ADMINISTRATION AND HUMAN SERVICES
STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Monday, February 22, 2021

The meeting of the Administration and Human Services Standing Committee was held on Monday, February 22, 2021 at 5:30 p.m., remotely via Zoom or by phone. The following members were present: Commissioner Markley, Chairman; Commissioners Philbrook, Kane, Ramirez, and Bynum. The following officials were also in attendance: Melissa Sieben, Emerick Cross and Alan Howze, Assistant County Administrators; Bridgette Cobbins, Interim Assistant County Administrator; Kathleen VonAchen, Chief Financial Officer; Misty Brown, Deputy Chief Counsel; Crystal Sprague, CARES Act Team Leader; and Angie Lawson, Deputy Chief Counsel.

Chairman Markley said before I call this meeting to order, I want to announce that due to COVID-19 some committee members, staff and public are attending remotely via Zoom as well as on site. All participants joining by phone should mute their phones when not speaking to avoid background noise.

During the meeting, please make sure you announce yourself by name and title every time you speak so the public that is observing knows who is speaking. This is critical given the number of remote participants and as current guidance from the Kansas Attorney General.

Due to COVID-19 requirements, in person public comment has been suspended unless otherwise required by law. The public is allowed to participate by Zoom or submit comments by email prior to the meeting, and those comments will be included in the record of the meeting.

Chairman Markley called the meeting to order.

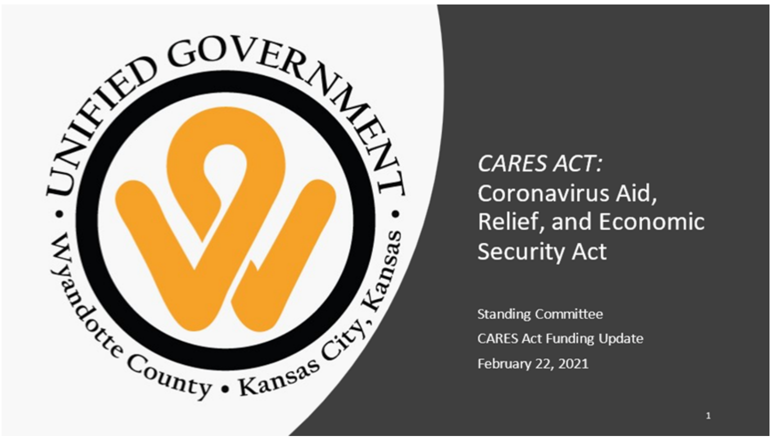
Roll call was taken, and all members were present as shown above.

Chairman Markley said there are no revisions to tonight's agenda, nor do we have minutes to approve, so we will move right along to our committee agenda. We have one item and that is our Cares Act Funding update.

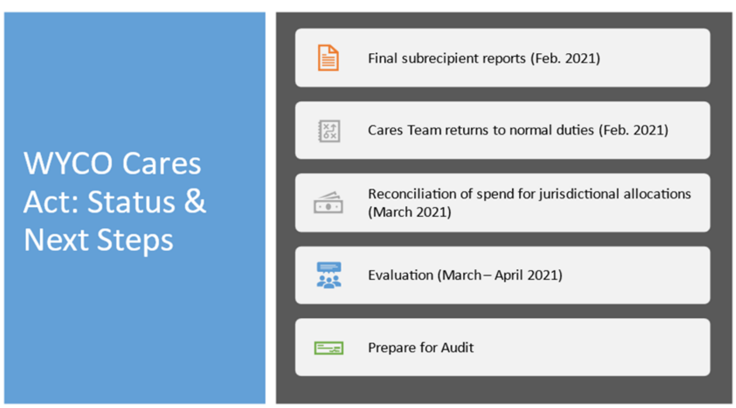
Committee Agenda:

Item No. 1 – 202…UPDATE: CARES ACT FUNDING

Synopsis: Update on CARES Act funding, submitted by Crystal Sprague, CARES Act Team Leader.



Crystal Sprague, CARES Act Team Leader, said thanks to the committee for entertaining the CARES act Team again this evening. This is for information only. As Commissioner Markley said, I am the lead for the CARES Act Team, which is shortly to be disbanded. We believe that for now I am still the CARES Act Lead. This is our seventh monthly update to this committee regarding the CARES Act and the funding allocation that was allocated from the Governor Spark Committee to Wyandotte County. Thanks for letting us come in again tonight and give you an update.



