they got into, we could have maybe made a difference and I very much see Municipal Court as an opportunity to do exactly that, be more impactful in people's lives before things go sideways and get out of hand.

The Municipal Court is considered a court of limited jurisdiction, having responsibility for all adult misdemeanors which occur in the City of Kansas City, Kansas, with a few exceptions. There are no jury trials in Municipal Court.	The Municipal Court has a Probation Division, which is managed directly by the Municipal Court. The Municipal Court requires regular/semi-regular (and occasional) interpretation for a wide range of languages, to include but not limited to Spanish, Swahili, Burmese, Nepali, Kirundi, Chin, Hmong, Karen, Kinyarwanda, Hakha Chin, Chuukese, Somali, Vietnamese, Mandarin, Kunama, Tigrinya, Dari, Laotian, Romanian, and American Sign Language.	 Our mission: To serve with fairness, honesty, and integrity.
The Municipal Court has (14) separate dockets each week.	The Municipal Court acts on tickets written by multiple agencies.	

The Municipal Court is considered a court of limited jurisdiction. We have responsibility for all adult misdemeanors which occur in the city of Kansas City, Kansas. There are a few exceptions. There are no jury trials in Municipal Court. We have Specialty Dockets in Municipal Court for

both DUI and Domestic Violence cases. We currently have 14 separate dockets each week in Municipal Court. We act on tickets written by KCK Police Department, Sheriff, Railroad Police, KU Med Center Police, Kansas City Code Enforcement Officers, USD 500, the Community College, Kansas City, Kansas Animal Control Officers and Parking Control. Tickets written by the Kansas Highway Patrol are processed over in District Court. That's often something that most people don't realize, but those are done over in District Court level.

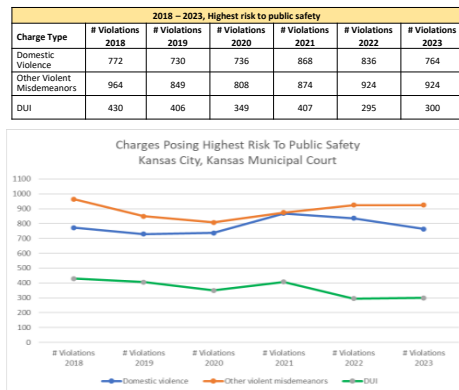
By having Municipal Court handle those adult misdemeanors that burden is removed from District Court allowing the DA's Office to focus on those more serious kinds of felonies, so it really prevents that bottleneck from occurring at the District Court level and having those cases backed up. The Municipal Court requires regular, semi-regular, and occasional interpretation for a very wide range of languages. I put several of them down, Spanish, Swahili, Burmese, Kirundi, Chin, Hmong, Mandarin, Kunama, Tigrinya, Romanian, American Sign Language, Hakha Chin, Chuukese. That's not all of them. That's about 20 just over the last 12 to 18 months, but we've seen that need for interpretation grow exponentially, especially over the last several years.

Case Information & Statistics

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Misdemeanor Total	7,677 - 18%	6,279 - 17%	5,479 - 17%	5,791 - 17%	5,893 - 27%	7,304 - 27%
<i>Of the misd. total:</i>						
Animal	1,114	844	922	951	1,100	2,011
Failure To Appear	1,709	1,466	1,161	1,111	821	711
Codes	308	186	79	100	134	41
Domestic Violence	772	730	736	868	836	764
Traffic Total	23,320 - 55%	21,345 - 56%	20,671 - 62%	19,955 - 60%	13,006 - 61%	15,364 - 57%
<i>Of the traffic total:</i>						
DUI	430	406	349	407	295	300
Parking Total	11,658 - 27%	10,229 - 27%	6,921 - 21%	7,708 - 23%	2,564 - 12%	4,312 - 16%
Total All Citations:	42,655	37,853	33,071	33,454	21,463	26,980

