

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, May 28, 2026

5:30 PM – 8:43 PM

Attendance:

Commissioners Present:

- Mayor CEO Crystal E. Watson
- Commissioner Andrew Kump
- Commissioner Jermaine Howard
- Commissioner Christian Ramirez
- Commissioner Evelyn Hill
- Commissioner Carlos Pacheco
- Commissioner Phil Lopez
- Commissioner Chuck Stites
- Commissioner Melissa Bynum

Commissioners Absent:

- Commissioner Bill Burns
- Commissioner Andrew Davis

Staff Present:

- David Johnston (County Administrator)
- Monica L. Sparks (Unified Government Clerk)
- Wendy Green (Deputy Chief Counsel)
- Shelley Kneuvean (Chief Financial Officer)
- Mari Mongil (Planning)
- Osiris Espinoza (Planning)
- Reginald Lindsey (Budget Director)
- Mike Grimm (Research Manager)
- Adrian Alemifar (Budget Analyst)

Call to Order

Mayor Watson called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM. Commissioner Hill led the invocation, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Revisions to Agenda:

No revisions to the agenda were reported.

Public Announcements: (Discussion 3:09)

Mayor Watson made several announcements:

- **Wyandotte Is Naturally Strong” / WINS Campaign:** highlighting positive energy across the county.
- **Recognition of Angel Ferrara (Parks & Recreation):** Angel Ferrara, Director of Parks & Recreation, received the Robert W. Crawford Young Professional Award from the National Recreation and Park Association.
- **Neighborhoods Rising Funds Awardees:** Announcement of 17 total awardees of Neighborhoods Rising Funds. List of awardees available in the Mayor’s office.
- **Constituent Letter – Street & Neighborhood Improvements:** Letter from a constituent thanking UG staff, who noticed more city activity and care in neighborhood streets than in past years.
- **Constituent Letter – Downtown Beautification (Flower Pots):** Letter praising whoever did the flower pots in front of City Hall and Memorial Hall. Building and Logistics staff credited and applauded.

- **WYCO Loves Local / Small Business & World Cup Activities:**
 - A. One World Wyandotte Event features 10 vendors and 8 food trucks, all small businesses. Event scheduled Friday at 3 PM in the courtyard. Tied to sister city programs and a prelude to the World Cup.
 - B. 5 Trainings with local businesses on: Psychological preparedness, & Business well-being
 - a. Featuring collaboration: Central Avenue Business Association, Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Heartland Black Chamber of Commerce, Strawberry Hill Business Association, The Toolbox Small Resource Center
- **World Cup Watch Party Circulator:** A circulator bus will operate around World Cup watch parties at Visit KCK / Memorial Hall. Designed to support 10–12 local businesses, help visitors and residents access small businesses.
 - A. Includes: Strawberry Hill businesses, Central Avenue businesses, Minnesota Avenue businesses, John’s Java and Jazz, Total of 14 stops.
- **Faces of Entrepreneurs Campaign:** 10 KCK local businesses to be featured in a collaboration campaign in partnership with Kansas City, Missouri.

Linked to the “WYCO loves local” program, highlighting and supporting local small businesses.

Mayor’s Agenda:

Item No. 1 – PROCLAMATION: HONORING THE WORK OF DAVID WARM, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (ED), MID-AMERICA REGIONAL COUNCIL (MARC) (Discussion Begins 9:15)

This item was read into the record of the meeting, and no commission action was required.

Item No. 2 – PROCLAMATION: JALISCO RESTAURANT AND THE HERNANDEZ FAMILY (Discussion Begins 17:00)

This item was read into the record of the meeting, and no commission action was required.

