

Unified Government of Wyandotte County and Kansas City, Kansas



BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Commission Chambers

701 N. 7th Street Trafficway, Kansas City, KS 66101

Mayor Tyrone Garner

Commissioner At-Large Dist. 1 Melissa Bynum – Commissioner At-Large Dist. 2 Tom Burroughs –

Commissioner Dist. 1 Gayle E. Townsend – Commissioner Dist. 2 Bill Burns –

Commissioner Dist. 3 Christian Ramirez – Commissioner Dist. 4 Dr. Evelyn Hill –

Commissioner Dist. 5 Mike Kane – Commissioner Dist. 6 Phil Lopez –

Commissioner Dist. 7 Chuck Stites – Commissioner Dist. 8 Andrew Davis

MINUTES

SPECIAL MEETING

Tuesday, September 9, 2025

5:07 PM – 7:02 PM

Attendance:

Commissioners Present:

- Mayor Tyrone Garner
- Commissioner Burroughs
- Commissioner Bynum
- Commissioner Burns
- Commissioner Lopez
- Commissioner Kane
- Commissioner Townsend
- Commissioner Stites

Commissioners Absent:

- Commissioner Ramirez
- Commissioner Hill
- Commissioner Davis

Staff Present:

- Monica L. Sparks (Unified Government Clerk)
- David Johnston (County Administrator)
- Angela Lawson (Interim Chief Legal Counsel)
- Reginald Lindsey (Budget Director)
- Michael Peterson (Deputy Budget Director)
- Dr. Shelley Kneuvean (Chief Financial Officer)
- Debbie Jonscher (Deputy Chief Financial Officer)
- Angel Ferrara (Parks and Recreation Director)

Call to Order:

Mayor Tyrone Garner called the meeting to order at 5:07 PM.

Notice and Consent to Meeting:

NOTICE OF SPECIAL MEETING of the Unified Government of Wyandotte County/Kansas City, Kansas, is scheduled to be conducted in a hybrid format on Tuesday, September 9, 2025, at 5:00 p.m. for a budget workshop in the Fifth-floor Conference Room of the Municipal Office Building, 701 N. 7th Street, Kansas City, Kansas.

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.

County Administrator, David Johnston, turned the meeting over to Budget Director, Reginald Lindsey, to continue the budget workshop process for the 2026 budget.

Sheriff's Department Staffing Request (Discussion Begins: 5:06)

Budget Director Lindsey presented a proposal for additional Sheriff's Department positions:

- Sheriff Soptic requested 10 additional sworn positions
- Current FTE count: 145, proposed increase to 155
- Phased implementation plan:
 - A. January recruit class: 5 FTEs (12-month impact: \$550,000)
 - B. July recruit class: 5 FTEs (6-month impact: \$275,000)

C. Total 2026 impact: \$825,000

D. Annual ongoing impact: \$1.1 million (equivalent to 0.5 county mills)

Discussion and Comments:

Commissioner Burroughs expressed support for the phased approach, confirming that in 2027, all positions would be funded at the full half-mill price.

Commissioner Burns recommended that commissioners wanting to cut items should make motions to expedite the process.

Commissioner Bynum clarified that if the Sheriff doesn't hire all 10 positions, the money would not be spent, though it needs to be budgeted in preparation.

Commissioner Townsend inquired about the Sheriff's Department parity payments and whether they could be adjusted as a non-contractual item to help fund additional positions.

Optional Budget Additions Review (Discussion Begins: 10:25)

Director Lindsey reviewed optional additions requested by commissioners:

- Only \$100,000 for illegal dumping enforcement cameras currently built into budget

Discussion and Comments:

Commissioner Lopez requested information on fines collected from illegal dumping arrests and where those funds are allocated.

Commissioner Townsend confirmed the bi-weekly mowing amount represents additional funding to double current frequency.

Chief Oakman met with administration and determined he does not need the additional 17 patrol officers originally requested.