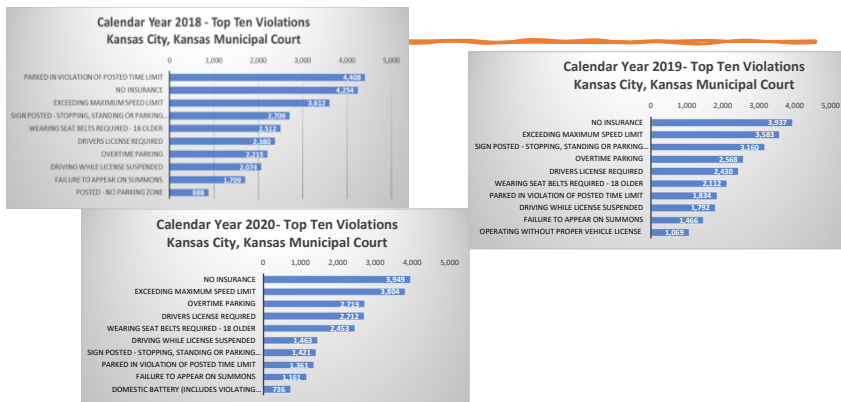
I included on your handout the org chart for Municipal Court. I think it's important for people to understand that Municipal Court as a whole has 23 full-time positions. That's it. That includes the judges, so we operate with a fairly, what I would consider to be a minimal amount of staff members especially when you take into account the Case Information & Statistics. So, historically, approximately 35,000-40,000 cases on average have been filed with Municipal Court each year. Here's some of the previous years. I went back six years dating back to 2018 just to give people an idea of what that looks like. You can see beginning in 2018 the total citations were 42,655,

almost 38,000 in '19, fewer in 2020 which is also when COVID hit, so we saw that reduction. A slight increase in 2021, again still under COVID. Luckily what we seen in 2022 and 2023 is an actual decrease, so 21,463 in '22 and 26,980 in just this last year. We hope that's a trend that continues. We like seeing fewer and fewer citations.



I wanted to highlight the highest risk of public safety kinds of charges that we see in Municipal Court and what that looks like with those same years. Those are domestic violence cases, other violent misdemeanors, so things like battery, battery on LEO, assault, committing a crime with a weapon and DUI. We see those as posing the biggest, most direct threat to public safety. You can see in 2018 where we were. That's represented on the graph below. The domestic is in blue with other violent misdemeanors in orange, DUI in green. We saw a decline from 2018 to 2020 with that slight increase in 2021, down again for DUIs and the other violent misdemeanors—I'm sorry, the domestic violence from down into 2022 leveling off here in 2023. There's a slight increase on other violent misdemeanors from '21 to '22, but it's leveled off again in 2023 just to put that chart in perspective for you what that looks like.

Case Information & Statistics (cont'd)

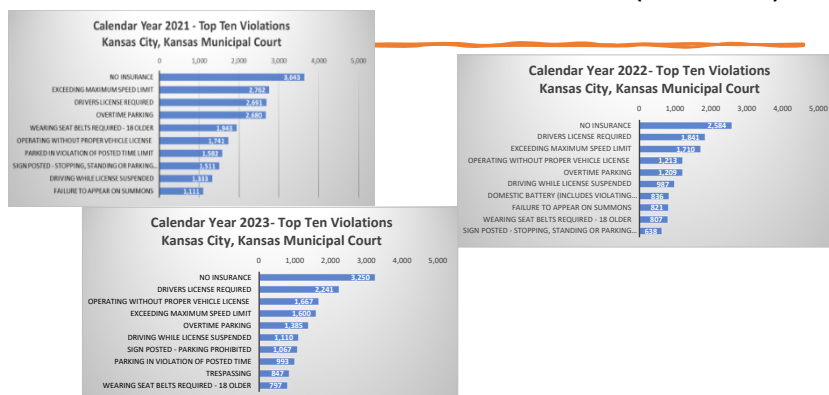


The same six years, the top 10 violations that we see in Municipal Court. You're going to see some similarities with most of those being traffic related.

If you'll give me a minute to go back, on that chart I want to point out if you look at the middle traffic totals are easily just a little over 50% of what we hear in Municipal Court followed by parking related offenses and then those misdemeanor offenses at the top broken down percentage wise.

This reflects what that chart shows with the majority of those being traffic related, those top 10 kinds of violations for each of those years, '18, '19, and '20 and...

Case Information & Statistics (cont'd)



the next three, '21, '22, and '23.

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Total Collected <i>(fines, fees, costs)</i>	\$3,511,781.92	\$3,037,394.18	\$1,816,824.71	\$2,022,039.73	\$1,439,704.51	\$1,605,147.25
Total Remittance to State of Kansas <i>(from total collected)</i>	\$489,853.49	\$508,859.97	\$322,120.54	\$371,109.34	\$251,054.11	\$277,548.82
Final Total Collected	\$3,021,928.43	\$2,528,534.21	\$1,494,704.17	\$1,650,930.39	\$1,188,650.40	\$1,327,598.43

Money Collected

I wanted to give just a quick kind of down and dirty overview on money collected. Municipal Court is unique in that the less money collected is a positive. I know that sounds a little backwards, but when you're bringing less money in because you've had fewer citations, people are being fined less, that's a reflection that those kinds of negative behaviors aren't occurring outside, which reflects a safer community. You can see from 2018 that those total fines collected, the total money collected which includes fines, fees and costs at \$3.5M. We have a remittance to the state of Kansas, so all the money collected a portion of that goes to the State like what the Judge alluded to earlier, which left that final total collected at the bottom in orange. As you can see along with the graphs it reflects that same kind of trend. Well from 2018 to 2023 where you've seen that slowly go down. Again, though, I would suggest that a reduction in money collected is actually a positive for our community.

