

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

REGULAR SESSION
December 14, 2023

The Unified Government Commission of Wyandotte County/Kansas City, Kansas, met in Regular Session Thursday, December 14, 2023, with ten members present via Zoom and on-site; Bynum, Commissioner At-Large First District; Burroughs, Commissioner At-Large Second District; Burns, Commissioner Second District; Ramirez, Commissioner Third District; Hill, Commissioner Fourth District; Kane, Commissioner Fifth District; Lopez, Commissioner Sixth District; Stites, Commissioner Seventh District; Davis, Commissioner Eight District; and Garner, Mayor/CEO; presiding. Commissioner Townsend, First District; was absent. The following officials were also in attendance: David Johnston, County Administrator; Wendy Green, Assistant Counsel; Jeff Conway, Legal Counsel, Irene Caudillo, Chief of Staff in Mayor's Office; Andrea Vineyard, Deputy Treasurer, Dennis L. Rubin, Interim Fire Chief; and Monica Sparks, Acting UG Clerk.

Mayor Garner said before I call the meeting to order, I want to announce that some commissioners, staff, and the public are attending remotely via Zoom, by phone, or 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. Please be sure to speak directly into the microphone when speaking so the public can hear your comments and there's an accurate recording of the meeting for the minutes. This is critical given the number of remote participants and is current guidance from the Kansas Attorney General's Office. Thank you for being here tonight. This is our first meeting with several new commissioners that you'll see, so welcome to our new commissioners.

Mayor Garner called the meeting to order.

Roll call: Burroughs, Burns, Ramirez, Hill, Kane, Lopez, Stites, Davis, Bynum, Garner.

December 14, 2023

Invocation was given by Pastor-elect Reverend Deleno Sheffield of the Metropolitan Baptist Church, immediately followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Garner said Clerk, are there revisions to the agenda tonight? **Monica Sparks, Acting UG Clerk;** said yes Mayor, we've had two revisions to our agenda. The first revision was adding item number four, a resolution setting schedule a meeting times to the Mayor's agenda. The second revision was adding item number five, a proclamation for Bob Breitenstein Day under the Mayor's agenda and also adding nominations to Boards and Commissions under the Consent Agenda. Those are all of our additions.

Mayor Garner said before we start our agenda this evening, I want to just take a moment to ask everybody for a moment of silence. A gentleman I've known when I worked here pretty much throughout my career, Parking Control Officer Henry V. Jones, he departed us on December 9, 2023, and if we could just take a moment of silence in his honor and his memory, for his service, years of service to this great community, that would be appreciated. I'm going to let the Administrator have some words, just bear with me shortly.

David Johnston, County Administrator, said just to add to what the Mayor stated, unfortunately, one of our UG family passed away, Mr. Jones. I think to talk about why it's an important time to remember, this gentleman gave over 40 years of his life in service of our citizens with our government. He was a few times that I met him, just a wonderful human being, really loved coming to work, doing his job, serving our citizens and didn't ask for any fanfare. He just wanted to do his job the best that he could, and so the Mayor has prepared a very beautiful succinct. Sincere condolences to his family and if I may take a few moments to read this in honor of one of our colleagues Henry Jones.

"To the family, friends, and loved ones I'd like to send my deepest sympathy on the loss of your precious loved one Henry V. Jones. The homegoing of your beloved has brought about a reflection of who he was and what he represented to so many that loved him. We pray that the comfort of his memory aid you and keep you with a knowledge that gone may be the sound of his voice but never your memories. Gone is his physical touch but never from your hearts. Gone from immediate sight but will never be forgotten. Please know that the thoughts and prayers will be with

you as you navigate through your bereavement, sorrowfully submitted Tyrone Garner, Mayor, Unified Government of Wyandotte County, KCK.”

Mayor Garner said the Administrator is tasked with overseeing the 2,300 authorized employees here at the Unified Government, so it’s befitting that he sends that to the staff. Mr. Jones started on March 14, 1984, and was well known here at the Unified Government so he will be missed.

VI. MAYOR'S AGENDA

Item No. 1 – 212949...RESOLUTION: AMENDING POLICY RENAMING UG-OWNED BUILDINGS OR PARK.

Synopsis: Resolution amending the current policy to provide for a procedure for the Mayor or a Commissioner to request to name or rename a UG-owned building or park, submitted by Tyrone A. Garner, Mayor/CEO.

Item No. 2 – 212950...RESOLUTION: RENAMING BETHANY COMMUNITY CENTER

Synopsis: Resolution to rename the Bethany Community Center to the Earl Watson, Sr., Community Center, submitted by Tyrone A. Garner, Mayor/CEO.

Mayor Garner said these first two of the items on the Mayor’s agenda are related with the approval of a resolution amending the current policy for the renaming of UG owned buildings or parks. It’ll allow the Mayor or Commissioner to make that request and change. The second item under this agenda, again, is the approval of a resolution renaming Bethany Community Center to the Earl Watson Sr. Community Center. I’ll ask our Legal Counsel to make some open remarks in regards to those policies.

Wendy Green, Assistant Legal Counsel, said the Mayor put that exactly correctly. Our former policy did have a procedure to where a citizen could petition the Unified Government by submitting a petition with a number of signatures depending on what type of building it was, what type of park it was to the Unified Government Clerk and that would be placed on a Standing Committee Agenda to rename a park or a building. But we didn’t have anything in our policy for the Mayor to make that request or for a commissioner to make that request. So, the resolution

before you would be to amend that policy, and all we did was add Section 8 and Section 9 to the policy. Section 8 provides that the procedure for the Mayor to request to name or rename a park or building and that would be that the Mayor would be to submit to the UG Clerk to place on the Mayor's Agenda at the next available Commission for consideration, the request to name or rename a building. Section 9 is for a commissioner to submit to the UG Clerk to place on the next available agenda for Public Works and Safety Standing Committee to rename or name a building. If you have any questions, please let me know.

Item No. 2 – 212950...RESOLUTION: RENAMING BETHANY COMMUNITY CENTER

Synopsis: Resolution to rename the Bethany Community Center to the Earl Watson, Sr., Community Center, submitted by Tyrone A. Garner, Mayor/CEO.

Mayor Garner said at this time my Community Engagement Advisor, I believe, Mr. Steve Williams, he's going to have a presentation related to both resolutions.

Steve Williams, Executive Coordinator to the Mayor, said it is my honor to stand before you on a community-driven initiative to rename the Bethany Community Center to the Earl Watson, Sr. Community Center. I know myself personally, I can't think about Bethany Recreation Center without picturing Mr. Watson. A small bio about Mr. Watson, to start a little bit about his history employment with the Unified Government. He started in 1991 and he worked 32 years there at the Community Center. Some of the positions he held, he started off as a Recreation Specialist and eventually moved to a Recreation Supervisor by the time he retired. So that transition happened somewhere within that time. Some of his notable contributions was he operated the Parkwood Pool as well as the Bethany Community Center. So, he kind of had a dual role. He coordinated the Annual Back to School Supplies; giveaway supplies with the Community Policing where they supply backpacks and school supplies for our youth of our county. He coordinated the Night Hoops Program which was a large basketball program in our community for years where our kids had a place to go, a safe haven to go where they could play basketball. Like I said, he worked at the Bethany Center and the Parkwood Pool providing all kind of different activities for the kids. But what I remember most about Mr.—I'm a little bit nervous you all, so forgive me. What I remember most about Mr. Watson was I was a policeman for thirty years and I was in Community Policing

and for a large tenure of that time the Bethany Community Center was either in my district or connected to my district. So, I operated out of that building, I operated out of that community center and whether it was 6:00 in the morning on a Saturday for a community cleanup at Bethany Park, Mr. Watson was there. If we were having a Halloween party for the youth and we got out of there 11:30-12:00 o'clock, Mr. Watson was there. Out of all that time, as much time as I spent there, I only remember a handful of times, one or two times that Mr. Watson wasn't there. I mean his connection to our community, that building was his connection to our community and it was—when I go there—I used to go there sometimes just to talk to him, just to get wise counsel from a man who—I mean he's going to shoot you straight, he's going to be honest and he loved, loved, loved this community.

When I took this position and I started hearing the buzz about the renaming of the community center on social media and from people, I thought what a blessing this would be for us to name this facility after a man who's gave so much to our community. I thought it would be an awesome opportunity for us to give our flower—give him his flowers while he can still smell them. I think that's huge and sometimes we forget that. We try to remember people after they're gone and it's crucial that we remember them while they're still here. So, when I start digging into it, I met with Mr. Edgar Galicia, he had started this process awhile ago and when I made contact with him, he kind of shared with me the work that was done to get us to where we're at right now. And to tell you how proud I am to be a part of it even getting to this part of the process, you have no idea because I'm used to teasing him sometimes and say Mr. Watson you here so much this building should be named after you, so to be standing here before you guys today and making this request with the community support, it's amazing to me. When it was finally—it was clear it was going to be on the docket tonight, people start reaching out, people from the community start reaching out saying what can they do? What can I do to be a part of helping this process? How can I—to the point where they was like if it's finances, we'll figure a way to come up with the finances to make this happen if it's signage. The community just really—I mean kind of took over and this thing has snowballed and started rolling.

So what I'm going to do is give you an opportunity to hear from some of those people tonight, some of the people from the community and they're going to share with you stories about Mr. Watson, some of the things he's done for them. But we're going to start off with Mr. Earl Watson Jr., he's going to be our first speaker and there's going to be several other speakers that

come and I'm going to let them identify themselves and tell you who they are and their role. But what I want to do is thank you guys for even listening to this because I believe it's really important and I think it's important in our community. I think it's really important to our community to show Mr. Watson what a great impact he has on our community.

Earl Watson, Jr. said thank you for having me here to leadership of Wyandotte County, I know it's not easy, trust me. The imagination and sympathy is with you but in great gratitude I sit here and stand here in honor of my father. If you don't know a lot about him, let me be really clear, he's 91 years old, he worked there until he was 90. My dad always taught me little things make big things happen and what he meant by that—well it was three things to him that was important. It was family, it was community, and it was commitment. And when my father talked about family, I feel like whoever entered Bethany Rec Center or Parkwood Pool is my sibling because I truly shared my father with community. When he said he was there, when Steve Williams said he was there throughout the day, he left the house about 6:00 o'clock in the morning, he would walk Central Boulevard, he had to get his walk in. Then he would open up the gym and he would let the judges in, then he would let the police in, and then he would open up in the evening for anyone in the community. So growing up as a kid if I wanted to see my father I had to go into Bethany Rec. So, obviously I play pick up with the judges, the police, and the community three times a day. The judges fell harder than the policemen, the policemen talk more trash just being honest with you. But my dad was truly a mentor to all.

I heard stories about my dad and to be honest with you when it comes to family, I really didn't appreciate my dad doing it. I'm going to be honest with you, I wanted my father to myself. Sometimes he wouldn't make some of my games, and then when I went off to UCLA he didn't make any of them himself for the holiday season because he had to open up Bethany Rec Center. And even in my early 20's all the way through college I despised that. And it wasn't until I got older I realized what he was truly doing. He was truly changing lives instead of inspiring lives, and as a former professional athlete, I inspired people but my impact is nowhere near as powerful as his with changing people.

