

Unified Government of Wyandotte County and Kansas City, Kansas



Board of Commissioners

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

Due to construction, the July 2, 2026, Board of Commissioners meeting will be conducted in the Fifth-floor conference room of the Municipal Office Building, 701 N. 7th Street, Kansas City, Kansas.

MINUTES

Thursday, July 2, 2026

5:00 PM – 6:13 PM

Attendance:

Commissioners Present:

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

Commissioners Absent:

- Commissioner Bill Burns
- Commissioner Andrew Davis

Staff Present:

- Monica L. Sparks, Unified Government Clerk
- Alan Howze, Interim County Administrator
- Angela Lawson, Acting Chief Counsel
- Reginald Lindsey, Budget Director
- Adrian Alemifar, Senior Budget Analyst
- Angel Ferrara, Park and Recreation Director
- Casey Meyer, Interim Assistant County Administrator
- Dr. Shelley Kneuvean, Chief Financial Officer

Call to Order

Mayor Watson called the meeting to order at 5:00 P.M.

Executive Session (CHANGE OF ORDER PER AGENDA UPDATE)

Motion made by Commissioner Bynum that the Commission convene into Executive Session until 5:30 p.m. in the 5th floor conference room to consult with our attorneys on matters relating to consultation with an attorney on matters that would be deemed privileged in an attorney-client relationship, as permitted under the Kansas Open Meetings Act; and that Angela Lawson, Casey Meyer, and Alex Gilmore remain as needed to participate in the discussion.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Howard.

Vote: Motion carries 8/0

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

Present for the Executive Session: Bynum, Kump, Ramirez, Hill, Pacheco, and Watson, Mayor/CEO; presiding. Staff Present: Angela Lawson, Interim Chief Counsel, Casey Meyer, legal counsel, Alex Gilmore, counsel from Fisher Patterson Law Firm.

Mayor Watson reconvened back into Executive Meeting at 5:30p.m.

The invocation was led by Sister Theresa Bangert from Our Lady Saint Catholic Church, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Revisions to Agenda: (Discussion Begins 03:45)

The Clerk reported there was an updated agenda issued:

1. An updated agenda was issued adding Items One and Two to the Mayor's Agenda.
2. Documents were added to Consent Agenda Item Number One.
3. Documents were added to the Administrator's Item Number One.

Public Announcements: (Discussion Begins 04:13)

Mayor Watson delivered several community announcements:

Community Blood Drive: Mayor Watson announced that the KCK Fire Department, in partnership with the Community Blood Center, will host a community blood drive on Thursday, July 9, from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM at City Hall Lobby, 701 North Seventh Street, KCK. Residents were encouraged to sign up on the UG website. Mayor Watson noted that every donation can make a difference and help save a life in the community.

KCK Fire Department Bucket Brigade Program

Mayor Watson announced the KCK Fire Department Bucket Brigade program, designed to reduce preventable fires caused by improperly discarded fireworks during the Fourth of July holiday.

Proclamation — Secure Firearm Storage Awareness Month

Mayor Watson recognized Carla Oppenheimer of Grandparents for Gun Safety and presented a proclamation declaring July as Secure Firearm Storage Awareness Month in Wyandotte County and Kansas City, Kansas. Mayor Watson invited Ms. Oppenheimer to come forward while she read the proclamation aloud.

Seven Days of Kindness — Check Presentation to Wyandotte County Parks Foundation

Commissioner Bynum announced the presentation of a check in the amount of \$740.85 to the Wyandotte County Parks Foundation, representing proceeds from the Seven Days of Kindness Candy Gram Sales. Staff explained that Unified Government employees purchased candy grams to spread cheer to fellow employees and community members. The Seven Days of Kindness celebration took place in April. Attendees were reminded to continue being kind to everyone in the community.

Citizen Letter Recognizing Officer Morgan Reed

Commissioner Bynum read aloud a letter received from Mr. Ernest D. Green, Senior, of Beaumont, Texas, commending Officer Morgan Reed of the KCK Police Department.

Citizen Letter Recognizing Environmental Services Team — Jeff Miles

Staff reported that a citizen reached out to the Mayor's Office to recognize the work of the Environmental Services Team, led by Jeff Miles. The letter from Joshua Yochum of Kansas City, Kansas

EPA Brownfields Cleanup Grant Award — \$3.7 Million

Commissioner Bynum announced that on June 24, 2026, the Unified Government was notified of a grant award from the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in the amount of \$3.7 million for a Brownfields Cleanup Grant. Staff noted this award ranks in the top 10 largest awards of its kind in the country.