Unified Government Marijuana Diversion Program

- This program began in January of this year (2024) as an option for defendants who meet the Prosecutor's Office criteria.
- What is required? Defendants are required to watch a video and pay a diversion fee of \$100 to participate. Defendants can watch the video in-person through the Prosecutor's Office, or online. If the defendant watches the video online, they will be required to complete a survey as proof.
- Upon meeting the requirements of diversion, the Prosecutor's Office considers the diversion complete, and the case dismissed. All persons may receive diversion more than once but not within the same 12-month period.
- Since starting the program, we have had (12) diversion completions.
- Without diversion ...
- **1st Offense** – Class B Misdemeanor, 6 months in jail and \$1,000 fine.
- **2nd Offense** – Class A Misdemeanor, 1 year in jail and \$2,500 fine.
- **3rd Offense** – Felony, 10 to 24 months in jail and \$100,000 fine.

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We wanted to highlight some of the things that the Judge was referencing starting with the Marijuana Diversion Program. That program began in January of this year. It was an option for defendants who meet the Prosecutor's Office criteria for that program. Defendants are required to watch a video, pay a diversion fee of \$100 in order to participate. They can watch that video in person through the Prosecutor's Office or online and if the defendant watches that video, they're required to complete a survey as proof that they've done so.

Upon meeting the requirements of diversion, the Prosecutor's Office considers that diversion complete, the case is dismissed and all persons may receive diversion more than once, but not within the same 12-month period. Since starting the program, which again is just this year, they've had 12 diversion completions. What we would like to highlight is, without this program, without diversion, marijuana convictions, what they mean is highlighted below. On your first offense it's a Class B Misdemeanor punishable by up to six months in jail and a \$1,000 fine. Your second offense is a Class A Misdemeanor. It's punishable by one year in jail and a \$2,500 fine. Your third conviction is a Felony in the state of Kansas, punishable by 10-24 months in jail or prison and a \$100,000 fine. Those are serious consequences especially with respect to we're right across the state line from a state where marijuana's legal, so it's a tough situation to be in. The Diversion Program, in my opinion, is a positive way in dealing with those marijuana convictions without negatively impacting somebody's lives substantially. It's a big, big deal and I think sometimes we forget that oh well, you know, just a second conviction, that's not a big deal and so you got caught a third time, but a third time in this state is a Felony.

Suspended License Intervention Program (SLIP)

Over 200,000 Kansans have suspended driver's licenses. The vast majority of those are not for dangerous driving but are instead a manifestation of poverty. Meaning, they have failed to pay a traffic ticket or missed court. Kansas has the 6th highest suspension rate per capita in the nation. 40-50% of people with a suspended license will lose their jobs.

In May of 2022, in partnership with Kansas Legal Services (KLS) and the Health Department, and with the aid of funding provided by ARPA, the Municipal Court introduced this program as a way to benefit those who would otherwise not be able to recover from a cycle of continuing license suspensions by assisting defendants obtain valid licenses. Additionally, the program seeks to reduce the number of jail days served and/or additional lengthy suspensions due to habitual violator status through a supervised diversion program.

The Judge mentioned Suspended License Intervention Program. Again, this is information that was provided to us through Kansas Legal Services. We partnered with them and the Health Department utilizing ARPA funding to get this program started. I think maybe people don't realize that over 200,000 Kansans have suspended driver's licenses. The vast majority of those are not for dangerous driving, instead they're a manifestation of poverty meaning they have failed to pay a traffic ticket or missed court. Kansas has the sixth highest suspension rate per capita in the nation, 40 to 50% of people with a suspended license will lose their job. The reality is this, whether my license is suspended or not, I have to get to work, I have to get to the grocery store, I have to take my children to school, I have to go to the doctor and it's just this vicious cycle of once it's suspended I can't get out of that hole. It just becomes more costly and more costly over and over.