Then the next thing was community. My father grew up on Quindaro Boulevard, he'll let you know. He believed in the north end of the whole time and we had a thing we used to do when we were younger, we eat lunch at Big Eleven Lake, that was his thing. He would walk the gates,

get lunch, we'll walk Big Eleven Lake, we'd eat and feed the ducks, and just take in all the experience of Big Eleven Lake. He is truly prideful and passionate about Wyandotte County. He believes in Wyandotte County. I would like to thank everyone that forced him to retire because we want him to retire a long time ago as a family. So as a family we appreciate you for sending home back home to us because my father would have stayed in Bethany Rec until his last breathe truly.

And the last thing is commitment. For those who don't know my father, was one of the first to integrate the US Army as an African-American drill sergeant in 1954. He joined the Army in 1948, and what he was most prideful of is that flag, that Army outfit, and that army belt that sometimes disciplined us when we were younger. It hung up in the closet, we couldn't touch it, he kept it pressed and he always believed that that was a way. So growing up I had two options, either join the Army or find a way to make it with basketball. I obviously chose basketball.

I was not tough enough to do the Army like he did, but my father also experienced, born in 1932, segregation and integration and for my father to be one of the first to integrate the US Army as a drill sergeant he believed in community and commitment and bringing all people together and he truly believed that so when he speak to you, he speak to you as a person, he speak to you as a soul. It's one thing he always taught me in order to win the battle you have to win the war. You're not going to win every war, but win as many as you can and bring as many with you and never leave anyone behind. He believed in brotherhood, he believed in community, he believed in commitment and he believed in family. So thank you with much gratitude from our family, I wish he could have made it, but he could not. I appreciate you and it's just an honor just to be here. Thank you.

Cynthia Lane, Kansas City, KS, said I'm a long time member of this community and it's a very honor to be before you Mayor Garner and distinguished commissioners. I want to start by thanking you for your leadership. Leadership is difficult. You are making some very important decisions for our community and leading us forward and we are very grateful for your service, so thank you. It's a real honor to stand before you, it's been a minute since I've had a chance to be in this Chamber, and it could not be more fitting to be here in support of renaming Bethany Community Center for a man whose day-to-day actions are truly the definition of community, Mr. Earl Watson Sr. As I went down memory lane after Irene gave me call and let me know about this tonight, my mind began thinking about all the times that I had the privilege of interacting with Earl Sr., so I

contemplated what words I might offer that truly give honor and appreciation to a remarkable man who graced my life, who encouraged me, and kept me focused on the way forward whenever I had a chance to meet. And a humble man who as Earl Jr., just said, has done so much for our community, but my mind took me to a Parable, one of my favorite Parables called The Giving Tree, and so if you will just give me a moment, I'm going to take some liberties and talk to you about The Giving Tree and I think you'll see how Earl comes through.

Once there was a tree and the tree loved his community. Every day a child would come and visit the tree, gather leaves, climb the tree's trunks, swing from the tree's branches and play. The tree offered shelter from life's storms and shade on a sunny day. The place where the tree stood became so important to that child that he returned on a regular basis. The child grew to love the tree. For the child the tree was a place of belonging, a place to explore, to compete, to develop and to grow. The tree was steadfast and reliable and would often share words of wisdom reminding the child to work hard, stay positive, never give up or give in. Now I hope I'm not taking too much liberty with this story so far but for that child and I daresay for all of us, that tree symbolizes what it means to be rooted in the community. The tree, I daresay, is Earl. Earl reached out his arms, had that most magnificent still does, welcoming smile. Never seeming to give up or give in, always having a positive attitude, inviting us all in, encouraging us to extend our branches, to work united to improve KCK to be a better place. A place where dreams are nurtured. That's what Earl did everyday in his work with our youth. A place where children and youth are our priority. A place where we can all thrive. Earl Watson Sr., is our tree. So I stand here united with the community, thanking you for the opportunity for this very fitting and lasting tribute to a remarkable man who is truly rooted in our community. Thank you very much.

Calvin Thompson, Owner of Semi-Pro Basketball Team, said I'm not as tough as I was when I was playing so I'm going to have to read mine because I'm going to get a little sensitive when I talk about my elders. Mr. Watson meant so much to so many. There's no place I would rather be than here tonight speaking for him. One word that I never heard from Mr. Watson was no. You see, I grew up in the playground era and whenever there was inclement weather I would always call on Mr. Watson to see if I could get into the gym and it was always yes, I'll be there. He looked out for me even back when I was as tall as I was wide and he believed in me at a very early age before he even knew who I was. Once he found out how much I like basketball and why he really

took a liking to me. Different aspect. I told him my aspirations was not to go play pro ball although I ended up playing for 9 years. My aspirations was to be the first in my family to go to college and that's when he wrapped his arms around me and really took me in. He taught me at a very early age that it was more than just a game. It's more than just a game, and when I retired back in '95 I was trying to figure out what I was going to do with my life and I was scribbling on some paper scribbling out, scribbling out what am I doing, what am I doing, I'm helping people, I'm helping out other people. I'm helping people and helping out other people was the acronym that I use for my youth program, was Hoop Service Helping Out Other People, and he taught me that along with my father at a very early age and it wasn't about him, it wasn't about—I mean it was before EJ. And obviously, with him looking out for us, we looked out for EJ, and he talked about family, when we greet each other it's big bro, little bro and it was more than just a game with Mr. Watson.

He looked out for everyone, it wasn't just me, it was thousands before me, and thousands after me. His efforts to keep young kids like myself out of the streets and out of trouble was tremendous. I remember the doctor told me that I would never walk again, and he would say, Calvin the door is open, come and rehab, come and rehab, I would turn around he'd be sitting in or standing in the doorway watching and he'd look at me and I'm looking at him, next thing I know, I turn around, he didn't realize how long I was going to be in there. Now he's sit but he never once complained about the time that I was in that gym. He sat there, he held my hand and a couple years ago when I would come back down here I would go up there, Mr. Watson you at the center? Yes. I would go up there just sit down and talk with him, pick his brain. There's no other person that I would think or I could think of that this honor should be bestowed upon. So, please consider renaming Bethany Rec to Mr. Earl Watson, Sr.

Carolyn Wyatt said I'm glad to be here this evening in honor of Mr. Watson. I met Mr. Watson a long time ago. I used to be a coach. I used to coach a team, a couple teams, different years until the guys went to college. When I would go over to Bethany Mr. Watson was there. Even after I was coaching and that time I had nephews that were playing basketball so then I would go over there and I see Mr. Watson, sit and talk with him, he's very brilliant and when you talk to older people you can learn a lot and they give you some wisdom and Mr. Watson would be around all the time. And then I would see him at the swimming pool, he'd be down there, he had to go down

there to do some work down there, he'd be down there in the summer or all the time in the morning and then I'd see him at JFK, which is Beatrice Lee now and at Bethany. So he's been around a long time and you don't find very few people who give their time to young people like that. Very few people who really love young people, love what they're doing, making sure the gym is open. It's a safe haven for young people and we should make sure that every center is the same. It's a safe haven for young people. Mr. Watson gave all that time, his life, but it's like it was so much it was so important for him to help young people and the community he worked in. The time wasn't an issue. Most people want to get in and get out, he wasn't trying to get out. Like his son said, he'd be still there now. That's just how important people and young people was to him and I think it's important that when a person give their service like that, give their life like that, it's a worthy cause to renaming the center. It means something. It means something to the people on Central, it means something to the people that went there all those years that knew Mr. Watson and I think it would be very fitting for it to be renamed Mr. Earl Watson Community Center. Thank you.

Reverend Tony Carter Jr., Pastor of the Salem Baptist Church, Kansas City, KS, said it's been my awesome privilege to serve that congregation for 23 years. I met Mr. Watson when I first got here because I wanted to do something to exemplify my youthfulness at 40, and Mr. Watson opened his doors to us on a number of occasions before little Earl, my jumper got broke, I done broke my jumper now I don't—it don't work like it used too. But one of the things that drew me to Mr. Watson was he reminded me so much of my dad. Earl Jr. my dad too, was a father to everybody in the community and if he wasn't their father, he was their uncle. Everybody wanted to be Uncle Tony. Uncle Tony and I—Mr. Watson really, really in a empathetic way reminded me of my dad because everybody used him to mentor them. He made himself available. His community advocacy. He was always trying to advocate for somebody in the community, particularly those who were undeserved or those who didn't have the same privileges that others did and he was always advocating for them. I don't know if all of you all know who do community work to include you, commissioners and Mayor, it's hard work.

There's a passage in First Corinthians, I'm sorry, I am who I am. The passage says we are laborers together with God and Mr. Watson epitomized that passage because there were times he worked hard, they—just everybody just got done telling you, he show up early or he show up late, and he stay as long as it took, it did not matter to him. He did it even to the detriment of his family

at times or at least it felt that way but he was a laborer, he worked but then he realized that you have to work together. And he was always looking for other people to help him reach out, to help him bridge gaps, to help him fill the voids that were there. He understood the labor, he understood that it had to be done together and there were times when even with the right kind of laborers and even people trying to work together it really required a higher power and God stood in. He epitomized that. His life spoke that, even though he never quoted scripture perhaps, I don't know, maybe he did but I never heard him quote scripture, but he lived it out in faith. I think we would be doing a grave injustice if we didn't take this opportunity while he yet lives to give him the flowers and to rename the Bethany Community Center after Earl Watson Sr., is what we call a no-brainer but I want you to use your brain. It's not a no-brainer. If you don't do it, it's no heart because if you have a heart, no one could be more deserving than Earl Watson than he is, excuse me Earl Watson Sr., God bless.

Paul Soptic, Kansas City, KS, said I should know better than to follow a preacher up here, but I'll try my best. I remember meeting Mr. Watson 28 years ago, back in 1996 when I started with Wyandotte Countians Against Crime, WCAC. We had our first Summerfest in Bethany Park then Mayor Marinovich, Ron Miller, our ex-Chief of Police, and a whole bunch of other people. We brought a lot of people together in those 17 years that we did have the Summerfest at Bethany Park. We had the Halloween celebration for 14 years from 2005 to 2019. In 2019, the last time we had the Halloween celebration there we had 4,002 kids come through that center that night. The reason we know it's 4,002 because Mr. Watson had the little clicker at the door and celebrated everybody coming into the park and doing the clicking and making sure that everybody was counted. This was just the kids, didn't include the family. It was unbelievable, but every time that we had an event at either the park or the center itself, we had some guys sitting off in the corner and he would be holding our hand or he would be cheerleading or he would be providing chairs or tables or utilities or whatever it took to get the job done, but that was Mr. Watson and actually it was a second love, helping people. His first love was actually the youth of Wyandotte County. We would sit and talk for hours and hours about him putting together the basketball teams and the groups of players that he would mentor and hold their hands or enjoy teaching them about life as well as basketball. He did so many things in the community that it would be hard to talk about. I know when he had to take himself away from the Parkwood Pool, they hired three people to take

his place. That was just Mr. Watson, I don't think we could find a kid on the street that he didn't hold a hand or mentor him some way or another. I do hope that you do use your brain like Reverend Carter said and change the name of the Bethany Rec Center to Earl Watson Sr., and if you do it tonight, I'll even help you hang the sign tonight. Thank you.

