

**ADMINISTRATION AND HUMAN SERVICES
STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Monday, January 22, 2024**

The meeting of the Administration and Human Services Standing Committee was held on Monday, January 22, 2024, at 5:21 p.m. The following members were present: Commissioner Bynum, Chairman; Commissioners Hill, Ramirez, Kane. Commissioner Davis was absent. The following officials were also in attendance: Alan Howze, Assistant County Administrator; SueZanne Bishop, Senior Attorney; Shakeva Christian, Manager in Human Resources; Anna Halworth, HR Analyst; Courtney Sachen, Senior Human Resources Partner; Wesley McKain, Manager in Health Department; Dr. Elisha Caldwell, Health Department Director; Elizabeth Groenweghe, Chief Epidemiologist for Health Department; Monica Sparks, Deputy UG Clerk; and Jessica Gabaree, UG Clerk's Office.

Chairman Bynum said before I call the meeting to order, I want to announce that some committee members, staff, and the public are attending remotely via Zoom as well as on-site. All participants joining by phone should mute their phones when not speaking to avoid background noise. During the meeting, please make sure that you announce yourself by name and title every time you speak so the public that is observing knows who is speaking. When speaking be sure and speak directly into a microphone so all comments are heard, and the record of the meeting is accurate. This is critical given the number of remote participants and is the current guidance from the Kansas Attorney General.

The public is allowed to participate by Zoom or submit comments by email prior to the meeting. Those comments will be included in the record of this meeting. The public may also indicate their intent to provide remote public comments by contacting the Clerk's Office by 5:00 p.m. the Thursday before the meeting. The public also will have an opportunity to provide brief comments either by telephone or via Zoom from the 5th Floor Conference Room of the 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 Clerk, do we have any revisions for our meeting tonight? **Monica L. Sparks, Deputy UG Clerk**, said yes, we do have one revision to the meeting, item number three which was the resolution for the Automatic Mutual Aid Agreement was moved to the Public Works Committee, so it was removed from this one. **Chairman Bynum** said okay, thanks very much. First order of business tonight is approval of minutes from December, and I believe that during the last meeting we did cover that we can approve minutes even for those of us who may not have been present for that meeting, is that correct? **SueZanne Bishop, Senior Attorney**, said yes Commissioner, that is correct.

Approval of standing committee minutes from December 12, 2022. **On motion of Commissioner Ramirez, seconded by Commissioner Kane, the minutes were approved.** Roll call was taken and there were four “Ayes,” Hill, Ramirez, Kane, Bynum.

COMMITTEE AGENDA

Item No. 1 – 212936...UPDATE: HUMAN RESOURCES GUIDE

Synopsis: Approval of Human Resources Guide policy as follows: Section 4.1 Health Care Benefits, submitted by Shakeva Christian, Manager and Renee Ramirez, Director Human Resources.

Chairman Bynum said our first item out of two is approval of the Human Resources Guide update and I will recognize Shakeva Christian, Manager in Human Resources. It looks like you have some staff there with you to make the presentation.

Shakeva Christian, Manager in Human Resources, said yes, I do Commissioner. I have with me staff members in Human Resources, Anna Halworth who is our Benefits Administrator, and Courtney Sachen, our Senior HR Partner. We have one small change regarding our retiree health insurance benefits and the health insurance policy as a whole, so staff will go ahead and make those comments.

Anna Halworth, Benefits Administrator, said and the first revision that we’re going to discuss is that due to Workday in 2022, we have now updated our policy to reflect the Workday

advancements having to do with Human Resources proposing that our current Health Care Benefits Policy that allows organization to streamline the overall benefits process for our active and retired employees. Implementation of Workday in the ERP system has changed the method of processing and administering our benefits program. So, the benefit election and changes current policy addresses employees paper notification process for new hires, open enrollment, and qualifying event changes. Introducing Workday in 2022 allows us to the notification process to be the responsibility of the employee like new hires can elect for benefits within Workday, open enrollment processes are completed in Workday and then qualifying events and processes are also now completed in Workday. When we're addressing retirees previously policy guidelines employees eligible for a full retirement were not eligible to obtain retiree health benefits if they regain UG employment and were eligible for UG sponsored benefits. All billing was manually inputted at that point.

