CONSENT AGENDA ITEM NO. ____

STATE OF KANSAS)
WYANDOTTE COUNTY)) SS **SPECIAL MEETING, THURSDAY, MAY 1, 2025**
CITY OF KANSAS CITY, KS)

The Unified Government Commission of Wyandotte County/Kansas City, Kansas, met in Special Meeting, Thursday, May 1, 2025, with nine members present: Bynum, Commissioner At-Large First District; Burroughs, Commissioner At-Large Second District; Burns, Commissioner Second District; Ramirez, Commissioner Third District; Kane, Commissioner Fifth District; Lopez, Commissioner Sixth District; Stites, Commissioner Seventh District; Davis, Eighth District; and Garner, Mayor/CEO presiding. Townsend, Commissioner First District; and Hill, Commissioner Fourth District; were absent. The following officials were also in attendance: David Johnston, County Administrator; Bridgette Cobbins, Assistant County Administrator; Angela Lawson, Interim Chief Counsel; Shelley Kneuvean, Chief Financial Officer; J.J. Simma, IAFF; LaRwan McClaine , Deputy Fire Chief; and Monica L. Sparks, Unified Government Clerk.

Mayor Garner said before I call the meeting to order I want to announce that we have individuals attending remotely as well as on-site. All participants joining by phone should mute their phones when not speaking to avoid background noise. During the meeting, please make sure you announce yourself by name and title every time you speak so the public that is participating knows who is speaking. This is critical given the number of remote participants and is current guidance from the Kansas Attorney General Office. Please be sure to speak directly into the microphone to ensure your comments are heard and an accurate record can be made of this meeting.

Mayor Garner called the meeting to order.

NOTICE OF SPECIAL MEETING of the Unified Government of Wyandotte County/Kansas City, Kansas, is scheduled to be conducted in a hybrid format on Thursday, May 1, 2025, at 5:00 p.m. for a presentation of the Kansas City Kansas Fire Department Master Plan from IAFF Local 64 in the Commission Chambers of the Municipal Office Building. Roll call was taken and there were nine “Ayes,” Stites, Davis, Bynum, Burroughs, Burns, Ramirez, Kane, Lopez, Garner.

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

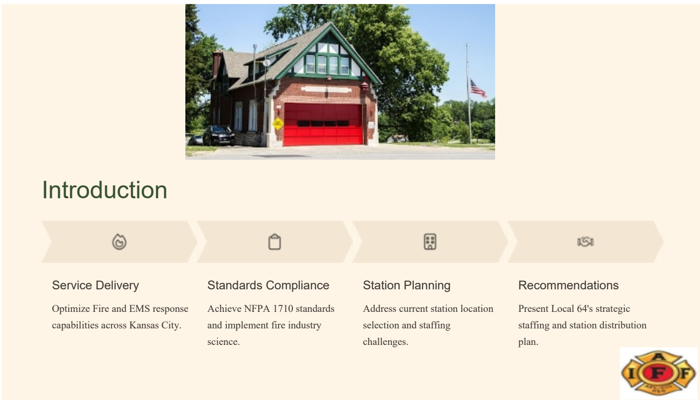
Mayor Garner said I'll turn it over to our County Administrator, David Johnston, and he'll do the introductions.

David Johnston, County Administrator, said a few weeks ago you heard a presentation from our Fire Chief on a summary of the Fire Management's presentation of a Master Plan for the Fire Department as was part of the Collective Bargaining Agreement with the Fire Department. Part of that agreement was the opportunity for—as well for fire union to present their presentation of a Master Plan. So, tonight we have the fire union's presentation, so I'll allow the President of the Fire Union, J.J., to make his introductions and his team to lead their presentation.

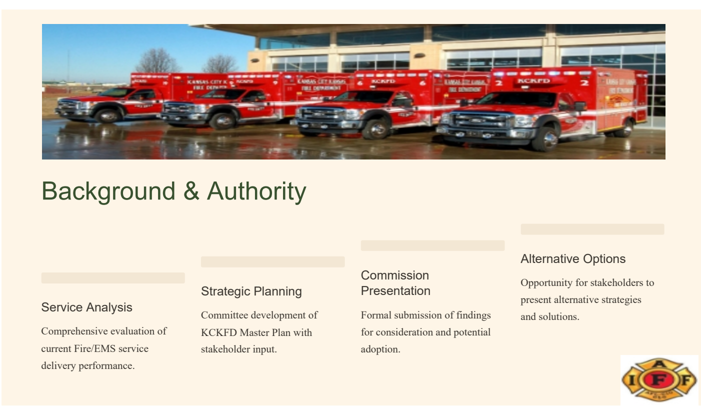
J.J. Simma, President of the International Association of Firefighters, Local 64, said I have with me this evening members of the Strategic Planning Committee for Local 64, Business Manager, Carrie Aldridge, Vice President, Ryan Heim, and Business Agent, Ed Lynn. I would also like to take this time to thank Assistant County Administrator, Bridgette Cobbins, for her assistance and support as well as Fire Department Administration and the Local 64 Executive Board for all the work on this project.

As the Administrator said, we're here this evening to present Local 64's version and recommendations of the Fire Department Master Plan. It can be noted there are areas in which we were in agreement. We reported in the fall, last September, on a number of things that we are in agreement on, Fire Industry Science, National Standards, station conditions, NFPA Standards with regards to staffing and response times, additionally EMS services, but there are areas we differ and that's what we're here to present tonight.

We have submitted to you all a written Master Plan Report as well as a copy of this PowerPoint presentation. After conclusion this evening, we will also submit to you all a link to the IAFF GIS Study, which we have performed. That report is an interactive data-driven mapping study with analysis based on National Safety Standards and Fire Industry Science with recommendations for compliance.

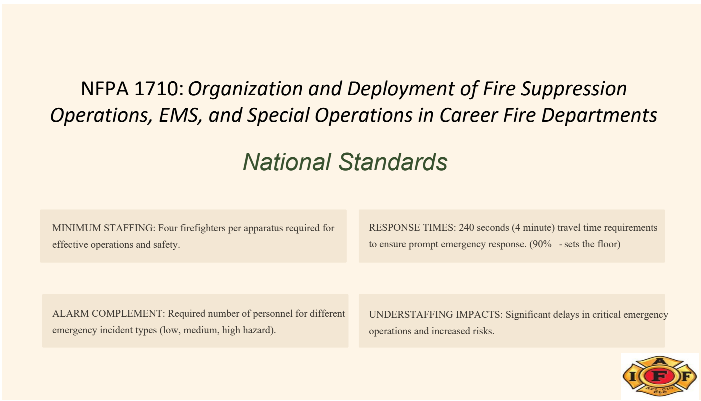


Our objectives for this evening will be to discuss our current service delivery and how we can optimize fire and EMS response across Kansas City, Kansas. We will discuss methods to achieve compliance with NFPA 1710 Standards, and the implementation of fire industry science. We'll discuss key findings on current station locations and conditions and KCKFD staffing challenges and lastly, we will present Local 64 staffing and station distribution plan.



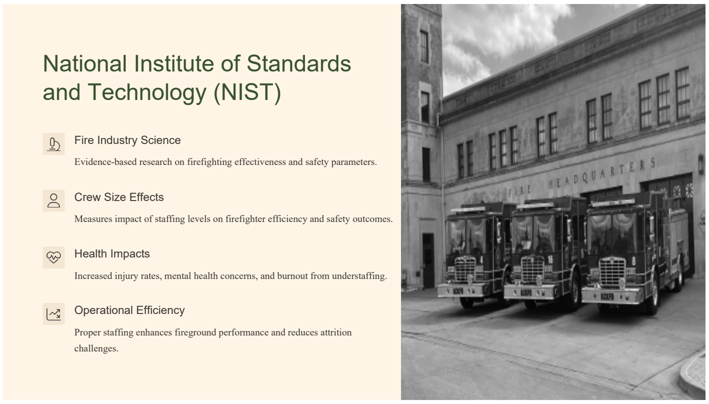
To give some history on this project, several years ago, within the party's MOA, the Fire Department and union were tasked with conducting a Comprehensive Fire and EMS Service Analysis. Factors to be considered included station locations, potential new stations, renovation or expansion and/or closure, deployment of manpower and apparatus, response times, safety, and consideration of the NFPA 1710 Standard.

A joint Labor and Management Strategic Planning Committee was formed to develop recommendations for service and a master plan. Pursuant to the MOA, the recommendations and plan are to be submitted to the Commission for consideration and adoption. Additionally, what we will bring forth to you tonight, the parties were not required to reach consensus on all matters and are allowed to bring forth alternative options to the Commission.



NFPA 1710: 1710 is the National Standard for organization and deployment of fire and EMS resources. Benchmarks established within the Standard include minimum staffing of four firefighters per suppression apparatus for effective operations and safety. A 240 second or 4 minute travel time for initial arriving apparatus to ensure prompt emergency response 90% of the time. 90% of the time sets the floor, 90% is not an A grade. 90% is a pass/fail mark. As you'll recall a month ago in the Fire Department report card called on individual apparatus performance that the Chief showed you, Battalion 1, which is the northeast, met the 90% mark most, but not all of the time. Battalion 2 in the south and Battalion 3 in the Midtown and west areas fails to meet the Standard at all with respect to 90% response times.