Victor Harris said in 1991 I met Mr. Watson and this is how I knew that he's the kind of person that was into the community. This is before a lot of you all. He used to have a business on 13th & Quindaro. Right now the Family Dollar is right there, but he had a little small grocery store there and we used to call them little neighborhood stores, and my wife and I was working with kids, I had just came home from the military and we was trying to do things for the community. So we looking for somebody to donate, when you're working with kids, it's kind of expensive trying to do it but Mr. Watson would donate the Kool-Aid, the cups, anything we needed that was for those kids and we would go to him occasionally and he said just go in the store and get what you want. Then after a while, I want to do something else and I—let me go to Bethany and start coaching. So I started coaching Mr. Watson. He was in the Army, I was in the Army. When you go into Bethany's parking lot, it's a big window up there, usually he's sitting right there in that window and that's why I knew most of the time he was in there because when I'm coming to parking lot, I look up at that window he's sitting right at that table reading or doing something and we were talking. He told me how Leman Smith was the Director of Parks & Recs or something got him into Parks & Rec. He said he gave him the keys and said go up to Bethany, I mean sorry, to JFK, open up, let the kids hang around.

Mr. Watson kept doing it repeatedly, finally, he ended up getting the job. But that's how he said he started working at Parks & Rec, Mr. Leman Smith. So, to go on Mr. Watson he spent time and hours and commitment at that facility because I know a lot of times we would go and Mike would be up there and we would show up early in the morning. He would be there somewhere 8-9 o'clock at night. I guess Ms. Watson finally got fed up with it so she started hanging out up there then. So you would see her sitting on the bench over there too. Mr. Watson gave that community and his kids, I heard they was trying to reach out to like three miles of the community to get this petition done. Mr. Watson knew people over in Missouri, he knew people in Topeka, he knew people everywhere. So to say limited to get a group of names to sign this petition, three miles, Guys come on, that's a joke. You would have to go completely out of this state almost to

find people that will sign that petition said that what we're doing is right because Mr. Watson he deserved it.

I was getting into politics. Yes, I ran for commissioner, who I'd go talk to? Mr. Watson. He talked me through step by step. He talked me who to go to talk to. He was a mentor, he loved this community, and one thing most of you guys can see, you ever seen an 80 year old run him down that basketball court officiating games. Half of the coaches when we would play coaches game, Mr. Watson would have a coaches game up there, we couldn't even do it. I would get out there run up, down two times, holler sub. Mr. Watson is still running up and down the court blowing the whistle. That's what he gave to this community, that facility. The repasses that a lot of people in this city had of families that you didn't have a place to have a repass at because maybe you are short of money. Mr. Watson was there. Birthday parties, Mr. Watson was there. Dance recitals, Mr. Watson was there. He opened that door if you want to do free plays where you thought your kids would be somewhere that's not getting in trouble, Bethany Rec, Mr. Watson was opening, he had free play for them.

He gave to this community, I'm just hoping that I get the age that he is and be able to do what he does, and that's why my wife said why I want to retire? I can't retire because I sit up and watch how Mr. Watson continued in his 70's-80's doing what he did for this community. Commissioners, I'm gong to say it, please, please from your heart seriously think about naming that facility Earl Watson Sr. Community Center. He don't want it, I'm telling you right now, he don't want that because that's the kind of person he is. So, if you do it, you're going to have to do it without his permission, without his blessing because that's not what he wants. Mr. Watson just want to be Mr. Watson known for everybody's pops. Yes, Earl, I shared and called him pops too. Commissioners, please consider this. Thank you very much.

Adrian Robertson, Pastor of Kingdom Community Church, said I'm also honored to be the co-founder and executive director for KC United Youth and Family Sports and Education Initiative, and we've been around going on year 14. I've been wondering all day since I got this call from Steve. He said man, can you come and talk about Mr. Watson for two minutes. There's not enough time in the day. I've been trying to figure out all day what to say about Mr. Watson. So, I also am honored to work for the Kansas Leadership Center because what came into my heart is that we teach people around the country about adaptive leadership where we try to teach people

that don't just look at everything from a technical fix, but with some of the challenges that you have to deal with from the position of a leader, there are different acts of leadership that can help close gaps and challenges. So, one of the first things that we teach people to do is to what do you observe? What do you see? So, this is the question I want to ask those standing out here with me? How many of you sitting out here right now can say that the work that you do right now, those seeds were planted by Mr. Watson's standards. Point number one. Point number two, when we started youth football back in 1992, we went to a couple local groups to see if they would support us and we were turned down.

That brother right there Tony Carter and another young man said man come use my church. Mr. Watson said Robinson, what are you trying to do? We are trying to do football, he said come down to Bethany. We were with the Kansas City Gators. That brother back there Victor Harris, we had parties there, we had celebrations there, and now we're celebrating year 14 next year. Then also with that with Mr. Watson when we're talking about the work that he has done, you have to look at him from the perspective of the leader. Let me give you some competencies. These are five competencies that we were—I just got off a zoom call today, we're just doing the same training with 220 folks talking about adaptive leadership. These are my examples of Mr. Earl Watson Sr.; One adaptive leadership competency is that leadership is an activity and not a position.

We're not saying get rid of the President's, Pastor's, Board Chairs and CEO's, we need to have people in positions of authority that's true, but when it comes to the really difficult complex challenges, the problems that keep us up at night, the issues that make us worry for future generations. You just heard, Mr. Watson give, gave, and is currently giving his life for young people. It's going to take more than authority to make things better. Earl Watson Sr., perfect example, anyone can lead anytime, anywhere. When it comes to adaptive challenge, we adaptive challenges we all have a part to play. Lots of people need to get involved, lots of people need to contribute time and energy, you've heard that story already. Many people need to change, you've heard that story already. More people need to exercise leadership, this he did. Number three, leadership starts with you and must engage others. You saw how many people stood up. Literal example of legacy is standing in the room.

Some things an expert can fix, or the boss can order done but as a culture we've gotten into the bad habit of waiting for others to act or to lead. For you, if you embrace this principle and for me, the waiting is over, Mr. Earl Watson Sr., gave us that example. Point number four, your

purpose must be clear. It's cut and dry. Mr. Watson's purpose was to love this community, to love his family, and to show what commitment meant by tactically and tangibly touching people by just being himself. And finally, leadership is risky. We'd be irresponsible if we didn't share this one final principle. If you've ever attempted to get people to work together on a difficult challenge, you know that leadership is risky. You'll need to identify and navigate those risks and Mr. Earl Watson Sr. was never one to back down from a challenge. As a Pastor, I got to give you all this scripture. You all have no idea, you help me with this, so let me give you Psalms 1. It says blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers but he delights in the law of the Lord and on his law, he meditates day and night. He is like a tree.

You heard that word already, he is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields his fruit in its season, and his leaf does not wither, in all that he does, he prospers. You've heard it already, we are asking you, we're literally challenging you. There can be no way that a no vote can come from this group. Rename Bethany Rec Center Earl Watson Sr. Center. Thank you.

Jeffrey Bagsby, former KCKPD, said along with several of my classmates that we came on in 1985, which is when I first met Mr. Watson. Mr. Watson was like I don't even want to say father, because he was greater than a father because he did things that a lot of people's fathers never get a chance to do with their sons. I remember I used to talk to Mr. Watson when I was very young, I was 21, when I started on the Police Department, so really I was kind of naïve and I wasn't a street kid and I didn't really know a whole lot about the stuff so I was just getting to know a lot about a community and serving and things like that. I remember he had a conversation with me, he was telling me, he said and he had a funny way of talking but he would always say Bagsby, he said man, you just need to just act like you know what you're doing and I'd say yeah I'm trying to do that so, and he was really talking about us playing basketball and being leaders in the community, but one thing that he told me he taught me when I was—I saw him one day up at the swimming pool up on Quindaro.

I don't know if you guys remember, well I know you remember Maurice Green. Mr. Watson was up at the pool with him because I think he had just hurt himself and wasn't able to go to the World Championships or something like that. He was up there talking to this guy; he was literally in tears, but Mr. Watson was telling him how he was going to be a great runner, and he

was going to be a great man. I was just kind of sitting there listening to him and he was never talking about himself, he was always trying to inspire people and inspire young people. I think that everybody in this community, every young person who knows anybody, knows Mr. Watson. All of my children know Mr. Watson. He's just very deserving of this honor. I don't think anybody else that knows anything about Bethany knows anybody else but Mr. Watson. He was a great—he is a great man, and I could go on and on just different things that he just taught me and always a caring and giving person. He never asked for anything, he was always talking about what could he do, who could he give something for, how many kids do we need to have come in, or just what can he do to help. So, I just thank you Earl Jr., for allowing us to have a part of your dad's life.

I know it was hard because he was there all the time, and I can't even imagine how he felt. I mean, he explained that he resented it but I know he knows now that it was a greater purpose in his dad's life. A scripture I want to leave with you, it's in Psalms 37 and this is what I think about when I think about Mr. Watson. It says the steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, and he delighteth in his way though he fall he shall not be utterly cast down for the Lord upholdeth him in his hand and I don't think anybody in this room or anybody in this community saw Mr. Watson fall they wouldn't be there to pick him up. Please rename the Bethany Community Center, Earl Watson Sr. Community Center. Thank you.

Eric Williams, Owner Clipping the Pleas Barber Shop, said I am a product of Wyandotte County. I grew up here my whole life, so I'm as Mr. Thompson said, I was one of those kids that grew up in the gyms around here and there was one person that I saw all the time, he wasn't as tall as Calvin Thompson, but he was still a giant. Like he sat in that window, I used to pull up and we'd wonder if the gym's going to be open. You could look up in that window, you knew the gym was going to be open that day. Mr. Watson was, like I said, as I went with the crowd that went into the gym, he was always there for us as a leader and I saw he always—I just watched how he worked with the young men, the young. He'd pull them to the side just to give them just nuggets that they could use, and I remember just kind of standing around being close because it seemed like he was this giant of a guy that maybe I couldn't get to, I just want to be around as he shares his wisdom. I just want to be somewhere near him as he gives his wisdom. I do remember the gym's dad opened and realized that was when I went through, not telling I'm 56 years old, when I went back again when my baby brother went, I was like is that still Mr. Watson at the gym. So,

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that let me know that he's been there for a long time, so it was like man, he's still at the gym so I knew that he had the passion and that he loved what he did. Probably as much or more than we love going there. He was always there, and he stayed there even through my baby brother's time which is younger than me and it was like that's the same man. He pretty much still looked the same when he got there too.

As they say, running down the court at 80, he looked the same that he did when I was there in the '80's so I don't see anybody else that I think would be—when you think as everybody has said before me, when you think of Bethany, I think you—we wouldn't even say Bethany as much as we would say up there Mr. Watson spot up there. We never would even say Bethany, we said Mr. Watson spot, so we already kind of hood wise dubbed it Mr. Watson spot without a sign but we do, in getting older, we realize that would be an honor for us to see it as what we spent the time in there for him as well. As it's been said before so not to be repetitious but to for him to be able to get the flowers to show you that his—that's not his goal, that he didn't do that for the flowers, shows to me a lot about his humility.

