CONSENT AGENDA ITEM NO. ______

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

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MINUTES

SPECIAL MEETING

Tuesday, August 19, 2025
5:04 PM – 11:01 PM

Attendance:

Commissioners Present:

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

Commissioners Absent:

- Commissioner Ramirez

Staff Present:

- Monica L. Sparks (Unified Government Clerk)
- David Johnston (County Administrator)
- Angela Lawson (Interim Chief Legal Counsel)
- Reginald Linsdey (Budget Director)
- Michael Peterson (Deputy Budget Director)
- Anita Peterson (District Court)
- Philip Lockman (Community Corrections)
- Terrie Garrison (Interim Director, Health Department)
- Matt May (Emergency Management Director)
- Gregg Talkin (Director Neighborhood Resource Center)
- Dennis Rubin (Chief, KCK Fire Department)
- Karl Oakman (Chief, KCK Police Department)
- Greg Wooten, Buildings and Logistics Department
- Jeff Miles, Director of Environmental Services
- Brandon Grover, Road and Bridge Program Manager
- Dwayne Smith, Street Department Manager
- Diana Miles, Solid Waste Manager

Call to Order:

Mayor Tyrone Garner called the meeting to order at 5:04 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 Thursday, August 19, 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.

DISTRICT COURT BUDGET PRESENTATION (Discussion begins: 4:38)

Reginald Lindsey, Budget Director, presented the District Court budget:

- Total county budget: $2.8 million
- FTE count: 11 positions
- Department hierarchy includes district court, process servers, and court trustee
- 2026 budget impacts: No significant increases outside personnel costs
- Key notes: 61% of expenses are contracted services including inter attorneys for juveniles and court appointed lawyers
- Juror mileage and stipends: $128,000

Discussion:

Commissioner Burns asked about juror mileage and stipends being lower than previous years and the impact of fewer jury trials. Anita Peterson, District Court, confirmed fewer jury trials but would provide specific numbers starting in January.

COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS BUDGET PRESENTATION (Discussion begins: 8:02)

Mr. Lindsey presented Community Corrections budget:

- Total county budget: $2 million
- FTE count: Almost 17 positions
- Majority funding from grants
- Department hierarchy: alcohol/drug treatment, community corrections, pretrial services
- 2026 budget impacts: Pretrial service house arrest operational increase of $28,000

Phil Lockman, Community Corrections Director, answered questions about the special alcohol tax fund totaling $955,000 budget with $587,000 from special alcohol tax.

Discussion:

Commissioner Bynum inquired about the special alcohol tax amount.

Mr. Lockman explained the funds support two drug courts and behavioral health court, helping ease jail overcrowding.

Mayor asked about budget increases.

Mr. Lockman explained operational funding challenges for pretrial services.

Commissioner Davis asked about budget reconciliation between different documents.

Mr. Lindsey clarified that grant dollars totaling $4.5 million support community corrections but are not reflected in the county-funded portion being presented.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT BUDGET PRESENTATION (Discussion begins: 20:57)

Mr. Lindsey presented Health Department budget:

- Total budget: $5.1 million
- FTE count: Almost 32 positions
- Department hierarchy: health administration, clinical services, public health, community health, county coroner
- 2026 capital improvement: First floor bathroom renovations ($75,000)
- Key notes: 62% personnel costs, 28% contractual services (15% autopsies)

Questions and Discussion:

Commissioner Lopez asked about coroner operations.

Ms. Garrison explained the coroner has a flat contract rate of $27,000 annually, separate from forensic medical autopsy costs which vary by complexity.

Terrie Garrison, Interim Health Department Director, addressed questions.

Commissioner Burns asked about vaccination timing for elderly residents.

Ms. Garrison recommended mid-September for flu, RSV, and COVID vaccines.

Commissioner Davis asked about measles and tuberculosis situations.

Ms. Garrison reported no new measles cases since mid-July and that tuberculosis investigations remain at state level despite requests to return to local jurisdiction.

Commissioner Davis asked about ARPA, non-grant funds, and Ameri-Corps Fund.

Ms. Garrison discussed ARPA funding ending in December 2024, with three positions retained through other grants, and AmeriCorps funding being restored after temporary suspension.

Commissioner Davis asked to clarify if the hiring freeze will be lifted once the budget is voted on. Commissioner Davis stated that there are many key positions that need to be filled.