In May of '22, again, in partnership with KLS and Health Department and through that ARPA funding, the Municipal Court introduced the program as a way to benefit those who would otherwise not be able to recover from that cycle of continued license suspension by assisting those defendants obtain valid licenses. Additionally, the program seeks to reduce the number of jail days served and/or additional lengthy suspensions due to habitual violator status through a supervised diversion program.

One thing I didn't include on the slide that KLS shared was a story and I wanted to see if I could find this for you and no I did not. They used an example of a particular individual that had a suspended license for a period of seven years, had lost I think six or seven jobs during that same time period, he owed \$3,000 or \$4,000 by that point in fines and fees and how through this program they were able to eventually work with the Prosecutor's Office and through a Diversion Program to get a portion of that money paid off and eventually obtain a valid license for this individual for the first time in seven years, which I thought was pretty amazing.

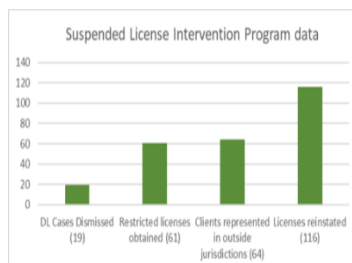
More About The Suspended License Intervention Program (SLIP)

Since beginning the program (May- 2022), through the end of 2023, the SLIP has yielded impressive results.

As a result, we are working with KLS to continue the program at a reduced capacity.

Date from KLS reflects the following*:

- Amount of fines and fees waived for SLIP clients in traffic cases – **\$65,869.**
- An Arizona study from 2017 found that the median annual income loss as a result of driver's license suspension was **\$36,800.**
- Assuming the Arizona study is accurate, with Kansas Legal Services obtaining either restricted driving privileges or full license reinstatements for 177 Wyandotte County residents, then as of December 2023, approximately **\$6,513,600** has been put back into the pockets of Wyandotte County residents who so desperately need it.



More about that Suspended License Intervention Program. Since the beginning of May of '22 through the end of this last year '23, we've had some pretty impressive results. Data from KLS reflects that the amount of fines and fees waved for SLIP clients and traffic cases totaled \$65,869. They pointed out there was an Arizona study from 2017 which found that the median annual income loss as a result of a driver's license suspension was \$36,800. So, assuming the Arizona study is accurate, with Kansas Legal Services obtaining either restricted driving privileges or full license reinstatements for up to this point, 177 Wyandotte County residents, then as of December this last year approximately \$6,513,600 has been put back in the pockets of Wyandotte County residents who so desperately need that money.

Grant – Cities and Counties for Fine & Fee Justice (CCFFJ)

As a participating jurisdiction of the 2022-23 CCFFJ Cohort, we received a \$50,000 grant to help support our fine and fee reform efforts/goals, specifically:

1. The elimination of the \$30 court cost fee, which required no use of grant funds. Working with the Legal Department, Ordinance 23-13 was updated to reflect the elimination of the \$30 court cost fee – this was effective July 20, 2023.
2. Creation of a new position in Municipal Court - the Risk Engagement Assessment Liaison (REAL). Grant funding allowed us to pay for much of this position, at least through the grant period of 1 year (2023). At the end of the grant period, the Unified Government agreed to fully fund the position for at least an additional year (through 2024), and will reassess at the end of 2024 to determine if we will continue the position on a permanent basis.

The Judge spoke about the grant through Cities and Counties for Fine and Fee Justice. We were selected as a recipient of that grant. We joined and we're participating members of that 2022-2023

Cohort. As a result we received a \$50,000 grant to help support our fine and fee reform efforts and goals, specifically two things, the Judge already referenced the elimination of the \$30 court cost fee. The other thing and what we used that money primarily for was the creation of a new position in Municipal Court. The Risk Engagement Assessment Liaison or what we refer to as the REAL, that grant funding allowed us to pay for much of that position at least through the grant period of one year. At the end of the grant period the Unified Government agreed to fully fund the position for at least one additional year through this year 2024 with a reassessment at the end of 2024 to determine if we will continue the position on a permanent basis.

[More About The Grant – Cities and Counties for Fine & Fee Justice \(CCFFJ\)](#)

We set out to have the Risk Engagement Assessment Liaison work with individuals primarily through the facilitation of classes, which can be provided at no cost to the participant. Additionally, the liaison would provide simple assessments when/if needed and assist the participant with navigating those areas specific to their individual needs – e.g. where to obtain a mental health or substance abuse evaluation. Also, the liaison will be working with community corrections on reestablishing a community service program for individuals receiving community service sanctions through Municipal Court. The liaison actively works at building relationships with community providers and partners in an effort to reduce costs to individuals where possible. We want to provide citizens with viable options and resources that will assist them in overcoming the barriers and obstacles that could lead them back into the criminal-legal system.