1710 also establishes the required number of personnel to be assigned and dispatched and response times for all personnel to arrive on scene for different types of fire alarm based on three levels of hazard. Those three levels are low, medium and high. A low hazard alarm is a residential type structure, requiring 17 firefighters to arrive on scene in 8 minutes. A medium hazard alarm is a commercial type structure, a strip mall, a restaurant, a garden style apartment and that requires 28 firefighters in 8 minutes in the National Standard. A high hazard alarm is a high-rise, a high occupancy building or a high volatility building, manufacturing, a hospital, a school, high-rise apartments. That alarm complement—requires 43 firefighters to be dispatched to on the initial alarm and to be compliant and arrive in 10 minutes and 10 seconds. Impacts of understaffing are reduced efficiency and effectiveness and increased risk to the public and to firefighters.



The National Institute of Standards and Technology, NIST, is Fire Industry Science. NIST is a federal agency which has performed evidence-based research on firefighting effectiveness and safety. The NIST research is the established science behind the NFPA Standards.

Crew Size Effects, NIST has conducted research to measure the impacts of staffing levels on efficiency and safety. You'll recall last fall and a month ago you were all shown a video that showed components of that research with respect to two firefighters, three firefighter, four and five firefighter crews.

Health Impacts, NIST research has identified that the physiological effects of understaffing on firefighters results in higher levels of exertion, higher blood pressure, pulse and respiratory rates along with mental health and burnout concerns.

Operational Efficiency, NIST research demonstrates that proper staffing improves operational efficiency. A four firefighter crew is 25% more efficient accomplishing task completion, 5.1 minutes faster than a three firefighter crew. Understaffed apparatus result in slower hose deployment, delayed victim search and rescue, and other fireground tasks and higher firefighter injury rates. NIST states that cutting firehouses, apparatus and firefighters would likely yield an increase in community fire loss, both human and property.

NIST also states that there should be sufficient redundancy or overlap in the system to allow for simultaneous responses without compromising the safety of the public or the firefighters.

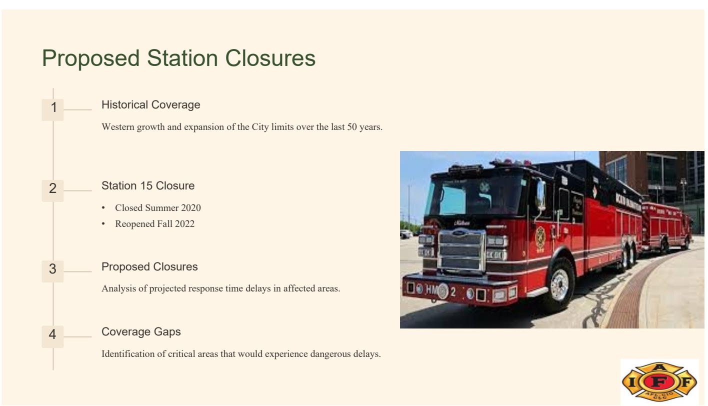
Local 64 requested a GIS Mapping Study, as I referenced earlier through IAFF headquarters, to assist the committee in its work. Five years, 2018-2022, a comprehensive KCKFD call data was collected and submitted. IAFF GIS analysts performed a data-driven roads traveled analysis on the KCKFD's current response capabilities. A roads traveled analysis looks at actual travel routes to incidents based on GIS mapping rather than simplified distance measurements. Other available methods, which consultants and other departments may use, are ill regular diamonds, polygons or concentric circles on maps to identify coverage areas.

These used a fixed criteria that a firetruck can travel 35 mph and 1.5 miles in four minutes. This formula was established by a Rand Study 50 years ago. This is an as the crow flies method, which we all know is unrealistic and an estimate based on averages. There are barriers which prevent the accuracy of these methods. For example, apparatus cannot travel 1.5 miles in all directions. Terrains, rivers, parks, rails, streets that do not pass through, all provide route obstacles just to name a few.

GIS roads travel technology and analysis, if available, which we have and have submitted five years of data is the best and most accurate evaluation of capabilities in need.

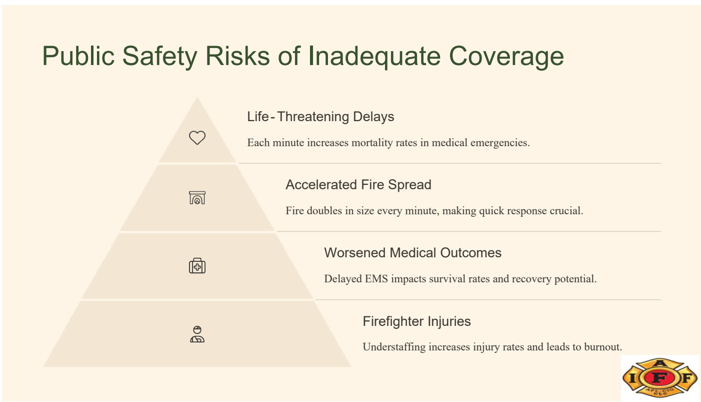
Response Matrix, the IAFF study analyzed the data submitted including timing of and type of incident, deployment of resources, duration of calls, and return to available service time. They then applied the data analysis to the National Standards and Industry Science to determine compliance and deficiencies for the KCKFD.

Current staffing levels verse NFPA 1710. KCKFD operates daily 23 fire suppression companies and nine medic units. 14 of 23 fire suppression apparatus are staffed regularly with a minimum of three firefighters daily. Due to current staffing levels and reduction in overtime, there are days which as many as all 23 companies have been reduced to three firefighter staffing. As we have discussed, NFPA Standards which were established based on the NIST research for crew size and efficiency recommends a minimum of four firefighter staffing per apparatus

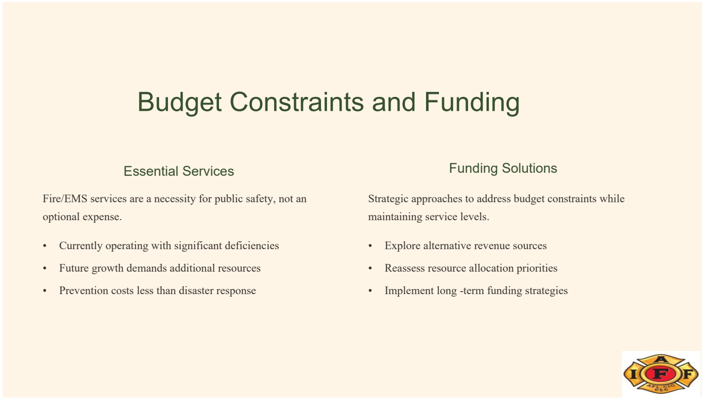


Proposed Station Closures, historically as KCK has grown through western expansion and development, city and fire department leadership has looked at the northeast and east, the urban core for resources to relocate. Five fire stations, which are now located Midtown or west, were originally in the eastern corridor of the city. We currently operate less fire companies now than we had 50 years ago when the area of coverage was much smaller and the call volume was much lower. As you all are aware, Station 15 closed in 2020 to relocate that apparatus to the new Piper Fire Station. With the efforts of the union, this Mayor, and this Commission, Station 15 reopened in 2022 restoring service to the Fairfax area.

Proposed closures, any proposed future closure of an existing fire station or any existing fire station should be considered a reduction in service. This would also include any temporary closure which would be considered a brownout due to shortage of staffing. Any closure will create gaps in coverage where we are currently providing service; however, would no longer meet the standards. Our IAFF GIS Study will show identified response delays in areas where other closures have been discussed.

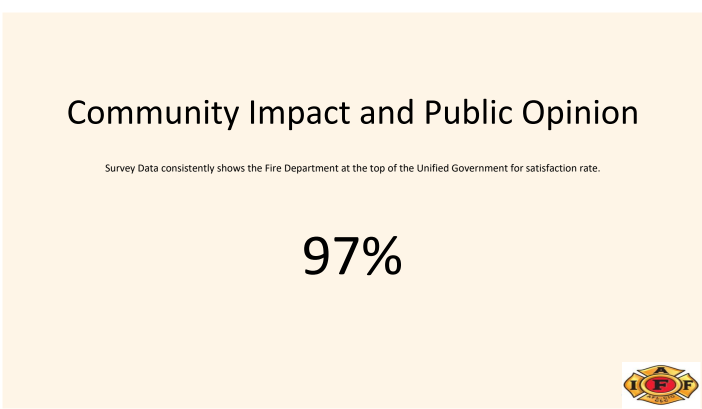


Public Safety Risks of Inadequate Coverage, per the American Heart Association, each minute increases mortality rates between 7 and 10% in medical emergencies. Accelerated Fire Spread, as the NIST Science on Fire Behavior establishes, fire doubles in size each minute, making quick response crucial. In another video that you all have seen on a couple of occasions from NIST, which was the apartment fire, a small fire in an apartment on a couch reached the point of a fully involved apartment in less than three minutes. If we refer back to crew efficiency studies and the fact that a four firefighter crew is 25% more efficient and completes fire ground task 5.1 minutes faster than a three firefighter crew. It emphasizes how important minimum staffing is. Medical outcomes may be affected as delayed EMS response impacts survival rates and recovery potential and firefighter injuries, understaffing can lead to increased firefighter injuries, overexertion, and burnout.



Budget Constraints and Funding, Fire and EMS are essential services and a necessity for public safety, not an optional expense. We are currently operating with significant deficiencies. We do not meet response time standards, nor are we compliant with minimum staffing recommendations. Future growth will increase demand and require additional resources. Call volume has consistently increased and likely will continue to do so with future development and population growth. Current large developments such as the American Royal, Margaritaville, Buc-ee's, baseball and soccer complexes, numerous apartment complexes, the downtown community college campus will increase demand. Taking a proactive approach to establishing appropriate resources reduces loss and damage to property, preserves life, and minimizes injury.

Funding Solutions, Local 64 fully understands the scope and commitment which will have to be made to address the needs of the Fire Department. The parties should explore all potential revenue sources to include available grant programs and potential public/private partnerships. We should reassess resource allocation priorities and service demand and make adjustments as necessary to optimize service. We should implement and secure long-term funding strategies.