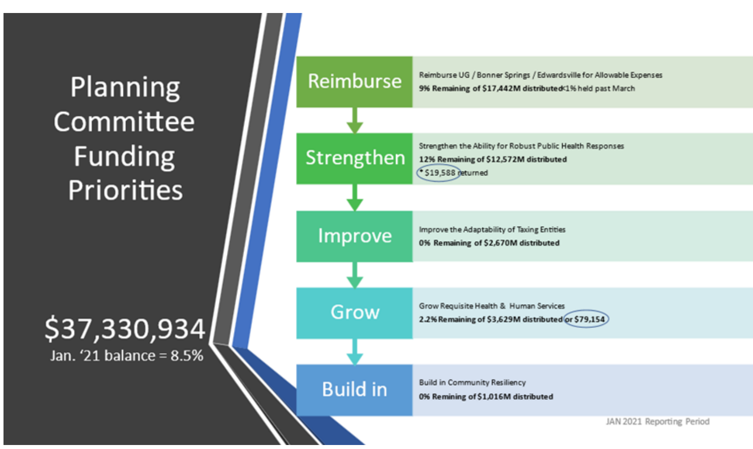
Tonight's status report will take a slightly different tone as we are going to focus on the wrap up activities for the CARES Act, as well as some information about future funding relief packages that are headed our way, or potentially headed our way. In March, we'll have some more specific information for our last update and our final wrap up about the projects completed and services rendered within the Unified Government and Wyandotte County. But for tonight's presentation, we're going to stay focused on what those wrap up activities have looked like since the last time we saw you and what other funding packages could potentially be coming our way.

A little bit about our status and next steps. Since the last time we met, the subrecipients in our community have submitted their final reports and that was at the beginning of this month. We had great success and collaboration with many agencies across the county. I think we had a total of 68 subrecipients and that does not count some 80 small businesses that also participated in our reporting process; and we've had really great compliance with that reporting. A big acknowledgement to those sub recipients who have been reporting to us every month in a very complicated reporting process that we have to maintain to get information to the state of Kansas.

We also have started the transition of our CARES Act team back to their normal duties. That's a little sad for me because we had this amazing team that has been together since July, but it's time for them to return to their normal duties as our project is set to wind down at the end of this week.

We'll continue throughout the month of March doing final reconciliation on spending for jurisdictional allocations. Then, in March and April, we'll take some time to look back, reflect on what we did, what we believe we did really well, and some ways that we could improve moving forward if we happen to find ourselves in a situation where we have a fast-moving grant application process such as this.

Of course, we'll start preparing for any potential audit that we would have either from the federal level or from the state level, but being prepared for that audit, and internally as well as we look back at the financial reconciliations and making sure we have all of our paperwork and documentation in order.



January 25, 2021

Where are we at today. As a reminder, we had an original deadline for spend of December 30th of 2020. On the 27th of December, that spending deadline was extended through the second CARES Act, or through the second stimulus package, signed on the 27th of December. That extended the ability to spend down these dollars according to the Federal Government until the end of 2021. However, the State of Kansas felt that they need to be more conservative in that timeframe and given the fact that most counties were almost done with their spend and in compliance with the December 30th spend date, they only extended us through March 1 of this year for our CARES Act One, with some consideration around a few other projects in the Phase Two and Phase Three of the CARES Act One funding.

We allowed some continuation into 2021. Again, like I've mentioned before, most of our organizations, most all of our organizations, and most all of our local spend was complete by the deadline. However, we did carry over in some dollars in Public Health Emergency Management and to facilitate the CARES Act Team for the first quarter of this year.

At the end of January, we had a total of 8.5% left in our balance, that's cash on hand. We obviously have a month worth of reconciliation to complete and many of those dollars are already encumber. Contained in that 8.5% were continued contracts for items through the Health Department such as medical staffing and remote sites for vaccination clinics. We feel really comfortable with that amount and know that we will meet our deadline as set by the state.

We also believe we're going to have a little less than 1% held over past March. This is allowable by the State of Kansas for audit purposes and for any administration purposes that we might have moving into April, May, and June as we prepare for our audit and complete our audit practices.

The second is our public health response. Commissioners, these are listed in order that the local Spark Committee set out for funding priorities. It starts with reimbursing our local entities and goes all the way down into building committee resiliency, which are our small business grants.