A letter from Jerry Minor Gordon English, Acting Director, Office of Brownfields and Land Revitalization, EPA, was read into the record, congratulating the Unified Government and confirming that the Unified Government of Wyandotte County, Kansas City, Kansas was selected as one of the entities the EPA will begin negotiations with to award a cooperative agreement for a cleanup grant. The letter noted that the Unified Government submitted an outstanding application, acknowledged the tremendous commitment of time and energy invested, and referenced the EPA Brownfields program's mission since its inception in 1995 to help states, tribal nations, and communities clean up and revitalize brownfield sites.

Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) Triple Crown Award

Commissioner Bynum announced that the Unified Government's Finance Department and Chief Financial Officer Dr. Shelley Kneuvean achieved the Government Finance Officers Association's (GFOA) Triple Crown Award for 2024.

Mayor's Agenda: (Discussion Begins 17:42)

Item No. 1 – RESOLUTION: MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (ADDED PER AGENDA UPDATE) (Discussion Begins 17:42)

Mayor Watson announced the approval of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between David W. Johnston and the Unified Government. Mayor Watson introduced Angela Lawson, Chief Legal Counsel, to present the item.

Presentation by Angela Lawson, Chief Legal Counsel: Ms. Lawson explained that the MOU is a simplified agreement derived from Mr. Johnston's existing contract and that no new financial terms are introduced.

Commissioner Bynum made a motion to approve the resolution. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ramirez.

Vote: Motion carries 8/0

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

Item No. 2 – RESOLUTION: APPOINTMENT OF THE INTERIM COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR (ADDED PER AGENDA UPDATE) (Discussion Begins 19:07)

Mayor Watson introduced Angela Lawson, Chief Legal Counsel, to present the item.

Presentation by Angela Lawson, Chief Legal Counsel: Ms. Lawson explained that the Unified Government Charter requires that a County Administrator is appointed by the Mayor with the consent of the Board of Commissioners. She stated that the same process applies to the appointment of an Interim County Administrator. She confirmed that the resolution allows the Mayor to negotiate and enter into an agreement with Alan Howze for the interim role, at terms not to exceed those of the current County Administrator's contract.

Commissioner Kump made a motion to approve the resolution. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Howard.

Vote: Motion carries 8/0

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

Consent Agenda: (Discussion Begins 20:41)

Item No. 1 – RESOLUTION: DOWNTOWN GROCERY STORE AT 501 MINNESOTA AVENUE (ADDING ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS PER AGENDA UPDATE)

Item No. 2 – APPOINTMENT: BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Item No. 3 – MINUTES

Item No. 4 – WEEKLY BUSINESS

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

Vote: Motion carries 8/0

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

Administrator's Agenda:

Item No. 1 – BUDGET: CIP WORKSHOP (ADDING ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS PER AGENDA UPDATE) (Discussion Begins 21:33)

Mayor Watson turned the matter over to Interim County Administrator Alan Howze for opening remarks and introduction of staff.

Mr. Howze provided context for the presentation, explaining that the current session was intended to be a shorter continuation of the comprehensive CIP discussion held the prior week. He noted that at the previous meeting, the budget team and departments presented the full scope of CIP requests, which were not necessarily reflective of what would be included in the budget to be formally presented to the commission on August 6, 2026. Rather, that session provided commissioners with a full picture of community needs.

Mr. Howze summarized the key categories of need identified in the prior session:

- Approximately \$30 million identified in road and bridge needs
- Police station needs
- Fire station needs
- Parks and community centers needs
- Additional departmental capital needs

He noted that tonight's session would connect the CIP requests to the results of the March 2026 Community Survey, identifying priorities expressed by community members and aligning them with CIP requests. He acknowledged that the community has identified many pressing needs against a limited set of resources and stated that working toward a balanced budget for August 6 is a primary goal. Mr. Howze turned the presentation over to Reginald Lindsay, Budget Director.

CIP Presentation by Reginald Lindsey, Budget Director:

Mr. Lindsey added to Mr. Howze's introduction, noting that the prior week's CIP presentation included over \$50 million in capital needs brought forward by seven departments:

1. Parks and Recreation
2. Police Department
3. Fire Department
4. Facilities
5. Technology
6. Emergency Management
7. Public Works

He noted that as a result of questions raised by commissioners at the previous meeting, a memo from each department was prepared to normalize the information and was provided to commissioners for this meeting. Mr. Lindsay introduced Adrian Alemifar, Senior Budget Analyst, to present the remaining three slides from the prior CIP workshop.

Presentation by Adrian Alemifar, Senior Budget Analyst:

Ms. Alemifar reviewed the final three slides of the CIP workshop, connecting CIP requests to the results of the March 2026 Community Survey. She organized her presentation into three categories: City Services, County Services, and Shared Services.

