STATE OF KANSAS)
WYANDOTTE COUNTY)) SS **SPECIAL SESSION, THURSDAY, AUGUST 24, 2023**
CITY OF KANSAS CITY, KS)

The Unified Government Commission of Wyandotte County/Kansas City, Kansas, met in Special Session, Thursday, August 24, 2023, with eleven members present: Bynum, Commissioner At-Large First District; Burroughs, Commissioner At-Large Second District; Townsend, Commissioner First District; McKiernan, Commissioner Second District; Ramirez, Commissioner Third District; Johnson, Commissioner Fourth District; Kane, Commissioner Fifth District; Markley, Commissioner Sixth District; Stites, Commissioner Seventh District; Davis, Commissioner Eighth District; and Garner, Mayor/CEO, presiding (left meeting at 6:00 p.m.). The following officials were also in attendance: David Johnston, County Administrator; Bridgette Cobbins, Assistant County Administrator; Angela Lawson, Interim Chief Counsel; Brett Deichler, Unified Government Clerk; Monica Sparks, Deputy Unified Government Clerk; Debbie Jonscher, Interim Chief Financial Officer; Reginald Lindsey, Budget Director; Michael Peterson, Assistant Budget Director; Mike Grimm, Research Manager; Adrian Alemifar, Senior Analyst in Budget Department; Jeff Fisher, Executive Director of Public Works; LaVert Murray, Economic Development Advisor in Mayor's Office; Renee Ramirez, Director of Human Resources; Shakeva Christian, Human Resource Manager; Stasha Ferguson, Human Resources Department; Gina Nick, Hurman Resources Specialist; Michelle Eskina, Human Resources Department; Monica Tyrrell, Human Relations Partner; Ashley Hand, Director of Strategic Communication; and Irene Caudillo, Chief of Staff in Mayor's Office.

Mayor Garner said before I call the meeting to order I want to announce that we do have individuals attending remotely as well as on-site. All participants joining by phone, should please mute your phones when not speaking to avoid background noise. During the meeting, make sure you announce yourself by name and title every time you speak so the public that is participating knows exactly who is speaking. This is critical given the number of remote participants and is also current guidance from the Kansas Attorney General Office. Also, please be sure to speak loudly and clearly into the microphone to ensure that your comments are being captured by the Clerk for an accurate record of the meeting.

Mayor Garner called the meeting to order.

ROLL CALL: Markley, Stites, Davis, Bynum, Burroughs, Townsend, McKiernan, Ramirez, Johnson, Kane, Garner.

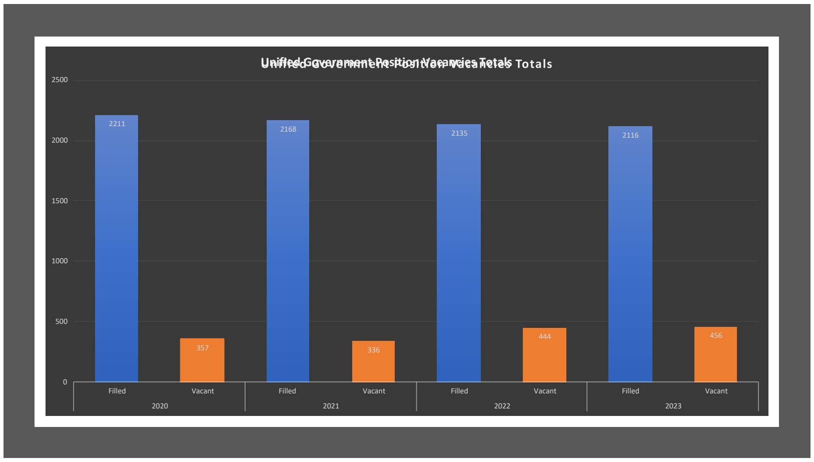
NOTICE OF SPECIAL SESSION of the Unified Government of Wyandotte County/Kansas City, Kansas, to be conducted in a hybrid format on Thursday, August 24, 2023, at 5:00 p.m. in the fifth floor conference room of the Municipal Office Building for a Budget Workshop.

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.

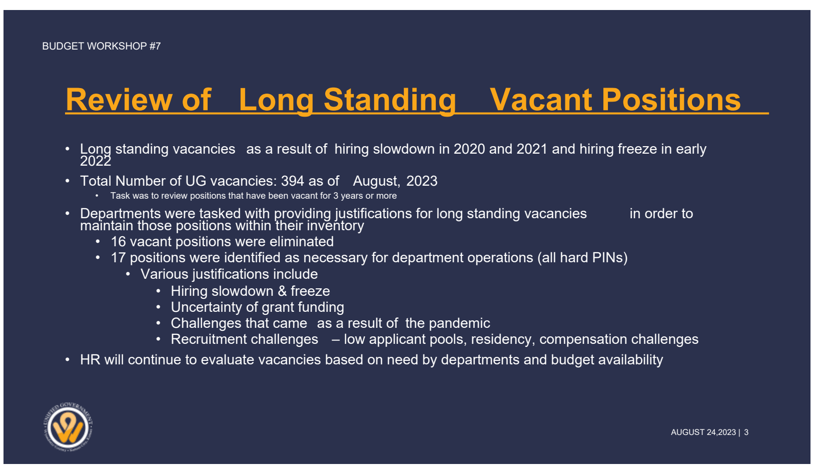
Mayor Garner said this is a scheduled Budget Workshop and I'll turn it over to our County Administrator David Johnston for opening remarks and to lead the presentation.

David Johnston, County Administrator, said this is a continuation of our discussion of last week. At the end of last week we received a question from, I believe, it was Commissioner Davis about personnel. We're going to start off, as we did last week, by answering the questions that the Commission asked us to come back with. Renee has a short explanation that, hopefully, provides the information that Commissioner Davis has requested. I think you'll find it a little bit enlightening yourselves.

Renee Ramirez, Director of Human Resources, said this evening I have with me Shakeva Christian, HR Manager, and I also have several of the HR staff members here that work on recruiting and helping departments fill positions.



This first slide that we're going to show you is an overview picture of the vacancies throughout the Unified Government and these are actual positions that are vacant. The vacancies listed in this graph are actual positions and not FTE counts. When we're looking at a position, we're looking at one body per position regardless of the number of hours that they work at the Unified Government, so this is going to be a combination of full-time, part-time, seasonal, sworn and civilian. This illustration here represents the vacancies across the organization representing years 2020, 2021, 2022 and where we sit currently with our vacancies.

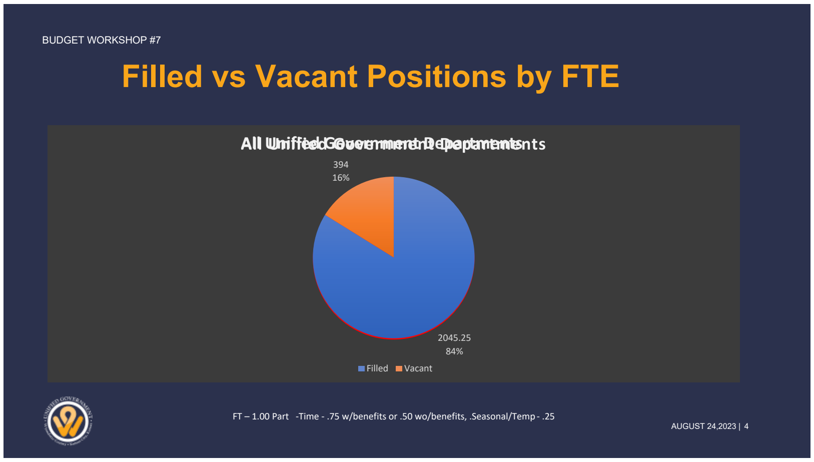


This next slide is the long-standing vacant positions that we've had here at the Unified Government. These vacancies represent positions that we had as a result of a hiring slowdown, which we had in 2020, 2021 and a hiring freeze in the early part of 2022. Currently, as we sit here today, the Unified Government has 394 FTEs as of August, 2023 that are sitting vacant.

The Administrator has asked us to actually work with departments to really vet out why are some of these long-standing vacancies still sitting on the books for us today. Departments were tasked to look at the position inventory reports that we actually analyze every year as we're going through the budget process and we work very closely with the Budget team in trying to balance the position inventory for the Unified Government. We did ask departments to try to identify which positions are still in need if they've been sitting vacant. Through that process, originally we had looked at 12 vacancies that were actually eliminated; however, we took a second look at that and working with our Assistant County Administrators we were able to eliminate an additional four positions which brought the total to 16 vacant positions that were eliminated from our position inventory.

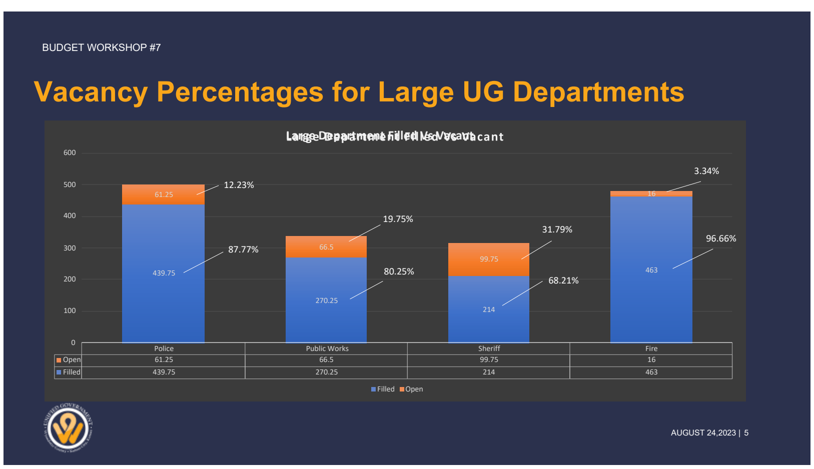
There are 17 positions that were identified through working with our departments that were identified as necessary for department operation, so these were all hard position inventory numbers that were sitting vacant for a while and departments came back and justified the need as to keeping those positions there sitting on the inventory. There are various reasons why departments justified some of these reasons. Some of these I've listed. You know the hiring slowdowns, the hiring freeze, uncertainty of grant funding for some of these positions, the challenges that came as a result of the pandemic and then challenges that we have with recruiting. You know some of the challenges with recruiting are low applicant pools because as you know organizations, businesses across the nation are looking for applicants to apply for their jobs, the residency requirement, and compensation challenges as we're looking at and trying to recruit talent to the organization we have to be cognizant that we actually—you know, we have competitors out there. We're all vying for the same pool of candidates, so there are organizations and companies out there that will actually offer more money to their candidates for lesser responsibilities than what some of our employees are holding here today at the Unified Government. So, those are things that potentially challenge us as we're recruiting and trying to fill positions.