Alcohol & Drug Education Class

Anger Management Class

Parenting Class

Theft Education Class

The Risk Engagement Assessment Liaison work is important. This is a position that will primarily work through facilitating classes for individuals like what the Judge referenced. Those four classes are Alcohol & Drug Education Class, Anger Management Class, Parenting Class, and Theft Education Class. Individuals who are identified as needing those classes aren't necessarily required to be put on probation. So, the example I will give you is—this is something that's really near and dear to my heart, it means a lot, so the explanation I like to give to people is if we have a defendant who was cited for stealing, most people would look at that individual and say you know the person is a thief and their problem is they need to stop stealing. I would suggest we do a little bit deeper dive on that and look at what were you stealing. Was it somebody who was stealing diapers, baby formula, because they had small children at home that they needed to feed because they couldn't afford to because they don't get any other financial support. They might be a single parent, maybe they don't work because they can't afford daycare or because they don't have the education to obtain that type of job. Maybe transportation is an issue. So, I would suggest that

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the person is not a thief. The person relied on stealing as a way to survive and as a way to care for children that I think any of us with children can relate to.

So, Municipal Court is an opportunity when somebody like that comes before the Judge, it's more than just okay, well, don't steal anymore. It's through these kinds of classes like a Theft Education Class where we can dig a little deeper and figure out what are the barriers, what are the issues that you're facing because rarely is it just I'm a thief.

I worked in the Department of Corrections for 20 years, never not one time, did I ever meet anybody that woke up one day and decided I think I'll go to prison. It doesn't work that way. It usually starts out small when somebody is younger making poor decisions, getting in trouble and ending up in a place like Municipal Court and it snowballs from there. This is a position, these are the kind of classes and as the Judge pointed out, we can offer through Municipal Court at no cost to an individual, so again, trying to remove some of that barrier of the poverty or what you can or can't afford.

In addition to that, this individual, the Risk Engagement Assessment Liaison, will help guide that individual through assessments, so individuals who might need a mental health assessment, substance abuse assessment, treatment is different. We don't provide treatment, so substance abuse treatment, mental health treatment, batterers intervention program; those are programs that we don't contract out, but we send to a contractor. They're dictated who those approved providers are by the state of Kansas. We want the individual—they'll be working with Community Corrections on reestablishing a Community Service Program for individuals receiving community service sanctions through Municipal Court and actively working at building relationships with community providers and partners in an effort to reduce cost to individuals where possible.

We want to provide citizens with viable options and resources that will assist them in overcoming the barriers and obstacles that could lead them back into the criminal legal system. That's how you address those issues. It's more than just write citations and make sure people are serving sanctions for what they did wrong.

New Court Management Software – “Municipal Justice”

After a long, two-year process, the Municipal Court is moving forward with a new court management software system that will greatly improve efficiency, resulting in cost savings and improved customer service. We will spend calendar year 2024 ... into some of 2025 ... transitioning to “Municipal Justice” by Tyler Technologies.

Our current system dates back to 2013, with no upgrades being made since that time. We have seen a sharp decline in the quality and reliability of our current system. Tyler Technologies is an industry leader when it comes to government and other public sector software. In addition to being a SaaS solution, Municipal Justice is a robust court management system that will be integrated with eCitation as well as state reporting systems (KDAR & KDOR), making the Court approximately 90% paperless. Additionally, the system has a check-in component as well as a video court component, which will allow us to potentially expand court services.

- Yearly costs for our current system (IMDS+) is \$78,475 – which is 18% of our current operating budget.
- Yearly costs for the Tyler system (Municipal Justice), after implementation, will be \$222,224.
- www.tylertech.com

A couple of highlights on some transitions that we’re going through. One is a new court management software system. It was a long two-year RFP that we finally were able to decide on and moving forward with a software system, Municipal Justice by Tyler Technologies. We know that this will improve efficiency resulting in cost savings, improve customer service. The current system that we have, IMDS, is from 2013, so going on 11 years now. No upgrades have been done to this system since that time and as a result we’ve seen a sharp decline in the quality and reliability of that system. Tyler Technologies, in case you’re not aware, is an industry leader when it comes to government and other public sector software. It’s a SaaS solution, so on the cyber security side of things it’s a big plus.