The second being the Health Department, we have about 12% remaining there, but the large majority of that again is tied up into some of those contracts for staffing. As you know, the Health Department is doing a fantastic job of vaccinating and making that available to our residents. They need lots of staff to do that and those contracts would have continued through the end of February and into March. So we have some reconciliation to do there as well.

But we do have an amount here listed of about $19,000. I'm going to address that that piece of funding here in just a second, but I want to make sure that we're drawing conclusions about the total amount that would be left in those buckets.

Next is to improve the ability of taxing entities to respond and recover. We have 0% remaining in that bucket or allotment.

The next would be our Health and Human Services bucket. We have 2.2% remaining in that bucket and that's the equivalent of about $79,000. We have two organizations with our community: one that sits in the bucket of public health response and one that's a human services, or health services, in the fourth bucket. Those organizations either needed to return a small amount of money because of lack of spend, or were not able to commit those dollars and be completed by the contractual term of December 30th. That's going roughly amount to $98,740.

If you think of all the money that went out in the community with that small percentage coming back, we were really pleased with the ability of our local health agencies outside of the Health Department, as well as our community resources to be able to utilize those funds. As directed by the Internal UG Spark Committee, or working group, those dollars will be reallocated back to the local jurisdictions in the cities, and that will be completed by the end of this month. Again, we've got about $98,000 that will be reallocated to our local jurisdictions.

The last item is to build a community resiliency, and this is where we are focused on small business loans, and we do have 0% remaining. Early on we initially thought we would allocate, or disperse about $825,000 in this bucket, but we were able to increase that by about $250,000, resulting in a push out to small businesses of about a million dollars into the community.

We're starting to get a look at the tools that the State of Kansas is developing to get a better understanding of the overall approach that many organizations took. As you are well aware, each local municipality, or each county, was given an award and we needed to figure out how we were going to distribute it, and tailor it to our community. So, we're starting to get a look into what that looks like for the state and then other municipalities.

The Recovery Office has created this interactive tool and it is available on the Recovery Office website. A couple of words about this tool, it was given to us by or introduced to us by the Secretary of administration, Burns Wallace, Mrs. Burns Wallace. She did give us, a couple of disclaimers as we started to look at this tool. It is interactive and I would encourage, Commissioners, that you or anyone in the community can get online at the Recovery Office and drill down into each one of these items.

But a couple of items that Secretary Burns Wallace mentioned was first, the dollars listed here are planned dollars, they are not actual dollars. The second would be this is the total community investment, not just our CARES Act One. If you look at Wyandotte County for example, it's going to have listed in a complete investment of about $50M. Our CARES Act One funding that I'm speaking to tonight was the equivalent of about $37M. It's going to have the total Kansas investment in the community.

Most importantly, the buckets listed here are not always consistent from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. The Recovery Office did the best that they could to bucket things in like categories, but of course our definition of what business resiliency might look a little different than maybe Sedgwick County's would look.

Lastly, this is just a tool. It's in an effort to provide some additional reflection into what the State of Kansas did with CARES Act One dollars, but it's a tool for insight. If you have any questions, we'd be happy to seek answers at the Recovery Office particular to Wyandotte County. Take a look at it, play around with it, it was provided to us. It's up and available for any citizen to look at, but it's got some interesting information and comparisons.

In addition to the investment dashboard, the State of Kansas and the Secretary Burns Wallace is also asking for stories that we might have. You know, of course the CARES Team is going to have a lot of stories of community investment and what happened across our county in response and recovery. Those stories can be shared by individuals, or, Commissioners, by you and it's as simple as going to the Recovery Office website and filling out a couple of spaces on a form. State of Kansas is very interested in how this money affected, and how it helped, response and recovery efforts in our county and across the state. That option is available to you as well.

Statewide To-Date

Based on December 2020 Spending Report	% of CRF County Allocation $400 M
Direct County Expenditures	34.09%
Assistance to K-12	19.65%
Assistance to Small Businesses & Non-Profits	14.44%
Assistance to Municipalities	13.02%
Public Health/Healthcare Providers/Human Services	9.51%
Higher Education	3.46%
Economic & Workforce Development	2.03%
Individual Assistance	1.45%
Assistance to Special Districts or Taxing Authorities	1.41%

Kansas League presentation 2.