How it wasn't for to name this he didn't stay there for all those years to name the Center after himself, but just to give back to us little guys that was trying to make it and try to do their things. A guy like me got a chance to meet Stevie Williams at Bethany. So, I was—we was in two different sides of Kansas City so me, Stevie Williams 40, 50 years later he's still one of my good friends so that opportunity was allotted us by being able to come to Bethany Rec so like said before me, I'll ask that if you would find it in the kindness of your heart to make Bethany Rec, Earl Watson Sr. Community Center. Thank you.

Paul Jones, Retired Battalion Chief KCKFD, said I can say this, ever since I've heard that Mr. Watson was possibly going to be named—Bethany was going to be named after him, I can't think of a more deserving person who needs that honor. I would like for him to see his flowers while he's alive. I want to thank his family for sharing him with us all these years. He not only opened up the gym and the pools and everything, but he made sure that we had good leadership there, quality people there and he took control and knew what everybody else was doing. I want to thank him for opening up the gym when the firefighters and the policemen had a little battle with basketball every now and then. They know the outcome of that though. Like everyone has said, especially his family as well, thank you for sharing. I called him Uncle Earl and everybody, a lot

of other people call him Pop or Uncle. I call him Uncle Earl because he made you feel just like family. When Mike and everybody was doing the Halloween celebrations, he was there. When I did the parades for the Back to School and Mr. Watson would be one of the main leaders who would help coordinate that and he never—I've asked him every year; our first Grand Marshal was Buck O'Neal. I asked him every year to be our Grand Marshal, he didn't want that. He didn't want to be out in the light like that, but it's everybody here knows everything that he's done in this community. He was never a selfish person; he gave his self to his community. He was a server, and I think that's what God put us all here to do is to serve and I'll be honored, and I ask of you to name Mr. Earl Watson Sr.—Bethany need to be named Mr. Earl Watson. Thank you.

Mayor Garner said if anyone else would like to speak, please take this opportunity. Just state your name.

Tony Martinez, Kansas City, KS, said I'm not here in any official capacity but Mr. Watson is a big part of my story. The four words I have to say that are most important are do the right thing. I spend my days telling people to do the right thing, I'm asking this Commission to do the right thing. I met Mr. Watson in 1998 or 1999, very important to remember too that I don't know anybody in my whole life that I've ever called anything but Mr., Mr. Watson has always been Mr. Watson. I've never called him Earl; I've always called him Mr. Watson because I have so much respect for the man. Back then, I had three little boys and one little girl, and we were a mixed family. My two adopted bonus children were redhead and blonde and I had two Mexican American children that looked a lot like me. I lived in a different county at that time, from Argentine, from Armourdale but I lived in a different county at that time. I'd gotten my education on most things I think except the one thing that had passed me by and that was how to raise my children but I was learning.

My sons and my daughter all wanted to play sports. I didn't know anything about basketball, I just knew that my sons and daughter wanted to play basketball, and I was going to learn how. Watching TV, reading books, whatever it took, I was going to do that. The county that I lived in at the time, didn't really afford much places for me to practice. Those reasons for that, see the teams that I had started with from the YMCA and Salvation Army they were mostly Black, Indian, Mexican, Pakastani, whatever minority group there was, that's who we are. Unfortunately,

truthfully, in the county that I lived in at that time there weren't many places to practice, whether that was because of the make up of my teams or just because. We knocked on the door at Bethany Center and Mr. Watson opened that door and invited me in. I told him my problem, he said when do you want to practice? Let me know what you want to do but keep the door open to all the children from the county that you grew up in because they need your help. He knew I was an attorney; he thought it was important that kids stay in school, I did too. From there we developed a friendship, his door was always, always open for me and every kid I could find that wanted to play or practice. Back in those days we had epic battles with the KC Panthers, with the 76ers, with the Blue Dogs, with all great local teams. Eventually my team was composed of just about 90% of the kids from Wyandotte County, great athletes from Sumner, Washington, Schlagle, just great athletes.

Eventually, we went to many of those great tournaments in Las Vegas, in Chicago, in Texas, in California, 90% of the kids were from right here. Mr. Watson always had the door open for the kids that played on the KC Outlaws. He always had the door open for Coach Martinez and his teams. 99% of those kids that played for me were right from here and they went to college, and they did well. We only lost one to the streets. When I told Mr. Watson about that he cried with me. He cried for Marcus, a playground legend. He cried for him, we cried together. As my children got older, they stopped playing sports, they went to college, they did well. Then something really neat happened. Six years ago, something really great happened in my life. Mr. Watson knocked on my door and encouraged me, keep going no matter what you do, but don't you forget about the kids in this community because they need role models, and you have to continue that Tony.

Mr. Watson, I'll do whatever I can. I still do that, and I do that as much for Mr. Watson as I do for myself, as I do for my kids, and as much as I do for the kids here in this community. I can't tell you what I do all day and that's when I tell people do the right thing. But I can't ask you, I can plead with you, do the right thing. Change that name from Bethany to the Earl Watson Sr. Community Center. Thank you for your time.

JD Rios, Mayor's Office, said I think you've heard of plenty, but I as a policy I want to remind you; in order to do this great thing, you must first pass the resolution allowing for the Mayor and yourselves to do a renaming. So that would be the first course of action, and I just want to remind you of that and then the actual resolution further renaming is the second item that you'll act on.

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And so, I want to thank you. I will add this one, I've known many of students through my educational career that would talk to me about Mr. Earl Watson Sr. and I utilized him on a few occasions for students that were kind of giving me—I said you know what I got someone you need to visit with and he happily did it. So, I think it's a great thing here but I really just want to remind you of procedure. Thank you very much.

Mayor Garner said I'm going to close the public comment now in the audience unless there's anyone else that wanted to speak. We have someone waiting online. Clerk, we have someone online? **Ms. Sparks** said Mr. Galicia, you'll need to unmute.

Edgar Galicia, Central Area Betterman Association Executive Director, said I want to thank all commissioners, the Mayor, and the County Administrator and everyone here for the opportunity to speak on behalf of the Bethany Resource Center change of name. It is important to say that CABA operates a community building program called the Adversity. This program is solely dedicated to increasing the community pride. The pride of people, residents, business owners and workers in Kansas City, Kansas feel for our community. Community pride builds nations. Community pride saves cities in despair. The purpose for increasing the pride our community feels for our city is ever so important as it is a pillar to the increase of self-investment. Self-investing has helped our community come back from where it was during the 90's and move forward to where we are today. Community pride has kept us standing. We have plenty to do and we have a long road ahead of us to become the city all of us could be proud of and yet, each step we take is important.

Changing the name of the community center or the resource center as it's officially known to the Mr. Watson or Earl Watson Sr. Resource Center, is only one way to make sure all of us stand proud and all of us work together in building this community of ours. I want to thank everyone here again for allowing us, allowing the community to express their feelings about this petition. We've worked since 2018 in trying to make this a reality and this is the time to do it. This is the time to make it happen. Help us be proud of our community by honoring one of our local heroes. Help us belong to our community by recognizing that Mr. Earl Watson Sr. deserves such a great honor because of all his work. Help us be stronger together and become a proud community. Thank you very much.

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Mayor Garner said Clerk, is there anyone else? **Ms. Sparks** said there are no other hands raised. **Mayor Garner** said thank you and thank everybody for your comments and thanks to my staff for facilitating the presentations and for everyone that spoke. We have a new commissioner to this District. I believe it's Commissioner Burns, and that's his district and I know he's been listening intently to all the ongoing and he's the first button to push would like to make a comment, so I'm going to open up for Commission comment.

Commissioner Burns said this is a no brainer. I mean first of all, I'm glad Mr. Watson didn't file against me even though I represent that but what a great man and I would like to have the honor and the distinct honor to make the motion to rename the Bethany Community Center, that's in my district to be forever the Earl Watson Sr. Community Center and I hope the Public Works will not just put some little letters up. I hope they find the biggest letters they can that will represent what a great man he is on that building. So, I would like to make a motion to do that. **Mayor Garner** said I'm going to hold that motion Commissioner. **Commissioner Burns** said yes sir. **Mayor Garner** said so save it.

Action: **Commissioner Burns made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Burroughs, to rename Bethany Community Center to Earl Watson Sr. Community Center.**

Mayor Garner said I'm going to hold that motion Commissioner. **Commissioner Burns** said yes sir. **Mayor Garner** said so save it.

Commissioner Ramirez said I remember meeting Mr. Watson. I can't remember if it was when I was campaigning the first time or when I was already reelected. It was during the time when we were fighting for Parkwood Pool. I remember I went to Parkwood Pool; I had an interview to fight for Parkwood Pool and that's when I met him. Anyone could say once you talked to him you knew he loved this community. He cherished this community. He fought for that pool and fought for the youth. And so, just as Commissioner Burns said, this is a no brainer. This is to me, I would be proud to support this and with that, before we get to Commissioner Burn's motion, I make a motion to approve the resolution amending the policy renaming UG buildings or parks.

Action: **RESOLUTION: NO. R-82-23** “A RESOLUTION AMENDING THE EXISTING POLICY ON NAMING AND RENAMING UNIFIED GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS AND PARKS.” **Commissioner Burns made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Stites, to adopt the resolution.**

Mayor Garner said okay, any further comment from any Commissioners. I'd just like to say that again, I appreciate everybody, it's been a long time coming. I think what Mr. Watson represents is you don't have to be the Mayor to be somebody of value. You just have to care about people and God can work with you and in you and to allow and design a purpose for you to feel that person that improves people's lives and that's what Mr. Watson did. God can work with you right where you are and I think his life legacy is a testament for all of us, especially at this time of the year when we talk about the holidays and giving. He gave so much and really it's a time to reflect on ourselves, looking at what he did and realizing that it starts with love. Love of others, love of our community, and realizing that if we had more of that in our world, what a better world this would be, and so I don't get to vote, but if I could, I'd vote to change the Bethany Rec Center to Earl Watson Sr. Community Center and I urge this Commission to do the same.

Commissioner Davis said I'll say this very, very quickly. I'm really excited about this policy change because like Mr. Watson Sr. we have so many champions in this community that deserve to be celebrated. Looking at this policy it's very difficult, although kudos to you Mr. Williams and Mr. Galicia for doing the work of getting the signatures, and showing that the community is very, very much invested in wanting this to happen and so thank you all for that work and I'm excited to vote in favor of this.

Mayor Garner said thank you commissioners. There is a motion on the first item. Clerk, am I correct, amending the policy renaming the UG own buildings or parks. **Ms. Sparks** said yes we have a motion and second. **Mayor Garner** said okay, any further discussion. Seeing none, Clerk roll call.

Roll call: Burroughs, Burns, Ramirez, Hill, Kane, Lopez, Stites, Davis, Bynum.

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Mayor Garner said Commissioner Burns put a motion out on item number two a resolution renaming Bethany Community Center into the Earl Watson Sr. Community Center. I have a motion, is there a second? Commissioner Burroughs seconded the motion. Mayor Garner said there's a motion and a second, any further discussion? Seeing none, Clerk, roll call please.

Action: **RESOLUTION: NO. R-83-23** "A resolution to rename the Bethany Community Center as the Earl Watson Sr. Community Center." **Commissioner Burns made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Burroughs, to adopt the resolution.** Roll call was taken and there were nine "Ayes," Burroughs, Burns, Ramirez, Hill, Kane, Lopez, Stites, Davis, Bynum.