Municipal Justice, it’s a robust court management system, it will also be integrated into some other systems. So, for an example, the eCitation system that KCKPD is getting ready to implement is a Tyler product as well. It’ll be integrated into some state systems as well, so our reporting through KDAR and KDOR at the end of the day making the Municipal Court about 90% paperless. We will have to accept some handwritten citations and documentation until such time as those entities upgrade and go to a paperless kind of system like eCitation.

Yearly cost for the current system, IMDS, is \$78,475. I’m going to apologize, the percentage is not correct. The percentage on my third one is and it’s a combination of three. I apologize. It’s what I get for crunching some numbers and doing three things at once at the very end of this. Yearly cost for the Tyler System, our new system, is definitely more at a cost of \$222,224 per year. It’s an increase, but I would suggest an increase that is definitely money well spent, especially as it results in efficiencies and cost savings for the citizens of Wyandotte County.

Interpretation Services – “PropioOne”

Through one of our contract interpretation vendors (Propio), the Municipal Court implemented the use of real time video interpretation for non -English speakers. This system (PropioOne) allows the court to address many cases without requiring the need for a continuance. We also utilize this service via a dual handset phone, at our cashier window. We have an in -person Spanish interpreter at all dockets. This is through our contract with Interpreters, Inc.

- Video interpretation (all languages, except ASL) = \$.73/min.
- Video interpretation for ASL = \$1.59/min.

www.propio-is.com

Interpretation costs fluctuate from year to year. We are budgeted for \$97,600 to cover the costs of interpretation services as well as the costs of pro tem judges.
– this represents 22% of our current operating budget.



Another one of the services that we implemented was through our contract PropioOne. That’s one of our vendors. It’s through them that they provided this equipment. The PropioOne allows the court to address cases without requiring the need for continuance by offering real live on demand video interpretation. Prior to us implementing this, what would have to happen at an arraignment, somebody might show up and English is not their first language. We wouldn’t know that because we never met that individual before. We would obtain or relay as best we could what language do you speak. We would have to continue that case so we could find an interpreter to come back in person to interpret for that individual. This prevents that person from having to come back. It allows often times the judge to resolve whatever it is on that first arraignment without having to do anything else. This has been a huge improvement for Municipal Court services. We have this available not only in the court, but at our cashier window as well. It’s done through a dual handset, so when people show up we can help them without telling them we don’t understand, can you go get somebody who speaks your language or who can interpret for you, so saving people an enormous amount of time and money.



Appointed Defense Counsel (ADC)

A new Appointed Defense Counsel (ADC) team has recently been contracted to provide defense counsel services through Municipal Court. The defense counsel team focuses on providing excellent representation, with an emphasis on efficiency and customer service. They are physically present on the 2nd floor each Thursday and Friday (excluding the 5th week, if one), working out of two offices in room #212. After being appointed counsel in court, the defendant completes a short intake form via their own computer/tablet, phone (QR code provided), or they can utilize one of the laptops set up in a privacy booth. After completing the form, the page will take them to an appointment scheduler where they can make an appointment with their appointed defense counsel. We are very excited to have this team providing services.

- Contracted yearly cost for defense counsel services \$230,000 – which is 52% of our current operating budget.

Appointed Defense Counsel, so we have a new contract with new appointed Defense Counsel. They were recently contracted to provide services through Municipal Court. That team provides excellent representation with an emphasis on efficiency and customer service. They're physically present on the second floor every Thursday and Friday excluding the fifth week of a month if there is one. They work out of two offices in room 212. After being appointed defense counsel in Court the defendant completes a short intake form via their own computer or tablet, phone. There's a QR code provided on a sheet that we give them or they can utilize one of the laptops. You'll see the picture here set up in a booth on the second floor. This allows somebody to leave court if they've been appointed defense counsel, go directly into a booth, complete that intake form, it takes you to a scheduling page, they can schedule an appointment with their defense counsel. Again, preventing people from having to make multiple trips. Staff is there to assist if somebody needs help or they don't understand we can help walk them through that process.

Again, my apologies, the percentage, that percentage is correct, but it's a combination of both defense counsel services, interpretation services as well as the court management software.