We want to take a look at the statewide distribution of CARES Act One funding. It gives you an idea of how our funding priorities stacked up against the state. As you'll remember, our first funding priority was direct County and municipality expenditure reimbursement. It's the same here but a little reflection on it, where those dollars were allocated at a state level. I want you to pay special attention to the Public Health Care Provider and Human Services area funded about 9.51% of the total CFR county allocation. This is pretty significant when you look at how Wyandotte County and the Spark Committee here locally prioritized public health spending.

WYCO Investment for Response & Recovery

Counties tailored their investments to their needs, priorities

Based on December 2020 Spending Report	Butler $13.8 M	Lyon $7.7 M	McPherson $5.8 M	Seward $6.4 M	Shawnee $36.8M	WYCO %	WYCO $37.3M
Municipalities	12.84%	7.82%	15.69%	40.35%	24.99%	41.54%	$15.5M
Small Business & Nonprofits	7.04%	12.06%	11.20%	0.00%	14.10%	2.7%	$ 1.0M Business ONLY
County Operations	40.00%	11.10%	13.36%	15.64%	40.44%	5.18%	$ 1.5M + Cares Team Admin
Economic & Workforce Development	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	30.52%	0.00%		In community services allocation
Essential Community Services	0.07%	0.00%	4.32%	13.48%	0.51%	9.72%	$ 3.6M All Community Services
Higher Education	0.95%	30.61%	13.03%	0.00%	0.00%	4.08%	$ 1.5M Includes all Edu. groups except K-12
K-12	35.66%	28.66%	35.02%	0.00%	19.18%	3.07%	$ 1.1M
Public Health/Healthcare Providers & Services	3.45%	9.75%	7.38%	0.00%	0.79%	33.68%	$12.6M

Kansas League presentation 2.16.21

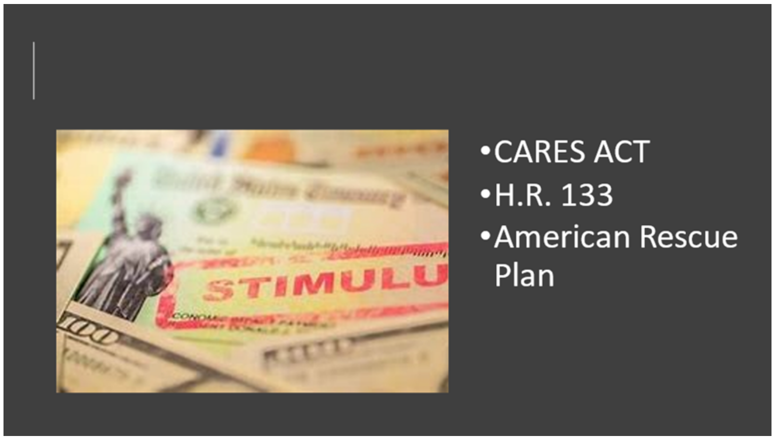
Then, the next slide also provided by Kansas City municipalities and Secretary Burns Wallace, gives you an idea of how we might compare to other jurisdictions. This is a snapshot provided by the Recovery Office. They happened to pick five Counties, some small, some large, some equal to us in allocation, but not necessarily population. It gives you an idea of how those counties took the dollars that were given to the county through the Recovery Office and then bucketed them, or allocated them.

I've also placed what Wyandotte County allocated their percentages to. Remember that definitions are not perfect here. Where we might've considered small business and nonprofits separate, the comparison here buckets those together. So, again, it's all about definition and how we defined it. Another example would be higher education. We took our education bucket and looked at K through 12 higher education and educational institutions in general as one bucket where the state splits them out, for comparison here.

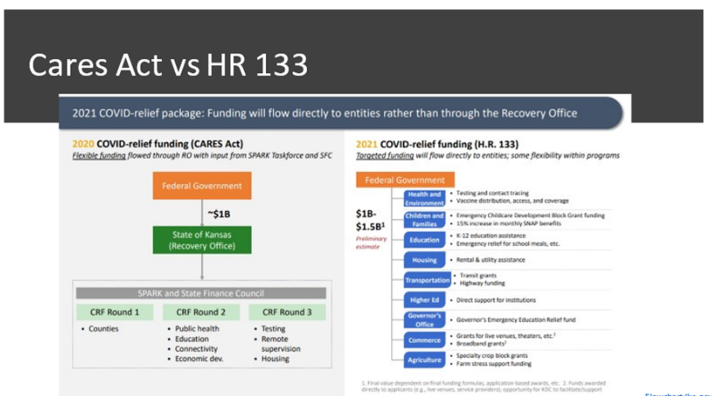
It's all contextual and how you look at it. I think when you look at the big areas, the municipalities funding and particularly the health care funding, you do see something that's a little bit more consistent across the board as far as definition. Municipalities ranged in this group, or at this sample size, from about 7.8% to 41% across the board. Then, if you look at county operations, those ranged anywhere from 5.1%, which would be our allocation percentage, all the way to 40%, plus.

