



Unified Government of Wyandotte County and Kansas City, Kansas

Administration and Human Services Meeting

5th Floor Conference Room

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

Commissioner Melissa Bynum

*Commissioner Mike Kane – Commissioner Christian Ramirez –
Commissioner Andrew Davis – Commissioner Evelyn Hill*

MINUTES

Monday, March 24, 2025

6:38 PM – 7:46 PM

Attendance:

Committee Members Present:

- Commissioner Bynum (Chair)
- Commissioner Kane
- Commissioner Davis
- Commissioner Hill
- Commissioner Ramirez

Committee Members Absent:

- None

Staff Present:

- Brittnie MacDonald (Unified Government Clerk's Office)
- Wendy Green (Deputy Chief Counsel)
- Irene Caudillo (Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office)
- Dr. Shelley Kneuvean (Chief Financial Officer)
- Alyssa Marcy (Long Range Planner, Planning and Urban Design)
- Luby Valdovino (Grants Administrator)
- SueZanne Bishop (Senior Legal Attorney)
- Rodney Lucas (Interim Assistant County Administrator)

Call to Order:

Commissioner Bynum called the meeting to order at 6:38 PM.

Revisions to Agenda:

No revisions to the agenda were reported.

Approval of Previous Minutes:

There were no minutes to approve.

Committee Agenda:**Item No. 4.1 - ORDINANCE: PROVIDING FOR COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR SUCCESSION
(Discussion Begins: 1:34:12)**

This item was remanded to the standing committee from the full commission for additional review and discussion. The ordinance would amend the Unified Government Code to provide for County Administrator succession during periods when the Administrator has been dismissed, resigned, or has a prolonged absence.

Commissioners in discussion.

Discussion Participants:

- **Commissioner Davis** questioned the necessity, noting current processes work effectively with Assistant County Administrators (ACAs) serving as acting administrators
- **Commissioner Kane** stated this was "a solution to a problem we don't have"
- **Commissioner Hill** inquired about succession when mayor and pro tems are unavailable simultaneously
- **Wendy Green, UG Legal Counsel**, explained existing procedures under sections 2-81, 2-101, and 2-102 of the Unified Government Code. Counsel Green confirmed that acting County Administrators possess all authorities of the County Administrator, and existing charter provisions adequately address succession scenarios through Mayor appointment with commission consent.

The Chairman opened the public hearing. No comments were received. The Chairman closed the public hearing.

No motion was offered. No action was taken by the Committee.

Item No. 4.2 - ORDINANCE: PROHIBITING THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR FROM TERMINATING OR DISCIPLINING SUBORDINATES DUE TO UNFAVORABLE PERSONNEL ACTION (Discussion Begins: 1:34:12)

This ordinance would prohibit the County Administrator from taking retaliatory action against employees. The item was also remanded from the full commission.

Discussion Participants:

- **Irene Caudillo, Chief of Staff** explained the mayor's concerns about potential gray areas regarding administrator authority over staff
- **Commissioner Kane** reiterated this addresses a non-existent problem
- **Commissioner Davis** inquired about whistleblower protections and employee rights
- **SueZanne Bishop, Legal Department** confirmed UG employees are informed of their rights and are covered by federal whistleblower laws.

Legal Remedies Identified:

- HR complaint processes
- Ethics administrator complaints
- Mayor can call special sessions for immediate action
- Federal whistleblower protections for grant-funded employees

The Chairman opened the public hearing. No comments were received. The Chairman closed the public hearing.

No motion was offered. No action was taken by the Committee.

Item No. 4.3 - PRESENTATION: INTERDEPARTMENTAL GRANTS COALITION: 2025 FUTURE GRANT PURSUITS (Discussion Begins: 1:58:24)

Alyssa Marcy, the Long-Range Planner in the Planning and Urban Design Department, presented the item.

Key Points

- The interdepartmental grants coalition began in December 2022, now includes 13 departments and USD 500, and coordinates grant pursuits to avoid departments competing against each other.
- Coalition priorities are seeking no-match grants due to financial constraints; the group uses a strategic “go/no-go” approach before applying for grants.

- Collaboration with partners (e.g., the Kansas Infrastructure Hub) helps identify opportunities and leverage technical assistance.
- There is uncertainty with federal grant programs: some grants have disappeared or been rescinded, and the loss of “disadvantaged community” status affects eligibility and matching requirements.
- 2025 priority projects include:
 - A. Micro transit programs continuation
 - B. Permanent location for “On House” facility
 - C. Choice Neighborhood planning grant (with KCK Housing Authority)
 - D. Youth supportive services (sub-grants to nonprofits)
 - E. Riverfront development and levee trails (funding gap exists)
 - F. Combined sewer overflow systems (large funding needs)
 - G. Major bridge replacements (Kansas and Central Avenue)
 - H. Intersection improvements (especially ahead of World Cup 2026)
 - I. Turkey Creek Trail public access
 - J. World Cup beautification efforts
 - K. Park-specific priorities like Rosedale Arch restoration, Piper land acquisition, Parkwood pool assessment, and countywide urban heat island mitigation
- Noted challenges include tighter federal grant environments, ongoing funding gaps, and shifting grant eligibility.
- The coalition’s work fosters collaboration, strategic planning, and efforts to maximize grant success under constrained fiscal circumstances.

The Chairman opened the public hearing. No comments were received. The Chairman closed the public hearing.

This item was for information only, and no action was required.

COMMITTEE REQUESTS FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

The following items were formally requested for future committee consideration:

1. Elected Official Succession Planning - Address succession when mayor and pro tems are unavailable
2. ARPA Projects Update - Comprehensive report on American Rescue Plan Act project outcomes
3. Grants Policy Review - Presentation and potential revision of current grants policy

Commissioner Davis made a motion to request these items for future agendas. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ramirez.

Vote: Motion carried 5-0

- Ayes: Davis, Kane, Hill, Ramirez, Bynum
- Nays: None
- Absent: None

Adjournment: (Discussion Begins: 2:39:48)

Commissioner Kane moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ramirez.

Vote: Motion carried 5-0

- Ayes: Davis, Kane, Hill, Ramirez, Bynum
- Nays: None
- Absent: None

The meeting was adjourned at 7:46 PM.

MLS