

Unified Government of Wyandotte County and Kansas City, Kansas



Neighborhood & Community Development Meeting

5th Floor Conference Room

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

Commissioner Andrew Davis, Chair

Commissioner Gayle Townsend – Commissioner Evelyn Hill

Commissioner Christian Ramirez – Commissioner Melissa Bynum

MINUTES

Monday, April 28, 2025

7:07 PM-11:07 PM

Attendance:

Committee Members Present:

- Commissioner Andrew Davis (Chair)
- Commissioner Bynum
- Commissioner Townsend
- Commissioner Hill
- Commissioner Ramirez

Committee Members Absent:

- None

Staff Present:

- Brittne MacDonald (Unified Government Clerk's Office)
- Alan Howze (Assistant County Administrator)
- Wendy Green (Deputy Chief Counsel)
- Angel Ferrara (Director of Parks and Recreation)
- Vincent Billaci (Parks Management)
- Shaya Lockett (Recreation Division Manager)
- Matt Zayas (Fiscal Analyst)
- Michael Sutton (Redevelopment Coordinator and Economic Development)

Call to Order:

Commissioner Davis called the meeting to order at 7:07 PM.

Revisions to Agenda (Discussion Begins: 2:02:12)

No revisions to the agenda were reported by the Clerk.

3. Approval of Previous Minutes: (Discussion Begins: 2:02:19)

There were no minutes for approval.

4. Committee Agenda:**Item No. 4.1 - PRESENTATION: PARKS AND RECREATION UPDATE (Discussion Begins: 2:02:27)**

The Parks update was presented by Parks and Recreation Director, Angel Ferrara. She then had support and additional detail from: Vince Billaci, Shaya Lockett and Matt Zayas.

Overall Department Snapshot

- Parks & Rec manages:
 - A. 54 parks (51 city/neighborhood, 3 county) – over 2,600 acres
 - B. About 15–20 cemeteries
 - C. 1 pool, 4 splash pads, 42 rentable shelters
 - D. ~80 playgrounds, 6 community centers, 3 reservation halls
- Department vacancy rate: about 19.5% overall
 - A. Parks: ~23% vacant
 - B. Recreation: ~18–19% vacant

ARPA & Grant Investments

- \$3.9 million ARPA investment into parks (HVAC, windows, trails, spray parks, courts, etc.).
- Since 2020, Parks & Rec has leveraged \$13.5 million in grant / federal / ARPA / CDBG / CARES funds.
- Many recent major projects (trails, sport courts, facility upgrades) are predominantly grant-funded.

Major Projects & Deferred Maintenance

- **Wyandotte County Lake Park**
 - A. Replacing the failing stone wall: options run \$825k–\$1.2M; \$892k already budgeted; design and bidding planned this year.
 - B. Marshall Creek Bridge identified as a future high-priority replacement to avoid failure and access issues.
 - C. Korean & Vietnam War Memorial: nearly complete; a few granite panels still to be replaced; rededication planned after that.
- Other deferred maintenance priorities:
 - A. Roads and parking lots
 - B. Masonry in multiple parks
 - C. Park lighting (example: many poles at Pierson Park need work)
 - D. Underground water lines (Wyandotte Lake water line project recently completed over several phases)

Structural / Operational Changes

- **Abatement team & Land Bank mowing:**
 - A. Abatement operations (homeless camp cleanup, illegal dumping, certain mowing) moved from Parks to Building & Logistics.
 - B. One program coordinator moved to Land Bank to manage mowing contracts and land bank lots.
- **Mowing program challenges:**
 - A. Normal rotation (fully staffed): 7–10 days.
 - B. Due to vacancies, rotation is now more like 14 days for priority areas.
 - C. Lower-use areas may be cut every 4–6 weeks so high-use areas (shelters, playgrounds) stay maintained.
 - D. Parks is currently about 23% vacant, heavily impacting mowing capacity.