But, at any rate, the HR team will continue to evaluate vacancies, working with our Administrator, working with the Budget team to really see what the need is for the organization and what the budget availability is for maintaining some of these positions.



This next graph represents a pie chart that will show you the filled versus vacant positions by FTE. As you can see here, the FTE I have a little key down there, you know, full-time of course is going to be one equivalent. We have two forms of part-time. We have part-time with benefits, which would account for .75. We have part-time individuals that do not get benefits and they're at .50 and then we have seasonal temps that we would calculate at a .25.

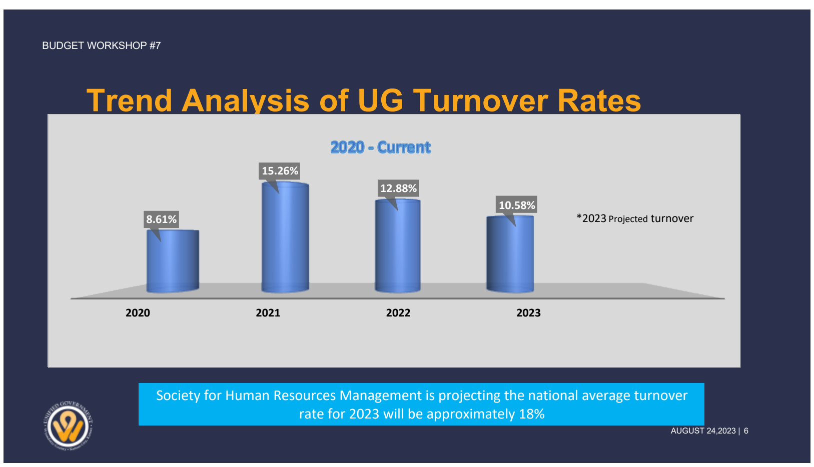
Right now, the Unified Government again is sitting at 394 FTEs which represents about 16% of vacancy rate for the organization. We are operating at 84% capacity. We have 84% of our positions that are actually filled today and, again, this is a combination of union, non-union across all departments here in the organization.



The next slide that we have here is the vacancy percentage for some of our larger UG departments and we pulled out about four of our largest departments here at the Unified Government and demonstrated what the vacancy rate and our operating capacity is across these larger departments for the Unified Government.

The first you'll see is the Police Department. They're operating at 87.77% capacity and then they have about a 12% vacancy rate. Again, this is a combination of sworn positions and civilian positions. For Public Works, again, you'll see their vacancy rate is sitting at 19% with the 80.25% capacity where they have those positions filled. The Sheriff' Office, you're going to see that department has one of the highest vacancy rates and one of the lowest filled rates for their employee base. We have tried to be strategic in trying to get some of those positions filled by having adjustments to their salaries. They are one of the positions where we actually have an exception to the residency requirement where their employees are allowed to have 24-month period to move into the county opposed to a 12-month period to move into the county.

We continue to have challenges with the Sheriff's Office. This does also include the Juvenile Detention Center where we have statutorial ratios for one employee per the number of residents that we have. So, those are things that we continue to look at and try to strategize on how we're going to get those positions filled. The last representation there is the Fire Department where you're seeing they are operating at about 96%, almost 97% full capacity with very few vacancies in those areas. Again, that's a combination of sworn and civilian positions.



The HR Department is always watching the UG turnover rates. We're wanting to see what our turnover is here organization-wide, why are our employees leaving. Here's a trend analysis of the UG turnover rates. In 2020 we had a turnover rate of 8.61%. That's pretty typical across organizations because, you know, COVID was there. People were not moving to other jobs. Everybody was kind of staying in place because of the unknown. Then we move into 2021 where you're seeing the spike in turnover where 15.26% was our turnover. You know some factors in that higher turnover is remember unemployment. A lot of people were going on unemployment, there are some individuals that actually were making more money on unemployment than actually being employed, so people were looking at the work-life balance at that point coming out of COVID trying to figure out what we need to do in those situations, so you started to see a trend up.

At any rate the national average for the turnover rates, we were still trending pretty good because the national average at that time was right around 15% and then going into 2022 you're seeing that we're falling down now on the turnover, so we're starting to see less people leave the organization. Then, where we're sitting at today, we did a projection of what we are thinking based on what the industry is looking at for the turnover. As we look through our research and relying on a source that Human Resources professionals always rely on, which is the Society for Human Resources Management, they are projecting that the end of 2023 we will have a nation turnover rate of about 18%. If we're lucky, you know, hopefully we'll be right about the 10%, but hopefully no more than the 12%. That is just a projection that we're hoping for at this time.

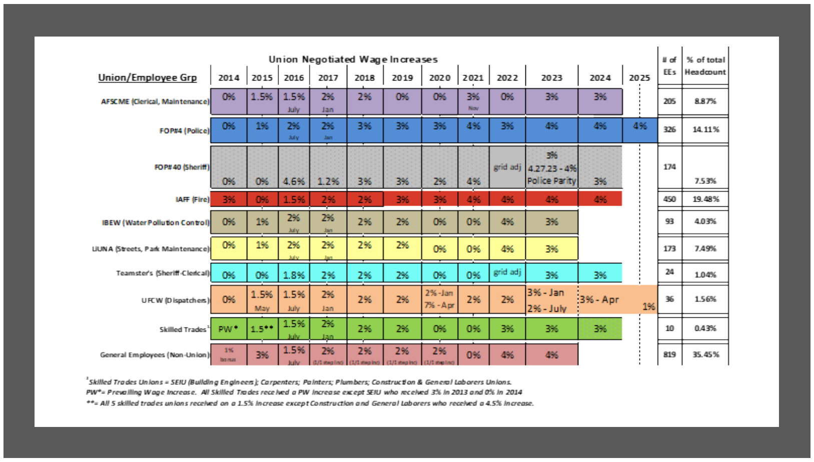
This next chart is going to show you information over a four-year period. We looked at the separations and as you can see in 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023, in 2020 we had less separations which, again, as I mentioned, people were kind of staying in place. 2021 was a little bit higher in separations at 349 separations and there was a lot happening in our organization and so people were leaving. You know the market is an employee's market where people are recruiting for jobs, jobs are paying more money. Their work-life balances that people were taking in consideration, so you're seeing more separations that happened in 2021.

In 2022 we start coming down a little bit and we're at 307. Those are straight separations and that's going to be a combination of voluntary and involuntary separations that were occurring through our organization. Then, as we sit today, eight months into the year, we have already experienced 159 separations here at the Unified Government.

The appointments, these are individuals coming new into our organization or individuals who may have been like rehires into our organization. Again, 2020, we had 211 new hires come to our organization and then you'll see the number goes up in 2021. In 2022 we experienced an all time high of hiring 421 individuals and I have to take you back into what was actually happening there. In early 2022, the Interim Administrator at that time, had a hiring freeze and wherein all the positions were frozen. We were not doing any hiring and then there was a release of Public Safety positions that were going to be hired and then mid-year there was a release of over 300 positions that got released to be filled. So, a lot of those vacancies that you're seeing now, those positions are a result of those carryover years where these positions just sat and now they've gotten released.

In 2023, right now, we are trending at hiring at 213, and again, that's a combination of bringing in classes, bringing in civilian positions, so we're trending pretty good right now and I think part of our rich benefit package that we offer here at the Unified Government is one of the things that we always encourage our hiring managers to highlight. While we may sacrifice a little bit on the starting salary, you know to offer a rich benefit package to the way that we offer benefit package to our employees, is unspeakable and a lot of organizations don't offer the things that we actually have in our benefits package.

The below graph down there represents transfers. These are going to be transfers that are employees that are going from department to department or they're going from let's just say a trainee position or an auxiliary officer position to a patrol officer, so these are basically internal transfers that are happening throughout our organization.

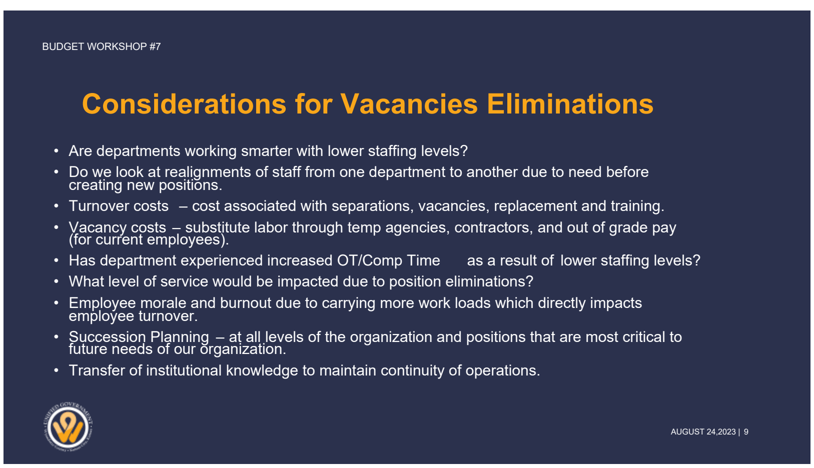


Union Negotiated Wage Increases

Union/Employee Grp	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	# of EEs	% of total Headcount
AFSCME (Clerical, Maintenance)	0%	1.5%	1.5% July	2% Jan	2%	0%	0%	3% Nov	0%	3%	3%		205	8.87%
FOP#4 (Police)	0%	1%	2% July	2% Jan	3%	3%	3%	4%	3%	4%	4%	4%	326	14.11%
FOP#40 (Sheriff)	0%	0%	4.6%	1.2%	3%	3%	2%	4%	grid adj	3% 4.27.23 - 4% Police Parity	3%		174	7.53%
IAFF (Fire)	3%	0%	1.5%	2%	2%	3%	3%	4%	4%	4%	4%		450	19.48%
IBEW (Water Pollution Control)	0%	1%	2% July	2% Jan	2%	2%	0%	0%	4%	3%			93	4.03%
LIUNA (Streets, Park Maintenance)	0%	1%	2% July	2% Jan	2%	2%	0%	0%	4%	3%			173	7.49%
Teamster's (Sheriff-Clerical)	0%	0%	1.8%	2%	2%	2%	0%	0%	grid adj	3%	3%		24	1.04%
UFCW (Dispatchers)	0%	1.5% May	1.5% July	2% Jan	2%	2%	2% - Jan 7% - Apr	2%	2%	3% - Jan 2% - July	3% - Apr	1%	36	1.56%
Skilled Trades[1]	PW*	1.5**	1.5% July	2% Jan	2%	2%	0%	0%	3%	3%	3%		10	0.43%
General Employees (Non-Union)	1% bonus	3%	1.5% July	2% (1/1 step inc)	2% (1/1 step inc)	2% (1/1 step inc)	2% (1/1 step inc)	0%	4%	4%			819	35.45%