I brought attention to that 9% for public health care, health care providers and services on the previous slide to your attention, because I think it's notable here, to understand the priority that the subcommittee, or the working committee, put on our public health response. That's shown here in our percentage of allocation at 33.68% of our total funding as compared to some of the other counties across the state. Then, cumulatively, the 9% across the state for infused dollars into public health response.

I think it's also important to remember that as counties were deciding on how they were going to respond and recover and prioritize their funding, we were in the thick of things here in Wyandotte County. But some of the other Kansas counties hadn't had a reported case yet. So, you know, it seems like just yesterday, but it was a long time ago that counties were asked to decide how and when they would spend their allocations.



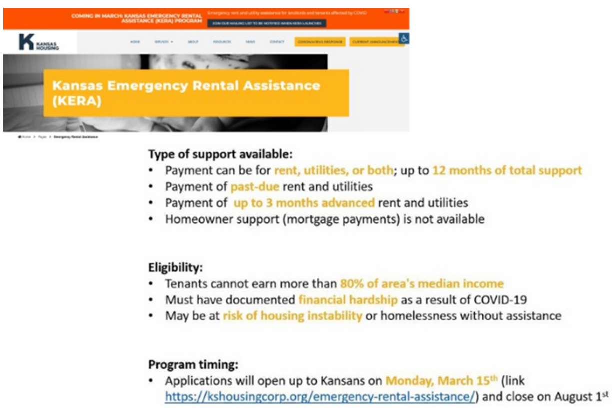
Just a brief little touch on the current funding allocation, and then what is expected to come. The CARES Act now seems like old news when we start talking about H.R. 133 and the America Rescue Plan, but I think it's under important to understand the three stimulus packages, and how they are continuing on top of one another. The CARES Act, of course, effective April 2020, H.R. 133 signed on the 27th of December of 2020, and the American Rescue plan is currently in the house and in committee.



This slide, it shows the direct comparison between the CARES Act versus the H.R. 133 Bill. The CARES Act on your left gives you a pretty clear indication of how those dollars came from the federal government to the Recovery Office and then split by the State Finance Council. An example of that would be our county allotment, or in CRF Round Two, the connectivity grant that we applied for and received.

I will take a moment here to give you a little update on that Fiber Project. We're in the permitting and technical design phase of the connectivity grant, or the CERG grant, that we were awarded. That project is moving along at a pretty good pace and it's expected to be completed by the deadline. That project, again, will expand connectivity and internet to some of the most underserved parts of our community, out west, and incorporate Bonner Springs, Edwardsville, as well as the school district in Bonner Springs.

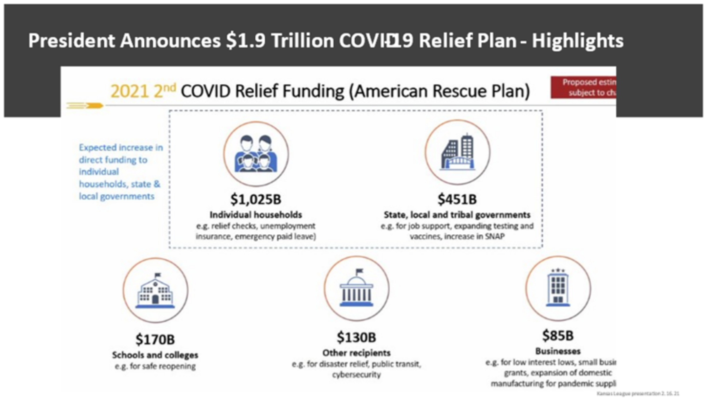
In comparison, the H.R. 133 Bill that was signed at the end of December is very targeted and very specific. An example of that would be the housing slot here that is set for rent and utility assistance. These dollars are using current federal programs, for example, SNAP or Housing Authorities, to increase funding in those areas. Unlike the CARES Act, a COVID Relief Funding Bill that was signed in April that came to the state, these dollars are using current federal government programs.