Asset Management & Data

- Parks received funding for an asset management software system (similar to Public Works).
- 9 proposals were received; they're in selection now.
- Goal: have all park assets (infrastructure, pavement, lighting, water lines, etc.) in one system to:
 - A. Track life cycles

- B. Plan replacements proactively
- C. Make data-driven budget decisions

New Park Development & Western Wyandotte

- A new park in western Wyandotte County is a stated priority:
 - A. Need to identify or acquire land
 - B. Need funding for design and construction of amenities
 - C. Some seed money already exists; more requested in the current budget cycle.
- **Riverfront Park / Rock Island Bridge area:**
 - A. Parks acquired about 4 acres of riverfront park land.
 - B. Applied for an Outdoor Recreation Legacy grant with Public Works – application considered strong, but program is currently on hold; may re-apply when it reopens.

Staffing & Safety

- Department-wide vacancy: ~19.5% (13.25 FTE vacancies in Parks; 4 FTE in Recreation).
- Community centers:
 - A. Historic model: 1 staff per center (unsafe).
 - B. New standard: minimum 2 staff on site due to prior incidents and safety concerns.
- Hiring was delayed early in the year while confirming budget capacity to fill positions.

Funding & Budget Context

- 2025 Parks budget: about \$14 million.
 - A. Funded from:
 - a. 34% county tax levy
 - b. 54% city general fund
 - c. 10% department fees
 - d. 2% miscellaneous (e.g., Renaissance Festival payment)
- **Cost recovery:**
 - A. National comparable agencies: 22%
 - B. Parks & Rec here: 9%
- Capital projects budget: 2025 capital reduced by about 64% vs 2024 (excluding ARPA/CDBG/earmarks).

Recreation Division – What They Operate

Key functions:

- **Administration/front office**
 - A. Shelter reservations
 - B. Customer service
 - C. Fishing & boating licenses
- **Marketing**
 - A. Promotes programs, events, reports
- **Aquatics**
 - A. Parkwood Pool (under contract with Midwest Pools – they hire lifeguards/managers)
 - B. 4 spray parks (Memorial Day–Labor Day, 9am–9pm, free)
- **Sports & Programs**
 - A. Youth and adult leagues
 - B. Community events
 - C. Classes (examples: teen creative writing at Armourdale; senior computer class at Joe E. Amayo)

Facilities under Recreation:

- 6 community centers
 - A. 1 currently closed due to staffing shortages
- 3 reservation halls
- Parkwood Pool
- Wyandotte County Lake Marina

Types of Programs

- **Department-run programs**
 - A. Run by UG Parks & Rec staff
 - B. Examples: sports leagues, department events, staff-taught classes
- **Instructor-contract programs**
 - A. Outside individuals/groups teach; UG provides space
 - B. Examples: dance, fitness classes

- **Special events**

- A. Public events (free or fee-based)

- B. Must complete special event application and be vetted by staff

Summer Camp – Capacity & Challenges

Current licensed camps:

- Only 2 licensed sites (of 6 centers):
 - A. Eisenhower
 - B. Beatrice Lee
- Each site: capacity 45 youth
→ Total 90 kids across the whole system

Licensing requirements (state of Kansas):

- Must meet fire code footprints (fire inspections & plans)
 - A. Several facilities don't have updated code footprints; costly to obtain/upgrade
- Staff-to-camper ratio: 1 staff per 16 youth, with minimum 2 staff on site at all times
 - A. You can never have just one staff member with kids

Staffing reality:

- Only 6 positions allocated specifically for summer camp
 - A. To run both sites fully and safely, 10 staff are really needed
 - B. Because of this, the department cannot fully operate both sites simultaneously

Summer 2025 operational change:

- Instead of both sites for 6 weeks each:
 - A. June: 4-week camp at Eisenhower
 - B. July: 4-week camp at Beatrice Lee
- Kids can attend both sessions if they choose (for equity across the city).
- Structure allows all staff resources to be at one site at a time.

Camp content (what kids do):

- Sports & agility training
- Mindfulness & wellness programs
- Swimming lessons at Parkwood (Joe Delaney Learn to Swim)
- STEM activities

- Cooking components
- Literacy & math to combat the “summer slide”

Aquatics Highlights

- Spray parks: Memorial Day–Labor Day, 9 a.m. – 9 p.m., free
- Parkwood Pool:
 - A. Open May 24 – August 10
 - B. Operated by Midwest Pools under management agreement
- Joe Delaney Learn to Swim program:
 - A. Free lessons on Mondays in June
 - B. For infants through adults
 - C. Info available on May 1 via website and community centers
- Department returning on May 29 for a special Parkwood Pool presentation (status and upgrades)
 - A. Applied for Land and Water Conservation grant for immediate Parkwood needs

The Chairman opened the public hearing. Comments were received from the following:

- **Pamela Penn Hicks (Comments Begin: 2:37:45)**

The public hearing was closed.