Mayor Garner said before we proceed on, Earl Jr., would you like to have some comments before we close out. I know this has been a long time coming for me, a lot of hard work went into this.

Earl Watson Jr. said I'm going to be very transparent. I've never been more emotional in my life than now, for anything. I guess I got my dad for myself, I care less, but for him, he has no clue this is even happening. So when we tell him as a family, I would videotape it and make sure to post it to see his reaction. I almost just want to wait until he gets there, but everyday is significant for us and just to have him here, I think I'm just going to tell him sooner. So, thank you from the bottom of our hearts. Like I said, leadership is difficult, I know it's hard when you have thousands of people telling you what to do but they never sit in the seat when it's really hot. So, I understand it's easy to talk from the stands, trust me I know that for sure. So, just thank you for everything you do. Once again, it's about community love and family and I'm always a resource for the community as well. Thank you.

Commissioner Lopez said District 6. I'm new here on this—I maybe—I got to run by Code of Ethics, but I have equipment, and I don't know if I would be allowed to help put the sign on the building. **Mayor Garner** said well, I believe that you can get with our Administrator, our Legal team and they can walk you through that commissioner, but I know that everybody appreciates that gesture. Thank you so much.

Item No. 3 – 212952...UPDATE: APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Synopsis: Discussion of the process regarding policy and procedures for appointments to Boards and Commissions, submitted by Irene Caudillo, Chief of Staff.

Mayor Garner said I'll ask my Chief of Staff, Irene Caudillo to lead this conversation and answer some of your questions.

Irene Caudillo, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office, said Mayor, Commissioners, County Administrator, and special first commission welcome to Commissioner Hill, Commissioner Burns and Commissioner Lopez. It's always an honor to stand before you but tonight, I want to do something about reminding you of the importance of the opportunity of voice and representation that you offer our community via appointments, certain committees, boards, task force. Now I understand all of you have said it's been difficult to find appointments, people that can commit and serve based on times, days of the meeting. But what is important is as you enter the new year, what I want you to think about is how we fill, reappoint, or appoint your positions. For new commissioners, I know you've been through a wealth of information and training this weekend, so you have a lot that you have to think about. But for all commissioners, I do want to share that we recently had a Legislative Audit, and it was about the boards, committees, and task force, and something I want to take as a quote from there if you haven't seen it, talked about many board seats are vacant and some of these are longstanding vacancies. And additionally, many seats are held by members whose terms have expired but are still serving until a replacement can be found. That's citizenship all the way. That's civic engagement but one of the things that I would like to remind you is it is so important to think about the ways we can have public be a voice and be at the table, often not invited at some of these tables.

So, I also have some more information that I think you would be interested in. Our Clerk's Office actually provided some research, even as early as today, and it indicated about 47 boards, committees and task force that are important to have community voices in. Now, of these though, 10 are inactive, 7 are the Mayor's task force that really are open invitation to participate by all of our community members, but that leaves almost about 30. 30 appointments that must be made by the Mayor and/or the Commission. Many of these you might kind of remember or know and have a good feel for including things like the Landmark's Commission that 's responsible for overseeing

the preservation and cultural heritage of our community. Wyandotte/Leavenworth County, Areawide Advisory Council on Aging that assist our Area Agency on Aging through planning, coordination, Kansas City Housing Authority, of course you know that helps many individuals and families of low income achieve greater stability and self-reliance by providing safe, affordable and quality housing.

We have a Wyandotte County Library Board that looks at contracting library services and furnishing library services and setting tax levy and budget. Our Board of Parks Commission advises Parks & Recreation Department in areas on park management, long-term planning, initiative for park needs. A Solid Waste Committee. Imagine you inviting someone for this, but it's so important because it provides a solid waste management plan for our county. And then last week for new members, last week this board actually approved a new committee that would look at Quindaro Ruins and really build a plan to share this historical site with people all over hopefully the country in hopes to spark development in the northeast portion of our county, but that's only six or seven. Many of you long-time commissioners—think there's about seven to nine and we're going to be working with the Clerk's Office along with even the Auditor's Office to really determine how many there actually are and how many actual appointments you have.

So, with that being, the Mayor's Office really is happy to work with you to recommend candidates but what I ask that's more important is that your networks and sharing your networks with each other, being able to vet, and think about community members that we can invite to be a part of some of our work is really important. So that's one, but the second thing I'll say is now it's asking you to think about a commitment from you. The Mayor has four appointments and the Mid-America Regional Council Board of Directors. And with that Board of Directors, it consists of 33 locally elected leaders from nine-member counties and the six largest counties in our region. This Board position is often appointed by the Mayor, but what we're asking is that you think about as we ask community to sit at the tables to share their voices.

We ask three of you to consider being MARC Board members that meet on the fourth Tuesday of the month at noon, to be Wyandotte County voices, to be our voices at that table and represent this community. So, if you have an inkling to volunteer, I need three volunteers to let the Mayor know you can do that tonight too, be sitting right there, Mayor sitting right there, you can do that.

The other appointment from MARC that's also important is the Total Transportation Policy Committee which serves as a local decision-making and policy development body that's related to multimodal transportation in the region. So, it's a forum for state and federal officials to communicate with local officials and representatives as well as for citizens and members of the business community to address local officials about transportation related issues. The Mayor has already appointed two community members to serve on that.

We're looking for a commissioner that would be interested. They meet the third Tuesday of every month 9:30. So it has one position on that available, please consider representing Wyandotte County at this table and if I haven't said it; Mayor's sitting right there, so tonight before you leave, he or I could be willing to do that so commissioners I'm also going to speak to our residents that are either online or listening here that stayed today and I'm going to close by saying that the steps we take together for a better Wyandotte County includes diverse voices at tables that our residents often aren't invited to. These appointments offer you and our community an opportunity to share lived experience to provide opportunity, voice and representation for a better Wyandotte County. Thank you. Alright, Mayor let's hope we hear from at least four of the commissioners tonight. Thank you.

Mayor Garner said thank you Irene. Do any commissioners have any questions about any of the Boards? There's several out there and we would like to get some of these Boards filled.

Commissioner Ramirez said I just want to reiterate what our Chief of Staff Caudillo said to the community. These Boards are important. Everyone has their mandate and they touch almost every part of our government and our community in ways that we can fix it, especially on the Area Agency on Aging, our parks, our landmarks, as you said our historical and cultural heritage. So, these aren't Boards where you just—I know some community members may think you just sit and listen and hear reports from staff about what's going on. No, these are Boards where you make change, you recommend change for us or either you may be the final voice on that change. And so it's—if you want to be involved, reach out to your commissioner and see what vacancies they have open, or as you said, that there may be some expired terms that are still serving so I really—because I think I have a couple and I know which Boards I have and I'm having a hard time finding people to fill those vacancies. So I urge the community, if you want to be involved, reach out to your

commissioner. It's important, we need your voice as Chief of Staff Caudillo said, your voice is important, and I would love to be considered for any of the other commissioner appointments that are available. Thank you.

Commissioner Davis said Ms. Caudillo you forgot one which is the Community Benefit Advisory Board which is also passed as well, so just add that to the list. What I would also ask, which I think would be really—and thank you this is very helpful, I'm glad we're having this conversation. If there are folks that we think are eligible candidates for a particular Board because some Boards in Task Forces have certain requirements. For example, Library Board, I'm appointing somebody from Edwardsville. I'm not even appointing somebody from my District. Information on—maybe we have a pool of people of who they are, what district they live in, and then what particular skill set they have. I've had one appointee of mine, send me their resume—I thought that was doing quite a bit much, but just getting an idea of who you are, what you're interests are, you don't need to be an expert, but there needs to be some sort of experience or interest or relation to what that Board is but some sort of pull from us to look at would be very, very helpful. But thank you.

Ms. Caudillo said I appreciate that. Can I just say that one of the important factors behind this too, is of course, you want to accept appointments where there's some interest but I would challenge our community to understand the importance of getting outside, getting uncomfortable sometimes because that learning curve can be very important. When I actually, years ago, was appointed to the Kansas City Area Transportation Authority because at that time Mayor Marinovich said she got tired of me standing up in front of the Commission saying how bad our transportation system was. So, I was going to do something about it. Now, I knew how to ride the bus, but anything about—but that was one of the best Board experience I could have at that time and was shared and learned so much about regulations, rules but also just the desire to make some great things happen that we did in Wyandotte County. So, I challenge you to—it doesn't have to be something of interest or knowledge because we should also be able to have some of that learning curve as well. But, we'll work on that because I would love for us to either have some vetting or opportunity to share with you resumes aren't bad, share those with other folks, but I think you're right, we want to get some information so that you'd be able to have people that you can also vet as well. Thank you.

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Commissioner Bynum said to Commissioner Davis's point, I believe if we check with our Administrative Staff in the Commission Office, there's an online application now for Boards and Commissions and I think it has room within it for some of what it is we seek when we're looking to make those appointments. So we might want to have a look at what exists right now that's been created for it's a portal for the community to make entry and show their interest in serving on a Board and I know that in the past when I've had someone approach me about being appointed to something. I've been directed to direct them to the portal so there's a pool of we should—applicants somewhere and we might just want to look at that and see what kind of refresh it needs.

Ms. Caudillo said thanks, appreciate that. We will do that. Thank you.

Commissioner Davis said I'll just add, perhaps next year we think of some sort of communication push or something to really get the message out because I know these Boards exist, but I mean the website is a little bit cumbersome, then you got to pick and there's not really a description. Some of them have minutes so I can say hey, here's what they're doing. A lot of them do not have minutes at all so I can tell you what they talked about last week or last month and so there is some tidying up that needs to be done, but I think on the communication side, the knowledge that these opportunities exist is something that we can do a better job of. But thank you, it's really helpful.

Commissioner Kane said I'm a little upset, I appointed somebody to the Library Board, the Board voted the lady into be in charge. She actually has a degree in the Library Board, she was removed from that position an hour before the meeting. So, when I appoint somebody, the group decides that they're going to be the chairperson. Then they put a chairperson in there that says that people in Wyandotte County don't have to have a Library here, they can go in Johnson County or some other places. So, I'm a little apprehensive to fill any of these jobs because I don't want my people being insulted and removed from a committee that they're on and by the way this young lady has a degree as a Librarian and without notice I wasn't notified that my person was no longer the Chair. So, you sit there, and you think okay, well I appointed the right person, with the right degree, with the qualifications, they're the Chair and all of sudden, the next thing you know, they weren't even notified, and you know this.

Ms. Caudillo said yes, I do know this. **Commissioner Kane** said and they weren't even notified before the hour, before the meeting so I'm going to be hard pressed to fill some of the openings.

Ms. Caudillo said I understand.