Community Impact and Public Opinion, survey data consistently shows from the community that the Fire Department is at the top of the UG for community satisfaction. A recent internal survey by the Fire Department showed a satisfaction rate of over 97%. I want to emphasize the high approval rating should be attributed to the dedication of the membership and the work they do providing service to the citizens and visitors of this community with the resources we currently have. We should continually strive to provide a level of service to our community which the public has come to expect and deserves.

Proposed Solutions

- The KCKFD should maintain existing station coverage.
- Continue to evaluate and address areas of deficiency and future growth.
- The KCKFD should increase minimum daily staffing to become compliant with recognized national safety standards.
- Strategies for optimizing resources without sacrificing safety.
- Evaluate potential policy adjustments to meet NFPA 1710 compliance.

Proposed Solutions, KCKFD should maintain all existing fire station coverage. The Fire Department should continually evaluate and address areas of deficiency and future growth. The KCKFD should increase minimum daily staffing levels to four firefighters per apparatus at all times to become compliant with recognized National Safety Standards. We should consider strategies to optimize resources without jeopardizing safety and we should evaluate potential policy adjustments to meet 1710 compliance.

STATION	ADDRESS	AGE – YEARS	CONDITION	RECOMMENDATION
1 – HQ	815 N. 6th Street	95	Poor	Build New
2	6241 State Avenue	46	Poor	Remodel
3	420 Kansas Avenue	74	Deplorable	Build New
4	3044 N. 82nd Street	68	Deplorable	Build New
5	910 Quindaro Blvd.	70	Deplorable	Build New
6	9548 State Avenue	24	Poor	Remodel
7	2717 Strong Avenue	74	Deplorable	Build New
8	3131 N. 123rd Street	46	Deplorable	Build New
9	1100 Central Avenue	58	Poor	Build New
10	2210 W. 36th Avenue	30	Poor	Remodel
11	3100 State Avenue	101	Deplorable	Build New
12	2913 Hutton Road	5	Near New	New – no action
14	2615 N. 27th Street	69	Deplorable	Build New
15	444 Kindleberger Road	38	Poor	Remodel
16	1900 S. 55th Street	1	New	New – no action
18	5429 Leavenworth Road	47	Poor	Remodel
19	1011 N. 80th Terrace	53	Poor	Remodel
20	72nd Street & Kansas Avenue	00	Pending - NEW	Start Construction

Here you'll see KCKFD station table. It shows location, age, condition, and recommendation. Local 64's recommendations. Most are in need of significant rare repair or be rebuilt. You all are aware of this. We've talked about this in our last couple of sessions. As was presented in September on our initial report, the Fire Department and union are in agreement on that fact. This point was reiterated by Chief Rubin in his presentation on March 27th. Local 64 proposes three forms of action. Build new, remodel current building, which would be a complete renovation to modernize the building, address code compliance, ensure safety and privacy for the employees, as well as implement health and safety preventative measures to include cancer reduction.

Stations 12, 16, and 20 are near new, new or needing to start construction. Station 20, to our understanding, has been authorized and funded. The initial construction phases have begun. Work has been completed. I don't believe they've broke ground. Local 64's recommendation would be to begin construction as soon as possible. Local 64 would also propose that we jointly evaluate the need of each location with respect to resources as best as possible when making determination on building size and capacity to optimize available funds. Additionally, site selection should be a task of the committee when looking at future buildings as well.

A site for Station 20 was selected and purchased by the last Fire Administration with no input from this committee. Local 64's opinion is that this is not the best site when considering overall coverage. There is a resulting roads traveled effect on overall coverage and neighboring fire stations when any site is selected or any relocation is made. A site should be selected with the big picture and overall coverage in mind.

It has just come to our attention that the University of Kansas Hospital has been approached by the Fire Department Administration regarding relocation of current Station 10. That topic was raised in the committee sometime back by Local 64 that we should explore that possibility if they would like to partner with us on a fire station. This makes that point. If this is a collaborative process, then we should have been at least made aware. We had no idea they were going to approach KU. If that's a realistic option, then that site selection should come from this committee with overall coverage in mind.

PHASE 1

NEW BUILD	RENOVATION
STATION 8	STATION 10
STATION 4	STATION 2
STATION 9	STATION 18
STATION 14	STATION 19
TRAINING FACILITY	

Our building recommendations. Local 64 recommends a two-phase plan to address station conditions. As you'll see, each phase will include both new build and complete remodels. We recommend fully completing Phase 1 before proceeding to Phase 2. Timeframe can be accelerated with additional funding and depending on progress. As you can see in Phase 1, Local 64 recommends rebuilding Stations 8, 4, 9, and 14 and renovating Stations 10, 2, 18 and 19. In Phase 1 we also have included the construction of a Fire Department training facility. The current KCKFD training facility is not adequate for a department of our size. Initial and ongoing training is critical in the fire service to ensure preparedness and safety of the public and the firefighters.

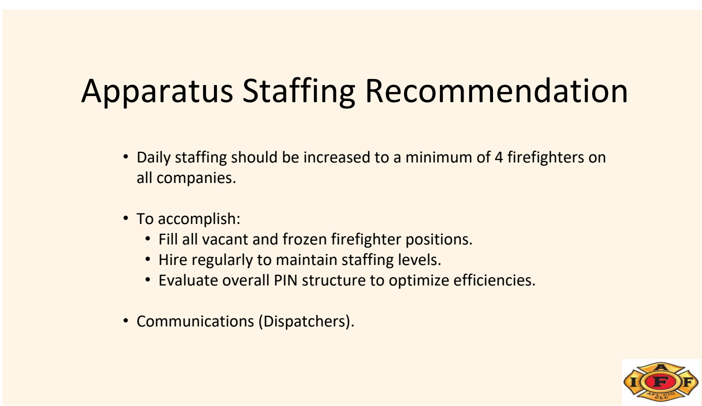
PHASE 2

NEW BUILD	RENOVATION
STATION 11	STATION 15
STATION 7	STATION 6
STATION 3	STATION 12
STATION 5	STATION 16
STATION 1	STATION 20

In Phase 2, you will see rebuilds and remodels as well. We are recommending the rebuilding of Stations 11, 7, 3, 5, and 1. We also recommend remodels for Stations 15, 6, 12, 16, and 20. As you see, Station 12, 16, and once complete Station 20, are or will be our newest buildings. We are recommending no immediate action on those buildings. However, in the outyears of this plan, those stations will likely be upwards of 20 years old. Renovation should be planned to maintain serviceability and function. This plan should be flexible and subject to adjustment due to emergencies that arise, growth, other identified needs. Lastly, the union would recommend consideration of additional future fire stations and resources in addition to our current buildings to address deficiencies in coverage and anticipated growth and development of the community. Multiple IAFF and ISO studies over the last 15 years have made similar recommendations.

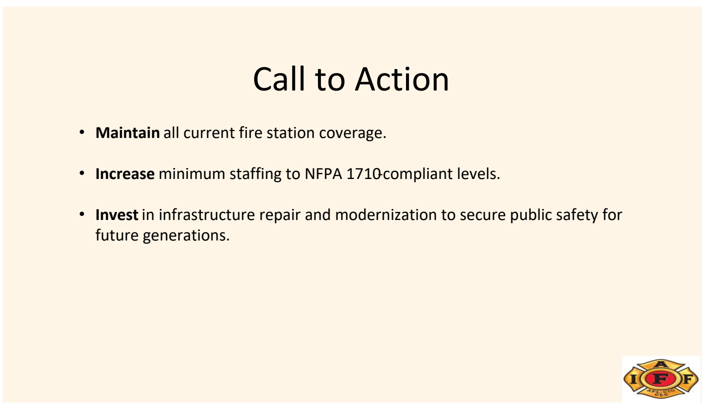
The Fire Department is in need of additional resources. Data shows deficiencies in current coverage and the need for additional fire stations, fire companies, and ambulances. This can potentially be addressed with new buildings being located more optimally for improved coverage in their original districts and new fire stations being constructed in uncovered areas of the community such as Piper, which we know needs additional fire stations.

The scope of addressing the current building condition is large. This has been allowed to develop over a number of decades. This Commission inherited the problem; however, we need to develop a way to address it. No one in this room was responsible for what happened 20, 30 and 40 years ago as these buildings declined, but we have the problem in front of us that we have. This fact also emphasizes the need for adequate maintenance and upkeep to prevent future deterioration of the facilities.

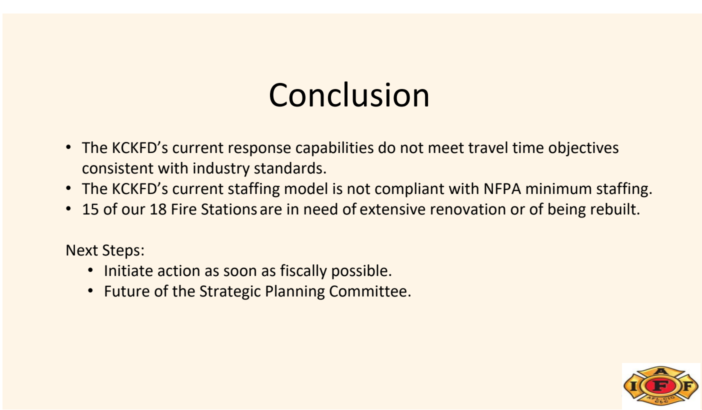


Apparatus Staffing Recommendations: Daily staffing should be increased to a minimum of four firefighters on all companies. To accomplish this, we should fill all vacant and frozen firefighter positions. We currently have 12 frozen positions and an unknown number of vacancies due to regular attrition. We should hire regularly to maintain staffing levels and minimize overtime. And we should evaluate overall PIN structure to optimize efficiencies and determine additional needs.