Clerk’s Statement (Statement Read 19:32)

Planning and Zoning Consent Agenda (Discussion Begins 23:25)

Clerk, Monica L. Sparks, read all items on the Planning and Zoning consent agenda, including:

8.1. CHANGE OF ZONE APPLICATIONS

8.1.A: COZ2025-033 - TYLER COEY WITH PEARL PROPERTIES

8.1.B: COZ2026-001 - OMAR VELA

8.1.C: COZ2026-005 - CAITLIN KINCAID WITH TEXAS ROADHOUSE

8.1.D: COZ2026-006 - HEM GHATANNEY WITH ABC REAL ESTATE INVESTING

8.2. SPECIAL USE PERMIT APPLICATIONS

8.2.A: SP2026-001 - ARIN WOODSON

8.2.B: SP2026-009 - JUAN URENDA

8.2.C: SP2026-013 - MALIK ALSAEED WITH MK AUTO LLC

8.2.D: SP2026-015 - ERIC MEDVED WITH EM SALES REAL ESTATE LLC

8.2.E: SP2026-019 - STEPHANIE VOGEL WITH HAPPY HEARTS AT KCKCC

8.2.F: SP2026-022 - GUY HOLBERT

8.2.G: SP2026-023 - CHAD WOLFE WITH MCCARTHY BUILDING COMPANIES

8.2.H: SP2026-024 - CYNTHIA NIELSEN AND JON DANNELS

8.2.I: SP2026-025 - KATHERINE MCENDREE

8.2.J: SP2026-026 - DAN DOTY WITH BLUE PALM LLC

8.2.K: SP2026-027 - JENNIFER COBB

8.2.L: SP2026-028 - JEFFREY HOLLINSHED

8.3. MASTER PLAN AMENDMENTS

8.3.A: MPL2026-001 - OMAR VELA

8.3.B: MPL2026-003 - HEM GHATENNEY WITH ABC REAL ESTATE INVESTING

8.4. MISCELLANEOUS

8.4.B: ORDINANCE AMENDING THE REQUIREMENTS FOR OUTDOOR COMMERCE ON PRIVATE PROPERTY

8.5. MINUTES

8.5.A: MINUTES

Commissioner Ramirez made a motion to approve all items on the Planning and Zoning Consent Agenda as submitted except set aside Item No. 8.4.A. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Kump.

Vote: Motion carries 8/0

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

Set Aside Item:

8.4.A: ORDINANCE CLARIFYING THE EXISTING CODE PROVISION THAT AUTHORIZES MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT FOR THE PLANNING COMMISSION (Discussion Begins 32:09)

A request was made by Commissioner Kump to set aside Item No. 8.4.A.

Wendy Green, Deputy Chief Counsel, explained the ordinance was brought forward because the current ordinance conflicts with state statute. State law prohibits compensating planning commission members but allows reimbursement for actual expenses. The current practice of paying \$100 monthly without requiring documentation constitutes compensation, not reimbursement.

The proposed ordinance would require planning commission members to provide proof of mileage and be reimbursed at the federal rate, capped at \$100 monthly.

Commissioner Pacheco made a motion to keep the denial from the Planning Commission and keep it the way it was voted.

Commissioner Pacheco made a motion to amend the prior motion.

Commissioner Pacheco made a motion to send the item back to the Planning Commission to review the costs and reimbursements to comply with state laws. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bynum.

Vote: Motion carries 8/0

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

Standing Committees' Agenda:

Item No. 1 – ORDINANCE: TEMPORARILY ALLOWING FOR THE SALE OF ALCOHOLIC LIQUOR AND CEREAL MALT BEVERAGES (Discussion Begins 1:20:40)

This item was heard by the Economic Development Finance Standing Committee, chaired by Commissioner Bynum, on May 14, 2026. The committee voted 6-1 to forward the item to the full commission. Commissioner Bynum explained the ordinance would allow bars and restaurants only (not retail liquor stores) to sell alcoholic beverages from 6 AM to 5 AM the following day during the World Cup period, reverting back on July 19.

Commissioner Pacheco made a motion to approve the ordinance. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bynum.

Vote: Motion carries 7/1

- Ayes: Pacheco, Stites, Kump, Howard, Ramirez, Hill, Bynum
- Nays: Lopez
- Absent: Davis, Burns

Administrator's Agenda:

Item No. 1 – BUDGET: REVENUE ESTIMATES WORKSHOP (Discussion Begins 1:36:35)

County Administrator David Johnston introduced the budget presentation focused on revenue estimates, led by Budget Director Reginald Lindsey and Research Manager Mike Grimm.