Check-In Kiosks (via CQueue)

- The Municipal Court has been using check-in kiosks since July of 2022. The system allows us to see, in real time, who has checked in for court. Additionally, we are able to run reports from the system going back 1 year.

www.cqueue.com

We implemented check-in kiosks at Municipal Court. This allows us—we've been using this since July of '22. It allows us to see in real time who's checked in for court. Additionally, we're able to run reports from the system going back a year, so the Clerk inside the courtroom prior to this would have no way of knowing who exactly has checked in and at what time. People would get upset because I was here before you and yet you were called first and we almost had people get into fist fights out in the hallway because they were upset. This captures it in real time so you are called in the order that you actually arrived and we know who you are, why you're there, if you're a victim, if you're a witness, if you're an attorney, and so it helps out in the court process in that fashion. It also helps that we can run a report a year back so if somebody would dispute and say well I was in court last month. We can go back and say did you check in and yes I did, we can go back and look to verify whether they did or not, so it allows us to track that.

The other thing it does is allows us to track efficiency so it timestamps not only when you check in, but when you're called to the podium, the Clerk up at the bench clicks an accept button and then when you're finished they click a finished button. It captures how much time it took you from when you checked in to when you stepped up to the podium to appear before the judge to when you left the courtroom. We can monitor that time and look at efficiencies on how is court running, do we need to eliminate something, pick something up, do something different in order to get people through the court process in a more timely fashion.

Yondr Pouches – Phone Free Courtrooms

The Municipal Court introduced Yondr pouches on February 29, 2024, due to the ongoing issues we were experiencing with cell phones in the courtrooms. The usage of the Yondr pouch technology is aimed at enhancing the safety of attendees and ensuring a distraction-free environment in Municipal Court. Municipal Court attendees place their devices in soft, lockable pouches before entering the court room and attendees maintain possession of their device. Attendees will be able to unlock their pouch and retrieve their cell phone when leaving the courtroom. Also, if necessary, attendees are able to unlock their pouch at the podium (in front of the Judge) or at the prosecutor's table.

The benefits of utilizing Yondr pouches include:

Privacy and security - Yondr pouches protect the privacy of personal information and conversations that could be captured by electronic devices, ensuring confidentiality in legal matters and protection of witnesses and defendants.

Enhanced focus - by eliminating the temptation to check or use mobile devices during court sessions, Yondr pouches foster an environment where participants can concentrate solely on the proceedings, leading to more productive and efficient hearings.

Respect for decorum - Yondr pouches encourage individuals to remain attentive and respectful, reducing disruptions caused by ringing phones, text message alerts, or the unauthorized capturing of sensitive courtroom information/interactions.

www.veryondr.com



The last slide, our Yondr Pouches. We just implemented this February 29th. We had some ongoing issues we were experiencing with cell phones in the courtroom, so the usage of Yondr Pouch technology is aimed at enhancing the safety of attendees and ensuring a distraction free environment. We place those devices or actually the defendant does, in the pouch, we lock it and they maintain possession of it the entire time. When they leave the courtroom we unlock it for them, they retrieve their phone and they depart for the day. If while in the courtroom they need access to their phone to say for an example show an insurance card, we have unlocking bases both at the podium and at the Prosecutor's table so they have the ability to do that while in court. It provides enhanced privacy and security by eliminating—by protecting privacy of personal information, conversations that could be captured by electronic devices. It's an enhanced—provides an enhanced focus by eliminating the temptation to check or use mobile devices during the actual court session. This way people can concentrate solely on the proceedings leading to a more productive and efficient hearing. It also provides respect for decorum. We encourage individuals to remain attentive and respectful reducing disruption caused by ringing phones, message alerts, the unauthorized capturing of courtroom information or interactions.

In addition to this, and it's not on the slide, while an individual's in the courtroom and because they don't have their phone and they have to pay attention, they pay attention to a large television monitor similar to what's behind me and that was—so Judge Wittman developed PowerPoint slides for every type of docket that we have and so it actually walks somebody through the process, explains what your rights are, explains what to expect; those kinds of things. So, as an individual sitting in court waiting for their turn, they have information to look at which hopefully answers some questions or might spark some questions so when they appear before the

judge they can reference that. That's another enhancement that we made that goes along with the pouches and trying to make sure people focus on the court proceedings.

That ladies and gentlemen is the end of the PowerPoint presentation. I'm happy to answer any questions that you might have. I know the Judge is happy to as well.

Mayor Pro Tem Burroughs said thank you for the presentation. Are there any questions or comments from the committee?

Commissioner Burns said about how many cases in a calendar year are appealed to the District Court? **Mr. Geniuk** said I know this because I just had to provide this information to the Judicial Administration. Last year, 2023, we had 12. **Commissioner Burns** said just 12 appeals and how many really went to trial over there? **Mr. Geniuk** said I don't know right off hand. I'd have to check. **Commissioner Burns** said you don't know what the disposition was on those. **Mr. Geniuk** said I would have to go look for those 12. **Commissioner Burns** said just 12 out of all those cases. **Mr. Geniuk** said correct.