Commissioner Lopez asked about department concerns.

Ms. Garrison identified staffing shortages, particularly the need for a disease investigator specialist and epidemiologist positions for disease surveillance.

Commissioner Bynum asked about tax levy and general fund differences.

Mr. Lindsey explained various dedicated tax levies prescribed by state law for specific purposes.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT BUDGET PRESENTATION (Discussion begins: 42:35)

Mr. Lindsey presented Emergency Management budget:

- Total budget: $2 million
- FTE count: 5 positions

- Department hierarchy: emergency management and Wyandotte County radio communications
- 2026 capital improvement: Outdoor warning system ($40,000)
- Key notes: 61% contractual services (29% radio maintenance, 13% technical support), 27% personnel

Questions and Discussion:

Matt May, Emergency Management Director, explained the high contractual services costs.

Mayor asked about contractual services composition.

Mr. May explained radio system maintenance costs approximately $500,000 each for subscriber units and infrastructure, plus BPU technical support agreement (75/25 cost share).

Commissioner Burroughs asked about cost sharing with other departments.

Mr. May explained that smaller departments like Junior College and USD 500 police pay per-radio fees, but major departments don't contribute additional funding.

Mr. May detailed radio replacement needs, with some departments still requiring mobile radio updates costing approximately $2.5 million to complete.

Commissioner Davis asked about radio system costs.

Mr. May explained the necessity of reliable public safety communications and the planned obsolescence requiring infrastructure replacement by 2030.

Commissioner Kane shared personal experience about radio communication failures during emergencies.

Commissioner Lopez asked about radio replacement costs and timeline.

Mr. May confirmed the original $15 million project cost about $11 million over five years, with $2.5 million still needed to complete remaining departments.

NEIGHBORHOOD RESOURCE CENTER BUDGET PRESENTATION (Discussion begins: 1:02:47)

Mr. Lindsey presented Neighborhood Resource Center budget:

- Total budget: $6.8 million (city general fund)
- FTE count: 55 positions
- 2026 budget impacts: Restore MBR funding ($220,000), restore neighborhood impact grant funding ($35,000)
- Key notes: 80% personnel, demolition fees 25% of contractual/commodity expenses, office rent 16%

Questions and Discussion:

Greg Talkin, NRC Director, provided updates on system improvements and business process improvements beginning.

Mayor asked about revenue generation.

Mr. Talkin reported generating under $7.4 million in 2024, approaching $4 million in current year with four months remaining.

Mayor asked about demolition practices and land preparation.

Mr. Talkin explained only concrete block 12 inches or smaller is used as fill, meeting building code requirements.

Mayor discussed blight and beautification priorities, referencing Operation Bright Side history.

Michael Peterson, Deputy Budget Director explained current collaboration with various departments for graffiti abatement and cleanup efforts.

Commissioner Townsend asked about eliminated positions.

Mr. Talkin confirmed two positions eliminated in 2025, amended budget and discussed code enforcement capacity.

Commissioner Lopez suggested building ownership versus leasing. Mr. Talkin noted 3.5 years remaining on current lease at approximately $133,000 annually.

DEDICATED SALES TAX PRESENTATION (Discussion begins: 1:45:29)

Michael Peterson, Deputy Budget Director, presented dedicated sales tax overview:

- 2026 budget: $18.2 million
- Supports 50.25 FTEs
- Fund breakdown: 37% personnel, 52% capital outlay
- Department allocation: Police 33%, Fire 33%, Public Works 31%, Parks 2%
- Capital projects include fleet replacement, facility improvements, infrastructure projects

Key Operational Items:

- Fire: 25 positions, turnout gear, health/fitness programs
- Police: 25.25 positions (20 officers), training academy, CIT co-responder, body cameras

Questions and Discussion:

Commissioner Bynum suggested redirecting capital funds toward major building projects like fire stations. She noted personnel costs of $6-7 million from the $14-15 million generated, questioning whether remaining funds could fund fire station construction debt-free.

Commissioner Burroughs asked about fund balance reconciliation.

Mr. Peterson explained differences between original, amended, and proposed budget figures.

Mayor emphasized need for detailed expenditure tracking.

Commissioner Davis asked about forecasting accuracy.

Mr. Peterson explained conservative sales tax projections and prior year adjustments.