[1]Skilled Trades Unions = SEIU (Building Engineers); Carpenters; Painters; Plumbers; Construction & General Laborers Unions.
PW*= Prevailing Wage Increase. All Skilled Trades received a PW increase except SEIU who received 3% in 2013 and 0% in 2014
**= All 5 skilled trades unions received on a 1.5% increase except Construction and General Laborers who received a 4.5% increase.

We threw this slide in here—this is a slide that we often use with Administration and as we're going into negotiations and this kind of helps us really set the stage and really helps us keep on track of what have we been given the authority and what has been approved for compensation for our employees. This graph will represent kind of over the years the percentages that we've given employees in these respective unions and in 2024 and 2025 if you see a space that's not there, that means that we're getting ready to actively start engaging in labor negotiations with those unions. This was merely just thrown in there so that way you can kind of see how we're trending and what we are projecting as increases for our employee base based on the agreed upon Memorandum of Understanding.



Lastly, I want to leave you with some of the things that we really need to consider. When we're considering eliminating positions and creating vacancies throughout our organization, you know this is part of that deep dive that we have to take when we're making these decisions. One of the things that we need to consider is, and ask ourselves, are departments working smarter with lower staffing levels and what is the impact of that. We need to be very cognizant of that.

We also need to look at realignments of staff from one department to another based on the need instead of creating new positions. We may have positions where maybe they're not really operating at full capacity, but we have another department within the Unified Government that has a greater need. So instead of creating new positions and making our inventory and raising our FTE level, let's look at what we have in here and let's see if we can shift and if there's a possibility of shifting, we can upskill, we can retrain, we can help individuals through that process so we can make them successful in another department.

We also have to consider the turnover costs. Costs associated with separations, costs associated with vacancies and replacement and training, so those are true costs to our organization. Vacancy costs, vacancies cost our organization and before we're creating those vacancies we need to make sure we're asking, if we create this vacancy later down the road, are we going to have to have substitute labor through using temp agencies, hiring contractors, paying employees out of grade that are performing jobs at a higher level. These are things that we have to keep in the back of our mind.

We need to see has the department experienced an increase in overtime, an increase in comp time as a result of lower staffing levels and then most importantly, employee morale and employee burnout due to carrying more workloads which directly impacts employee turnover. We have to look at succession planning and what we're doing there. Succession planning is just not in executive roles for the organization. Succession planning is at all levels of the organization and we need to be able to identify which positions are most critical for the future needs of our organization.

Lastly, most importantly too, is the transfer of institutional knowledge to maintain the continuity of operations for our organization. Institutional knowledge is huge and there are individuals here—we have institutional knowledge that's walking out of the doors every day. How do we preserve that, how do we transfer that knowledge. We just entered into a program—David agreed to do the DROP Program for KP&F positions through KPERS. That gives us the ability to maintain personnel who are in the KP&F like Police, Fire and Sheriff and they actually are retiring through KPERS, but they're going to continue to work for the Unified Government and they can elect to work three, four or five years. That is giving us an opportunity to better manage and really project what our true vacancies are going to be in those public safety areas.

I hope this presentation answered some of the questions that you had. If you have any questions, we're here to try to answer them for you.

Commissioner Markley asked, what is an appropriate vacancy rate, and in particular, I'd be curious if there's a separation between government and private sector. I mean obviously there's always a vacancy rate. What would be a typical vacancy rate for an organization?

Shakeva Christian, Human Resource Manager, said it varies. I don't know if there's a specific standard when it comes to that. I think we need to look at the needs of the organization and what is appropriate for the workload. I think where we stand now 84% is still pretty lean and that may have something to do with having the authorized strength that's probably lower than maybe, for example, private sector. There may be a larger Accounting Department in the private sector whereas our Accounting Departments are smaller and I think that's true across a lot of departments within the Unified Government. I think the 84%, like I said, it's probably pretty standard, but given that we don't have the authorized strength probably that some organizations have impacts our service levels.

Commissioner Ramirez said a couple of questions. From the 16 positions, I'm just curious, the 16 positions that were eliminated, were there multiple departments or were just like a handful of those 16? **Ms. Ramirez** said that was over four departments. **Commissioner Ramirez** said I was just curious. The four large departments showing the vacancy rate, I know last year for the 2023 Budget, the Sheriff came to us for a pay parity, and I'm not sure if the Sheriff is here or not, but has that in any way helped with bringing in more candidates for the Sheriff's Department? **Ms. Ramirez** said today the answer to that is it's not helped a whole lot. We still have our challenges in that. We are hoping that—we're going to have a Saturday testing, so we're hoping that it draws more candidates because we're going to hold it on a Saturday. We are hoping that at some point that those salaries will help us get individuals here, but that is very hard to recruit positions for. That is one of the positions that has the 24-month residency requirement, but asking or having someone come in and the challenges that our deputies face every day working inside our facilities, that's hard to get individuals to come in and really encourage them that this is the position, this is the career.

However; we work hard with our Sheriff's Office. We are advocates for them. We are out there beating the pavements. We started the Correction Specialist Program where we are trying to engage our youth of the community, you know, at the high school level creating that program. I think we brought that to you where they're coming in, they're going to be with us for a semester, these seniors and then, hopefully, when they graduate they'll come in to our department, so we're looking at every opportunity, in every available resource, to help us to get there. Yes, the salary increase has helped in some ways with the advertising and things, but we still have to do our due diligence in getting people to want, to understand what position really is because it doesn't do us any good to bring someone in and then we equip them. You know a cost per hire—it costs us to hire individuals. There are a lot of pre things that have to be done. That's all coming out of our budget, so in order to replace somebody after you've made an investment because that's truly what we're doing when we're hiring individuals for the organization, we're making an investment in this person. We're hoping that soon we will start seeing some sort of return on our investment for that decision.

Commissioner Ramirez said I hope so because I know that is something that was very—I was a big advocate for it when he came before us and so I hope and I encourage anybody who's watching or listening, if you know someone, please encourage them to come to the Sheriff's Department and have a conversation with the Sheriff and Undersheriff and any employee of the Sheriff's Department and try to encourage them to come work for the department. Yes, it's not an easy job, it's difficult being in that type of position in that type of environment.

I'm hoping and I know you and I know Sheriff Soptic and his department does an amazing job of trying to recruit as best as they can and that goes across all our departments here at the UG.

I have one last question and this is for, I believe, the Administrator. Are all our unions on contract? **Mr. Johnston** said I believe they are. That was a thing that about a year ago was a goal of the Unified Government is to bring every union under a contract. The last one, I believe, was the Fire contract and that was a retro. That's why I think Renee mentioned they're going to be starting in a few months to start the next cycle of a CBA and then we have a couple others that's about ready to start now.

Ms. Ramirez said our actual last contract that we came into agreement with was with the UFCW which is our Police Dispatchers. **Mr. Johnston** said that's it, Dispatch, so the answer is yes.

Commissioner Johnson said just on that point to Mr. Johnston, I don't know what the magic sauce is, but we haven't seemed to have as much heartburn in terms of our negotiations with the contracts as we have in the past. I don't know if there's anything different, but that's just my perspective. Perhaps there is, but it's just the style in which we have done that, so whoever's working on that, hats off to you.

Cost per hire, can you kind of give me a range. I know it differs depending on the kind of position. Can you kind of give me a range of what that actually costs us on average to hire someone because I do agree, it is indeed an investment. **Ms. Ramirez** said I have that in this report here. Typically the cost per hire, as we're calculating that, there's going to be a range for that as well. I would say anywhere—it could be from $700 up to $2,000 for cost per hire and that's going to be depending on how big the class is, where we've advertised. For police officer, what are the things that we have to equip them with, their uniforms, the training that we give them; all of those are factors that we have to consider for the cost per hire.

Commissioner Johnson said I think you know—again, I hear discussion about return on investment that we certainly want to see and I think that's something that we have to continue to look at as we are going through these changes. I'm glad that you all went through and took another look at it and it sounds like you're open to taking yet another look at it.

I'll end with my final question. When we look at the different departments, the vacancy percentages for large UG departments, Commissioner Ramirez had talked about the Sheriff, but I sure would love to hear about how are we being so successful with the Fire Department because they are—I would have never assumed that we would only have a 3.34% vacancy rate. **Ms. Ramirez** said I think one of the reasons is the retention, having the ability to retain firefighters. They have one of lowest turnover rates for the organization. They're typically staying with our organization sometimes 36 years and now with the DROP Program, they're able to now expand that three, four, five more years from that. So your turnover rate is a direct correlation to the number of vacancies that are going to happen.

Commissioner Kane said you know I've been around for a little while and the thing that sticks out to me is employee morale and burnout. What I don't want to do and you know we've had wage freezes for our employees for several years and what I don't want to do is eliminate a job and then take that job and throw it on another group and then they have the burnout. I'm not sure what the magic number is, but if we're lean, maybe we shouldn't be so lean to take some work off the folks that are performing it because nobody wants to come in every day and do their job and somebody else's job and that's what we've done in the past and I damn sure don't want to freeze the wages on anybody. I would think that we would want to go up closer to 90% so we can take the strain off our employees. **Ms. Ramirez** said, Commissioner, we appreciate that. That is why the last slide was in there because before we talk about further eliminations, we need to have these considerations in the back of our minds for that.