Now that Workday is fully live we have proposed policy changes which address employees eligible for a full retirement will be eligible to obtain UG sponsored benefits if they return to our organization. In a position that are eligible for benefits, they will be eligible to re-enroll in UG retiree health insurance if they meet the qualifying criteria and Workday payroll does not have the capability to categorize the active employees paying the retiree rates.

Ms. Christian said so that's the gist of the changes to the HR guide. Any questions regarding that particular policy.

Chairman Bynum said it sounds like some of what you've done is to align with the automation basically of the new Workday system. Would that be correct? **Ms. Christian** said yes, that is correct Commissioner. The policy or the systems have required us to change our processes, but we also find it a benefit that retirees, it wouldn't disincentivize retirees that come back and work for Unified Government by allowing them to return to that retiree program once they leave employment again.

Chairman Bynum said thank you, are there questions from members of the Committee?

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

Ms. Sparks said Commissioner Bynum, Commissioner Ramirez has a question. **Chairman Bynum** said Commissioner Kane, just hold that for one moment Commissioner.

Commissioner Ramirez said I will second Commissioner Kane's motion, but the just a comment. I remember when we were going through the Workday, the presentations and trying to—the planning process for us to get Workday and I do not remember what year it was. A presentation of processes of the HR Department and how paper based it was at the time and not just HR, but all departments across our government, how much paper based they are and so I think now with Workday we're starting to change that and I'm happy that with making those changes with our Human Resources Department so that we can be more efficient so that we can take care of our employees better, so thank you. And I do second Commissioner Kane's motion. **Chairman Bynum** said excellent, thank you, any other questions from our committee? Clerk, anyone online asking to make a comment? **Ms. Sparks** said no hands are raised. **Chairman Bynum** said and is there anyone there in person who wants to speak on the item? **Ms. Sparks** said no one is approaching the podium.

Chairman Bynum said excellent thank you so much we do have a motion and a second so, call roll please.

Roll call was taken and there were four "Ayes," Hill, Ramirez, Kane, Bynum.

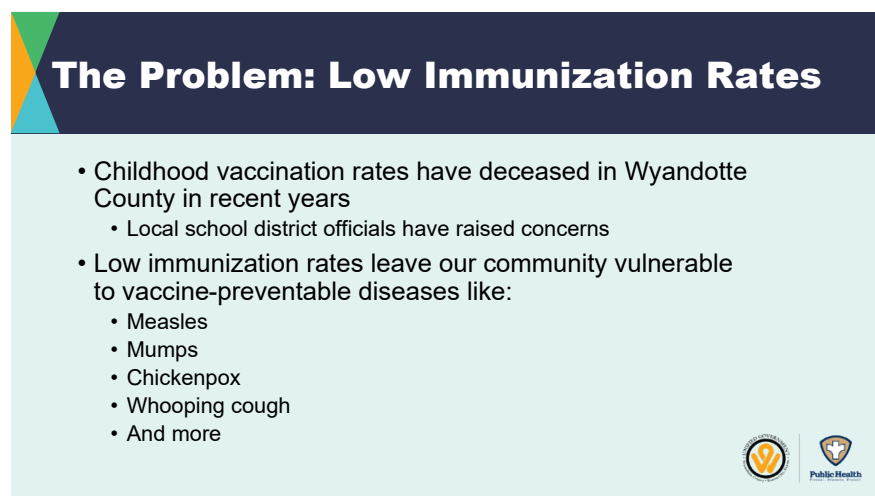
Chairman Bynum said thank you to our HR staff for the work that you've done to bring it forward. It is most appreciated.

Item No. 2 – 212942...GRANT: VACCINE HESITANCY

Synopsis: Approval to submit the grant Equipping Local Health Departments to Address Vaccine Hesitancy to the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO). The grant request is for \$100,000, and no match is required, submitted by Wesley McKain, Policy & Development Manager, Health Department.

Wesley McKain, Policy and Development Manager, said I'm here with Elizabeth Groenweghe, our Chief Epie, and Dr. Eli Caldwell our Public Health Director. We submitted a grant to the National Association of City and County Health Officials for vaccination. I assisted with the grant, but the line share of the work was done by our Chief Epidemiologist Elizabeth, so she has a short presentation about the vaccination status of our County and the grant that she's going to give, and I'll pass it over to her.