The Communication Division, our Dispatchers, the union recommends that the Fire Department increase the number of bargaining unit dispatchers in the Communication Center. Communications is an essential first step in the response to requests for emergency assistance for all call types. NFPA 1710 incorporates into its overall timeframe—or excuse me, response time recommendations and established timeframe for the jurisdictional communication center's receipt and processing of a request for aid and dispatch of appropriate resources. The Fire Department has historically struggled to maintain staffing in the Fire Communication Center. Dispatchers have a difficult and stressful job as the first link to the public when requesting assistance. Understaffing drives fatigue and burnout as well as mandatory forced overtime and may cause delays in processing requests and response to service.



Our Call to Action, the UG should maintain all current fire station coverage. We should increase minimum staffing to NFPA 1710 compliant levels. We should invest in infrastructure repair and modernization to secure public safety into the future. The UG Fire Department and union should work jointly to optimize resources to ensure the safety of the public and the health and safety of the firefighters. Local 64 is committed to collaboration on solutions. We live here and we work here. We want what is in the best interest of the public and the city as a whole.



In conclusion, the KCKFD's current response capabilities do not meet travel time requirements consistent with industry standards. The KCKFD's current staffing model is not compliant with NFPA minimum staffing. 15 of our 18 stations we showed on that station chart are in need of extensive renovation or being rebuilt. The KCKFD needs additional fire stations, fire companies, and ambulances.

As next steps, we suggest continuing an ongoing conversation and discussion. We suggest that we initiate action as soon as fiscally possible. This will help control costs into the future due to inflation and rising construction costs. With regard to the future of the Strategic Planning Committee, the Fire Department and the union have agreed that the committee should remain in place as a Standing Committee with the purpose of meeting quarterly to monitor progress and continually evaluate developing needs and deliver annual reports to the Commission.

On behalf of Local 64, our membership, and our executive board, I would like to thank you again for allowing us to present these findings to you and for your thoughtful consideration of our needs and we stand for questions.

Commissioner Burns said thank you, J.J., for the presentation. Did you put a fiscal note on Phase 1 and 2 on what it would cost to do what you're recommending? **Mr. Simma** said no, we did not and I will tell you why. Local 64 focused on the established factors as I discussed earlier in the Memorandum of Agreement for us to look at with regards to developing our Master Plan and our recommendations. Our scope to be able to—I believe it is out of our scope to be able to accurately project the cost of a project of that nature. We focused as a Local on delivering to you all what we believe the data suggests that we need. With respect to cost, I believe those are conversations that now need to be had and we are certainly happy to collaborate on those if we can. **Commissioner Burns** said so who would be qualified to make estimates? **Mr. Simma** said we would probably have to sit down with all the Finance people of the Unified Government, the Fire Department, and the committee as a whole, and then look into what we're talking about with regards to individual stations, how much staffing increases would cost. The other component of that that's going to be difficult is building nine fire stations, some of which may not be for another 10 to 15 years, may be very difficult to project the cost of.

As we had our discussions internally, there was discussion in the committee about numbers, but as we had our discussions internally, we didn't feel that we could accurately put a number on it and from this point that should be looked at and developed. **Commissioner Burns** asked, is Dennis here tonight? **Someone** said no. **Commissioner Burns** said did he have a good reason not to come? **Someone** said he had pre-arranged meetings that he had planned several months ago. He's in a Fire Chief's Metro Committee at this time. **Commissioner Burns** said so, is the taxpayers paying for him to do that or is he doing it on his own? **Someone** was inaudible. **Commissioner Burns** said no, the trip in particular to get there and back. **Someone** said, Commissioner Burns, I can't speak for Chief Rubin at this time—(inaudible). **Commissioner Burns** said well, I kind of consider an insult that he's not here as important as this is and as much as the Fire Union 64 wants to get along with the Administration, Fire Administration, it just makes it difficult.

Bridgette Cobbins, Assistant County Administrator, said these presentations were originally scheduled in March and before that time Chief Rubin's time had been approved and it's a project that he's working on outside of the UG's compensation. He's compensating himself for this tour that he's on. But these were originally scheduled back in March to come before Commission, but because of timing and scheduling, we had to push it out and this was the best date that was best for the union to be able to present to the Commission tonight, so that's why Chief Rubin is not here tonight. **Commissioner Burns** said well, I just was concerned that he wasn't here to listen to the union. **Ms. Cobbins** said he was scheduled to be at the meeting in March that the IAFF was going to present, but due to scheduling—and it had been approved back in January, that's why he's not here tonight.

Mayor Garner said just for clarity, I don't know, Ms. Cobbins or CFO, the commissioner asked for projections for these phases. I don't know if there's an estimate, how much does it cost to build a fire station. Do we know in today's dollar, just a rough estimate based on what we've already built and if you take these projections into account that you've all presented, just an overall guesstimate of probably what we're looking at or the commissioners would be looking at when you talk about what that would be as far as its totality Phase 1 and maybe Phase 2 if this Commission chose to expeditiously move down that road to work with both the Fire and Local 64. **Ms. Cobbins** said as J.J. mentioned, we've been talking about this Master Plan for about two years now and we decided as a committee not to provide dollar amounts because as he indicated, we just weren't quite sure where the government was going to be at in a position to start approving those phases. So, for right, we've been going on tours as we speak with IAFF to other municipalities fire stations and we're finding that on average, depending on the site and how many bays, on average three bays, about 13-15M is what we're seeing. We didn't want to put those dollar amounts in our Master Plan because then it would be stagnant in the years in which we would be looking at the future buildouts. So, that was the determination that the committee made at the time was to not put in dollar amounts because we knew it would be old data once we started getting the approval to move forward.

Mayor Garner said now, on top of that, these new fire stations, will we use existing apparatuses or will we be acquiring new apparatus to coincide with these stations? **Mr. Simma** said under our recommendations the existing fire stations that we believe need to be rebuilt, that we are recommending be rebuilt would be similar to the Turner Fire Station. We would build it and move into it with the existing crews and companies that were working down the street in that other fire station. We would just be replacing the older building with that. If we start talking about—and as I mentioned, we are in need of and it's been identified in multiple studies additional companies and resources if we build a new fire station in the Piper area, we shouldn't take from somewhere else just as we shouldn't have taken from Fairfax a few years ago. So, it's going to depend on which one we're talking about building and I'll elaborate a little bit on the stations.

They vary greatly just based on what the size and what you're going to do. As Bridgette was saying, we've got some additional research as we've been looking, trying to look post-COVID, we know what we've done here and we know what several others in the community—and we've only been on one tour, we're going on another one in a couple of weeks, but they can range probably from anywhere from 8-13M depending on size. If you're a two-bay fire station with four firefighters or they're going to house essentially four firefighters or if you're a four-bay fire station and you're going to house 10 firefighters, so it does range fairly significantly, depends on what you actually need for your community.

Mayor Garner said help me out, back up your recommendations on fire stations, how many were those in both Phase 1 and Phase 2? **Mr. Simma** said nine rebuilds. So, nine new stations replacing old stations that are outdated and need to be decommissioned, six remodels, 15 of the 18 with immediate action or necessary action. The other three are the new ones and the future Station 20 that's ready to start construction.

Mayor Garner said just off the estimates that Ms. Cobbins gave us, I'm just looking and this is just general math, it's just nothing exact, but I'm looking at possibly $135M for nine stations potentially and that's just a rough guesstimate, I would think. And then if you add the cost of how much—we're doing three that you said as far as firefighter staffing per a rig, if we update how much—do we know what is the cost per person to staff? If you were to hire me today, what's the UG's investment salary and benefits for a firefighter. Do we have a—**Mr. Simma** said a fully staffed fire company with four firefighters would be a Captain, a Driver, and two backend firefighters. We could probably do some quick math on it for you because a Captain is a ranking officer, so it's going to be a little higher. Those backend firefighters could range from 10 or 15 years on to a brand new one that's just been hired, so that salary range is going to vary greatly, but that company probably is in the neighborhood salary-wise—do you guys have those numbers--$350K annual salary per company and that's a guess for one company.

Mayor Garner said and we're talking about if you go back, how many companies did you say needed? **Mr. Simma** said we have 23 companies. We don't need 23 new companies, but we need on 14 of those companies to staff that fourth firefighter every single day. Now, that doesn't necessarily mean we need 14 new firefighters per shift. We have some of them in the system, but it means that we need to work them every day to bring our staffing up to compliant levels. **Mayor Garner** said just simple math, again, we're looking at adding two firefighters and a Captain to bring you all up to the standards that you had talked about potentially. **Mr. Simma** said not necessarily because you already have a Captain and a Driver on every one of those apparatus, but it's adding the fourth firefighter. **Mayor Garner** said just adding the fourth firefighter, so we're looking at just one more firefighter. **Mr. Simma** said one more firefighter on 14 companies and again, that doesn't mean we need 14 new firefighters because we have some of them in the system. We have an academy getting ready to graduate. We have the frozen PINS, so they're in the system as well, but they're just not filled. **Mayor Garner** said okay, thank you for that information.

Ms. Cobbins said, Mayor, we have been talking about future discussions with our planning and our group to have those deeper dive discussions. We didn't quite know what would happen after we presented the Master Plan, but our due diligence going forward is to have those committees to meet on a regular basis. We had even talked about coming before the Public Works & Safety Standing Committee more frequently just giving updates as to where we should be at from a staffing aspect for updating our apparatuses and for looking at remodel options and actual new builds. This is something that we've committed to with the IAFF and Fire Administration for the next three, four years to just continue that dialogue and to see what we need to do to get them whole and to make sure that their staffing numbers are adequate and that we have the appropriate apparatus and equipment.