Commissioner Stites said, Commissioner Johnson, you asked the question, why Fire at three and why Police and Sheriff's Department—I've done not the Fire Department job but I've been a police officer and Sheriff's Department in Wyandotte County. I will tell you, Police and Sheriff, look at the climate of today. How hard is it to attract somebody to come in and do this job when you see nationwide what's happening. The Fire Department doesn't get attacked like Police and Sheriff's do, so the retention is there because they do a good job and they, for the most part, don't get attacked for it.

Also, Renee, I wanted to address, and I know it's a contentious point, and I worked under it for a lot of years, the residency requirement, but whenever you ask Sheriff Soptic right now, and I have, what's the single most thing that prohibits him getting that staffing number up, it's residency requirement. We've already shown that the wage increase isn't working. When was the last time that the four that were listed, the four large departments, were at full staffing? **Ms. Ramirez** said I've been here a long time and I've been in HR for a long time and I don't know that I ever remember us being fully staffed at full capacity. **Commissioner Stites** said right, and I think in a place where public service like Police and Sheriff, that's not a place that we, obviously, the Fire Department is okay because where they're set now on their numbers, but that's a place that we can't really afford to not be fully staffed or close to it.

I know that I think the number of just officers on the street for the Police Department is around 40 right now. I know that you had said maybe 61 or 60 or so was the number, but that was for sworn and unsworn. **Ms. Ramirez** said that was sworn and civilian and dispatchers. **Commissioner Stites** said but 40 officers down right now. So, what I'm getting at, is the residency requirement hasn't worked. It hasn't worked. Like you just said, how long have you been here and how long the rest of us—been around here for a long time and our pool of people that we're pulling from—what other departments around, what other cities around here—there's a reason Kansas City, Missouri just lifted theirs. There's cities that surround us that see the residency requirement doesn't work, yeah, we're still holding out and we're still showing these numbers. We've got to make a change.

Commissioner Bynum said a question on the vacancies, 394 and then 16 were identified as being able to be eliminated, but the remaining 378, are we still working through them or have we identified they all need to stay? **Ms. Ramirez** said most of them have been identified to stay. Those are positions that we've been actively recruiting. They're posted on the board. Some individuals are in background checks, some are in conditional offers. You know there are several different stages that those positions could be in. **Commissioner Bynum** said I just wasn't sure if the 16 was like the work wasn't done yet and we were going to have more or that was how many total we actually identified that could be eliminated. **Ms. Ramirez** said the 16 positions that were there were likely positions that have been sitting on the inventory. There was no funding for them. They merely have just sat with no activity whatsoever, so those are easier to eliminate.

On the 17 we're sitting there and there was some consideration because of maybe the operational needs of the department, they couldn't do away with that specific position.

Commissioner Johnson said to Commissioner Stites point, it really comes down to this body as it relates to the residency requirement. I will go on the record saying that I do not want to see—I do want to continue to have a residency requirement, but I also feel the squeeze and I don't know where we are as a Commission as to whether or not—well, I see some hands going up already—where we are with regards to continuing to have that residency requirement because at the end of the day it comes down to this body, so maybe I'll pull back here and let some other persons have a say.

Commissioner Kane said remember, we ran a survey and 60 some odd percent of the people in the community said that if you work here, you should live here. I'm of the mind that we asked the community, the community said what they wanted and in my mind if they've elected us to do what they want, not necessarily what we want, and they spoke loud and clear 60 some odd percent that they said—and it affects my family, but it's if you have a good paying job here in Wyandotte County, and you're going to get a retirement, you're going to get all these things that go along with that, if you want a good job here, you should have to live here.

Commissioner Ramirez said I wasn't going to touch on the residency, I wasn't, and I'm not going to. My last comment based on the slide with considerations that you had, the very last two I think all of these considerations are important, but to me the last two are the most important, especially the institutional knowledge as you mentioned. We've lost a lot, a lot of great staff and employees who had years and years of institutional knowledge and we as an organization need to figure out a way to capture all of that institutional knowledge before these employees leave. It's a shame we've lost all of that hard work and dedication, but I think just moving forward we need to make sure how do we capture it and what's the best way because we have all these vacant positions and we're bringing in new employees, that's good we're bringing in new employees into these positions, but that background knowledge of things that have happened in the past of processes and protocols and whatnot, if that's not passed on to these new positions, these new department directors that may come in, that's a lot of, in my mind, a lot of progress that has been lost.

I know staff that are currently already there can help that new person, but it adds more time for the person to play catch-up rather than us having a system in place of capturing all of that knowledge that we can pass on to the new person. I think that's, in my mind, it's one of the—again, it's only me, I think that's the most important consideration on this list is just that institutional knowledge.

Commissioner Davis said thank you Renee and thank you to your department. This is really good information. It's very educational for me. Do we have, and it's okay if we don't know right now, but I'd be interested to know what the statutorial requirements are for the Sheriff's Department. Do we know kind of by state law what are we obligated to say, hey, at the bare minimum, not that I'm advocating for the bare minimum, but at the bare minimum as a governing body here's how much you need to fund this. You cannot go any lower or else we're going to be in court. Do we have those numbers? **Ms. Ramirez** said we don't have those numbers. Right now what I can say is statutorily the only requirement that I'm aware of at this moment is the staffing ratio for the Juvenile Detention Center. **Commissioner Davis** asked, what is that ratio? **Ms. Ramirez** said it's 12.1. **Commissioner Davis** said that's very helpful because, again, just trying to be mindful of what we are obligated to do. I know we have kind of a list of things that we're looking at of considering, reducing and services, but there are other things besides what's on that list that we should be aware of.

On the residency requirement, I've seen it done. When I worked for the city of Lawrence, for example, it wasn't an either or deal. I've seen where department heads had to stay or there was a certain position that you had to be in management, then you had to be a resident and then everybody else could choose, but wherever you live, you have to live in a certain radius. Just to put that out there. It's not a—I don't see that conversation as an either/or deal. I do see it as something that we can find some sort of a happy medium if that would be beneficial to us.

In regards to the Sheriff's Department, I don't know if we would even have the authority to tell Sheriff Soptic what to do with the residency requirement. As I understand it, the D.A., and please correct me if I'm wrong, lifted or amended the residency requirement for employees. I don't know if I'm accurate on that or not. **Ms. Ramirez** said we'll have to defer to Legal Counsel.

Angela Lawson, Interim Chief Counsel, said yes, the state law creates the District Attorney's elected position different from other departments. Elected officials do have more freedom with their budgets than other departments per state law, but the District Attorney's office has the most with terms of HR issues, so he has a lot more freedom to craft those policies that he would like or exempt the ones that he doesn't. **Commissioner Davis** said gotcha. I wasn't sure if that same law applied to the other elected folks or is it just unique. **Ms. Lawson** said it's a little bit of a mishmash. It does for purchasing issues and some budgetary issues, but for HR issues the DA has sort of different rules than the rest of the elected officials. **Commissioner Davis** said I see. That's very helpful because I wasn't sure if we could even direct or what role we have when it came to that.

Again, thank you all for this information. I think similarly to—in our budget where we have reserves or kind of a percentage or a number that says, hey, you've reached it now, maybe we should look at doing something for our citizens. Perhaps we should adopt the policy for vacancies that kind of trigger a deep dive look to say, hey, once we reach a certain number, let's really look at what's happening here before we keep putting these vacancies in the budget and then foregoing other things that citizens have been asking us for. So, just for consideration, but thank you all. This has been very educational and I really appreciate it.

Commissioner Ramirez said more of a request since you know there's been a lot of talk about the Sheriff and everything. At a future Special Session or a place on the agenda for a future meeting if we can invite Sheriff Soptic to give an update on his department and his efforts so far on his ability to hire as best as he can. I think it'd be a good idea. He hasn't come before us since he asked for the pay parity, so I think it's just a good time to reinvite him back and just have that discussion with him.

Commissioner Stites said on the same line, I think if we're going to ask the Sheriff, let's go ahead and have the Chief of Police and the heads of the four departments that are—and I don't want to leave out the Fire Department either or the vacancies. I want to have them all in here and let them explain to us why residency is the number one prohibitor for them being fully staffed.

Mr. Johnston said if we could finish the staff comments on this. I think the biggest thing that we wanted to answer was Commissioner Davis's question. I hope we more than did that. We provided a lot of food for thought here, but one of the things that we have to remind ourselves is we are a competitor for labor and we aren't the only employer in town. Sometimes like we are now, it's an employer—employee market. They have the leverage. In downturn times when there's a plethora of unemployed or underemployed employees, it turns into an employer market. We're not there, so we have to deal with these ebbs and flows of the economy that create new dynamics in the labor market, but we have to pay attention to what's going on in the labor market. So, we are competing with most of the jurisdictions in the KC metro area for a lot of our employees, we have to entice them to call this place home. That is a challenge. Some do embrace it just as a matter of fact and some choose not to apply because of the residency requirement. That's a fact that we have to understand that dynamic.

There are people who are paying more than us and we have to know that element of the labor markets to make sure that at the very least we are competitive and will help entice somebody who's thinking about working in a certain field in government that they'll choose us over another one. So, there's a lot of issues that are involved in us attracting the right folks to call this place their employment home. It's nice that we have a dedicated staff in HR that is looking at all those things, working with our department heads.

One of the questions you asked is what's the recruiting costs. Some of our hardest placed positions we may have to repost three, four, five times and it's the same amount of time, a dollar amount to pay for each attempt and usually there's a twist of finding a unique way to get into a different part of the market to advertise vacancies. That forces us to look outside our normal comfort zone to how to reach the masses about our positions, but you know, that means those positions have a high recruiting position because we're not getting the applicant pool, but we still have the need. So, working with labor is a very dynamic environment in trying to get folks to apply and accept offers here.