Mayor Garner said Ms. Caudillo, I think there's several Boards that really that are prominent. I think there's only seven or eight of them that—it's really the library. I believe it's the—you want to go through those just main ones that—**Ms. Caudillo** said just the names real quick that I think everyone's familiar with in regard to commonly appointing are things like the Golf Advisory Board, the Landmarks Commission, Wyandotte County/Leavenworth County Advisory Council, Kansas City, Kansas Housing Authority, the Law Enforcement Advisory Board, the Self-Supported Municipal Improvement District, the Wyandotte Library Board, Board of Public Commission, Planning Commission and Board of Zoning Appeals, Community Corrections, Adult and Juvenile, Solid Waste, and more recently Quindaro Ruins as well as you are correct, I apologize for missing that the Community Benefits Fund. But I don't know if any of you have—these are new to me as well Mayor. We've also have some others that we've been the Board of—no, that's inactive. Contract Fairness Board, the Development Review Committee, the Drug Task Force, which I don't know. Ethics Commission, there are some others that I think, besides the Task Force that I'm not—I think I'm going to work with and I think Communications is a good idea too. I'm going to work to work with the Clerk's Office to understand some of these that do we have the Rental License Appeal Board. I know I talked to Commissioner Bynum about that one that is just—we don't know if they're active or inactive or how those operate but we're going to be able to get some information around, not just the who or the guidelines of appointment, but really trying to get a handle on making sure it's in one area that Commission support staff have as well as the Mayor's Office has, and the Clerk's Office and County Administrator's Office so that we can support understanding those true vacancies.

Commissioner Ramirez said I believe you mentioned one of them. It's the—I always forget the name of it—the Special Alcohol and Drug Committee or something. **Ms. Caudillo** said the Drug Task Force but there is a Drug and Alcohol but that is inactive. **Commissioner Ramirez** said that is currently inactive and that was something I had a couple months ago, I had mentioned to James Bain, who was a former attorney with our Legal Department and I had asked him to look into

because it by State Statute we receive the special—we receive the special taxes through the alcohol taxes. **Ms. Caudillo** said by the state. **Commissioner Ramirez** said by the state and by State Statute, if we have a Board set up then the taxes that we receive from the alcohol have to be recommended they create—that Board creates a budget and they recommend it to us and currently we, as I had mentioned this to Commissioner Bynum, and she put it very succinctly. Once again, in one of these Boards we are not in compliance with what State Statute is wanting us to do with that Board. So, that's again another Board where we have to make appointments to so that we're in compliance with State Statute. **Ms. Caudillo** said we'll take a look at that. I look at Monica and go we got some work to do.

Mayor Garner said thank you Ms. Caudillo. And just so you know staff, Commission, Irene really took this on with Mr. Murray and Mr. Rios to really take a hard look at this. So they're going to continue to work with staff and our Administrator's Office to hopefully get you something robust. The vision that I'd like to get is hopefully at some point next year, a recommendation for you all to consider what are the key Boards that you want to maintain and maybe look at some Boards that have been inactive for a long period of time that you all could consider to let go by the wayside to cut down on 40 plus Boards and there's still a lot of other Boards out there. There's ghost boards that exist. There's a Merc board, believe it or not for the Merc Co-Op downtown. And so there's just a lot of ghost Boards that are not operating that we just need to narrow down, so we just want to bring that to your attention. That's something we're going to be working on but I think those key main eight or nine, ten Boards, including the newer ones, are the ones that are really most important of value to the day-to-day of the Unified Government. So, to the new commissioners and to our long-term commissioners, if you can just consider just finding some key appointments to those Board that would really be helpful.

**Item No. 4 – 212924...RESOLUTION: APPROVING TWO-YEAR MEETING SCHEDULE
(ADDED PER AGENDA UPDATE)**

Synopsis: A resolution approving the schedule of meeting times for standing committees and commissions meetings of the Unified Government pursuant to Appendix C, Section 107 of the 2008 Code of Ordinances and Resolutions. Two options are presented, submitted by Jeff Conway, Assistant Legal Counsel.

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Mayor Garner said item number four is a resolution approving a two-year meeting schedule added per the agenda and really what this looking at I believe Counsel we have actually two options. We've been out of compliance. I guess at some point there was a practice put in place to where before I became Mayor that there were two Commission meetings, which you know I don't have a problem with, but you know you got to know my background. If it's in black and white and I'm sworn, and I've taken an oath to make sure to uphold the policies of the Unified Government and make sure that they're enacted as written and approved by whatever Commission. And so, prior Commissions had authorized per ordinance that we should be operating under three commission meetings a month and so we have been out of compliance. I believe last year in talking to our At-Large Commissioners and I think I told this Commission as well, that coming in this year we would take a hard look at it and I would try and bring us into compliance but I know that the practice has become the expectation and so I've gotten with Legal to give this Commission a recommendation for two options.

To keep things basically as they have been with two commission meetings and to change the ordinance to reflect that or to keep in line with the current ordinance that obligates us to three commission meetings. There are pros and cons. I've heard some of you have complained about the length of meetings, going into the midnight hour. I agree, I come in here, I'm here all day and then I have to stay here all-night doing commission meetings, that's not a complaint, that's what I signed up to do. But for our staff and folks and for the public that have to endure those long meetings, it does become somewhat burdensome as well as to the Commission. I know a lot of you have jobs as well, and so those are the options on the table. Naturally if you have three meetings, the meetings times would be shorter, so really this was a discussion and a debate that you could have. I come in every day, I work here every day, there's not a day that I don't miss being here unless I'm sick or out-of-town. So, I have to be here, I really don't have a recommendation or a preference one way or the other. Really, this is for the convenience of the public and for yourselves and taking into consideration staff and whatever the commission's will is. That's something you would have to decide for yourself. I'm going to let Counsel weigh in on this to give it some clarity.

Wendy Green, Senior Counsel, said so you have two options and whichever option you choose is what the corresponding schedule will be. Option A is to make Section 107 of our ordinances

coincide with what we have been doing, which would be two commission meetings per month. It would change Section 107 so that we would have a regular commission meeting, which would meet the first Thursday of the month and then on the last Thursday of the month would be a Commission meeting with Planning and Zoning matters as well as additional items. So, it would be the same thing we have now. It would just be two commission meetings per month, one on the first Thursday and one on the last Thursday. The last meeting of the month would be subject to change or if even in the first one, if there was a holiday, so those that are not set in stone. The corresponding schedule with that under Option A reflects those changes if there is a holiday.

This also does a little bit of clean up in Section 2. Under Section 202 Standing Committees created that cleans up the Standing Committees to where it actually makes us in compliance with what we've already been doing where we flip-flopped the Economic Development and Neighborhood and Community Development Committee meetings. Where we've been having the Economic Development Finance Committee Meeting first and then we had the Neighborhood Community Development Meeting second, that's actually not what our ordinance states. It states that Neighborhood Community Development should meet first and then Economic Development & Finance. So this would just make that ordinance in us in compliance with the ordinance by changing the ordinance.

So then Option B then would be if you choose to stay with the existing ordinance so that we would have three commission meetings a month. The first two would be the first Thursday and the third Thursday of the month, they would just be normal regular commission meetings and then the last Thursday of the month would have Planning & Zoning matters on it. So, it's a Planning & Zoning commission, which could also have additional matters on it. And the schedule with Option B would reflect that. It also has Section 2 which would again clean up Section 202, which is the Standing Committee ordinance, which would again make us in compliance with Economic Development & Finance first, and then Neighborhood Community Development second on the Monday night meetings. So clear as mud, I'm sure. But if you have any questions, please let me know. So, in short, if you want two meetings a month it's Option A, if you want three meetings a month, it's Option B.

Commissioner Burroughs said presently, we meet two times a month with one of the meetings being quite lengthy which could be with Planning and Zoning. If we go to three meetings, we're

mandated to have those three meetings and we haven't been in compliance to do that. I might suggest body that we continue to stay with the two and if we need to have a third, that we could call a Special Meeting, and we may not need to have it on a Thursday if a different day of the week for the Planning and Zoning meeting would be more beneficial instead of starting at 7:00 p.m. we could start at 5:00 p.m., 6:00 p.m. or 7:00 p.m. so that we're not here until late in the evening. I mean I'm just throwing that out as a possible suggestion while we're talking and working through this but I kind of like the two meetings and if we have light agendas, we get through them. If we need a Special Session, we can call a Special Session. That's just a point of discussion for the body.

Commissioner Bynum said I just have a couple of questions. On the proposed schedule for 2024 for two meetings, are we suggesting that we would codify first Thursday, last Thursday or is it just a suggestion and the reason I ask is because I'm looking November was different because there were holidays, December is different because we have holidays, but I've looked at August, September and October. In August we met on the 17th, which was the third Thursday and then we met on the 31st, which was the fifth Thursday. In September we met on the second and fourth Thursdays. In October we met on the second and fourth. So, I was just—all I'm trying to do is wrap my head around what consistency are we asking for. **Mayor Garner** said hold on a second. Counsel you also—I don't know if you've seen it, you also have the updated schedules and the comparisons there as you can look at, but I'll let Counsel answer your question Commissioner. **Ms. Green** said that is absolutely correct. The schedules that are attached to the different options would be in compliance with the ordinances unless there is a holiday and then that would reflect a holiday. If there is a change, if it's not set on a first Thursday or last Thursday it's because there is a holiday. Otherwise, it's a first Thursday and the last Thursday. **Commissioner Bynum** said and are you saying that that's how the ordinance reads now or that's what we would make the ordinance say. **Ms. Green** said that's how it actually reads now. **Commissioner Bynum** said oh, okay, because I'm just saying in looking at August, September and October, those are not the days we met. **Ms. Green** said correct. The current reading of Section 107, is that we will have regular Full Commission meetings on the first and third Thursday's and a Planning and Zoning Commission meeting on the last Thursday. **Commissioner Bynum** said that's for three meetings

a month and if we went to two, we would meet the first and last. **Ms. Green** said correct by Option A. **Commissioner Bynum** said okay, thanks.

Commissioner Ramirez said I have no preference which way we go, but I do like Commissioner's Burroughs idea of keeping it how we've been doing if we need to call a Special meeting for whatever purpose. The only thing I would have liked going to three was having one meeting, just Planning and Zoning and then the other two regular commission meetings but how we've been doing it, if we can figure out a way to make agendas light or what have you, I'm okay with that. I have no preference. I would support Commissioner's Burroughs idea of just maintaining how we do and if we need another meeting, we another meeting.

Commissioner Stites said so my question would be with what Commissioner Burroughs has recommended or suggested, what and who would trigger the—what criteria for the third meeting. Who's going to say now we need one. Is it 10 items, is it 15 items because you know that could get where somebody just says well, I just really want to get out here early, on our second meeting we'll have—we'll push all this off to the third one. **Ms. Green** said that would really depend on you all. Under our current code either the Mayor or four Commissioners can call a special meeting at this point. **Commissioner Stites** said so we can do that now if need be, right? **Ms. Green** said absolutely, so we need to change the code for that. I would just state that to call that a Special Session, you could not do it just for Planning and Zoning. Planning and Zoning Commission meetings by our ordinances are only to be on that last Thursday of the month. So, if you're calling a Special meeting it would not be for Planning and Zoning matters. You could do it for any item you could have on a regular commission meeting but not for Planning and Zoning matters if that makes sense. So, because you can set the agenda, the agenda for a Special meeting is whatever you say it is, but I would not do a Planning and Zoning Special Meeting.