Mayor Garner said I apologize, I wasn't able to attend the last meeting. I know Commissioner Burroughs filled in for me. How does your proposal bridge with fire command's proposal as far as staffing levels? **Mr. Simma** said I'll comment initially. We are in agreement that we don't meet the National Standards, the Fire Department and the union and the committee that whenever we run with less than four firefighters, we are not meeting the standard and we should be. With that being said, the Fire Chief didn't, and I can let Bridgette speak to it, didn't bring forth the full number of stations and the full number of people that we would need. He brought forth an initial phase and I'll let Bridgette—I don't want to speak for him. I'd like to let Bridgette or the Fire Department elaborate on what he brought forth. So, there's some differences in how we get there essentially. **Mayor Garner** said I don't want to speak for the Fire Chief. I know that you all are in continued discussions. Really, for the Commission, myself, and for anybody viewing, I'm just trying to get, I guess, a baseline on cost. You've all done a great job with the presentation on what you're recommending as possible fire stations, but really it's going to come down to the financials. I think those are the biggest things as well as how do we staff to bring you all up to standards. I just wanted people to kind of wrap their heads around this and try and maybe put a guesstimate of a dollar amount that we may be looking at.

Mr. Simma said, Mayor, on that note I would just say that we do anticipate and did anticipate there's going to have to be further conversations to identify some of those actual ways to get there and nail down the actual numbers. It's very difficult to project some of that until we can really get down to the hard numbers and crunching those and that's probably one of the next things that has to be done through further conversation. **Mayor Garner** said, yeah, I think that's really key because we can project fire stations and personnel, but really it comes down to dollar signs. That's really what a lot of our constituents are going to look at and really weigh in on the Commission, how do we get you all to where you need to be financially and phase this out in a responsible way. Thank you for that information.

Commissioner Ramirez said thank you for the presentation and first thank you to all the men and women of the Fire Department for the hard work they do. I appreciate the explanation of why there were no numbers instead of coming forth and saying you didn't think it was necessary to bring numbers from the previous response we got. So, I appreciate the explanation of it. It is hard and I appreciate that you guys are going to work with command staff, our staff, UG staff to try and get those numbers solid as best as you can and I know it's hard especially in the economic dynamic we're in right now it is much harder.

With the funding sources, you know, one of the bullet points you said is explore alternative revenue sources. What have you seen across the country of other organizations of using alternative revenue sources? **Mr. Simma** said so, there's multiple ways, but there are other departments that have used sales tax initiatives, that have used bond issues, that have used Usage Taxes. As I mentioned, grant programs. I mean even if you just get one fire station through a grant, that's one fire station you didn't have to pay for. Public/Private partnership is one that we would highly suggest we explore. I mean the conversation with KU is along those lines. General Motors did it with Fairfax 40 years ago. We've got all the development in the west. We should be actively exploring those options. We're bringing quite a bit of development into the community and they're going to need service as I discussed. It's going to drive call demand, so we should be exploring all those options as well and we should be anticipating those developments so that we can try to be prepared as they construct and go up and open so we're ready to provide service.

Commissioner Ramirez said you mentioned the Public/Private—you mentioned about Station 10 and KU. Was there an issues or was this the union not made aware of those initial conversations? **Mr. Simma** said it was discussed in the committee that being Station 10's location is near State Line and there may be a more optimal place to put it within that same territory in Rosedale to still provide service. But essentially expand its coverage by moving it a little off of State Line potentially and with the way KU is building that entire area, it was discussed that a partnership might work for that fire station to be relocated into a more optimal site and it might work for everybody involved, the UG, the Fire Department, and KU. That was several months ago. It's not that the conversation was had. We had no idea the conversation was going to be had.

Again, if we're going to collaborate and work on these things together, then that should be just what it is. As I said, if there is a site selected and that becomes a reality, that shouldn't just be picked out of thin air. We should be evaluating the data for the most optimal location to try to place that fire station with the available funds and available property and then making that decision so that it fits into the entire coverage plan versus just picking something and going over there and building a new fire station that may not really work for us any better.

Commissioner Ramirez said and from top of my head, knowing my district, I don't know what much area else there could be around Rosedale for a new fire station that's not close to State Line because the majority of Rosedale, unless we want to build it right in Rosedale Park, that's about the only place where I can see there's a lot of land open for a fire station. Everything else is already built out. So, I would be interested to see how that conversation continues and how site selection happens, but I hope the union is part of those conversations, as you said, to keep up that collaborative environment and relationship that you have tried so hard to keep with command staff and just UG staff in general. It will be interesting to see.

My last question, I don't know if it's a question you can answer or if it's a question for our Administration. How are we going to—we have Command Staff's Master Plan, now we have the Union's Master Plan, where do we go from here. How are we going to marry them, what are we going to take from each. What are our steps moving forward of how to bring these two together?

Ms. Cobbins said now that we have the final report from IAFF we will take both plans, and to be honest, I've been involved in this for about three years and there are a lot of things that are really similar. There are just a few areas that they may have totally different stances on, but I think it's going to put us in a good position to be able to merge both of the Master Plans together to try to figure out the commonalities and to figure out what we need to do going forward on the areas that we may have to come back and have further discussion. We will get together and look at them and go step-by-step and we'll go down the apparatus. We'll look at the staffing, we'll look at the remodels, we'll look at the new builds, we'll look at the reconstruction, so we will do a side-by-side comparison of both and we knew going into this that we wouldn't have one document that was going to be a one-size-fits-all for Fire Administration and for IAFF. So, we were aware of that and so we're just glad that we were able to finally come to a consensus on the areas that we do agree with and then those few areas that we don't quite have 100% commonality, we'll get there.

I think the first phase is having it documented, which we have done and now we'll just go through the phases of merging it and looking at it line by line as to what we can do in the different phases of getting things done.

Commissioner Ramirez said now let's say there's a scenario—I hope this doesn't happen, but let's say there's a scenario where it comes to stations and either new ones built, either remodeled or what have you, and there cannot be consensus between command staff and IAFF, will the Commission be the ones to make the final decision or will that be staff if there's no consensus can be made. **Ms. Cobbins** said we've talked about that on our Task Force Committee and we've talked about using the Public Works & Safety Standing Committee as a pipeline to bring those conversations to have a bigger discussion with the elected body.

Commissioner Ramirez said okay, and I know this may be a difficult question to answer, what is the timeline looking like? **Ms. Cobbins** said I think it's going to be contingent upon what the body does as far as our future funding stream for debt and for what we'll be looking at in the future. So, we're all waiting anxiously to see what the Commission will do for 2026 and beyond and then that will give us a good gauge where we can really start having those conversations of what a Phase 1 really looks like.

Mayor Garner said I'm one of three Mayors in your district, Commissioner. I know when I was on the Police Department my first area of patrol was Rosedale, that's where I patrolled, but I currently live there. I would love to team up with you and tour. I know of several locations if they needed to move, that would probably be good optimum locations for fire stations that we could probably look at together and ride around and probably have the union and maybe somebody from command to just explore those possibilities. But I know there's some good locations there to be able to do that.

I can say too for those of you that haven't toured any of the fire stations, I know I've gone to several, the new ones are really nice, but there's less than—I can count on one hand with fingers left over how many new fire stations there are. The fire stations that are there, some of them are very deplorable when you talk about the conditions that our Public Safety professionals have to work in. I go in there and I sit with them. They don't complain. They're committed, they do their job, but I can tell you—I challenge our commissioners to just take a moment with union folks and maybe command and see for yourself. I worry about their safety due to some of the deplorable living conditions that we're forcing our Public Safety professionals to live in. I know staff has done what they could with the dollars that have been approved. Like I believe the one at Klamm Park, the kitchen got updated, but there's so much more. If you go look at the bedrooms and things like that, the bathrooms, the living quarters, it's just not something that I would feel comfortable having to stay 24 hours in. This is something of an urgent matter, but we know that. I go back to how we got here and I'm really happy to see that the union and the command don't agree on everything, don't expect you to. Union, Labor and management don't always agree on everything, but what I can tell you they do agree on is that they are communicating, they are talking. I can tell you before I became Mayor, and this union will tell you, they didn't even have a channel or an open door of communication with the command staff of the fire union, let alone the Commission or anybody in staff. So, we've come a long way in just a short period of time to make sure they had a solid contract and to make sure that those channels of communication are wide open to move what we know is necessary forward when we talk about supporting our Public Safety professionals. I always say if we're going to have a safe—if we're going to have a great Kansas City, Kansas, you've got to have a safe Kansas City, Kansas and so these are critical investments.

Commissioner Kane said Panasonic was required to build a fire station in DeSoto and we've got a couple of major projects coming out west and there's no reason why they can't--$12B project, there's no reason why they can't build one for us. And actually the study that they did some time ago says Piper needs two more fire stations, not one. **Mr. Simma** said correct. **Commissioner Kane** said how many fire stations have been built in the last 20 years. **Mr. Simma** said two. **Commissioner Kane** said yeah, two and number 12 it took five years to build it and they were supposed to have another company out there and the former Mayor and the former Administrator robbed Station 15 and moved those folks out west to fill it and that is not what the Commission originally agreed on. Then, they shut the place down and thank God this Commission and the Mayor opened it back up.