I hope what you saw tonight is it's not just throwing an ad out there, sifting through applications and making a hire. There's a lot more to it and it's more complicated than maybe Joe and Sally layperson can appreciate, so hopefully, we brought a little bit more enlightenment to that dynamic.

Mayor Garner said, Commissioner Johnson, I think you had a question for me. You wanted me to weigh in on something. You mentioned me. I don't know if there's anything specific you want me to—**Commissioner Johnson** said no sir, I don't. I did, I'm getting a little older now—**Mayor Garner** said okay. I'm right there with you.

Mayor Garner said I think I agree with the Administrator and I agree with Commissioner Kane and Commissioner Johnson in regard to—I think the Administrator what he's really hitting on is I have my Masters in HR and so it is complex when you talk about hiring and retaining people for certain jobs. I know when you look at families or individuals and there is a dynamic there. Let's just talk about generationally. One thing when you talk about retention is the generation gap. My generation and I believe my parents generation, we were more in tuned to stay with one company, to stay with that company from high school to retirement. It seems to be a trend now with the younger generation, they look for opportunities and that has created a very competitive market. When you talk about the pool, if you look at just a lot of information that's out there on SHRM, and I encourage you all to do that. One of the things that they also look at is affordability, you look at schools, you look at the infrastructure, you look at the amenities, you look at the housing and I'm not talking about low income housing, I'm talking about housing that is affordable for a family to move into especially in today's world. Even rental, what's affordable when you talk about rental properties for the working class individuals and things that will entice people to live, work, play, raise families, when you talk about parks and recreation and things of those natures, there's a lot of things that go into that, taxes, utility rates, those play into it and people are going to go where it's more attractive. I think that plays out.

I heard someone the other day, I was at a meeting and they said that 70% of the highest paying jobs, they're in Wyandotte County. Most of the people that have those jobs don't live in Wyandotte County. You can look at KU. I've seen it when I worked on the Police Department, look at General Motors, look at a lot of our higher paying wage jobs and you can talk to some of the employees, you'd be shocked how many just don't live in Wyandotte County and for a variety of reasons some of which that I named. So, how do we entice those people to see Wyandotte County is a great place to live, work and raise a family and there's a lot of factors that play into that especially when Wyandotte County has some of the highest paying jobs in the metro and so what's left here is a lot of individuals that have needs.

The question came up about hiring and I just know over the years—I'll use the Police Department for an example. There was never a problem of hiring when I first got hired. When I got hired on back in '87 there was a class, testing class, of probably about 650 individuals that wanted to go on the Police Department, that was back then. That remained steady and pretty steadfast up until probably the early 2000s when we started struggling. I was involved in hiring. One of the problems that I've seen with hiring is the lack of will or the ineffectiveness of us to hire people of color.

I've always said this when I was on the Police Department against the grain, that the Police Department, Public Safety, and just the Unified Government individually should be made up of the community that it looks like and not just in the lower paying, but all the way up to the actual decisionmakers. A government of the people, for the people that's reflective of all the people throughout the organizations and making sure that those individuals not only are put in place and are figureheads, but they're also supported to give it the same level of support and respect as their peers and that has been a challenge going over the years in my experience and a lot of people I've talked to in my experience here at the Unified Government.

There is a pool. When I was involved in hiring—I know in, I think, it was 2003, we worked with the churches. We brought in more minority candidates than had ever been brought forward, but the Unified Government at that time or the Police Department still hired the same amount of minority applicants as they normally did. What's disturbing is some of those applicants went on to work at other Police Departments particularly Kansas City, Missouri and some Johnson County agencies. So, the question was why weren't these individuals from Wyandotte County that were qualified, some military went to school here, great criminal backgrounds and no criminal backgrounds, come from great families and they weren't good enough to work in our community, but other communities saw fit to hire.

When I talk about a lot of complex issues involved in hiring, those are some of them. When you talk about diversity, inclusion and access and I've said it before and I've seen it and I didn't grow up here, but what I have noticed is just this—it's not a perception, in my opinion it's a reality, you shouldn't have to be privileged, connected, powerful or influential to get a job or have access to anything here at the Unified Government. Those are some of the barriers and things that I've seen, not because people have told me, because I've personally experienced it, I've personally seen it and I've personally advocated against it because it's not right when you talk about equity and inclusion and how many have had those challenges.

I think if you look over the years and I can just talk about the Police Department, the number of lawsuits that have come as a result of EEOC complaints because of the inequities that have gone here at the Unified Government. So when you talk about not being able to hire people that are quality, I reject that notion because we have great people here in Wyandotte County that are talented, that are educated, that are capable that want to work, but have been somehow for some reason shut out and those are the things that we need to talk about.

There was a—racism is a countywide issue. Came up from the Health Department, still waiting on the finalization of that report, but I can tell you this, what I didn't see is looking at the inequities and some of the racist practices that have gone here at the Unified Government for decades and that needs to be examined as well. It's hard to point the finger at our community and say that they're racist or that there's inequities, or there's bias, or there's discrimination when several fingers can be pointed back at the practices of this Unified Government historically. So, those are some things we need to look at and correct and make sure that everyone has not just a seat at the table, but has an opportunity that wants it for success.

When you talk about the residency rule, in law enforcement I struggle with that one. I agree with Commissioner Kane. I'm community-driven. If the community is for the residency rule, I think as always with anything that people have seen me do, it's not what I want, it's what this community wants and better yet what they deserve. If they say this is what we want, I think as an elected official I'm obligated to try and meet the reasonable expectations that our community has for us and if they say they don't want a residency, I can support that. Some of the arguments that have been given to me against the residency is, and I'll just use Public Safety. There's a large minority community here and we know the issues that some of the minorities have had, not just here recently, within the last decade, but throughout, going back to Jim Crow slavery and before that.

So, when you talk about residency, that hits home to a lot of people when you have law enforcement that doesn't live here, that this community is paying for. They go back to their home, probably to our neighbor in the south and they use the tax dollars from the residents here to pay property taxes for their home, send their kids probably to Johnson County schools and then they come back in here and police this community. That type of ideology goes against everything that community policing stands for if you look at 21st century policing. What has worked is police officers living, working, playing, raising their families and getting to know the community that they both serve and they live in and so I tend to side with that notion when it comes to Public Safety that our police officers and our Public Safety officials should live here as a matter of getting to live and work and experience what Wyandotte County—it says a lot when people want to come here and make a living off this county, but aren't good enough to live with the people in this county. I had to live here. I've lived here my entire adult life and so throughout my career on the Police Department and I did just fine. I've lived in just about every corner of this community and I've never had any problems.

So, I think even with that, it goes back to affordability and some of those other things I talked about. We've got to make not just the Unified Government attractive because I do believe if you look at where we stand with our pay salary and benefits and the type of leadership that we have with the Unified Government, I'd say we probably rate higher than most. Then when you look at what's available to candidates that may be looking for a place to relocate, I think there's a lot of challenges there that we've got to look at if we're really going to be serious about how to attract and retain good employees because people are going to go where there are clean streets, nice parks, amenities, good restaurants, activities, entertainment, those types of things that are going to draw families to want to stay in the community. Those are some of the challenges that I see.

To answer Commissioner Davis's question, he hit on the question about the Sheriff. I know that Sheriff Green and I believe that either Legal or HR should get—he actually had a lawsuit or a legal challenge to the UG back when he was Sheriff, about that very question, about the UG not giving him the funding and the resources he needed for his Sheriff Department to operate. He actually won or it was settled and I believe by state statute that the municipalities are required to make sure that the Sheriff's Department is adequately funded so he can perform these essential duties required for the job. So, hopefully, that answers a little bit of your question Commissioner Johnson.

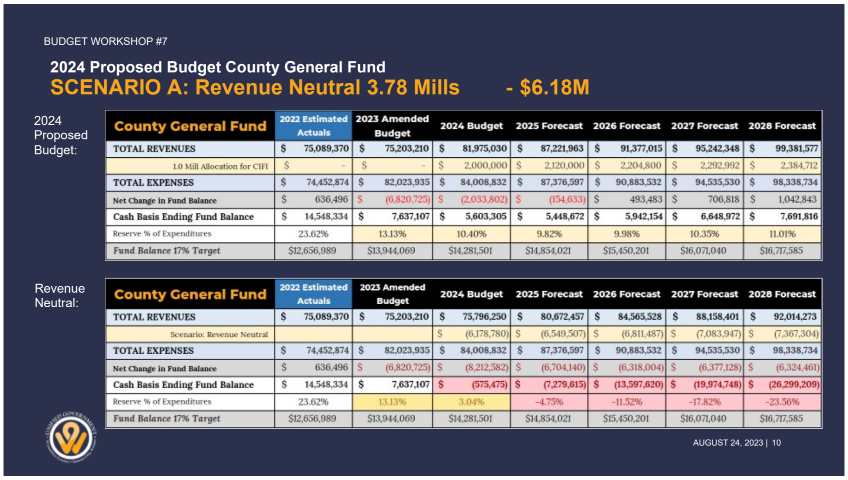
I know some of you wanted the Sheriff and I'll also bring in the DA. I'll facilitate the Fire as well as the Police Department and we'll bring them back before you and we can let them share with this body and the public about some of the challenges they have with recruiting and retaining. **Commissioner Bynum** said I would ask for Public Works. They're in the top four. **Mayor Garner** said okay, Public Works as well.

Mr. Johnston said thank you Renee and HR staff. I appreciate it.

Mayor Garner left the meeting at 6:00 p.m. and Commissioner Bynum presided as Mayor ProTem.

Mr. Johnston said Mayor ProTem is asking that we continue. We are shuffling seats right now, so when Reggie nests, we can continue with our budget workshop. So, Reggie, whenever you're ready.

Reginald Lindsey, Budget Director, said last week we had started a presentation and we did not get to finish, so we wanted to get that presentation finished up tonight. Also, during that presentation there were some of the financials we had to go back and look at the numbers. We also wanted to cover those before we jump into the rest of the presentation. One of the funds was the County General Fund that we looked at last week and there were some numeric numbers that we had to adjust.