Commissioner Davis said I am also in agreement with Commissioner Burroughs. We do a lot here, we take up a lot of time, we have the public come find parking, find a seat, and sometimes they're doing that just to come and speak for three minutes. I just can't imagine adding another meeting for that to be necessarily beneficial. As far as the agenda being lighter, I would just make the recommendation that we put more items through the Standing Committee process as opposed

to skipping the Standing Committee process and then putting it on the Full Commission because those items that are not going through the Standing Committee process aren't on the Consent Agenda and so at any time we can call a meeting, Mayor, you can call a meeting, we get a quorum, we can get it going. With that, I'll make a motion to adopt Option A.

Action: **Commissioner Davis made a motion to adopt Option A, seconded by Commissioner Kane.**

Commissioner Burroughs said I do appreciate the motion. The purpose of even bringing that option forward is just what was stated, we have a tremendous amount of public that shows up to these meetings, we have developers, we also have staff who are held at our mercy and it's out of respect to them. Some of the people in the audience are paid by the hour to be here and sometimes they start at 7:00 when we start and they don't get out of here until midnight. Is that really fair to whoever is paying their bill when it's on us to run the clock. So, I do appreciate the opportunity to at least share with you why I chose Option A, but I wanted to explain it and I do believe it may be a better option for us and this be a learning opportunity for us.

Commissioner Kane said I agree with Commissioner Davis. If we got the agenda adjustment at 3:56 today and you've got how much time because you got to leave work, you got to come up here to actually go over this as thoroughly as you should and there's a process to go through the Standing Committee and sometimes we're circumventing the process. If we went through the Standing Committee which could make them last longer, but it would make the Commission meetings less long.

Mayor Garner said there is a motion and a second for Option A. Is that correct? Is there any further discussion?

Commissioner Burroughs said Counsel you said we couldn't call a Special Session for Planning and Zoning, is that by ordinance that we can't do that or what is the criteria as to why we can't do that. **Ms. Green** said I would suggest at this point, it would be because of ordinance because our Section 107 specifically states that Full Commissions will happen on the last Thursday and our

meeting for specials, calling a Special Session doesn't state anything about Planning and Zoning Commission. It only says Full Commission meeting so that's why I would suggest I wouldn't call a Special Session for Planning and Zoning matters. I would only call it for anything the Full Commission could discuss. **Commissioner Burroughs** said so if I may Mayor, so if I understand correctly, we have first and fourth by this amendment or is it first and third. **Ms. Green** said it's the first and last. **Commissioner Burroughs** said first and last Thursdays so if we didn't call a Special Session, what could we call to do Planning and Zoning on a third meeting and on a Special Session for not for a Special Session maybe on a different day. Is there—do you need an ordinance maybe or because I don't want to tie our hands if we want to come in most of our Planning and Zoning anymore deals with the neighborhood short-term rentals.

Ms. Green said Planning and Zoning is different because we also have to wait 14 days after the Planning and Zoning Commission, or the Planning and Zoning Board meet because you have 14 days after the Planning and Zoning Board meets for people to file a protest. So, we have to wait 14 days after that. So, you wouldn't be able to have it, that's why I would also suggest not moving it up and not trying to do a special day so Jeff, please feel free to correct me if I'm wrong, but I would not suggest doing a special meeting for Planning and Zoning. I would leave that on that last Thursday and if you think agendas are going to get heavy, have a special meeting for all the other items, but leave the Planning and Zoning on the last Thursday. **Commissioner Burroughs** said thank you, that's what I was trying to get some clarity. So, we can still do Planning and Zoning the last Thursday knowing that we're going to have that portion on that last Thursday. **Ms. Green** said correct.

Commissioner Burroughs said okay, that would allow us one other suggestion. I might throw it the body to consider, that if we're going to throw something on the agenda, that maybe we take something off the agenda so that we don't add more to the agenda on an evening. It's just an idea; it makes it harder on staff that if we want to streamline this and make it acceptable to the public we should be as short and as concise but as thorough and prudent as we can be.

Commissioner Davis said I'll just add this and I hope we're able to get through with this so the other thing is maybe working with staff kind of coming back with a recommendation for the Planning Commission and what can be done if that is a ordinance change or a charter change or what have you that's worthy of looking at because I wholeheartedly believe we probably have lost

business because of the way meetings have happened here and if someone did a study, it probably is in the millions of dollars because people see this process and then they're like you know what, forget it. I would ask next year maybe, doing a deeper dive into what currently is in process for or on the books for our Planning Commission and then seeing what other options we can come up with.

David Johnston, County Administrator, said I think we are going to have to work with our Legal Counsel to give flexibility regarding Planning and Zoning meetings because when you have seen the amount of our Planning and Zoning meetings on the designated day, we've had long agendas. In other communities I've worked for we've had the flexibility to have a focus special meeting. If you see you're running along and you still have things to be doing, we've had the ability to have the Commission or Counsel say we're going to meet another day to finish this agenda and just this agenda. I would recommend that we make sure we have that flexibility in any ordinance but still keep it solely focused on Planning and Zoning only matters for the reasons that you stated. We're dealing with businessmen and women looking to invest in our community and even by looking at the size of the agenda, we should be able to come up and say hey look, we need to adjourn after agenda number fifteen. And so we have time to communicate with the other people so they don't come and wait and wait and when then they're told they're not going to have something tonight.

Ms. Green said the Open Meetings Act actually lets you continue a meeting to the next day if needed without having to provide notice ahead of time. If you needed to stop it and then go to the next day if you needed to or if you needed to stop and say we're going to continue this Friday, or we're going to continue this next Monday. **Mr. Johnston** said the only thing I have with that is we have eleven people with eleven different schedules in their life and we need to find a common date for them to reconvene to carry it. I just want to say I think we need to look at a flexible language in the ordinance that provides them, but still keep it focused. **Ms. Green** said I think we could do that actually probably without changing the ordinance just under the Open Meetings Act because the meeting itself began on the required day, but we could continue it to another day because we started it on the right day. **Mr. Johnston** said okay, so just keep in that in mind maybe you have to wordsmith something to guarantee that whatever—**Commissioner Burroughs** said be date and time certain. So that's all I have, Mayor, thank you.

Commissioner Ramirez said our Administrator kind of said what I was going to say is I think let's pass Option A now and then work through whatever we need to moving forward. This needs to be studied more by our Administrator and our Legal Department. To me, there's no point in us keep hashing it out when I think just work. Our Legal Department needs to do their job and see what options we can get later. This is a living document, you know, it's going to change as we move on. If we see later next year, let's say by March, April we see that—I know we've been doing two meetings for some time now but if we see that something needs to be changed, we can change it. So, I just say let's just go with Option A for tonight make this change and then continue to study and move forward.

Mayor Garner said there's a motion and a second. Is there any further discussion. Seeing none, Clerk, roll call, please.

Action: **RESOLUTION NO. R-81-23**, "A resolution setting the schedules of meeting times for the Standing Committees of the Unified government Commission and for the Unified Government Commission through January 2026." **Commissioner Davis made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Kane, to adopt the resolution.** Roll call was taken and there were nine "Ayes," Burroughs, Burns, Ramirez, Hill, Kane, Lopez, Stites, Davis, Bynum.

Action: **ORDINANCE NO. 0-162-23**, "An Ordinance amending the meeting days of the Full Commission, setting the days as the first and last Thursdays of the month, and changing the order of meeting of the Neighborhood and Community Development and the Economic Development and Finance Standing Committees." **Commissioner Davis made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Kane, to approve the ordinance.** Roll call was taken and there were nine "Ayes," Burroughs, Burns, Ramirez, Hill, Kane, Lopez, Stites, Davis, Bynum.

Mayor Garner said the last item on the Mayor's Agenda is—Commissioner Bynum?

Item No. 5 – 212956...PROCLAMATION: BOB BREITENSTEIN DAY (ADDED PER SECOND AGENDA UPDATE)

Synopsis: Proclamation proclaiming December 14, 2023, as Bob Breitenstein Day submitted by Tyrone A. Garner, Mayor/CEO.

Commissioner Bynum said I think you were getting ready to say that the last item is the Proclamation for Bob Breitstein, is that right? **Mayor Garner** said yes ma'am. **Commissioner Bynum** said I had an email come through from his daughter, well, since we've been in the meeting and they're very happy to hear of the Proclamation, but she also was saying, and they didn't know that the Proclamation was going to occur tonight and they only found that out in like the last hour. And so, the request is can this possibly be pushed perhaps into January, so that they can come, and Bob Breitstein can come and be here. Would that be a possibility? **Mayor Garner** said yes, Clerk, if you can just remove that, set that aside I'll withdraw that and—**Commissioner Bynum** said they're very appreciative, but they didn't know that it was tonight, and I think they'd like to come to the meeting. **Mayor Garner** said no problem at all.

Action: At the request of the recipient, the Proclamation will be set over to the January commission meeting.

Mr. Johnston said this is on as an aside I don't think we want to. It's always nice to hear that somebody actually wants to come to a commission meeting so anything we can do to help that along, we should. Sorry for the comic relief but it was getting a little heavy here.

VII.CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor Garner said that takes us to our Regular Consent Agenda. Do any members of the Commission or County Administrator wish to set aside any item on the Regular Consent Agenda? If an item is not set aside, all items on the regular Consent Agenda will be voted on by one vote. I'll entertain a motion.

Action: Commissioner Ramirez made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Davis, to approve all items as submitted. Roll call taken and there were nine “Ayes,” Burroughs, Burns, Ramirez, Hill, Kane, Lopez, Stites, Davis, Bynum.

Item No. 1 – 212844...COMMUNICATION: PROPOSED 2024 HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

Synopsis: Below is the following proposed 2024 holiday schedule:

New Year’s Day	Monday, January 1
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	Monday, January 15
Presidents Day	Monday, February 19
Spring Holiday	Friday, March 29
Memorial Day	Monday, May 27
Juneteenth	Wednesday, June 19
Independence Day	Thursday, July 4
Labor Day	Monday, September 2
Veterans Day	Monday, November 11
Thanksgiving Day	Thursday, November 28
	Friday, November 29
Christmas	Wednesday, December 25

Action: Commissioner Ramirez made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Davis, to approve. Roll call was taken and there were nine “Ayes,” Burroughs, Burns, Ramirez, Hill, Kane, Lopez, Stites, Davis, Bynum.

Item No. 2 – 212869...RESOLUTION: ANNUAL CASH AND INVESTMENT POLICY APPROVAL

Synopsis: A resolution approving the Cash Management and Investment Policy, submitted by Andrea Vinyard, Deputy Treasurer.

*On December 4, 2023, the **Economic Development and Finance Standing Committee**, chaired by Commissioner Burroughs, voted unanimously to approve and forward to full commission.*

Action: **RESOLUTION: NO. R-84-23**, “A resolution that the Board of Commissioners adopts the Cash and Investment Policy.” **Commissioner Ramirez made a motion, seconded**

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by Commissioner Davis, to adopt the resolution. Roll call taken and there were nine “Ayes,” Burroughs, Burns, Ramirez, Hill, Kane, Lopez, Stites, Davis, Bynum.

Item No. 3 – 212955...NOMINATIONS: BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Synopsis: Nominations for Boards and Commissions:

Jaqueline Browne to the Area Wide Advisory Council on Aging

Wyandotte/Leavenworth, submitted by Mayor Tyrone Garner.