FIRE DEPARTMENT BUDGET PRESENTATION (Discussion begins: 2:02:24)

Mr. Peterson presented Fire Department overview:

- Total city budget: $87.8 million
- City FTE count: 451 positions
- 92% personnel costs
- Makes up 26% of tax levy budget, 33% of city general fund
- 2026 budget impacts: Life scan health screenings, medical director contracts, $300,000 turnout gear, $300,000 station maintenance
- Capital improvement: $3.1 million fire equipment payments, $1.158 million fleet transfer, $1 million fire station planning/site work

Questions and Discussion:

Chief Dennis Rubin was available for questions with staff.

Commissioner Lopez asked about radio costs and coordination with Emergency Management. Chief Rubin clarified that communications FTEs are dispatchers, not radio equipment.

Chief Rubin addressed tire procurement and maintenance practices, inquired by Commissioner. Lopez.

Commissioner Davis asked about optimal staffing.

Chief Rubin stated department supports national standards but understands budget constraints. Recent contract added five members to minimum staffing, though national standard would require about $15 million annually for 40-45 additional members.

Chief Rubin discussed Command vehicle transitions to smaller, more affordable vehicles.

Mayor asked about response priorities.

Chief Rubin confirmed 80% of calls are emergency medical, followed by fires, hazardous materials, and rescue operations.

Mayor asked about station adequacy, and standards.

Chief Rubin referenced Insurance Services Organization standards and noted current stations are "adequate" but identified ambulance capacity as the biggest need.

Chief Rubin addressed facility conditions, estimating $221 million needed for station improvements, with most requiring replacement rather than rehabilitation.

Commissioner Burns asked about union consultation in budget preparation.

Chief Rubin acknowledged regular meetings but no specific budget input sessions.

Commissioner Townsend asked about population-based staffing standards.

Chief Rubin noted unique factors like interstate highways, rail traffic, and industrial facilities affecting service demands beyond simple population ratios.

Commissioner Davis asked about command staff numbers.

Chief Rubin confirmed 29 chief officers total: 3 deputy chiefs, 9 battalion chiefs, 9 assistant chiefs, 4 fire investigators, plus administrative positions.

Fire Station 20 Replacement received $1 million for planning and site work, with previous expenditures of $500,000-$1 million.

POLICE DEPARTMENT BUDGET PRESENTATION (Discussion begins: 2:58:13)

Mr. Peterson presented Police Department overview:

- Total city budget: $67.9 million
- City FTE count: 369.5 positions
- 84% personnel costs
- Makes up 25% of city tax levy, 31% of city general fund
- 2026 budget impacts: Data domain ($60,500), street smart systems
- Capital items: Animal services crematorium, tasers, mobile data computers, $2.6 million fleet transfer

Questions and Discussion:

Chief Oakman and staff available for questions.

Chief Oakman clarified FTE numbers: 369 total includes civilians, with only 309 sworn positions funded, representing a 60-position reduction in sworn officers. This equals "a whole patrol division" and "three community policing divisions."

Commissioner Kane asked about staffing shortages.

Chief Oakman confirmed 60 officers short, noting this would be the worst staffing position during his tenure.

Chief Oakman highlighted department achievements despite understaffing: historic low crime levels, 100% homicide solve rate (15 of 15 cases), $10.8 million in grants obtained since 2021.

Cost-saving measures implemented included logo changes (saving $1,100 per vehicle), lease programs, and reducing detective vehicle sizes ($135,000 credit).

Commissioner Lopez asked about protective equipment.

Chief Oakman confirmed efforts to ensure rifle-rated shields in every patrol car following recent incidents.

Commissioner Davis asked about staffing reconciliation.

Michael Peterson explained vacancy trend elimination process, with current staffing at 316 sworn officers plus 21 in academy.

Chief Oakman noted improved recruiting trends but emphasized hiring timeline challenges requiring six-month academy training.

Commissioner Davis asked about Animal Services initiatives.

Chief Oakman praised Director Ashley Scott's work and announced plans for cultural education programs on animal ownership responsibility.

Regarding illegal dumping,

Chief Oakman mentioned real-time crime center camera improvements and community policing staffing needs (currently seven positions down).

Chief Oakman addressed facility challenges affecting recruitment compared to other metro departments.

Commissioner Townsend asked about right-sizing based on population.