Elizabeth Groenweghe, Chief Epidemiologist, said I'm going to be sharing a bit about this grant that we have applied for and we were supposed to present on it in December when we submitted the application but the date got pushed back a bit and so we are sharing that we also were offered the grant and kind of the—I'll talk about the timeline on that as well. Okay, so I wanted to start a bit about the reason why we applied for this grant and some of the concerns that we have in Wyandotte County to better understand why this funding is so important for the work of the Health Department.



The Problem: Low Immunization Rates

- Childhood vaccination rates have decreased in Wyandotte County in recent years
 - Local school district officials have raised concerns
- Low immunization rates leave our community vulnerable to vaccine-preventable diseases like:
 - Measles
 - Mumps
 - Chickenpox
 - Whooping cough
 - And more

So, the problem really is low immunization rates in Wyandotte County, specifically our childhood immunization rates that children should receive before attending school. Unfortunately, post COVID across the country and Wyandotte County we're seeing the childhood vaccination rates have decreased and this is a concern that has been brought up by some of our school district officials as well. They're seeing children continuing to fall behind with their immunizations before they enter kindergarten and really failing to keep up with those immunizations as they progress through school. So, why is that important? Obviously, one of the most critical functions of a Public

Health Department is preventing the spread of infectious diseases and so low immunization rates in our community really leave us vulnerable to a lot of different vaccine preventable diseases everything from more mild things to very severe and life-threatening illnesses.

Some of these vaccine preventable diseases include measles, mumps, chicken pox, whooping cough or pertussis, and even some life-threatening illnesses like bacterial meningitis and so this grant will help to bolster our efforts in the community to make sure that we're doing everything we can to protect our community and our children from these vaccine preventable diseases.

Kindergarten Vaccination Rates			
School District	Kindergarteners with all required vaccines, 2022-2023	Kindergarteners with all required vaccines, 2019-2020	Religious exemption rate
Kansas City (USD 500)	81.53%	76.81%	0.83%
Piper (203)	73.33%	100%	3.74%
Bonner Springs (204)	91.08%	84.76%	2.19%
Turner (202)	86.67%	89.66%	0%

Required immunizations in Kansas: diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, polio, measles, mumps, rubella, varicella, hepatitis B, hepatitis A




I pulled some data, this is secondary data that I got from the State Health Department. They do an assessment every year of vaccination rates across the school districts in Wyandotte County and here we have the data for our four school districts in Wyandotte County so you can see, well maybe not, there's a little black box there, okay that's gone now. So, for USD 500 our biggest school district, this data in the first column is looking at the percent of kindergarteners that have all of their required vaccines for last school year. At the bottom there you see those list of required vaccinations per Kansas Law, diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, polio, measles, mumps, rubella, baricella, Hepatitis A and B. There are other vaccines that are recommended but these are the ones that are required by State Law and so for USD 500, 81% of kindergarteners entered with all those required vaccines. Piper 73.3%, Bonner Springs 91%, and Turner 86%.

So, when we were doing our research for this grant, we really noticed that there was kind of a split among the school districts and so for our focus on this grant, we're really focusing on KCK and Piper because they do have the lowest vaccination rates.

Also, we look at religious exemption rate data so parents can choose to not vaccinate their children for religious or philosophical reasons and those numbers are higher than we'd like, but not terribly high, showing that there's something else that we're missing here. Some other reason why parents are choosing to not vaccinate their kids and at this point in time the Health Department doesn't understand what that reason is and so part of this grant is doing an assessment to really understand these reasons and these complex issues for why parents chose to not vaccinate their kids, and those numbers continue to fall.

Vaccine Preventable Diseases	
Vaccine Preventable Disease	Number of cases in 2018-2022
Hepatitis B	154
Whooping Cough	77
Chickenpox	41
Hepatitis A	17
Haemophilus Influenzae, invasive (Hib)	11
Bacterial meningitis	1
Tetanus	1

I wanted to share as well what the data looks like in Wyandotte County for some of those vaccine preventable diseases. This shows in the last five years the number of cases of various vaccine preventable diseases that we've had in our county. I wanted to highlight whooping cough specifically or pertussis, it's a very uncomfortable, very serious illness especially in young children and babies, and we did have a pertussis outbreak in Wyandotte County in the last five years.

I also wanted to highlight chickenpox, which is for I think everyone in this room, wasn't always a vaccine preventable disease and a lot of us suffered through chickenpox, but that's no longer needed because there's a vaccine that's very effective for it and it really helps to stop outbreaks of chickenpox in our schools. We also did have a case of bacterial meningitis and tetanus in Wyandotte County, both very serious and life-threatening illnesses, that are preventable through vaccination.