Thomas Roberts to the Golf Advisory Board, submitted by Mayor Tyrone Garner.

Paul Jones to the Housing Authority Board of Commissioners, submitted by Mayor Tyrone Garner.

Commissioner Tom Burroughs to the KCATA Board of Commissioners, submitted by Mayor Tyrone Garner.

Mario Escobar to the Board of Parks Commission, submitted by Mayor Tyrone Garner.

Carlos Maderos to the Solid Waste Committee, submitted by Mayor Tyrone Garner.

Brett A. Deichler to the Solid Waste Committee, submitted by Mayor Tyrone Garner.

Action: **Commissioner Ramirez made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Davis, to approve.** Roll call taken and there were nine “Ayes,” Burroughs, Burns, Ramirez, Hill, Kane, Lopez, Stites, Davis, Bynum.

VIII. PUBLIC HEARING AGENDA

No items.

IX. STANDING COMMITTEES’ AGENDA

No items

X. ADMINISTRATOR’S AGENDA

Item No. 1 – 212951...UPDATE: KANSAS CITY KANSAS FIRE DEPARTMENT MASTER PLAN

December 14, 2023

Synopsis: An update from the Kansas City Kansas Fire Department and IAFF 64 regarding the KCKFD Master Plan, submitted by Dennis L. Rubin, Interim Fire Chief.

Mr. Johnston said I just want to let you know that one of the points of the agreement when you passed the last Labor Agreement with the Local IAFF included in that was a joint agreement to update or create a long-term Master Plan for the Fire Department that both the Union and management wanted to do. So, you authorized that to move under the direction of Union Leadership and Chief Rubin and you're going to hear presentation today to show that working relation proved to provide a very good document and they're here to present it so, Chief.

Dennis Rubin, KCKS Fire Chief, said thank you for this opportunity. As we have worked pretty diligently since June, we've begun to put together the framework of what we think is going to be an excellent Master Plan. The Master Plan's vision we hope would be a ten-year window and at the end of each year we'd add an additional year down the road. We've also agreed that we would meet quarterly to go over any obstacles, issues or concerns as we continue to try to improve our Fire Department. I would just say we will be completing that process at the end of January 31st, and we'd like to make a formal presentation with all the details supported by our local supported by our Administration sometime in February. Mr. President.

J.J. Simma, President International Association of Firefighters, said yes, Chief, I agree, we've been working diligently on this project. It's a very good opportunity for us to collaborate. I would like to give you a little history, if you don't mind, on how we arose at that. Pursuant to the MOA, the Memorandum of Agreement as you stated Administrator Johnston the department and the union were tasked with conducting a Fire and EMS Service analysis. That's been underway, as Chief said, for six months and what it is tasked with doing, just to give you a little bit of the criteria, is taking a look at station locations, deployment of manpower and apparatus, response times and consideration of national standards. That's been going along, we've made some significant progress for having productive conversations. The IAFF also requested a GIS mapping study from our international office to assist us in that task and we have that in hand that we're going to be able to use as we continue our discussions.

What that study does is take all those factors into consideration and looks at roads traveled with regards to response times in an effort to meet national standards and provide the service that this community deserves and do the utmost—make the utmost effort to keep the firefighters safe and doing so. I believe that we’re going to have a joint agreement to extend our extension or our time frame to January 31st is the Chief spoke and the only difference would be is I think we got to work out the schedules and we may be into March with the presentation but that’s—we’re going to conclude it here in about another six weeks and then we’ll bring it to you by the end of the first quarter it looks like. **Chief Rubin** said are there any questions Mr. Mayor?

Mayor Garner said any questions from our Commission?

Commissioner Ramirez said I thought I would never see Local 64 and our Fire Chief standing right next to each other in Commission Chambers. I’m very, very happy that our current leadership, Fire Department leadership and Union leadership are able to work together and have what I can see is a healthier working relationship than what was previous—than what we previously had. This is amazing because that means you—these two entities having a healthy working relationship means we’re going to have a safe and protected community, and so I thank you for working together, for understanding each other. You as always as adults, as public figures, you’re never going to always agree but finding the ways where you can agree and in the points where you disagree, find the compromise. So, I thank you for doing that and, again, I thought I would never see this day. Thank you.

Commissioner Bynum said when you bring the plan it’s going first I heard analysis of EMS and Fire, but I also heard Strategic Plan, is that right? Excuse me, Master Plan. So, I mean I’m just curious what the components of a KCKFD Master Plan are, but J.J. before you answer that, do you remember, I know you do, when we met, and met, and met, and met Union, Administration, and a couple of Commissioners trying to get that Fairfax Fire Station open? **Mr. Simma** said certainly. **Commissioner Bynum** said I always felt like I was receiving multiple sets of different data about the same thing and I even remember asking can we all agree on what the data is before we talk anymore about this. Not to go back to those dark days, but are we as your working through this

process, are we all agreeing on the source of the data and what the data is telling us as we work through this Master Planning process, does that make sense?

Mr. Simma said yes, I'll comment, of course, Chief. So do you to the first portion of your question when we reference a Master Plan interchangeably with Strategic Plan, I guess you could say, is what it's looking at is that service-based analysis that I discussed and with those criteria I was discussing and our study that we've commissioned will look at that and identify those components with all of those elements in consideration. Right now, we're sorting through the data still, we've made some great progress in the last six months, but we still have some work to do. I will tell you and as Commissioner Ramirez stated, we may not always agree, and we may not be in a 100% agreement on the entire proposal. The MOA allows for us to bring minority reports to you if that's where we end up with differing opinions. However, I think we're trying to collaborate and cooperate the best we can to arrive at what's in the best interest of the community and the Fire Department. **Commissioner Bynum** said that's all we can ask for.

Mayor Garner said I have to agree with Commissioner Ramirez. I mean, before I became Mayor, just talking to a lot of our firefighters and I know Commissioner Bynum said it was dark days. I see it as opportunities when you all came to me and said you hadn't had a contract for five years, fire stations were closed, morale was at its lowest point ever. It really inspired hope in me to see Administration and the Union coming together in good faith and under the leadership of our new Fire Chief, we're here at this point and we've got our fire station open and I think it goes without being said I don't know if General Motors would not be ready for a major announcement that's coming when it talks about refitting and expansion of the General Motors plant had we not opened that fire station. I don't know where morale would be right now had this Commission not stood firm behind our firefighters because I've always said to have a great Kansas City, you got to have a safe Kansas City and Public Safety is at the forefront of that and this Commission, probably unlike the Commissions I've seen in the past, over my 32 years, have really been overly supportive of that statement that I just made by supporting Public Safety in Kansas City, Kansas and Wyandotte County.

To get us to this point where you have the President of the Union and our Fire Chief standing side by side, working on a strategy to bring about something that could provide enhanced and improved efficient and effective service for our residents, I want to applaud you, I want to

applaud our new County Administrator and staff and our Legal team that I know over the course of since I've been Mayor, they really have put a lot work in you all to get you to this point and so it's going to make for a better Fire Department. If we have a better Fire Department, it's going to allow that morale to go up and if the morale of our men and women that provide those services are at a high level, we know the quality of care that our citizens are going to be even higher. So, I just want to say thank you all for the work that you've done and really appreciate that. Thank you.

Chief Rubin said it's truly our honor to collaborate. It's truly our honor to work for this great City, and again, I think the President said it, always focused on the citizens first and our firefighter's safety next. So very proud sir.

Commissioner Stites said under Section X Administrator's Agenda, if you go down to the second line it says submitted by Dennis L. Rubin, Interim Fire Chief. I'd like to see that we make sure that we get that corrected because we're proud to have him as our permanent Fire Chief.

Mr. Johnston said January 1st the title changes. **Commissioner Stites** said oh, is that right? January 1. **Chief Rubin** said thank you. **Commissioner Stites** said hey, good job.

Commissioner Davis said I'll just say, hope you all knock it out of the park and Chief Rubin, I don't know where these weekly update reports came from, but if you can send those our way more often, that would be incredible. **Chief Rubin** said can we send them weekly? **Commissioner Davis** said yeah, if you want to that or at least in me it would be great, just get that information. **Chief Rubin** said hoping to make it a jovial comment, but we do send them out weekly and we were under the impression that the Commission got them. We get a slip back that in fact has been sent, so we'll certainly check into that as—**Commissioner Davis** said please do. Yeah, we would love to stay abreast of everything that's happening there. **Chief Rubin** said but that is a weekly report, we'd love for you to have it sir. **Commissioner Davis** said awesome, thank you for the work.

Commissioner Bynum said just to that point at new commissioner orientation, we ended our evening with the Fire Department and it was fabulous by the way, it was a great day. But what was part of what was provided to us was that weekly report and the gentleman said please make sure

you read the weekly report, we put a lot of work into that. So, I asked that that be given to Lisa and Diana in our office so that we can all have it and that's how you got it today and I think the plan is that we'll get that from now on.

XI. COMMISSIONERS' AGENDA

No items.

XII. LANDBANK BOARD OF TRUSTEES' CONSENT AGENDA

No items.

XIII. PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT

No items.

Mayor Garner said alright, before we end tonight, it was brought to my attention and I think we would be remiss, Commissioner Kane, Piper sits in your district. Commissioner Bynum, it sits in your district as well. Dr. Jessica Dane with the Piper School District, she has been selected as a 2023 Superintendent to watch by the National School Public Relations Association, NSPRA. She's just one of 24 other Superintendents nationwide who are selected for this great honor in recognition of her innovative and effective use of technology to engage and inform the school community and to expand two-way communications and outreach effort. Dr. Dane's contributions to Piper USD 203 have been nothing short of remarkable.

Her visionary leadership has paved the way for innovative educational initiatives fostering an environment of growth inclusivity and excellence. I think it goes without being said for the parents and students as well as the staff at USD 203 that this Unified Government is proud of the accomplishment of Dr. Jessica Dane and I just like to send a congratulations on behalf of the Unified Government of Wyandotte County, Kansas City, Kansas.

With that being said, there is no further business. This will be your last commission meeting of the year; it has been a great year. Good things are slated for us in 2024, yes, we have challenges, but I always say those challenges offer unique and hopeful opportunities. The best is yet to come for Wyandotte County, stay tuned. Congratulations again to our new commissioners who were sitting with us tonight. As your Mayor, I just want to say Merry Christmas to everyone and a happy

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New Year and blessings throughout 2024 and beyond. I don't know if any other commissioners would like to make some remarks for the holidays.

Commissioner Burroughs said Mayor, I have this little gift in front of me and I'm assuming from last year's cookie grinch that this also came forward from you so, I just want to say thank you and Merry Christmas to my colleagues and the next year creates challenges but also tremendous opportunity. I look forward to spending it with all of you.

Mayor Garner said thank you all so much. I'll entertain a motion to adjourn.

XIV. ADJOURN

Action: **Commissioner Bynum made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Burroughs, to adjourn.** Roll call was taken and there were nine "Ayes," Burroughs, Burns, Ramirez, Hill, Kane, Stites, Lopez, Davis, Bynum.

MAYOR GARNER
ADJOURNED THE MEETING AT 9:29 P.M.
DECEMBER 14, 2023

Monica L. Sparks
Deputy Unified Government Clerk

JG

December 14, 2023