

Unified Government of Wyandotte County and Kansas City, Kansas



Board of Commissioners

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

Mayor Christal E. Watson

*Commissioner At-Large Dist. 1 Melissa Bynum – Commissioner At-Large Dist. 2 Andrew Kump –
Commissioner Dist. 1 Jermaine Howard – Commissioner Dist. 2 Bill Burns –
Commissioner Dist. 3 Christian Ramirez – Commissioner Dist. 4 Evelyn Hill –
Commissioner Dist. 5 Carlos Pacheco – Commissioner Dist. 6 Phil Lopez –
Commissioner Dist. 7 Chuck Stites – Commissioner Dist. 8 Andrew Davis*

MINUTES

Thursday, February 19, 2026

5:30 PM – 7:01 PM

Attendance:

Commissioners Present:

- Mayor CEO Christal E. Watson
- Commissioner Melissa Bynum
- Commissioner Jermaine Howard
- Commissioner Bill Burns
- Commissioner Evelyn Hill
- Commissioner Carlos Pacheco
- Commissioner Phil Lopez
- Commissioner Chuck Stites
- Commissioner Andrew Davis

Commissioners Absent:

- Commissioner Christian Ramirez
- Commissioner Andrew Kump

Staff Present:

- David Johnston (County Administrator)
- Monica L. Sparks (Unified Government Clerk)
- Angela Lawson (Acting Chief Counsel)
- Dr. Shelley Kneuvean (Chief Financial Officer)
- Jud Knapp (Land Bank Administrator)
- Angel Ferrara (Parks Director)
- Alan Howze (Assistant County Administrator)

1. Call to Order:

Mayor Watson called the meeting to order at 5:30 P.M. The invocation was led by Chaplain Annie Erickson of Novo Mission, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance

4. Revisions to Agenda:

No revisions to the agenda were reported.

5. Mayor's Agenda: (Discussion Begins 3:55)**Item No. 1 – RECOGNITION: KANSAS RECREATION AND PARKS ASSOCIATION AWARDS**

County Administrator David Johnson introduced Parks Director Angel Ferrara to present the awards received at the Kansas Recreation and Parks Association conference in Topeka in January 2026.

Key Points:

- The Unified Government won six awards among approximately 140 agencies statewide
- Awards included: one distinguished award and five branch honors
- Specific recognitions:
 - A. Korean Vietnam War Memorial Project (thanks to Marketing Coordinator Ethan Haynes)
 - B. Outstanding new/innovative sports program - Court for the Community
 - C. Outstanding new/innovative wellness program - six new trails
 - D. Outstanding Recreation Branch Professional - Shaya Lockett
 - E. Natural Resource Professional for Parks - Justin Ukena

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

6. Consent Agenda: (Discussion Begins 20:50)

Item No. 1 – RESOLUTION/ORDINANCE: ADOPTING RECOMMENDATIONS OF 2025 COMMUNITY BENEFITS ADVISORY BOARD

Item No. 2 – APPOINTMENT: BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Item No. 3 – MINUTES

Item No. 4 – WEEKLY BUSINESS

Commissioner Bynum made a motion to approve all items on the consent agenda. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Davis.

Vote: Motion carries 8/0

- Ayes: Pacheco, Lopez, Stites, Davis, Bynum, Howard, Burns, Hill
- Nays: None
- Absent: Ramirez, Kump

7. Public Hearing Agenda: (Discussion Begins 21:41)

Item No. 1 - PUBLIC HEARING/RESOLUTION AND ORDINANCE: NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION ACT (NRA) PLAN RENEWAL (Discussion Begins: 8:00)

Mayor Watson introduced the public hearing for NRA plan renewal, noting two elements: conducting public hearing for comments and adoption of resolution/ordinance.

County Administrator David Johnson explained the NRA program expired on December 31, 2025, and requires renewal every five years. Jud Knapp, Land Bank Administrator, presented the item.

Key Points:

- **NRA Program Overview:**
 - A. Property tax rebate encouraging investment
 - B. Benefits include long-term growth, tax base stability, reduced blight
 - C. No loss of existing revenue
- **Program Changes Presented:**
 - A. Area boundaries modified (Turner School District removed due to non-approval)
 - B. Area 1: 10 years rebate, Areas 2 & 3: 5 years rebate
 - C. Residential rehab: remains 95% rebate
 - D. Residential new construction: reduced from 95% to 50%
 - E. Historic structures: increased threshold from 5% to 15%

F. Commercial cap: increased from \$3 million to \$10 million

The Mayor opened the public hearing. Comments were received.

- **Blair Whaley (Comment Begins 30:44)**
- **Karen Schibie (Comment Begins 33:52)**

The public hearing was closed.

Commissioner Stites made a motion to go to the options with 75% rebate for new construction instead of 50% on a 10-year term. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bynum.

Vote: Motion carries 8/0

- Ayes: Pacheco, Lopez, Stites, Davis, Bynum, Howard, Burns, Hill
- Nays: None
- Absent: Ramirez, Kump

Note: Attorney Green confirmed the change requires returning to school districts for approval, creating an opportunity to re-engage the Turner School District. Once done, it will be brought back to the commission for approval; no public hearing is needed.

9. Administrator's Agenda: (Discussion Begins 1:22:49)

Item No. 1 - UPDATE: LOCAL PRIORITY PLAN (Discussion Begins: 8:00)

County Administrator David Johnson introduced Alan Howze, Assistant County Administrator, to present the local priority plan update.

Key Points:

- First-time process following 2025 ordinance requirement
- Goal: Create alignment between the Mayor, Commissioners, Administrator, staff, and Legislative Auditor
- Focus on one-year achievable actions, not long-term issues like poverty
- Incorporates input from standing committee chairs and boards/commissions
- Timeline: Proposed January, discussed February, adopted March

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

Commissioner Bynum made a motion to adjourn and reconvene as the Land Bank Board of Trustees. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Davis. (Discussion Begins 1:30:32)

Vote: Motion carries 8/0

- Ayes: Pacheco, Lopez, Stites, Davis, Bynum, Howard, Burns, Hill
- Nays: None
- Absent: Ramirez, Kump

11. Land Bank Board of Trustees' Consent Agenda (Discussion Begins 1:31:04)

Item No. 1 - LAND BANK OPTIONS

Item No. 2 - LAND BANK PROPERTY TRANSFERS

Item No. 3 - LAND BANK TRANSFERS FOR STORMWATER PROJECTS

Commissioner Davis made a motion to approve all items as submitted. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Stites.

Vote: Motion carries 8/0

- Ayes: Pacheco, Lopez, Stites, Davis, Bynum, Howard, Burns, Hill
- Nays: None
- Absent: Ramirez, Kump

12. Adjournment: (Discussion Begins 1:31:42)

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

Vote: Motion carries 8/0

- Ayes: Pacheco, Lopez, Stites, Davis, Bynum, Howard, Burns, Hill
- Nays: None
- Absent: Ramirez, Kump

MAYOR WATSON

ADJOURNED THE MEETING AT 7:01 P.M.

February 19, 2026

Monica L. Sparks, CMC

Unified Government Clerk

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