Unified Government of Wyandotte County and Kansas City, Kansas

American Royal Subcommittee

Fifth Floor Conference Room
701 N. 7th Street Trafficway, Kansas City, KS 66101

Chair Melissa Bynum
Commissioner, District 2, Bill Burns - Commissioner, District 7, Chuck Stites
Commissioner, District 2 At Large-Andrew Kump, Mayor/CEO – Christal E. Watson

MINUTES

Thursday, April 16, 2026
8:11 AM – 9:24 AM

Attendance:

Committee Members Present:

- Commissioner Bynum (Chair)
- Commissioner Burns
- Commissioner Kump
- Mayor/CEO Watson

Committee Members Absent:

- Commissioner Stites

Staff Present:

- Monica L. Sparks (Unified Government Clerk)
- Wendy Green (Legal Department)
- Rodney Lucas (Assistant County Administrator)
- Chelsee Chism (Economic Development Director)
- Reginald Lindsey (Budget Director)
- Mike Grimm (Research Manager)
- Shelly Kneuveaun (Chief Financial Officer)
- Jeff Conway (Legal counsel)

Call to Order

Commissioner Bynum called the meeting to order at 8:11 AM. Roll call was taken with all members present.

COMMITTEE AGENDA

American Royal Origination Fee Discussion

The Committee Chair opened discussion regarding the $5 million origination fee funds previously discussed for the County Infrastructure Funding Initiative (CIFI). CFO Shelley Kneuvean provided clarification that upon further review, the origination fees are related to industrial revenue bonds issued by Kansas City, Kansas for the American Royal project, making these city dollars rather than county dollars. Kneuvean explained that CIFI has traditionally been funded through county resources, making it inappropriate for these city-specific funds.

Kneuvean clarified the payment structure: $5 million in the first year as one-time funds, followed by $1.3 million annually for up to 19 years while bonds remain outstanding. She emphasized the first year's $5 million must be used for economic development purposes, while future payments can be used for economic development, infrastructure, or other beneficial purposes.

Economic Development Strategic Plan

Chelsee Chism presented information about a comprehensive economic development strategic plan estimated at $750,000. She explained this would include multiple geographic areas and stakeholder engagement, with comparisons to the comprehensive plan that cost $1.2 million. Chism indicated she could contribute $100,000 from her economic development budget and seek other partners, requesting approximately $600,000 from the origination fee funds.

Commissioner Burns raised concerns about studies being completed but not implemented. Chism assured this would be a proactive marketing tool with data to prove unmet market needs and support business development.

Downtown Grocery Store Funding

Kneuvean presented the option to use origination fee funds for the previously approved $150,000 commitment to support the downtown grocery store operator, which would preserve general fund resources. The committee expressed consensus support for this allocation.

Infrastructure Grant Match Discussion

Discussion centered on potential grant matching opportunities. The committee learned about the Central Avenue Bridge project with a $25 million BUILD grant application requiring a 20% local match, though conversations with KDOT are ongoing to offset this requirement.

Commissioner Kump provided information about the Little Turkey Creek tributary North interceptor capacity improvement project, estimated at $250,000, which would help achieve compliance with EPA and DOJ consent decree requirements.

World Cup Business Support Initiative

Mayor Watson presented the need for World Cup-related business support, initially requesting $400,000 for watch parties but indicating potential state funding may cover these costs. She advocated for $150,000 in capacity building funds for local businesses to handle the influx of international visitors.

The Mayor detailed specific needs including cultural training for businesses, translation services, inventory support, and marketing assistance. She emphasized the importance of supporting small businesses in areas expected to receive high visitor traffic, particularly around Memorial Hall, Strawberry Hill, and Sporting KC.

Mayor suggested Commissioner Bynum as pro tem for tonight's meeting state we want to be intentional on where we will direct global visitors, so we can direct where global visitors can go to visit while they're here in KC, K and then the funding is used to lay the groundwork for future business opportunities occasioned by such events Like World Cup. And then the other point you just need to make sure we stress is that we want to help local businesses prepare for global visitors, So "groundwork for future" in this meeting is specifically about:

- Using World Cup-related funds to:
    - Build **long-term capacity** in local small businesses.
    - Improve **marketing, customer service, and cultural readiness**.
    - Strengthen business districts so they can capitalize on **future major events**, not just this one.

Chism outlined current small business grant program parameters, noting eligible expenses include renovations, inventory, equipment, and marketing, with current $10,000 maximum grants requiring matching funds.

The committee discussed creating separate World Cup-specific funding with modified requirements, including potentially waiving the one-year business operation requirement and matching fund requirements.

Tentative allocation discussed: $250,000 total ($150,000 for World Cup business support, $100,000 for general small business grant augmentation) (Later discussion changed the funding for World Cup to $165,000 to include translation services)

Infrastructure Project - Beatrice Lee Building

Mayor Watson raised urgent concerns about the deteriorating condition of the Beatrice Lee building front entrance, noting concrete collapse and structural issues preventing wheelchair access and safe use of the front entrance. Staff indicated previous architectural studies were completed but funding constraints prevented implementation.

MEETING SCHEDULE AND PROCEDURES

Committee Replacement Process

Legal counsel confirmed that the replacement for Commissioner Stites, who indicated he would step down, should be appointed through the Economic Development and Finance Committee at their May 4 meeting or a special meeting called by the chair.

Next Meeting Scheduling

After extensive scheduling discussion, the committee agreed to meet **Wednesday, April 29, 2026, at 7:30 A.M**.

TENTATIVE FUNDING ALLOCATIONS DISCUSSED

Based on committee discussion, the following tentative allocations were identified:

- Economic Development Strategic Plan: $600,000
- Downtown Grocery Store Support: $150,000
- Little Turkey Creek Infrastructure Project: $250,000
- World Cup Business Support: $150,000
- Small Business Grant Program Enhancement: $100,000
- Cultural Training (World Cup): $15,000

Total Discussed: $1,265,000 of $5,000,000 available

Adjournment:

Commissioner Kump moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Burns.

Vote: Motion carried 5-0

- Ayes: Burns, Kump, Bynum, Watson
- Nays: None
- Absent: Stites

The meeting was adjourned at 9:24 AM

MLS