Chief Oakman referenced Kansas statewide standards suggesting 355 sworn officers for Kansas City, Kansas population, though noting unique metro area factors.

Commissioner Hill asked about residency requirements as recruitment challenge.

Chief Oakman identified pay (bottom third in metro), facilities, and residency as main recruitment obstacles.

Mayor Garner continued discussion regarding police department staffing levels, noting that while not advocating for an immediate increase to 400 FTEs, future growth of the community will require the commission to consider additional staffing for officer safety and responsible response to calls for service.

The Police Chief presented concerning conditions at West Patrol Station, explaining that the facility built in the late 1950s/1960s is in deplorable condition.

Key issues discussed included:

- The public cannot access the station due to safety concerns
- Station designed for 12 officers but houses over 50 officers
- Significant structural problems including falling concrete, non-functional systems, and water damage
- Showers used as storage closets due to plumbing failures
- Constant moisture causing rust throughout the facility

The Chief also reported on cost-saving measures, including relocating the traffic unit from a leased building on Leavenworth Road (costing $30,000 annually) to the former FBI space, which will save utilities and lease costs starting in 2026.

Discussion of the drone first responder program revealed the department acquired the equipment three weeks prior using Law Enforcement Trust Fund money. The system will have a 2-3 mile radius and integrate with the real time crime center.

Ken Anderson, Deputy Chief, noted that four School Resource Officers are subsidized by schools, with an additional Minnesota Avenue Schmidt position to be paid by that taxing district in the following year.

BUILDINGS AND LOGISTICS DEPARTMENT BUDGET PRESENTATION (Discussion begins: 4:08:19)

Michael Peterson, Deputy Budget Director presented the Buildings and Logistics budget totaling $11.9 million in 2026, representing less than 3% of the UG tax levy budget and roughly 3.75% of city and county general funds combined.

Greg Wooten represented the department in the absence of Director John Kelly, who was attending the National APWA conference. The department is responsible for approximately 60 buildings out of 200+ structures in the Unified Government inventory.

Key Budget Components:

- Personnel: 52% of budget
- Contractual services: 28%
- Capital improvements: 11%
- Commodities: 7%

Discussion:

Commissioner Burns inquired about courthouse exterior cleaning timeline.

Mr. Wooten explained that the masonry restoration project is proceeding through procurement, with work beginning later in summer/early fall and completion estimated by summer 2027. The project includes masonry, HVAC, electrical, and fire alarm system improvements.

Commissioner Davis asked about the $450,000 TGT-funded Memorial Hall upgrades.

Mr. Wooten detailed comprehensive kitchen and audio-visual improvements, including structural modifications, three-bay sink, freezer, refrigerator, food warmer, and furniture storage for events accommodating up to 300 people.

The abatement team of four employees with an $805,000 budget was transferred to Buildings and Logistics. Commissioner Davis requested specific data on abatements completed during the year.

Commissioner Bynum praised the Buildings and Logistics team as "unsung heroes" who serve as the backbone for all public-facing operations and events.

Administrator Johnson commended the team's responsiveness, citing specific examples including:

- Juneteenth Celebration grounds preparation

- City Hall Plaza improvements
- Emergency road repair at Quindaro Cemetery before a funeral
- Consistent support without ever declining requests

Operational Efficiencies:

Mr. Wooten highlighted the department's hybrid approach using in-house technical staff supplemented by contracted services, estimating up to $200,000 annually in cost savings. Staff member Frank Lopez was recognized for fixing security cameras that would otherwise require expensive contractor services.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT BUDGET PRESENTATION (Discussion begins: 4:34:55)

Reginald Lindsey, Budget Director presented Public Works as the largest department with seven divisions, $100 million budget, and 217 FTEs funded by nine certified funds:

Budget Breakdown by Division:

- Environmental Services: $57 million (57%)
- Solid Waste: $12 million
- Special Street and Highway: $9 million (9%)
- Other divisions comprising remaining budget

Jeff Miles, Director of Environmental Services, noted Director Troy Shaw's absence due to National APWA conference attendance as part of the department's two-year accreditation process. Upon completion, the department will be one of only 180 accredited public works departments nationwide out of 4,876 cities over 5,000 population.

Public Service Operations Division

Brandon Grover, Road and Bridge Program Manager, explained this administrative arm has a $4.1 million budget with 6 FTEs, primarily funding storm water debt payments (51% of budget).