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

Item No. 4.2 - LAND BANK OPTIONS —(Discussion Begins: 3:06:32)

Michael Sutton presented several Land Bank Options. Please visit the new site to review the applications below

<https://gisapp.wycokck.org/Landbank.html>

A. Single Family Homes – 268 Single Family Homes

1. Arturo Ayala Luna – 1 home
 - i. 2014 N 38th St – 108110
2. RA Engineering Corp – 3 homes
 - i. 1237 Armstrong Ave – 080917
 - ii. 1235 Armstrong Ave – 080916

- iii. 1231 Armstrong Ave – 080915
 - iv. 1243 Armstrong Ave – 080918
- 3. Pillar KC LLC – 2 homes**
 - i. 2840 S 9th St – 136561
 - ii. 2842 S 9th St – 136548
- 4. T&M General Construction – 1 home**
 - i. 1131 S 49th Dr – 051895
- 5. Ryan Barr – 1 home**
 - i. 1203 Ann Ave – 080936
- 8. Luis A Matos – 3 homes**
 - i. 27 S Mill St – 121119
 - ii. 29 S Mill St – 121118
 - iii. 31 S Mill St – 121117
 - iv. 37 S Mill St – 121116
 - v. 39 S Mill St – 121115
- 9. Erik Murray – 1 home**
 - i. 900 N 47th Ter – 916408
- 10. Aurion Taylor-Burks – 1 home**
 - i. 1512 N 22nd St – 065738
- 12. Camealia Murray – 5 homes**
 - ii. 3002 Hutchins St – 158549
 - iii. 3014 Hutchins St - 158546
 - iv. 3020 Hutchins St – 158543
 - v. 3036 Hutchins St – 158540
 - vi. 3040 Hutchins St – 158538
- 14. CJR Construction Project – 250 homes**
 - vii. 12th St to Hiawatha St, North of Quindaro Blvd to KS Hwy
 - viii. Sherman St to Allis St from Quindaro Blvd north to Manorcrest Dr

- ix. 210 Single Family Homes
- x. 30 Duplexes

B. Multi-family – 19 units

- 1. RA Engineering Corp – 2 Units
 - i. 410 Cambridge St – 220110
- 2. RA Engineering Corp – 2 Units
 - i. 5237 Nebraska Ave – 918030
- 3. Rajan Bhatia – 2 Units
 - i. 700 N 75th St – 928942
- 4. Latoya Wilson – 13 Units
 - i. 2116 N 22nd St - 159822
 - ii. 2112 N 22nd St - 159823
 - iii. 2108 N 22nd St - 159824
 - iv. 2104 N 22nd St - 159825
 - v. 2100 N 22nd St - 159826

C. Commercial – 4 Units

- 1. LS Commercial Real Estate Services, Inc – 3 Units
 - i. 1915 Sloan Ave – 124413
 - ii. 1918 Parkview Ave – 124425
 - iii. 1916 Parkview Ave – 124424 – UG owned
- 2. RA Engineering Corp – 1 Unit
 - i. 1302 N 13th St - 090678

The Chairman opened the public hearing.

Charles Robinson, President/Owner, CJR Construction Group, presented details related to Item A14.

Project Details:

- 329 land bank lots across multiple phases
- 350-500 homes planned over 7-year period

- Price range: \$215,000-\$305,000
- Investment: \$94 million total
- Minority business participation: 65-70% goal
- Community programs including job training and credit repair

Comments were received from the following:

Item No. A14

- **Elnora Jefferson (Comments Begin: 3:52:49)**
- **Carolyn Wyatt (Comments Begin: 3:53:53)**
- **Pamela Penn Hicks (Comments Begin: 3:55:33)**
- **Rochelle Donald (Comments Begin: 3:59:29)**
- **Candy Leonard Caldwell (Comments Begin: 4:20:46)**

Item No B4

- **Latoya Wilson (Comments Begin: 4:36:43)**

Item No. C2

- **Carol Newton (Comments Begin: 4:47:47)**

The public hearing was closed.