Non-Mandated Program Spending Review (Discussion Begins: 22:36)

Director Lindsey presented refined non-mandated spending totals:

- City funds: \$2 million (reduced from \$15 million after removing cash projects and specialty fund items)
- County funds: \$1.7 million (reduced from \$3 million)

Commission-Driven Initiatives (\$2.2 million total):

- Senior Citizen Disability Income Based Rebate Program: \$602,000
- Downtown Shareholders contribution: \$164,000
- Warming shelter contribution: \$24,000
- BPU pilot reduction (10.9% to 9.9%): \$1.2 million revenue impact
- Senior citizen pilot elimination program: \$250,000 revenue impact

City-Only Programs (\$760,000 total):

- Economic development initiatives: \$230,000
- Small business grants increase: \$50,000
- Livable neighborhoods/NBRs: \$220,000 (restored to 2024 levels)
- Demolition services: \$220,000
- Neighborhood impact grants: \$35,000
- Planning services: \$50,000
- Dispute resolution: \$4,000

County-Only Programs (\$130,000 total):

- County Fair: \$87,000
- Law Library: \$24,000
- Historical Museum operations: \$18,000

Discussion and Comments:

Commissioner Burroughs suggested reviewing dedicated sales tax funds for compliance with reserve requirements and potential mill levy adjustments to free up general fund resources for other priorities.

Mayor Garner questioned the equity of the downtown shareholders contribution, noting it's the only NBR receiving such funding, and supported the BPU pilot reduction as fulfilling a long-standing promise to residents.

Commissioner Bynum provided historical context on the downtown shareholders' contribution, noting it's a voluntary payment in lieu of property taxes to the SSMID, and that similar requests have been made to other tax-exempt entities.

Commissioner Stites inquired whether the Community College makes similar contributions to the SSMID and questioned the Unified Government's funding of the K-State Extension building lease.

Commissioner Kane provided historical context on the BPU pilot increase during the 2008 recession and subsequent policy decisions.

Commissioner Lopez questioned whether demolition costs for land bank properties are added to sale prices.

Commissioner Townsend noted that Land Bank currently has no structures due to successful rehabilitation programs from previous years.

New Budget Requests Built Into Current Budget (Discussion Begins: 58:47)

Director Lindsey presented the new budget requests. Combined City/County Requests: \$2 million City-Only New Requests: \$2.2 million across multiple departments County-Only New Requests: \$1.7 million across various departments

Discussion and Comments:

Commissioner Burns clarified that the Law Library is mandated by Attorney General opinion for counties or judicial districts, and that extension services provide valuable community programs.

Commissioner Burroughs proposed using community surveys and ballot initiatives to let residents prioritize discretionary spending items and establish dedicated funding streams for various programs.

Community Benefits Districts Discussion (Discussion Begins: 1:27:27)

CFO Dr. Shelley Kneuvean presented information on two resolutions regarding new growth and expiring economic development agreements:

New Growth Resolution:

- 10% of growth in assessed value helps pay debt
- City impact: \$79,000
- County impact: \$95,000

Expiring Economic Development Agreements:

- Various TIFs, IRBs, and Plaza at Speedway agreements
- Total city side: \$3.2 million
- Total county side: \$1 million
- 50% designated for debt retirement/tax reduction per resolution
- Revenues built into current budget projections

Discussion and Comments:

Commissioner Bynum questioned the TIFs and funds disclosed in the development agreement.

Commissioner Stites questioned why the Unified Government funds K-State Extension at all and requested clarification on the legal requirements.

Commissioner Bynum confirmed that state law requires counties to fund extension councils in partnership with Kansas State University.

Mayor Garner thanked staff for their hard work throughout the budget process and noted this would be the final budget workshop. He indicated that County Administrator Johnson would schedule individual meetings with commissioners to gather final input before presenting a budget for commission vote.

Adjournment (Discussion Begins: 1:59:20)

Commissioner Burroughs made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Burns.

Vote: Motion carries 7/0

- Ayes: Townsend, Kane, Bynum, Burroughs, Burns, Lopez, Stites
- Nays: None
- Absent: Ramirez, Hill, Davis

MAYOR GARNER ADJOURNED

THE MEETING AT 7:02 P.M.

Monica L. Sparks, CMC
Unified Government Clerk

mls