Emergency Rental Assistance | Kansas Housing Resources Corporation (kshousing

One of those programs that I know will be of specific interest to several of the commissioners on the call is the rental assistance and emergency funding. We learn more every day about what this program is going to look like. Those dollars in the H.R. 133 will come to the Kansas Emergency Rental Assistance, or KERA program. They will be available for direct application from individuals and landlords, and can be used for rent, utilities or both, up to 12 months of total support and they can be used for past due rent and utilities.

The eligibility criteria are listed here. The applications open on March 15 and will close August 1. I know that our local nonprofits are very well versed and very aware of what's happening and starting to gear up how they can help our citizens apply for these dollars, but encourage anyone who is suffering due to the COVID pandemic and financial hardship to be looking for this and the application will be available on the KERA website.



Lastly, the current American Rescue Plan that is in the house right now is not finalized, but we believe it will be finalized, with a total of $2B, coming the State of Kansas. It is unknown at this time what the final bill will look like. But we do think that $451B coming from that $1.9T plan will be set aside for state, local, and tribal governments. With a little asterisk underneath, it's going to increase the SNAP allotment, so little extra caveat underneath there.

It's unknown at this point what the distribution process will look like, but it very well could resemble the Cares Act distribution process, or it could bypass the state altogether and come straight to municipalities. We just don't know the mechanics of that yet. One huge difference between this particular bill and the previous bill that I'm reporting on tonight, is that does allow for offset of revenue loss to state, local, and tribal governments.

We'll come back to you in mid-March, kind of the end of March, and bring you some additional information. Hopefully, we'll have more specific information on the American Rescue Plan and how it will affect Wyandotte County, but also bring back to you some lessons learned from the CARES Act current allocation and some outcomes. Hopefully, my team will be with me that night as our last CARES Act activity and we will be able to recognize them for the hard work and effort that they've put in over the last seven months. Thank you, Commissioner Markley.

Chairman Markley said we would be happy to welcome them to recognize their great work.

Commissioner Kane said first of all, I want to thank you and your, who's your direct boss, are they online right now? **Ms. Sprague** said yeah, Mr. Howze.

Commissioner Kane asked Alan, how are you. Who knew that you had such good employees working for you? **Alan Howze, Assistant County Administrator** said I've got a great team, trust me. Kathleen is heavily involved. **Commissioner Kane** said I tell you what, you guys did a great job. I don't know how you did it, in such short order. I mean, kudos to all of you, and I would like to see your tea. In fact, can you send me an email of all the names of the people on your team, please. **Ms. Sprague** said I sure can. Thank you for asking for that.

Commissioner Bynum said with a question/comment. Crystal, in the H.R. 133 that was the one that came forward late December, correct. So, is that where the, for Kansas is that where the extended unemployment benefits are located. **Ms. Sprague** said yes, that's correct. It was signed on the 27th which was a Sunday. It was really two days before the deadline and it did have some extended unemployment benefits attached, yes.

Commissioner Bynum said we have heard countless sad, sad stories. I mean, actually horrifying with regard to our Kansas Department of Labor's inability to handle just the regular employment, let alone any of the pandemic, unemployment or the extended benefits. Is there a role for any of us here to play in some sort of advocacy? I mean they could sure use an Allen Howze, right now, I guess, is part of what I want to say, but what role can we play as a government, as elected officials? I mean beyond what we as elected officials are already doing, which is turning to other elected officials and saying, can you guys do anything, because it is really quite pitiful. All I can think about is that person who truly has lost their job, and that that is their income and that is the way they're going to pay for their utility bill, their mortgage, their medication, I don't know what these families are doing. I'm just wondering what can we do to help them. I don't know the answer.

Ms. Sprague said well, it is a very complicated question, for sure. I think what I know our commissioners always do is advocate for our residents, so I think that's where we start. I think also that, just be aware that locally, your Unified Government team is also advocating at every chance that they get, to say hey, we need to make sure that we're standing this up. But I think when we talk about the citizens and how we can help them, I think keeping them aware of other resources that are available, while the kinks get worked out of the infrastructure there at the Department of Labor. Is it a KERA program, is it Avenues, is it another program that might be able to assist them. It might even be Workforce Development down the street here, but keeping those resources available to them.