2024 Proposed Budget:

County General Fund	2022 Estimated Actuals	2023 Amended Budget	2024 Budget	2025 Forecast	2026 Forecast	2027 Forecast	2028 Forecast
TOTAL REVENUES	$ 75,089,370	$ 75,203,210	$ 81,975,030	$ 87,221,963	$ 91,377,015	$ 95,242,348	$ 99,381,577
1.0 Mill Allocation for CIFI	$ -	$ -	$ 2,000,000	$ 2,120,000	$ 2,204,800	$ 2,292,992	$ 2,384,712
TOTAL EXPENSES	$ 74,452,874	$ 82,023,935	$ 84,008,832	$ 87,376,597	$ 90,883,532	$ 94,535,530	$ 98,338,734
Net Change in Fund Balance	$ 636,496	$ (6,820,725)	$ (2,033,802)	$ (154,633)	$ 493,483	$ 706,818	$ 1,042,843
Cash Basis Ending Fund Balance	$ 14,548,334	$ 7,637,107	$ 5,603,305	$ 5,448,672	$ 5,942,154	$ 6,648,972	$ 7,691,816
Reserve % of Expenditures	23.62%	13.13%	10.40%	9.82%	9.98%	10.35%	11.01%
Fund Balance 17% Target	$12,656,989	$13,944,069	$14,281,501	$14,854,021	$15,450,201	$16,071,040	$16,717,585

Revenue Neutral:

County General Fund	2022 Estimated Actuals	2023 Amended Budget	2024 Budget	2025 Forecast	2026 Forecast	2027 Forecast	2028 Forecast
TOTAL REVENUES	$ 75,089,370	$ 75,203,210	$ 75,796,250	$ 80,672,457	$ 84,565,528	$ 88,158,401	$ 92,014,273
Scenario: Revenue Neutral			$ (6,178,780)	$ (6,549,507)	$ (6,811,487)	$ (7,083,947)	$ (7,367,304)
TOTAL EXPENSES	$ 74,452,874	$ 82,023,935	$ 84,008,832	$ 87,376,597	$ 90,883,532	$ 94,535,530	$ 98,338,734
Net Change in Fund Balance	$ 636,496	$ (6,820,725)	$ (8,212,582)	$ (6,704,140)	$ (6,318,004)	$ (6,377,128)	$ (6,324,461)
Cash Basis Ending Fund Balance	$ 14,548,334	$ 7,637,107	$ (575,475)	$ (7,279,615)	$ (13,597,620)	$ (19,974,748)	$ (26,299,209)
Reserve % of Expenditures	23.62%	13.13%	3.04%	-4.75%	-11.52%	-17.82%	-23.56%
Fund Balance 17% Target	$12,656,989	$13,944,069	$14,281,501	$14,854,021	$15,450,201	$16,071,040	$16,717,585

The slide we're looking at currently now is Scenario A for the County General Fund and basically the top financial is the 2024 Proposed Budget, how we presented it on August 10th when we presented the 2024 Proposed Budget. Then, below is the revenue neutral. This was something that was asked that we bring back, how revenue neutral would look with the County General Fund, so one of the things we can see when we proposed the budget back on August 10th the County General Fund had a 10% reserve fund balance and then if we were to go revenue neutral for 2024, it ends up having a 3% fund balance, but the most important thing is we wouldn't be able to approve a budget because that budget would be in the negative of $575K cash basis wise and then we can kind of see the trajectory going out to 2028. We wouldn't be able to approve a budget in any of those years, but the Proposed Budget that we presented on August 10th we wouldn't have the fund balance that our policy that we passed back in 2018 of 17%, we wouldn't have that fund balance, but we would have like a 10% fund balance and it would generally start to rise once we got out to 2027 and 2028. Some work would still need to be done. We wouldn't have a structural imbalance, so we would be able to start raising the fund balance.

Mayor ProTem Bynum said, Reggie, I'm so sorry, right off the bat. The top chart is when we say proposed, meaning at the current mill levy rate. **Mr. Lindsey** said yes. **Mayor ProTem Bynum** said the top chart holding the mill levy rates steady—oh okay, so we would have—at '24 we would have a 10.4% reserve at the end of '24. **Mr. Lindsey** said holding the mill rate steady. **Mayor ProTem Bynum** said holding it the same and then the bottom chart is the revenue neutral scenario for the County and you're saying that would be a budget by law we actually could not adopt. **Mr. Lindsey** said we could not adopt it. **Mayor ProTem Bynum** said because it's out of this—**Mr. Lindsey** said unless we went back and did some cuts or something.

BUDGET WORKSHOP #7

2024 Proposed Budget County General Fund

SCENARIO B: 2 Mill Reduction - $3.69M

2024 Proposed Budget:

County General Fund	2022 Estimated Actuals	2023 Amended Budget	2024 Budget	2025 Forecast	2026 Forecast	2027 Forecast	2028 Forecast
TOTAL REVENUES	$ 75,089,370	$ 75,203,210	$ 81,975,030	$ 87,221,963	$ 91,377,015	$ 95,242,348	$ 99,381,577
1.0 Mill Allocation for CIFI	$ -	$ -	$ 2,000,000	$ 2,120,000	$ 2,204,800	$ 2,292,992	$ 2,384,712
TOTAL EXPENSES	$ 74,452,874	$ 82,023,935	$ 84,008,832	$ 87,376,597	$ 90,883,532	$ 94,535,530	$ 98,338,734
Net Change in Fund Balance	$ 636,496	$ (6,820,725)	$ (2,033,802)	$ (154,633)	$ 493,483	$ 706,818	$ 1,042,843
Cash Basis Ending Fund Balance	$ 14,548,334	$ 7,637,107	$ 5,603,305	$ 5,448,672	$ 5,942,154	$ 6,648,972	$ 7,691,816
Reserve % of Expenditures	23.62%	13.13%	10.40%	9.82%	9.98%	10.35%	11.01%
Fund Balance 17% Target	$12,656,989	$13,944,069	$14,281,501	$14,854,021	$15,450,201	$16,071,040	$16,717,585

2 Mill Reduction:

County General Fund	2022 Estimated Actuals	2023 Amended Budget	2024 Budget	2025 Forecast	2026 Forecast	2027 Forecast	2028 Forecast
TOTAL REVENUES	$ 75,089,370	$ 75,203,210	$ 78,279,179	$ 83,304,361	$ 87,302,709	$ 91,005,069	$ 94,974,808
Scenario: Cut 2 Mills			$ (3,695,851)	$ (3,917,602)	$ (4,074,306)	$ (4,237,278)	$ (4,406,770)
TOTAL EXPENSES	$ 74,452,874	$ 82,023,935	$ 84,058,832	$ 87,147,561	$ 90,703,447	$ 93,428,766	$ 97,237,293
Net Change in Fund Balance	$ 636,496	$ (6,820,725)	$ (5,779,653)	$ (3,843,200)	$ (3,400,738)	$ (2,423,697)	$ (2,262,485)
Cash Basis Ending Fund Balance	$ 14,457,832	$ 7,637,107	$ 1,857,454	$ (1,985,746)	$ (5,386,484)	$ (7,810,181)	$ (10,072,666)
Reserve % of Expenditures	23.62%	13.13%	5.94%	1.31%	-2.49%	-5.01%	-7.14%

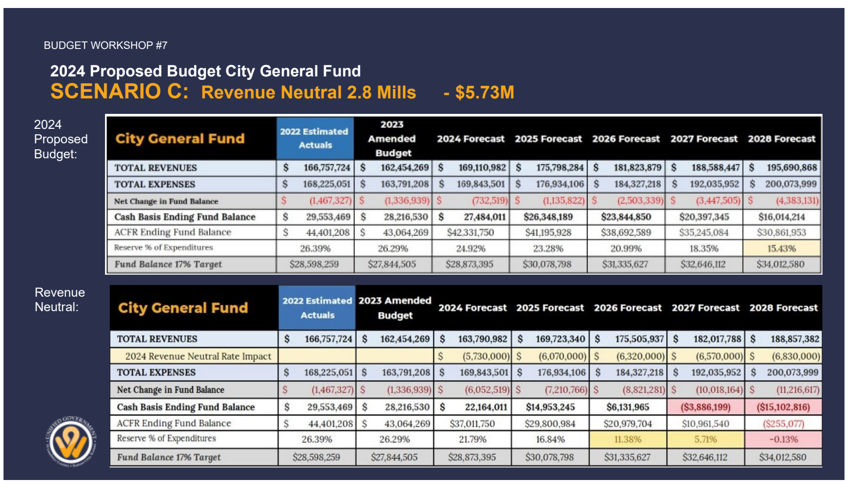
AUGUST 24, 2023 | 11

Mr. Lindsey said the current slide is the County General Fund and we're calling this Scenario B. One of the things that came forward from when we presented the budget because you wanted to see what a two mill reduction would look like. That two mill reduction equates to about $3.7M coming off of revenues in 2024, so we can see the 2024 Proposed Budget which is the top financials, that is the budget that we proposed back on August 10th. It doesn't have any adjustment to the mill rate.

The bottom financial has the two mill reduction and we can see in 2024 we end up being $5.7M structurally imbalanced compared to $2M, so it more than doubles our structural imbalance and then also we do end up having a cash basis fund balance of $1.8M, but our reserves fund balance ends up dropping to almost 6% and what we presented on August 10th, we're about 10.4%. The important thing next year though is as we get into 2025, we end up being almost $2M in the negative cash basis fund balance wise, so we definitely couldn't approve a budget 2025, 2026, 2027 or 2028.

Commissioner McKiernan said one thing that I want to just double check on here is that what you're showing is if we drop the income by dropping the mill and what is kind of understood, but we haven't spoken it out loud is, that's a starting place and if we wanted to then erase some of the imbalance in fund balance at the end of the year, then we would be charged with finding places to cut expenses, a fractional or commensurate amount, so that we could get there. I mean we're making an assumption here we would drop our income, but hold expenses at the proposed level, but it is possible and you're going to give us some options for that later on, but it is possible that we could choose one or more places to make expense reductions that would then modify what's on the board, right? **Mr. Lindsey** said that is exactly right. **Commissioner McKiernan** said perfect.

Mr. Lindsey said as you said, a little more into the presentation, we will have options and scenarios to look at reducing expenses and we also have an exercise where we will allow you all to make reductions.