Something else that happened at the same time, they could—for Station 12—FEMA would have paid for the first three years of the guys working out there. Is that correct? **Mr. Simma** said correct. **Commissioner Kane** said and we didn't even look at them. They could have got new trucks, wouldn't even look at them. We had multiple opportunities to look around and save us a bunch of money, free money, grants and we didn't do anything. We sat on it and it was all political. It's super frustrating that has to happen and you all know I worked on a joint program for 21 years and we would go behind closed doors and shit hit the fan and then we came back and we'd figure it out. We're not going to agree on everything. What you don't agree on, then we should be the ones that say, hey, this is what you should do.

This is crazy too. When we build fire stations that are Taj Mahals, I want to build something that we need, not something that we want and this goes back to them, their vehicles and stuff like that. We shouldn't drive vehicles that fancy. You know it's frustrating for me, my 20th year, we're still talking about one of the very first things we talked about when I got here and we got two fire stations and I couldn't tell you how much Wyandotte County has grown in the last 20 years. I mean it's astronomical. You got a new high school out there, out west. You've got all kinds of things and if you're out there by Savior of the World, the closest fire station, which is an old pole barn at 123rd Street and the other one is on Nelson out in Bonner, is that right, a hell of a long ways away and it won't get there in eight minutes let alone four. I realize we have mutual aid, but that's kind of a joke.

We need to figure out a way to get what we need, not what we want. I don't believe that 72nd & Kansas Avenue is the place to put the new fire station and I think that we need to regroup as a committee, as a Commission with maybe you guys and go out there and figure out which one it is and cut the crap. I know what it's like to have somebody tell me I'm going to get this rammed down my throat and I don't like it. But I'm also a believer that we can work together. You guys did it before, you can do it again and sometimes we need a nudge because we have a responsibility to you folks, to the fire staff and you know the fact that we're running shy on firemen now—and let's say you get a guy my size and they got to try to get this old boy up in the ambulance—I'm serious because they had to get me in one. These are things that we don't see. I got to see it firsthand. Sometimes you just need that extra person there and it's a requirement anyway. So, what do you do, wait until you get another company there to help. **Mr. Simma** said we can. We have had to call for additional help. **Commissioner Kane** said that's something you got to think about. Does your family member want to lay on a gurney and can't get in the ambulance because of poor health and you've got to wait an extra four to eight minutes for somebody to show up. A lot of stuff can happen in that short amount of time and tomorrow there's something that's terrible happening and it just shows you the danger that the Fire Department faces every day all day and it's sad to think about that happened and God forbid it never happens again.

Mayor Garner said I'd like to piggyback off of Commissioner Kane's comments. It didn't make sense to me and I'd like to commend Commissioner Kane, Commissioner Bynum and Commissioner Burroughs. When we heard about Station 15 and we opened that channel of communication. One of the first things we did was go down there and tour it and we made a call to action, worked with the staff and got that station open at the recommendation—it didn't make sense to have that area without the appropriate coverage especially with all the industrials down there. I can tell you, Commissioner Kane, I totally agree with you in regards to making sure that we have the right personnel. I know a lot of people in the public say why do we spend so much money on Public Safety, you know, it's almost half of our budget and it goes back to my statement, if you're going to have a great community, you got to have a safe community. People will put up, for those of you that may be watching, and you look at our budget figures it's like, wow, we spent a lot on Police, Fire, EMS and those types of things. You have to because folks will put up with bad politicians, a raggedy Mayor, staff that doesn't have good customer service, but I'm going to tell you what, when they dial 911 and grandma needs to get to the hospital and can't get to the hospital or they dial 911 because they've been robbed or being robbed and the police don't get there in the right amount of time and taxes are high, they're going to move and say I'm not paying for this. They're going to move and take their tax dollars somewhere else, so that's why I always say if you're going to have a great community, you got to have a safe community. Public Safety has to be number one. When you talk, it's not just about the money, for me just coming from my background, I've always said what price are you going to put on saving people's lives and that's what this is about. You've got to support Public Safety, so thank you.

Commissioner Bynum said, President Simma, I appreciate the report. I know how seriously you and the E-board take this information and I know that you worked really hard to research and bring the data, so it's very much appreciated. Circling back to comments that have been made by Commissioner Ramirez and other commissioners with regard to getting back together with fire leadership to find out where you have agreement within your two master plans and somehow merging documents, I personally would request that we know what the top one or two or three items are in priority among the two groups before we start making budget decisions, not after. I would flip that because it's May 1st and we're going to adopt a budget this summer and I don't think you all waiting for us to decide what we might be willing to put in a budget for buildings or people or equipment is what you really want because we're relying on the expertise of fire leadership and the union to tell us what is the most important thing we could do for you right now if we could do something in this coming budget cycle. And that's an if because we don't even know if we can. So, I'm just flipping that a little bit. Don't wait for us to decide if there's room in our budget for something you want. We need to know that. We need to know that now. We need to know that by the end of the month or we can't help you with it. Just my opinion.

Mayor Garner said I'll piggyback off of Commissioner Bynum. I'm big on options and I know some of the commissioners aren't sold on, for example, the 72nd & Kansas Avenue location. It's good to always have two or three options for this Commission to consider based on the recommendations from both the union and command as what's best for Public Safety and so if you all could even do that and my request is not only look at the financials on cost of personnel, apparatuses if it's needed for these fire stations, the amount of fire stations, the cost for, I guess, totality of Phase 1, Phase 2, maybe a 5-year plan, 10-year plan. I don't know what that looks like and then options. If there are facilities that are like—Commissioner Kane talked about ones that are—we need them fixed today because the ceilings are falling out. I've gone to some fire stations and I've just seen mattresses sitting on stilts. That's unacceptable how we treat our Public Safety professionals. We need to make sure that they have what they need. I like all those financing options. It would be great and I'm glad that command and the union are working together. Look at those financing options, so when you talk about options, bring some of those recommendations back to this Commission, things that they can act on today if necessary. I'm big on, you know, there's a lot of discontent with high property taxes or the perception of that here in Wyandotte County. We all know that. BPU and all those things when you talk about taxes and fees that we're all struggling as policymakers to try and address.

But at the end of the day, from day one, I brought a budget recommendation to this Commission and I suggested sales tax and the reason I did that is because make the community put some skin in the game and sell it to them. If you want amenities, if you want infrastructure, if you want parks, if you want upgrades, if you want the level of service, I always say it isn't just about what this Mayor, this Commission, and what staff is willing to do, I'd really like to know what the community is willing to do and they should say yes and they should say no on what they want and give them some options on an initiative for sales tax. I know some people say, oh, it's a regressive tax. Well, so is property taxes. People are being put out of their homes. The good thing with sales tax is that people that don't live here pay into that as well and as we grow our community and we get more tourism, we get more people seeing the value and the great things we have to offer to Kansas City, they're going to pour those dollars in here too to help prop up some of those necessities and that's the value of sales taxes. I like the idea of private/public partnerships and cooperative. I'd like to learn more about that, but really you all are the experts.

Like Commissioner Bynum said, bring forth those recommendations so this Commission can make an informed decision on what they feel is best moving forward because they are leaning on you and relying on you. I can tell you this Commission, and I've told all of you, I've talked to everybody and I've told people in the community, this is probably one of the most—and I worked here for 32 years in law enforcement, I have never seen a Commission this supportive of Public Safety than this Commission that you see right now. Every last one of them, all 10 of them, and this Mayor support you guys. We respect you guys and we appreciate the work that you do, both command, because it takes good leadership and the union making sure that you all have good working conditions, pay benefits so you all can provide as the boots on the ground per se the quality of service that our residents not only come to expect, but they deserve from our Public Safety perspective. I just want to say thank you all.

Commissioner Davis said, President Simma, thank you for your leadership of 64. This is very, very educational and informative presentation. There's some things I just want to get some clarity on. I'm looking at my notes from when Chief Rubin gave his presentation and then just today, so I want to get some clarity and I will rely on our staff to get that. So, where are we at right now with Fire Station 20? I don't know if Mr. Johnston, you want to answer or ACA Cobbins, just where are we at because there seems to be kind of mixed messaging on is it funded, is it not funded, how much money's been put in, where are we?

Mayor Garner left the meeting from 6:03 to 6:16 p.m.

Mr. Johnston said I believe that when we had this discussion—when we had some of our other Public Works projects, it was in this nomenclature issue that when we had this issue called when the project was authorized everyone thought it was approved. Well, it may have been authorized but there was never a dollar amount approved for it particularly in the debt issue, so it was in the queue, but it was never in the approved to get dollars for it. **Commissioner Davis** said okay, so currently it has been authorized, it's just not been funded. **Mr. Johnston** said right, it hasn't been funded and so particularly in '25 Budget, remember we did not authorize any debt financing for the '25 Budget. It may have been authorized, but there's no debt financing for any debt finance, so if there's no debt, it's not to be funded so there was no debt to back the project. So, it then would be on the shelf to be considered for the '26 Budget.

Commissioner Davis said gotcha. I'll agree with the Mayor and Commissioner Bynum. I think if you all gave us kind of a best case scenario for the fire stations remodel, what you can live with and then what's the bare minimum of how many you would want to do whether it's one station for every two years, one remodel a year, some sort of strategy that we can tinker with really helps especially as we are considering the budget. That can just help, particularly for the community, what the impact will be.

The last thing I'll say and I know we have Dr. Kneuvean here from Finance, do we have a number on what the sales tax is generating right now for Capital just every year because it's not as though we aren't making investments in our Fire Department, we are. You all are the most expensive department and so there is this question of we need more revenue, there's also this question of how are we stewarding what we have and is there a strategy there.