City Services — Public Safety: The community survey asked residents to rate importance and satisfaction on public safety items. Items with high importance but low satisfaction were identified as the highest priority areas for improvement. Results showed:

- Highest priority: Police visibility in residential neighborhoods
- High priority: Police visibility in commercial areas; response time for police emergencies

These items were identified as relating back to CIP requests for patrol stations, a computer dispatch management system, and a police department staffing study.

- Medium priority: Response time for medical emergency calls; response time for fire emergencies

These items related back to fire department CIP requests for fire station replacements.

City Services — Public Works: The community survey asked for satisfaction on infrastructure-related items. Importance ratings were not collected for infrastructure specifically, though the overall city services question highlighted public works as a prominent concern:

- Number one priority (city services overall): Maintenance of city streets
- High priority: Storm water management
- Medium priority: Sewer and wastewater management

These items were identified as relating to public works capital requests.

County Services: The community survey asked for satisfaction with Wyandotte County emergency disaster preparedness and the overall feeling of safety in Wyandotte County. Results included:

- Emergency disaster preparedness related to Emergency Management's CIP requests for: graduated siren replacement, radio system, backhaul network, emergency power generators, and a radio replacement project.
- Overall feeling of safety related to the Sheriff's Office and Emergency Management.
- Second-highest priority for county services overall: Public safety overall, which specifically called out the Sheriff, Emergency Management, and Community Corrections departments.

Shared Services — Parks and Recreation: The community survey asked for importance and satisfaction with Parks and Recreation.

- Number one priority for Parks and Recreation residents: Quality of facilities — which relates to numerous Parks and Recreation CIP items.

Shared Services — Technology: Technology presented a request for a tax management system replacement, which was identified as relating to the overall top county service priority: the property appraisal process.

Mr. Lindsey reiterated that during the prior meeting, the commission reviewed both the county general fund's long-range forecast and the city general fund's long-range forecast. He noted that

with over \$50 million in capital requests for the FY2027 budget, funding every item is not feasible, and that adding expenditures will erode the fund balance. He stated clearly that during the budget process; not all departments will receive all requested funding. He returned the floor to Interim County Administrator Howze.

Commission Discussion — Animal Services:

Commissioner Kump stated that while reviewing the police department budget and public safety priorities, he noted the absence of any funding for Animal Services in the CIP budget. He expressed his intention to advocate for ensuring that KCK Animal Services is funded to the level necessary to perform its mission. He requested that this be kept in mind during the ongoing budget process.

Commissioner Bynum noted:

- For many years, the Unified Government contracted with a nonprofit to provide veterinary services for animals.
- The contract was subsequently changed to work with K-State veterinary medicine students and doctors at the K-State Vet Med School.
- That arrangement has shown signs of not being sustainable.
- The true need for Animal Services is a dedicated veterinarian and a veterinary technician — operational needs, not CIP needs.

Commissioner Bynum stated for the record that since this is CIP, that might be why we don't see animal services here, unless there's some CIP need, which there is. They need a new building, but I do know that that's multiple years down the road. But as Commissioner Kump stated, I would like to advocate for animal services. Commissioners may or may not know that for many years we actually had a contract with a nonprofit to provide vet services for the animals, and then we changed that to work with the actual K-State students and doctors at the K-State vet med school, which has worked, but really is showing signs of not being sustainable, and what we truly need for to take care of these animals that come into our animal services building is a veterinarian and a vet tech, and those are not CIP needs, but they are desperate needs for our Animal Services Division. So, I'm just making that public plea to my fellow commissioners, to staff, and to the police department. If that has not been addressed in the budget needs that the police department put forward, it's very important, and I'll come back to that as we make our way through the regular portions of the budget, but I wanted to be on record with that right now.

Mayor Watson concurred with Commissioners Kump and Bynum. She noted that at a recent community meeting, residents expressed strong concerns about the lack of a dedicated

veterinarian for Animal Services. She indicated a desire to compare the cost of existing contract services against the cost of bringing that position in-house. While acknowledging this is outside the scope of the CIP discussion, Mayor Watson stated she wanted to "throw that out there and stick a pin in it" for the budget process.

Mayor Watson thanked the budget staff and all department heads for their presentations. No formal motions or votes were taken on this agenda item, as it was a workshop/informational presentation. The item will inform the formal budget presentation scheduled for August 6, 2026.

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

Adjournment: (Discussion Begins 36:18)

Commissioner Kump moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Howard.

Vote: Motion carries 8/0

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

MAYOR WATSON
ADJOURNED THE MEETING AT 6:13 P.M.
July 2, 2026

Monica L. Sparks, CMC
Unified Government Clerk

ML