I know we've done several publications right inside of the *Citizen* to show resources and I think that's going to be on us to continue to show those resources to our citizens. As a complete aside, I think this situation really speaks to the critical nature of infrastructure and IT infrastructure to be able to handle situations like this. I can't tell you how lucky we were here at the Unified Government to have a very nimble Department of Technology, but also some resources that were already on board with us because those investments have been made through Open Cities, or Open Forums or, you know our Knowledge Department, allowing us to work remotely through 365 applications. But the infrastructure that we had, man if the state could have had that kind of investment in the Department of Labor's infrastructure, I think that would have made a huge difference.

Hindsight 2020, I think that they're really looking at trying to fix that now. I think as advocates for our community understanding that hopefully we never have to go through something like this again, but being able to invest in infrastructure, especially technology as part of our infrastructure, is going to be critical in having the Unified Government and Wyandotte County be able to be nimble and respond to citizens in times of crisiss.

I mean hopefully, we'll never have this again, but we will have some kind of public emergency, whether it be a storm, or an ice storm, but having that technology infrastructure is going to be critical moving forward.

Commissioner Bynum said well, I appreciate all that you've said with regard to that, and Alan feel free to jump in, but I think the lesson to learn is to be nimble and be ready with critical technology infrastructures, so thank you.

Mr. Howze said I guess the only thing I had is we've been making this kind of shift over time to hosted applications of software as opposed to self-hosted within our own data center. The website that we're moving to later this year, and any other sort of key areas because when you go from kind of steady state to this, that's really difficult technology wise to plan for. You don't want to buy up here all the time because you may not ever need there, but having sort of a scalable, infrastructure, and kind of architecture, getting too technical in that means that you can respond when those surges happen and they sort of show up in places in ways that you couldn't anticipate, and really think about, but if you have a flexibility in how you designed the architecture of your information systems, then it put's you in a better spot to deal with, to respond to it.

Chairman Markley asked other questions or comments from the Commission.

Commissioner Philbrook said thank you for all your comments, Melissa. I really have to vote yes on comments, definitely well stated, and of course, Crystal, you know as usual, our rock star. We couldn't have picked a better person to be the lead on this and thank you so much. As you know you're not gone yet, like the Cares Act Committee may be winding down, but there's still a lot of CARES going on in the background, for sure.

Alan, thank you for your comment about technology because we were, when you came on in the process of trying to become more nimble, and so thank you for helping make that work. I do know that, because I get to be on some of the Department of Labor meetings because I'm involved with Workforce Partnership, when it hit the fan with unemployment, they were just, I think that they were caught off guard. Some of the new people that have come on, were caught off guard by how, poor their system was, how outdated. They knew it, but you know you got to have the money and you got to get the approval from everyone to spend the money on it. Those budgets come from, from the elected officials saying yes, you can spend that money, and hadn't had that money allotted to them to spend. I know that they really hit the ground running and were working really hard to get that accomplished.

I can speak to the unemployment issues as far as there are some people who are definitely fine. They believe they did not get the right amount of unemployment, or they were not allowed to have it during the CARES Act stuff. They are doing those hearings over the internet. The guys and gals that are working for Department of Labor and hearing those, they are hearing them over the internet. So, COVID is definitely struck into a lot of things and so a lot of those folks are working from home to hear those complaints and to help with the decisions on what's going to happen. I just wanted share that with you. There's a lot of people working really hard and thanks again to our team at the UG. You guys were, you were just heads above it and in front of it, so thanks so much.

Commissioner Ramirez said thank you, Crystal, Alan, to the entire team that has been part of this CARES, every member of the CARES Act team. You guys are just an amazing group that have been able to work through so many hoops, and so many short deadlines to get this done. We thank you for everything that you have done and continue to do because you know we're coming up with more COVID relief packages and so you may need to come back and do it again.

Thank you for all you've done. Thank you, Commissioner Bynum, for bringing up about the advocacy and the resource because it is–I have family who's currently trying to get through the Kansas Department of Labor and the unemployment issues. Thank you for bringing that up. I'm certainly going to do my part of making sure that everyone that comes to me with these issues are aware of the other resources that are out there in the meantime until until our Department of Labor can get their systems up and running. Again just overall, thank you for all that you have done. It has meant a lot to our community, and so hopefully you guys can have a little good break.

Chairman Markley ask any final comments. This item's obviously for information only and it is the only item on our agenda this evening, so we are adjourned. Thank you everyone for your attendance this evening.

Action: For information only.

Adjourn
Chairman Markley adjourned the meeting at 6:04 p.m.

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