Shelley Kneuvean, Chief Financial Officer, said for the Dedicated Sales Tax? **Commissioner Davis** said yes. **Ms. Kneuvean** said it's about $14M a year and a third of that goes to Fire, a third goes to Police, and a third goes to Neighborhood Infrastructure. Now, in Fire and Police, there are 25 each personnel that are funded and some Capital. That is what's fund—how they've used the money basically, but there's that funding source, there's the EMS Fund, there's the City General Fund, which has sales tax in it. So, there's a variety of places that we budget for them.

Commissioner Davis said gotcha. I thought we had moved from, and maybe I misheard, from using that sales tax to fund personnel. I do remember having that conversation. **Ms.**

Kneuvean said so that's the Road & Highway Fund and where some of our Public Works folks are and over time we're moving them so that we can dedicate those funds to infrastructure, but we don't have the capacity to do it all at once. But I will say in the Dedicated Sales Tax for the Public Works section, for the Neighborhood Infrastructure, that is all Capital, but your recollection's right, it's just a different fund. **Commissioner Davis** said okay, but when it comes to Fire and Police, they're using it for personnel. **Ms. Kneuvean** said yeah, and when it was originally authorized by the voters, that was part of the narrative, so it was planned that way, it's always been used that way. **Commissioner Davis** said gotcha. I mean there could be some opportunity there if there's some other fundings that could absorb the personnel cost that can then free up investment for remodel and/or new station buildout. Okay, that's all my questions.

Commissioner Stites said first off, thank you for the presentation. I made a couple notes here as you were giving your presentation and the future growth I think has got to be something that we really focus on because there are a lot of projects that are slated out west. As we look at not only the Fire Department, but the Police Department, they're in that same situation. They don't have a police station west of 80th & State Avenue at—what is that, Station 19, right. **Mr. Simma** said correct. **Commissioner Stites** said if you remember in the presentation that was brought before us by the Chief, I had mentioned the combo stations and what that could potentially look like. I just took a number if we—you know we were talking about what it costs to build a station, $10M, 15M, 11M, so I just took 10M, so if it was 10M to build a fire station and 10M to build a police station, if we brought the two together, maybe we get both built for 15M. So there's a savings there that it looks like that could be had if we're looking at some combination stations.

I do like the idea of that public/private partnership of how we can lean on others. I'm going to tell you I don't necessarily, and I'm not here to disagree with the Mayor, but when he made the statement of make the community put some skin in the game, I'm going to tell you right now, I don't know the community's got much more skin. We might be asking for bones because I think we're taxed to death already. We need to look at ways that we can address our issues that we have with not trying to put additional taxes on our constituents.

I don't know about this 72nd Street location. I'm really confused as to where we're at on it. It sounds like—I don't know if we've—is the ground bought? Did we own it before? Are we currently putting money into it? Have we put money into it? I don't know. It's really concerning to me. I will tell you that one side picks a location without consulting the other side. I guess I kind of looked at it and I was trying to think of what analogy I would use. It would be like me going and purchasing a house and not talking to my wife about that I went and purchased a house and here's where we're going to move and you didn't really have any input into it. That's concerning to me. I don't like it. So, back to 72nd Street. Where are we at on it. I don't understand.

Ms. Kneuvean said earlier you all had asked and the County Administrator talked about authorized versus issued money actually in the bank. We had about $700K that was actually issued because it was spent and that has already been spent to buy the land to do some additional engineering on the ground and the utilities there. We can get a detail for you, but I was looking that up earlier to confirm. There's been a little bit of money that was like real money in the bank that was spent. In the original Capital Improvements Plan for the full buildout, it was '24, '25, and '26 and with the pause, as he mentioned, then '25 paused to '26 depending on how much we can afford because we wanted to analyze our debt. So, all the money hasn't even been authorized, which is a step of the process. But as you guys know, I mentioned with the debt, we had spread it out so that you were getting like—making decisions like over three years, authorized temporary notes, permanent debt, and people lose sight of all of that.

In terms of keeping track of where projects are, departments have, the public has, the Commission, so we'll be in the future doing it an all-in-one so that we get all the approvals we need and then we can move forward. But, at least for where things are there's been 700, in round numbers, of money invested in the land and then a little bit in terms of some infrastructure. **Commissioner Stites** said what is the infrastructure you're referring to. **Ms. Kneuvean** said below ground. **Commissioner Stites** said like when I think what infrastructure is, I mean what has been done. **Ms. Kneuvean** said I don't have the details, but we can get them for you. **Commissioner Stites** said how much did we pay for the ground? **Ms. Kneuvean** said I don't have that detail either. I can tell you exactly how much we spent in total against the project, but we'll get you the breakdown. I'm glad to do that and I'll follow up by tomorrow.

Commissioner Stites said my concern is that we're going to go throw good money after bad. If we're not happy with this location, and I don't think that we continue the process if everybody's not happy with this location, and it hasn't been vetted out by everyone, not just one side. I'm not saying that side's wrong, I'm not saying that side's right, I just want to know that this was the right place to put it. I don't know that we had the conversation at all with the Police

Department that's needing a new station if that might not be the right place to put their new station. I don't think that conversation has been had. **Ms. Kneuvean** said yeah, there's a couple things in order to get to the point of having estimates that need to be nailed down. Where's the location for one—**Commissioner Stites** said I guess that's true, but we're 700K into this and now we're saying we're going to—yeah, you know what, we're going to have to try to figure out if this is the right place and we've spent $700K of taxpayer dollars to figure out if this is the right place. Now, we should have done that before we sunk a single penny into it.

So, anyway, my other point that I wanted to make, I was at an event today and I'm not going to name the construction company where I was at, but I know that there was an offer that was made to do a third party, I'm guessing, consultation to help with a Fire Department—what do they cost, what do they look like free of charge. I don't know if we looked at trying to take advantage of those types of people that, a consultant, that would help us free of charge, right, because I'm trying to not spend any more money that might be able to tell us what new Fire Departments are looking like because we all set up here and said who is making that determination. Is it two bay, is it three bay, is it four bay, what have you. Do we need an $8M station, do we need a $15M station. I don't know, you all may know, I don't, what it does cost and what we need, but I think there's consultants out there that will do this work and I can give you that name after this meeting is over if need be that will be willing to help do that free of charge. **Ms. Kneuvean** said yeah, I understand. One thing I would say is that I know that the department, Administration have been going out to recently built fire stations to see how much did it cost and what does it look like. Is it two bay, is it three bay, and so they've been getting contemporary data in terms of what our current costs are. So, that is helpful and that will help frame it, but again, we need to decide location if there's still issues. I hear what you're saying. Decisions were made by others as to buying that and then we need to decide at that location is it two bay, three bay, four bay, what is it and then we need to have a plan.

Commissioner Stites said I'm still frustrated that we spent money before we know if this is the right location. So anyway, that's all I have to say.

Commissioner Lopez said I was basically having the same question with Commissioner Stites. It just seems a little asinine, and then we don't have any money that's budgeted for it or is it, but yet we're in at 700 grand already. Anyway, we're talking about maybe a new location for the fire station and—well, let me back up a second. Do you have a dollar amount that you know that we spent already on this new location over there for Station 10? **Mr. Simma** said I don't have very much information on that at all. **Commissioner Lopez** said does anybody in this room tonight know that amount? **Mr. Simma** said I don't know that. Somebody would have to explain if it's been—**Commissioner Lopez** said I mean we have money in plans too. Didn't we spend a bunch of money to have plans built or made or we're just using from another fire station.

Ms. Cobbins said in regards to Fire Station 20, what we can do, we'll get a report together to get the details to provide it to the commissioners with all the questions that you have as it relates to where we're at, how much we paid for land acquisition, where we're at for construction and how it was determined that was the ideal spot. We'll get that information so that we can disseminate it to the commissioners so that we can have an understanding as to where we're at with Fire Station 20. Would that be okay for the Commission if staff gets that information for you and we'll email it out to you with all that information? **Commissioner Lopez** said that would be fabulous. And then talk about putting another—finding a location in Rosedale for a fire station, am I correct there? **Ms. Cobbins** said we're not looking for a new fire station. Preliminary discussions were being had with KU Medical Center about the current fire station near KU Medical Center. It was very preliminary. We're in the very beginning stages of that and so we are exploring that, but no decisions have been made, no sites have been identified and there has not been any discussion on actually selling the facility. Just conversations with a partner in an area looking at what we could do to improve our infrastructure of the Fire Department in that area.

Commissioner Lopez said I was just looking around and there's a Mt. Marty Park that we own, 14 acres that we own, the UG. It's right behind the old Rosedale—well, it's Rosedale Middle School now, but it looks like it would be a great spot if it came down to that. It's right there on the Rosedale Extension in Seminar Street, I mean, if we had to go that route. What brought up the conversation with KU and this location? What their issue? **Ms. Cobbins** said there wasn't really an issue, just talking about redevelopment in that corridor of the community. Like I said, it was just preliminary discussion and we try to not have those conversations in an open setting as to where we're going to identify for development because then that puts us in an uncomfortable situation when we do identify property. But our Economic Development Director is working in conjunction with the Fire Department, the Police Department on areas of what we can look at for expansion once we have the financing available.

Commissioner Lopez said is this something that KU Medical Center can throw us—can fund too? **Ms. Cobbins** said we're in preliminary talks with them and I'm not at a position to share that, but it's very early as to what we're doing, but we do have plans in the future to figure out how we could collaborate with different partners on fire houses and police stations. **Commissioner Lopez** said I appreciate that.