Item No. A9 was removed by the Applicant.

Item A1 – A12

Commissioner Davis moved to approve Items A1 through A12 (Minus Item No. A9). The motion was seconded by Commissioner Townsend.

Vote: Motion carried 5/0

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

Item A14

Commissioner Townsend moved to approve Item A14. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Davis.

Vote: Motion carried 5/0

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

Item B1

Commissioner Ramirez moved to hold Item B1 to the next meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Townsend.

Vote: Motion carried 5/0

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

Item B2 – B4

Commissioner Townsend moved to approve Items B2 through B4. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ramirez.

Vote: Motion carried 5/0

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

Item C1

Commissioner Ramirez moved to approve Item C1. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Townsend.

Vote: Motion carried 5/0

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

Item C2

Commissioner Bynum moved to deny Item C2. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ramirez.

Vote: Motion carried 5/0

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

Item No. 4.3 - RESOLUTION: ADOPTING REVISION TO THE LAND BANK POLICY (Discussion Begins: 4:51:33)

Wendy Green, Deputy Chief Counsel, presented the proposed changes to the policy:

- Added Section 8.3 requiring annual spring report on land bank option extensions
- Allows Board of Trustees to revoke extensions for incomplete projects with minimal progress
- Increases transparency in extension process

The Chairman opened the public hearing. Comments were received from the following:

- **Elnora Jefferson (Comments Begin: 4:55:05)**
- **Megan Painter (Comments Begin: 4:55:51)**
- **Eric Murray (Comments Begin: 4:56:30)**

The Chairman closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Townsend moved to adopt the resolution. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ramirez.

Vote: Motion carried 5/0

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

**Item No. 4.4 - RESOLUTION: LAND BANK HOLD UNIFIED GOVERNMENT
(Discussion Begins: 5:06:17)**

Doug Clements, USD 500, presented a request for a hold on 29 land bank lots west of Sumner High School.

The Chairman opened the public hearing. Comments were received from the following:

- **Beverly Easterwood (Comments Begin: 5:08:06)**

The Chairman closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Bynum moved to adopt the resolution. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ramirez.

Vote: Motion carried 5/0

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

**Item No. 4.5 - PRESENTATION: DOUGLAS SUMNER NEIGHBORHOOD GROUP
LAND BANK STRATEGY (Discussion Begins: 5:09:04)**

Beverly Easterwood, Douglas Sumner Neighborhood Association President, and Megan Painter, Community Housing Wyandotte County, made presentation to the committee.

Presentation Highlights:

- Three-year planning process for comprehensive neighborhood redevelopment
- 408 vacant parcels identified, with over half in land bank
- Implementation plan targeting 150-155 housing units
- \$42 million total investment projected
- Focus on whole-block development rather than individual lots
- Request for RFP process to package lot developments

The Chairman opened the public hearing. Comments were received from the following:

- **Rod Jefferson (Comments Begin: 5:30:22)**

The public hearing was closed.

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

5. Public Agenda:

Item No. 5.1 – APPEARANCE: ELNORA TELLIS JEFFERSON (Discussion Begins: 5:54:31)

Elnora Jefferson addressed the committee, emphasizing the need to update the Land Bank policy to include the redevelopment plan for Northeast neighborhoods. She highlighted the investment by Commissioners Townsend, Bynum, and Johnson for the Northeast Area Master Plan and suggested incorporating the equitable scorecard from the Northeast KCK Heritage Trail. Jefferson stressed the importance of local control, anti-displacement measures, and the impact of taxation on gentrification. The committee discussed strategic approaches, including the role of the economic development manager and the inclusion of various departments in housing strategies.

No formal action was taken on this item

Adjournment: (Discussion Begins: 6:03:01)

Commissioner Bynum made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ramirez.

Vote: Motion carried 5/0

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

The meeting was adjourned at 11:07 PM

MLS