BUDGET WORKSHOP #7

2024 Proposed Budget City General Fund

SCENARIO C: Revenue Neutral 2.8 Mills - $5.73M

2024 Proposed Budget:

City General Fund	2022 Estimated Actuals	2023 Amended Budget	2024 Forecast	2025 Forecast	2026 Forecast	2027 Forecast	2028 Forecast
TOTAL REVENUES	$ 166,757,724	$ 162,454,269	$ 169,110,982	$ 175,798,284	$ 181,823,879	$ 188,588,447	$ 195,690,868
TOTAL EXPENSES	$ 168,225,051	$ 163,791,208	$ 169,843,501	$ 176,934,106	$ 184,327,218	$ 192,035,952	$ 200,073,999
Net Change in Fund Balance	$ (1,467,327)	$ (1,336,939)	$ (732,519)	$ (1,135,822)	$ (2,503,339)	$ (3,447,505)	$ (4,383,131)
Cash Basis Ending Fund Balance	$ 29,553,469	$ 28,216,530	$ 27,484,011	$26,348,189	$23,844,850	$20,397,345	$16,014,214
ACFR Ending Fund Balance	$ 44,401,208	$ 43,064,269	$42,331,750	$41,195,928	$38,692,589	$35,245,084	$30,861,953
Reserve % of Expenditures	26.39%	26.29%	24.92%	23.28%	20.99%	18.35%	15.43%
Fund Balance 17% Target	$28,598,259	$27,844,505	$28,873,395	$30,078,798	$31,335,627	$32,646,112	$34,012,580

Revenue Neutral:

City General Fund	2022 Estimated Actuals	2023 Amended Budget	2024 Forecast	2025 Forecast	2026 Forecast	2027 Forecast	2028 Forecast
TOTAL REVENUES	$ 166,757,724	$ 162,454,269	$ 163,790,982	$ 169,723,340	$ 175,505,937	$ 182,017,788	$ 188,857,382
2024 Revenue Neutral Rate Impact			$ (5,730,000)	$ (6,070,000)	$ (6,320,000)	$ (6,570,000)	$ (6,830,000)
TOTAL EXPENSES	$ 168,225,051	$ 163,791,208	$ 169,843,501	$ 176,934,106	$ 184,327,218	$ 192,035,952	$ 200,073,999
Net Change in Fund Balance	$ (1,467,327)	$ (1,336,939)	$ (6,052,519)	$ (7,210,766)	$ (8,821,281)	$ (10,018,164)	$ (11,216,617)
Cash Basis Ending Fund Balance	$ 29,553,469	$ 28,216,530	$ 22,164,011	$14,953,245	$6,131,965	($3,886,199)	($15,102,816)
ACFR Ending Fund Balance	$ 44,401,208	$ 43,064,269	$37,011,750	$29,800,984	$20,979,704	$10,961,540	($255,077)
Reserve % of Expenditures	26.39%	26.29%	21.79%	16.84%	11.38%	5.71%	-0.13%
Fund Balance 17% Target	$28,598,259	$27,844,505	$28,873,395	$30,078,798	$31,335,627	$32,646,112	$34,012,580

Last week when we looked at the City General Fund there weren't any adjustments that needed to be made with the City General Fund numbers just as far as like cutting the mills and going revenue neutral. There was an adjustment that Commissioner Davis noticed with the BPU PILOT Relief, so the top financial was what we originally proposed back on August 10th for the 2024 Proposed Budget for the City General Fund and we can see 2024 Budget has almost a 25% fund balance, that amount is like $42M. Our structural imbalance is $732K. We can see each year that structural imbalance does continue to grow slightly and then out in 2028 is where we run into issues where our fund balance drops below our 17%.

Our BPU PILOT Relief down at the bottom list of financials that are showcasing it and what the BPU PILOT Relief is, we have like $750K additional revenue within our budget that will come from BPU raising their rates as far as like with the PILOT revenue we will receive. So, what we did was add an additional $750K into our budget that could be used for PILOT Relief and that is shown in the bottom financials. You can see in 2024 we have like $750K in PILOT Relief line and that amount is added to the expenses and we can see that fund balance wise we're still in the range of like we're over 17% and we do have 24% fund balance and it does slightly start to reduce each year, but it's pretty comparable to what's in the proposed. When we get out to 2028, again, we still do drop below the 17% fund balance.

Commissioner Ramirez said please correct me if I'm wrong because this is how I heard it and I want to clarify in my mind, so we're taking—the $750K is the windfall from the increase in the rates, is that correct? **Mr. Lindsey** said yes. **Commissioner Ramirez** said so we're taking the windfall, but then expending an additional same amount for BPU for PILOT Relief. Is that correct? **Mr. Lindsey** said that is correct. **Commissioner Ramirez** said okay. That's what I thought I heard. I just wanted to clarify, so we're taking the windfall, but then turning right around in sort of way expending the same amount to give back that relief. **Mr. Lindsey** said that is correct.

Commissioner Stites said, Reggie, I want to make sure I'm clear on this, but that give back of that $750K is not going to everybody that their rates increased—**Mayor ProTem Bynum** said right. **Commissioner Stites** said it's only going to a select group, correct? **Mr. Lindsey** said we haven't totally made a decision on how it would be dispersed, but we do have a couple different options. There is the sales tax utility, the Utility Rebate Program that we have and then there are also programs that Commissioner Bynum considered, but just all those, not the whole population would get all of those. **Commissioner Stites** said right, so what I said was correct, so not everybody that's getting—that's paying more BPU on their bill is going to see any type of relief from it. **Mayor ProTem Bynum** said based on the proposal that's been brought forward, that's correct.

Mr. Lindsey said on our last presentation we left off—we went through some of our scenarios, so I was going to catch back up to slides we left off on. The slide we left off on were slides related to—so last time we left off on covering Parks & Rec and just kind of refresh everyone. What we had started doing was going through what we felt and went through our expenses and felt was discretionary spending money that we did not have to spend and so we looked at about five other packages last week and we want to start going back through packages again. So this is what we're going through now is Parks & Recreation. Parks & Recreation has a transfer from the City General Fund of about $4.9M and actually this year we increased that $470K in 2024 over 2023. Some of the things that are included there are parks, grounds, trails, shelters, playgrounds, pools, spray parks, athletic fields and then also recreation programs which include youth and adult athletic program leagues, recreation center programs, summer programs, and then also a special population program.

Commissioner Kane said we all know we're there and it's a semi-joke and semi-not a joke. West of 435, north of Parallel, we pay a tremendous amount of taxes and we still don't have a park. I have no idea why we haven't tried to work with the school district. We tried to work with BPU and there's been a little bit of work, but in my mind and the community's mind not enough work. You know we just passed our taxes out and mine was $2,000 more. When somebody says well how come they got a park in town, they got a spray park, they got this, they got that and we don't and I'm tired of saying we don't have the money. All of you have a park in your area and it would be really nice for us to have one out there. We lost our community center because our former Administrator sold it back and that was a crock, but it's time we do something for the folks out west. It's frustrating that we sit here and we semi-laugh about it, but those folks have to go out to Bonner to the park or go to Johnson County or somewhere else and we don't have enough sports here so they go do this. I had to take my kids out to Johnson County, my grandkids have to go out to Johnson County because you don't have enough activity out west, so I would really appreciate it if staff took a hard look and, Mr. Administrator, you know none of this stuff and if you want to talk about it sometime and I'm in a good mood, we can. I'm tired of mentioning it, we deserve a park and I want a park.

Mayor ProTem Bynum said, Mr. Johnston, I would say—a couple of questions that I think should be researched to Commissioner Kane's point and I think Commissioner Kane and I and Parks should sit with you, but have the data because I really thought that there had been dedicated money—**Commissioner Kane** said there was, $250K and that's not going to buy nothing. If we find some property, Angel's got the folks that will go ahead and supply the equipment for the parks. All we need is ground. **Mayor ProTem Bynum** said that's why I thought maybe a conversation to bring the Administrator—**Commissioner Kane** said we own property west of 435. Now, I don't know what we're doing with it, but I got a really good idea what we should do with it and the community does too. I didn't open up my tax bill, my wife did and she works at a bank, that was a couple exciting minutes in my house for me and then you go outside and the kid next door is going out to Johnson County to play soccer because we don't have a place to practice here. **Mayor ProTem Bynum** said I mean I think it's a solvable issue—**Commissioner Kane** said absolutely—**Mayor ProTem Bynum** said let's ask the Administrator to schedule some time with us and you can show him the parcels that you're talking about. I think it's doable and we know that we have that money dedicated multiple years ago, so anyway—**Commissioner Kane** said maybe we should put another $250K in there just to get the fund up because it's going to take money, but it's frustrating for me. I've asked for this, I don't know 18 years, I don't know, somebody else would have to tell me how long ago it was, but it's been a long time.

Yeah, I moved out there and they weren't out there at the time, but during annexation they were promised improved roads, sidewalks and we are the only—one of the very few that we don't have a sidewalk except a 100 yard long sidewalk on Leavenworth Road from 128th Street to the new school. Our kids can't walk to school and we talk about safe routes. I want to see one person come out there, I want to see where they've looked at a safe route and yeah a lot of those kids ride buses, but we don’t have what we were promised long before I moved out there and I don’t know how much money we spend on keeping the other parks up, but it’s a tremendous amount of money and I’d like to know that. How much money is spent in each district for the parks and I’ll just take half of all of them total. Sorry.

Commissioner Stites said I kind of would like to back that up a little bit. You know we had talked about some of these other parks that—and I don’t remember the number that are sprinkled throughout our city that maybe aren’t really serving the purpose that they originally were intended to. So, maybe there’s an opportunity there for us to eliminate some of those and I don’t want people to go, oh, he’s against parks, but there are some places that I know that parks really aren’t being utilized. Some of that funding could go towards a park that has been asked for that would get used so I think somehow we need to start—Administrator, maybe we can get that number and start looking at some of those and see how they’re used and see if we might be able to look at how—**Mayor ProTem Bynum** said we know the number and the Public Works and Parks Department has the inventory and Christian led that part of the strategic planning and it’s in our report, so we can get to that, sorry to jump in.