Commissioner Ramirez said to not sort of piggyback off of that, but as conversations are had, I will take up your offer, Mayor, of working with you and working with command staff, union, and our UG staff just to make sure that what location is picked is—if that's what it comes to. As you said, it's preliminary, but I would like to, along with the union, be kept abreast and the Mayor as well of what those talks turn into and I understand they're preliminary. It's just the idea they're entertaining the idea, so I just ask that I be kept abreast. **Ms. Cobbins** said I can assure you that IAFF understands that if there's any conversations to be had that's going to impact them, the Administrator's Office has given them assurance that they will be at the table when we have those conversations when it gets to that place.

Mayor Garner said, Commissioner Ramirez, thank you for that. I think, yeah, we could do that. If you don't mind, either I can have my Chief of Staff get with you or you can get with Chief of Staff Caudillo and she'll get that set up and we'll get set up with some union folks and command staff folks and we'll take that tour.

Commissioner Burroughs said, J.J., one of the things you talked about was dispatchers and I know that can be a very stressful job and specialist in communication to assist you and your teams to get to the spot in a timely manner and safe manner. How many dispatchers are we short and what would you suggest we do to encourage the continued pipeline for dispatchers? **Mr. Simma** said to answer your first question, I don't have an exact number of how many we're short. I don't know if the Fire Department Administration that's here can answer that for us as to how many people we have in dispatch and how many vacancies we have. I know that we've struggled for years to maintain staffing out there and that we probably have an identified number as to how many we ought to have on duty each day to handle call volume, but that's where the variance is. Dispatch is different in that it's the nature of how many calls they have to handle during a shift as to how many people you need to have on duty. I don't know if the Fire Department has numbers on those exact vacancies and numbers. **Commissioner Burroughs** said I didn't mean to put you on the spot. I just know—I've read your report twice, went through it today and highlighted a few things, a few questions I had.

LaRwan McClaine , Deputy Fire Chief, said at this time we do have 14 dispatchers out there. We do also have a dispatch—or Communications Manager along with two supervisors. We currently do not have any vacancies. However, I believe what the message J.J's trying to send off is that even that is not enough to accomplish what they need to accomplish given their workload and the type of schedule that they work.

Commissioner Burroughs said the number of 135M was thrown out for the nine stations, rebuild, and the six remodels and the $350K per company and I believe that in order to meet that full company buildout, you said 14 employees, but you don't need 14. You've got some in the pipeline and there's ways to remedy that. I do know there are other needs too, like I think it was mentioned, Commissioner Kane talked about the ambulance service and the lifting into an ambulance. I'm to understand our ambulances could use the powerlifts that are much needed which comes at a cost and that our firefighters themselves are put into situations where there's hazardous materials and bioproducts that get on their gear. And a lot of times you can't even get that out of the gear and there's requests for, I believe, another set of gear for our firefighters to ensure that after the fire they're still able to operate in their fire station in a safe and effective manner.

There are a couple things people said. We need a point in time for FTE need and I think we as a Commission can look at the cost of that and see what we can do to start building into that and the fire station buildout. That's going to be important to find out just what it is you all agreed to and I'm pleased to see that it's been requested you two get back together and see how we can consolidate these reports to give us the guidance necessary to meet your criteria.

One of the things I did want to talk about and that is the public/private partnership that was mentioned. I know the new Data Centers are coming in and as it was mentioned you know comes in at billions of dollars and that public/private partnership is important. We have examples of companies doing that and I did mention that in a meeting and was advised that I shouldn't be asking for those types of things, but when it comes to this community, I'm going to stand up and ask for those kind of things because if you don't ask, you don't get. If we're going to provide services to an industry that's new to this community, that we ought to give consideration to partnering with us and being a good neighbor.

The KU relocation, KU has the resources into which to help with that. We have ambulatory services. We operate with them and to them. There's an opportunity there for a public/private partnership. I would state if we choose to move forward to 76th & Kansas Avenue, that we have very few windows in that facility except the windows that might be in the doors and they don't face the far west. As we know that at this particular time there's much concern down there. You all make response calls along with our Police Department.

Pipeline for firefighters, I'm sure you're going into the high schools to recruit and to talk about Career Day and/or our community college like our law enforcement community is doing. When it comes to additional dollars, insurance and fee collections for services, I think you even mentioned it in your report, so I commend you for looking at those alternative services. I know when I was in the Legislature, there was even a bill that was considered that if you are called out to an accident that car insurance companies should pay for the extraction and/or services that are provided above and beyond what's necessary for our Fire Department Emergency Response teams. I think that's critically important that we give that strong consideration. I know the EMS fee, we've been supplementing it just under a million dollars per year and I would hope that we look at a stronger collection and insurance fee service that can help us provide the necessary dollars to meet the budget shortfalls and challenges that we face today.

Very thorough report. As I stated, I read it twice. I'm not surprised with some of the information that came forward. It was very well done and very well thought out. I commend you for the presentation and I think there's been plenty of discussion as to what we may need as a Commission to move forward. I think every one of us is ready to partner with whatever it needs with the Fire Department and command staff to move this thing forward.

Mayor Garner said maybe our CFO can tell us—just to kind of bring us up to speed. I know there's an EMS Tax and I also believe there's a Public Safety Tax. How much does that generate and do we know exactly what that's used for and how those financials impact this discussion tonight? I know one of the bright spots for the Fire Department is they're one of the areas in the Unified Government that really isn't struggling with recruitment. I believe they're over 90% staffed. So, if this Commission was to budget for additional staffing, I don't see that as being a problem like the Police, Sheriff and other UG departments. But what exactly is the EMS Tax and the Public Safety Tax. I believe those were sales tax initiatives that were passed by the voters. Can you just kind of educate us all on that? **Ms. Kneuvean** said I think you're referring to the Dedicated Sales Tax, which is the 14M and a third of it goes to Fire, a third goes to Police, and a third goes to Neighborhood. Going from memory here, so if I'm incorrect, I will email it out but the EMS Tax, I believe, is around 9M, but I'm glad to verify that. Those are the two in particular that have funds that are going towards the Fire Department. Then there's obviously the City General Fund which is where the majority of our funding is.

Mayor Garner said I guess the question is, is that for personnel. **Ms. Kneuvean** said yeah, it's for everything. So, it's over $80M for the whole department. It's one of the most significant, if not the largest, budget that we have. **Mayor Garner** said I guess for future if you could break that down with that tax. **Ms. Kneuvean** said absolutely. **Mayor Garner** said I know it goes into the General Fund I guess at some point, but it is separate from the General Fund because if we didn't have that tax, that would be an increased burden on our General Fund without that tax. It would be good for the public to see that breakdown and how beneficial that sales tax initiative is. That's another example when I recommend as a Commission that we look at sales tax because that's a positive example of how sales taxes can benefit some of our infrastructure and our needs here at the Unified Government and I believe that's one of those good examples.

I guess what I'm getting from the Commission, and I can work with the Administrator, help me out Commission, I guess we want to see to conclude this, our Local 64 and our command kind of work together on a better strategic plan with all the things that we talked about tonight, numbers, personnel, overall cost, outlining what that would look like long term, if you phase it out.

I know that Station 10 has been brought up. I'm picking up, and if I'm wrong commissioners, please correct me. Administrator, what I'm getting is that we might want to pump our breaks on that to get more information as far as options for this Commission to consider. Ultimately, this Commission is going to make that decision. I know that was a question. This Commission is going to make the decision based on the recommendations we get from staff as to what is going to be the best fit when you talk about services to our residents. I think options are always great for this Commission to consider so they can choose based on what you all recommend. I think that's what I'm getting, so Administrator. Okay, so we'll pump the brakes for now on Station 10—20, I'm sorry 20. I stand corrected and hopefully you all can do something in short order.

I do have to commend you all. Again, you all have come a long way from where you were just 3.5 years ago where you weren't even talking and so this line and channel of communication is probably one that is long overdue and I don't really see a lot of this anywhere else. So, I commend you all for keeping those communication lines open.

Commissioner Davis said I'll be very quick and this is not just for the Fire Department, but just as we get closer to adopting the budget, I will ask and keep asking that we receive information from departments on what they are seeing as far as needs go. There are a lot of services, programs, Capital investments that by us going revenue neutral we put a pause to. It wasn't just Fire Station 20. Getting that information ahead of time before we make the decision, particularly on revenue neutral will be very important for us to make an educated decision.

Mayor Garner said I'll just end it with this, I know that we want to do right by our Public Safety professionals. We've talked about the conditions of the fire stations. I just want to make sure that when we talk about a strategic plan and that we move forward with recommendations to this body, that we do things right as opposed to right away. I think that's been brought up on Station 20 at Kansas Avenue. Let's get things right as opposed to right away and let's work—let's build that bridge of collaboration between union and management. Let's strengthen that, solidify it. It isn't so much—you know, and I've learned that just being the Mayor, it's not always about what you disagree about, it's what you do agree about and you move forward with that and bridge those gaps because ultimately you all working together and collaborating is going to bode well for our residents here in Kansas City, Kansas.

I do appreciate our Fire Department, our men and women that are out here right now keeping this community safe. I respect the work you do. I support the work you do and I just ask this community and this Commission to keep supporting Public Safety because, again, we cannot have a safe Kansas City, Kansas, a great Kansas City, Kansas without having a safe Kansas City, Kansas and Public Safety is at the forefront of that. So, thank you so much for your presentation. It was great and thank you command for filling in and thank staff for answering the questions and thank you Commission for supporting our fine hardworking Public Safety professionals here in

Kansas City, Kansas. They are truly some of the best Police, Fire, EMS, and our Sheriff Departments. They do a great job and the numbers reflect that, so thank you so much J.J.

Mr. Simma said thank you, Mayor, and we thank the Commission for your support as well.

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

MAYOR GARNER ADJOURNED
THE MEETING AT 6:40 p.m.

Monica L. Sparks
Unified Government Clerk

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