Discussion:

Commissioner Davis requested clarification on pavement preservation funding discrepancies.

Michael Peterson, Deputy Budget Director, explained:

- 2025 original budget: $14 million total, including $5.5 million for pavement preservation
- 2025 amended budget: $19.3 million total, including $12 million for pavement preservation
- 2026 proposed budget: $10.8 million total, including $5.7 million for pavement preservation

The $6.3 million increase in 2025 was attributed to Plaza at the Speedway TIF funding becoming available.

David Johnston requested detailed itemization of how pavement preservation grew from $5.5 million to $12 million, with staff agreeing to provide complete breakdown.

Street Maintenance Division - Critical Staffing Crisis (Discussion Begins: 5:07:50)

Dwayne Smith, Street Department Manager, presented alarming staffing data:

Historical Staffing Decline:

- 2019: 80 FTE positions (peak staffing)
- 2025 budgeted: 66 FTE positions
- 2025 actual filled: 51 positions at year start
- Current positions filled: 42 total (31 field staff, 8 supervisors, 3 management)
- Current vacancies: 23 positions
- 2026 projected: 52 positions (14 position reduction)

Overall Impact: 35% decrease in staffing from peak (80 to projected 52 positions)

Workload Comparison: Mr. Smith provided stark comparison with neighboring Olathe:

- Olathe: 1,400 lane miles maintained by 50+ employees, patched 1,000 potholes
- Wyandotte County: 2,400 lane miles maintained by 43 employees, patched 40,000+ potholes

Current year projections show 33,000 potholes patched to date with 7,000 more anticipated before year-end.

Department Responsibilities: Mr. Smith outlined 14 different functions including:

- Asphalt repair and replacement
- Curb repair and replacement
- Right-of-way mowing
- Storm debris clearing
- Illegal dumping cleanup
- Alley maintenance
- Traffic signage and repair
- Pavement marking (22+ schools)
- Emergency road closures
- Concrete work
- Street sweeping
- Block party support

- Winter operations
- 24-hour emergency response (3 on-call technicians)

Discussion:

Commissioner Kane strongly supported increased staffing, drawing parallels to labor strikes at General Motors when workers were overwhelmed. He emphasized the unreasonable pressure placed on employees and declining morale.

Commissioner Burns raised concerns about illegal dumping along K-32 between 40th and 57th Streets, expressing frustration that trash remains for 4-6 weeks.

Jeff Miles acknowledged the problem, noting:

- Over 3,000 illegal dumping reports with only 60 citations issued over three years
- 80% of citations went to Wyandotte County residents
- Street department spends half of Monday and Tuesday cleaning up illegal dumping
- Enforcement must improve to change behavior

Diana Miles, Solid Waste Manager, quantified costs: $2,400 for half-day cleanup of 20 tons along Call Drive, projecting $124,000 annually if done weekly.

Infrastructure Crisis Context

Brandon Grover, Public Works, explained the connection between poor road conditions and maintenance demands:

- Current Pavement Condition Index (PCI): 48
- Projected 2026 PCI: 42-44
- Comparison cities (Overland Park, Olathe): PCI 78-82
- Rehabilitation costs 6-8 times more than proper maintenance

Discussion:

Commissioner Davis questioned the department's hiring capacity, with Smith estimating ability to hire 10-15 positions in 2026 given union contract requirements and promotion processes.

Commissioner Townsed praised the department's year-round responsiveness to pothole reports and supported additional staffing to limit UG liability.

Commissioner Lopez identified street maintenance as an essential service requiring prioritization and proper budgeting. He suggested exploring waste management contract modifications to include illegal dumping cleanup and recommended an "all hands-on deck" approach with strategic blitz operations targeting problem areas.

Mayor suggested leveraging ongoing waste management contract negotiations to require cleanup of roadside dumping, noting the company's desire for early contract renewal until 2032.

Commissioner Lopez identified a $5.4 million discrepancy in Public Works budget totals, with staff explaining that Fleet Services ($5.4 million internal service fund) was included in divisional presentations but not the summary slide.

Adjournment (Discussion Begins: 5:56:20)

Commissioner Kane made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Davis.

Vote: Motion carries 9/0

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

MAYOR GARNER ADJOURNED

THE MEETING AT 11:01 P.M.

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Monica L. Sparks, CMC
Unified Government Clerk

mls