The presentation covered the Unified Government's major revenue sources including property taxes, BPU payment in lieu of taxes, and sales and use taxes.

Property Taxes:

- City side: 28% of revenues from two levy funds (city bond interest and general fund)
- County side: 62% of revenues from eight levy funds, requires more support
- Preliminary 4% appraisal increase estimate for 2026
- Estimated additional revenue: \$6.3 million (\$3 million city, \$3.3 million county)

BPU Payment in Lieu of Taxes:

- Supports Kansas City general fund at \$37-38 million (30% of fund revenues)
- Residential rate decreased from 11.9% to 10.9% in 2025, to 9.9% in 2026
- Goal to reduce residential rate to 5.9%
- 2025 actuals down \$1.8 million due to various factors

Kansas City Sales and Use Taxes: Multiple fund structures with various tax rates, including dedicated sales taxes for public safety, neighborhood infrastructure, and emergency medical services.

Wyandotte County Sales and Use Taxes: Support Sheriff, Emergency Management, Emergency Dispatch, and other services

New Revenue Options Discussed:

- Additional dedicated sales tax
- Franchise fee on non-residential solid waste collection
- Motor vehicle fee adjustment (increase from \$5 to up to \$10 per transaction)

Revenue Neutral Rate Discussion: Staff explained the revenue neutral rate requirements, calendar deadlines, and the option to exceed revenue neutral while still reducing mill levy rates.

COMMISSIONER QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION

Several commissioners discussed the municipal cost index and inflation impacts.

Commissioner Bynum: Emphasized that just because valuations go up 4% does not mean UG must take all that growth. She stressed desire to talk seriously about property tax reduction, not automatically capturing all new valuations. She asked for clear timing on audit availability and spending-reduction discussions.

Mayor Watson: Questioned the lack of revenue replacement planning when reducing BPU pilot rates. She asked if staff has ever shown a budget that reflects what it truly costs to run the city well, without pre-cutting to fit expected revenues. She requested that staff replicate last year's "no cuts needed" scenario so commissioners and the public can see how far off current revenues are from actual needs. She asked if staff have ever shown a budget that reflects what it truly costs to run the city well.

Commissioner Ramirez: Asked about the disconnect between Attorney General opinion timing and ordinance passage. He raised a fundamental concern: by charter, the PILOT is supposed to be a percentage of BPU's gross revenues, but in practice it is treated as a pass-through on ratepayers' bills. He suggested this may not match original intent and should be revisited in a deeper policy/charter discussion with BPU. Suggest an exercise to help with PBB.

Commissioner Stites: Requested information about other jurisdictions' practices. Agreed PILOT is not a pass-through and requested more discussion on it.

Commissioner Hill: Asked for clarification on one-time impacts

Commissioner Kump: Questioned revenue neutral procedures for clarity.

Commissioner Pacheco: Gave a long explanation aimed at the public: exceeding revenue-neutral does not automatically mean a tax hike; it mainly preserves flexibility. Even if the mill levy stays the same or goes down, service levels can still drop because costs (inflation, infrastructure, personnel) are rising faster than revenues. Get UG financials in order and then find relief.

Commissioner Lopez: Questioned whether, once American Royal opens, increased sales tax will mostly go to bond repayment, meaning UG “sees” the revenue but doesn’t fully keep it. Floated broader structural ideas (would require state action), like eliminating certain overlapping special districts (e.g., “pet district,” community college levy) using that room to raise UG mill levy as needed while still reducing total property tax.

Commissioner Bynum and Commissioner Ramirez: Concerned that the state “modernization fee” motor vehicle registration fees are not coming back to counties as originally intended; reportedly being diverted (e.g., to highways). They are committed to taking this issue back to the legislative delegation.

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

Adjournment: (Discussion Begins 3:12:24)

Commissioner Kump made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ramirez.

Vote: Motion carries 8/0

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

MAYOR WATSON

ADJOURNED THE MEETING AT 8:43 P.M.

May 28, 2026

Monica L. Sparks, CMC

Unified Government Clerk

ML