Commissioner Townsend said thank you for the presentation. It just seemed like yesterday although it's probably if this is '24 it's probably a couple of years ago that you were here before us talking about what you would do in your philosophy at the court and I'm just happy to see that this is evidence that you followed through on that. One of the things that was a key theme during that interview process was what was your philosophy about enforcement and balancing that against the individual needs that people have, so I'm glad to see that while it's a focus on addressing whatever the issue was, the focus is also trying to educate and help people not repeat a cycle and become productive and you know not just be a repetitive visitor at the court system. I'm appreciative for you following through on that Judge Wittman and Mr. Geniuk.

Judge Shultz said thank you very much Commissioner Townsend. Honestly, all of this has been possible because of the support of County Administration and the support of you as commissioners when we came to you about making the changes to the ordinance, when we came to you about the Marijuana Diversion Program, we received nothing but support and that has truly made all the difference for us. I really would urge all of you, please come visit us on the second floor. We are

happy to have you come down. I know Commissioner Lopez came down, Commissioner Stites has come down. I would love to have everyone come visit our floor, make contact with us, touch base with us. I know I've met with Commissioner Davis about animal cases. I really feel strongly that the work we're doing is really important and I think a lot of people's first contact with the Unified Government happens on our floor and I know it does because I hear other employees say oh, I saw a line of people come off at your floor and we've tried to make our floor a welcoming environment. One of the things that we do is when people come off the elevator we ask them, hey, how may I help you. Are you coming to court, we can tell you where the court is, which courtroom it is, what's your last name, do you need the probation waiting room, do you need—we have someone there who is making contact with people. I just think it has made such a difference.

The structure of our dockets has changed so much. When I worked here as a Prosecutor it almost looked like a cattle call, okay, everybody get in line. With this check-in system, we don't have to do that. We can call one at a time and we can call people in the order that they checked in and they can feel valued that we have not wasted their time. I'm hoping that the lack of appeals means that Judge Wittman and I are making good decisions. I don't know if that's what that means, but I certainly hope that is what it means.

Commissioner Bynum said thanks for the presentation. It is really appreciated. I just have a question that's probably not a very smart question. In a couple of the slides you referenced the Prosecutor and I just wanted to clarify is that a City Prosecutor? **Judge Shultz** said yes. The Prosecutor is not a part of our office. The Prosecutor is a part of the Legal Department. He's actually here today. I'm sure he would love to answer any of your questions about the Prosecutor's Office. **Commissioner Bynum** said I was trying to make sure I was tracking with the process. **Judge Shultz** said yes, absolutely.

Commissioner Davis said being mindful of time I'll be brief. I never got the presentation. It was amazing, so if you all can send that. I think all of us would just like to have it. No big deal. It's been a very interesting day, but definitely do send that to us or resend it if I'm just not catching it. **Judge Shultz** said I'm so sorry about that. **Commissioner Davis** said it's completely fine. Do not worry about that. **Someone** was inaudible.

Commissioner Davis said the other thing I'll say is I really, really hope and I know there's costs and everything in budget, but the Risk Engagement Assessment Liaison position I really hope we're able to keep that beyond the grant. One of the unfortunate parts about getting a grant is you end up getting the money, it's often for the things that you need and things that you wish that you can just do regularly and include it in your Operating Budget and then you have to make the decision do you keep it or not. So, I really hope we're able to keep it so that you all can just keep going on this foundation. We don't need to go backward, we need to go forward. You all are our—you're one of our front-facing ambassadors. Every time I get in the hallway most likely if it's somebody from the public, they're coming to your floor and I've heard nothing but positive things coming from the second floor at least for the folks that have been speaking to me. That speaks to the work of your office, that speaks to the work of you, Dominic, and with you UG Legal, Mr. Khalil. It really speaks to you all's effort, so thank you. **Judge Shultz** said thank you Commissioner. We really appreciate that.

Mayor Pro Tem Burroughs asked any other comments, questions? Seeing none, thank you. Very well done. There being no further business, do I have a motion and second to adjourn?

Commissioner Lopez made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Burns, to adjourn. Roll call was taken and there were eight "Ayes," Hill, Kane, Lopez, Stites, Davis, Bynum, Townsend, Burns.

**MAYOR PRO TEM BURROUGHS AJOURNED
THE MEETING AT 7:02 p.m.**

Monica L. Sparks
Interim Unified Government Clerk

dt

March 28, 2024