NACCHO Vaccine Hesitancy Grant

- The National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) is offering a grant titled "**Equipping Local Health Departments to Address Vaccine Hesitancy**"
- This grant will award three local health departments with up to \$100,000 to address vaccine hesitancy in their community
- The grant is supported with funding from the CDC



I wanted to talk a bit about the Vaccine Hesitancy Grant specifically. It's awarded through the National Association of County and City Health Officials, and it's titled Equipping Local Health Departments to Address Vaccine Hesitancy. This grant selected three local Health Departments to receive up to \$100,000 to address vaccine hesitancy in their community and as I mentioned before we applied for this grant back in December and we're planning on bringing it to the committee sooner, but that got postponed and we did receive notice late in December that we were one of the county's selected to receive this grant and so today I'm just looking for approval for us to move forward with this grant opportunity.

NACCHO Grant

- Our grant application has been accepted to be awarded funding
- We will **work with school districts** to better understand why parents are hesitant to vaccinate their children
- We will also **form a vaccine hesitancy task force** to address this issue
- The overall goals of this grant are **to better understand vaccine hesitancy in Wyandotte County and develop a plan to address this issue**



What we would do with that funding is outlined here so we really want to work with our school districts to better understand why parents are hesitant to vaccinate their kids, what the barriers or concerns are and how we can work to address that as a Health Department.

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We know that this is a really complex issue and so part of this grant is doing an assessment, listening to parents, listening to community members to really understand what's going on. We would also be forming a Vaccine Hesitancy Task Force with some other healthcare providers in Wyandotte County, some of our safety net clinics like Vibrant and Swope and the school districts to continue to dialogue about this issue and then the overall goals of the grant to better understand vaccine hesitancy in Wyandotte County and to develop a comprehensive plan on how we can address this so that the problem doesn't continue to get worse.

That's all I had for today. Again, we are looking for acceptance approval of this Grant since we have been awarded it and Wes did you have anything else to add?

Mr. McKain said just that I don't think we put on the agenda, but we are asking that this be fast-tracked to the January 25th meeting. We were originally planning on coming in December, but those got postponed until this month and so we found out in the meantime that we rewarded this grant which is great but the sooner that we can get accepted the better.

Action: **Commissioner Kane made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Ramirez, to approve with fast-tracking to Thursday's meeting.**

Chairman Bynum said thank you very much and thank you to the Health Department for continually looking for ways to expand what we're able to do with grant dollars. It's really appreciated and welcome again to our new Health Department Director. I wish I were there in person to greet you. Questions from our Committee before we vote?

Commissioner Hill said my question is, I saw you were going to approach the school district and other avenues, but since a lot of kids you are going to—you're trying to get information about is kindergarten or before kindergarten, is there a plan to get into homes to those parents, those young parents in particular with these babies?

Ms. Groenweghe said yeah, that's actually a really good question. At this point in time we haven't made any specific plans for approaching that Pre-K kind of parent population, but I think it's something that we can definitely work into the grant. Our strategy, initially at least, is to work with the school districts because they have identified already students that are behind in their vaccinations that we can have focus groups and surveys and forums with. I guess one of my

assumptions would be that if a parent has older children that are behind on vaccinations, it's probably very likely that the Pre-K and younger kids are also behind on their vaccinations, but when we form this task force we can also explore options for reaching out to parents of kiddos that aren't in school yet.

Chairman Bynum said anymore questions? Clerk, is there anyone online that wants to speak? **Ms. Sparks** said no hands are raised and no comments were received. **Chairman Bynum** said and anyone there in person asking to address it? **Ms. Sparks** said no one is stepping to the podium. **Chairman Bynum** said alright, excellent and we do have a motion and a second that include a fast-track to Thursday night. Roll call please.

Roll call was taken and there were four "Ayes," Hill, Ramirez, Kane, Bynum.

ADJOURN

Chairman Bynum said alright that concludes our meeting this evening. Thank you to the Health Department, really appreciate your work. Our meeting is concluded for the evening and I would entertain a motion to adjourn.

Action: **Commissioner Ramirez made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Kane, to adjourn.** Roll call was taken and there were four "Ayes," Hill, Ramirez, Kane, Bynum.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:42 p.m.

JG