Commissioner Davis said with that, Mayor ProTem, I would just add to my colleagues, I have three parks in my district. I do not think they are strategically placed for how our community has grown and that’s really the issue here is that as people have migrated and new subdivisions have been platted, all that stuff, the way our community is designed just doesn’t fit the placemaking needs. I know Commissioner Ramirez, myself and Commissioner Markley, we serve on a subcommittee that has looked at parks, that looked at making some pretty drastic changes. I do want to give our County Administrator time to go through that study, but absolutely we need to do an equity study on that and do some redistribution. I’m completely in favor of that.

Commissioner Townsend said Commissioner Kane has inspired me to speak out. I know this is not for addition necessarily nor is his park in this budget; however, several good points were made about it and, Mr. Administrator, I’m thinking that the last time I heard a presentation from Parks & Rec it’s about this time of year or maybe coming up in September that Ms. Ferrara and her staff will be back to do a summary or a follow-up. I mention that because in Kansas City, Kansas the

Parkwood Pool is the only pool in this area and it is over 60 years old and part of what should come back to us in that summary is the analysis of what condition that pool is in, is that still the right place for it, what it would take to do something more like an aquatic center, which I finally got to visit on one of the coldest days of this year out in Bonner Springs and talk to the staff and see what they did to finance that. So, as we talk about all this, some of the issues that my colleagues have just raised tonight may be answered in that study and should come back to us—**ProTem Bynum** said I'm sorry. I apologize. I thought you were done. **Commissioner Townsend** said I guess I am now, until that comes in, but I don't want to forget what's in the background here, not just Commissioner McKiernan's, not Commissioner McKiernan, not trying to throw you in Kane's ask. I don't want to throw you in. I'm sorry I just was looking that way. I'm looking forward to Parks & Rec coming back to us very soon I think to hear about that, to hear what can be done, what was done and where we go from there with that, but we can't forget that pool.

Commissioner Ramirez said yes, the subcommittee that I chair that's looking at facilities, but also Parks & Recreation in general. By direction of subcommittee and staff Angel did undergo—which she did give a preliminary presentation to us at a Special Session, a presentation about a facility or community center usage just in general. They have that final report. We have not heard it yet. I was out of town when we were originally going to hear it and so I think that's when we needed to reschedule so we haven't had that full report. Quarterly Parks & Rec does come to standing committee and give reports and they are currently undergoing an aquatic study, of Parkwood Pool and just in general of spray parks and just general of our aquatic infrastructure. There is a lot that is happening and, again, with these studies it takes time for us to gather that information and then it comes to us after the study is done and of all the recommendations and everything and, of course, the Administrator and the staff of which of those recommendations, what part of the study is most important to implement at the time.

I agree that there is a lot of information that is going to be coming to us soon regarding Parks & Recreation of how we can change things, how we can make Parks & Recreation better, more efficient where we can touch all of the entire community the best way that we can. Going back to Renee, she was talking about for HR wise considerations, you know, us being more diligent with Parks & Recreation funding and how we allocate those dollars. So having all that information, all those recommendations to us, it's going to help us.

I agree and I think Angel and the majority of the Park staff will agree we have a lot more parks than is necessary for our population and size of community, but again, that's another discussion and more strategic conversation we're going to have to have with not just amongst ourselves, but with the community and making sure that it's fair across the board, all corners of our community has a park in some way, shape or form. More specifically, Commissioner Kane's park should be number one on the list, but there is a lot of information, a lot of recommendations that are going to be coming to us regarding Parks & Recreation. I'm excited. This is something that the community has been wanting. I know my community, my district, this is Parks & Recreation is something that's very important. I only have one community center. Rosedale, you know, they're working amongst themselves as a community and with the Rosedale Development Association to create a Rosedale Community Center, but just amongst themselves, it's not going to be on the back of our Parks & Recreation. It's going to be the community's responsibility to maintain. So, Parks & Recreation is just very important all around and so I'm excited to see what we can do.

This is information that we needed and, hopefully, with this information we can update our Parks Master Plan and go through that process of updating it because it's been some years since we've updated and gone through so I'm looking forward to it and I'm looking forward to work with all the community and staff and rest of the Commission to make Parka & Rec better. We are surrounded by two communities, Johnson County and KCMO with amazing parks facilities and programming. Why can't we have that. We deserve that and—**Someone** was inaudible. **Commissioner Ramirez** said yes, that too. I think our Parks & Recreation staff are doing what they can do with what they have. With that, I'll leave it at that.

Mayor ProTem Bynum said Monday night we have a Budget Public Hearing at 7:00. Before that at 5:00 is Public Works & Safety Standing Committee and the Parks Quarterly Report is on that agenda, so we will have an update Monday night. Get here early and hangout with Public Works & Safety.

Reggie, on this slide, just walk us through Parks & Rec City Transfer $4.9M. Just talk to us about that. What's that mean?

Mr. Lindsey said what happens is the City General Fund transfers $4.9M to the Consolidated Parks Fund and the reason for that is back in 2007 or 2008 there used to be a separate levy for city parks and so we done away with that and it actually went into the City General Fund, so it ends up paying the money out to the Consolidated Parks Fund now in the amount of $4.9M. This year we did increase that amount $470K and that's based on the amount of increase taxes that go into the fund. It used to stay stagnant every year, but to be fair for Parks, Michael Peterson who's in our office, he did an adjustment where each year it'll get an increase, so it'll grow at the same amount that other funds grow.

This is a community—up under Community Programs, but it is under Parks & Recreation and it's property maintenance. It's really not a parks function, but it has to do with City and County funded lot mowing in the amount of $950K. Some of that is on the City side which is about $650K and takes care of weed lots and does 14 rounds of bi-weekly mowing.

On the County side there is $300K that is spent from here and that is to take care of Land Bank lots and also 14 rounds of bi-weekly mowing and then we have another amount for Land Bank lot weed mowing or spraying at $85K.

Next, under our Community Programs category is Transit Services. We're estimating we spend about $7.2M on transit services. Some of this is grant funded. We do have $3M that we pay out to the KCATA for routes that they run for us. There's about four different routes they run for us and they also run them on the weekend. They're about $3M and then there is the Zero Fare Impact to our budget. Zero Fare has been in place since about 2020 and it started around COVID. What happens is we lost $700K of revenue to our budget once we start doing Zero Fair. We would recommend here if we were to make some cuts or so we reinitiate collecting fairs and then also look at if we wanted to cut KCATA's contract.

Under General Government category for the government is Software Licensing Agreements and the only reason this is here is because this is money that we're not obligated where we have to spend. There's no statues related to it, but it would definitely cripple our government if we did not spend the money on our Software Licensing Agreements. It's been about $4.6M across both the City and the County. City, we spend $3M and County, we spend $1.6M. Some of the things that we have there are our new ERP System, Workday, we also have our Microsoft Enterprise Agreement, Land Management System, Enterprise Mapping System, and our Tax Management System and then our Timekeeping Systems and a host of other software license agreements.

Mayor ProTem Bynum left the meeting at 6:30 p.m. and Mayor ProTem Burroughs presided. Mayor ProTem Bynum returned at 6:41 p.m.

Mayor ProTem Burroughs asked, who had their hand up first?

Commissioner Johnson said, Reggie, I don't know, a couple two or three years ago we had a problem with reaching our software and I can't remember exactly what that's for. Maybe some of my colleagues—security breach and we found out that we did not have the proper—was it insurance at that time. Is that now built into our overall budget? Can you tell us whether or not we're—**Mr. Lindsey** said we definitely do have the funding for the cyber security insurance. We are out on the market in the procurement process of getting it. **Commissioner Johnson** said so we still don't have it? **Mr. Lindsey** said no. We are in the process, we're very close. There too we had to qualify ourselves to be able to get it. **Commissioner Johnson** asked, what does that mean, qualify ourselves? **Mr. Lindsey** said I don't know if someone would speak to it. There were certain things we had to do to bring our systems up to par where the insurance companies would even look at us so that we could make it through the underwriting process. **Commissioner Johnson** asked, do we have an ETA on that? **Mr. Lindsey** said I think it'll probably definitely—either by the fourth quarter or first quarter of next year we should have something in place. **Commissioner Johnson** said I don't have to remind anybody here, but maybe even our listening audience said that was a real big problem that we had to endure and I pray that we never have to deal with that. So, we need to get that posted, whatever can be done to get that in place.

Mayor ProTem Burroughs said, Reggie, if I remember correctly, it was the fact that we're out on the open market we may find it a little more expensive and a little more difficult to find an insurer that's willing to insure us if we haven't met the criteria that they set forth because we've already had a breach and the costs associated with that. So, if I remember correctly, that is some of the criteria that we're going to be dealing with also. So, even if we do find one, the cost could be quite high.

Mr. Lindsey said in our Public Safety category some of these discretionary programs that we did put out to consider being Outreach Programs in both Sheriff and Police Departments and so what these would do is cut Cadet Programs in both the Sheriff and Police Department. They both are $90K.

Commissioner Stites said I kind of couldn't hear you, but did you say the potential to cut out? **Mr. Lindsey** said yeah, so we're listing here discretionary spending and the potential to cut.

Mayor ProTem Burroughs said I think this is a proposal that they've brought forward that these aren't mandated by ordinance, statute or resolution and it falls within maybe some of you with needs, but it moreless falls into our wants. That these are programs that we would like to see incorporated to help with some of the issues we've had a discussion with today.

Commissioner Ramirez said these are all—everything that we've so far discussed of all these lists is discretionary. These are the programs and services we possibly could make cuts from. Is that correct? **Mr. Lindsey** said yes that is. **Commissioner Ramirez** said okay, I was reading this completely wrong.

Mr. Lindsey said under organization, this is the Public Works category and what we're looking at here are Street Capital Programs that we feel are discretionary that we're bringing forward as a potential to cut here. We have Street Preservation. We've got $12.6M of street preservation within our budget. We did increase that amount from $10M last year as part of the 25% increase that we need to improve our streets each year and $5.3M of that is within Certified Funds. None of it is in the City General Fund so we could move money out of like Special Street & Highway or Dedicated Sales Tax and backfill the expenses from the City General Fund into those funds if we were to look at offering an additional tax levy relief.

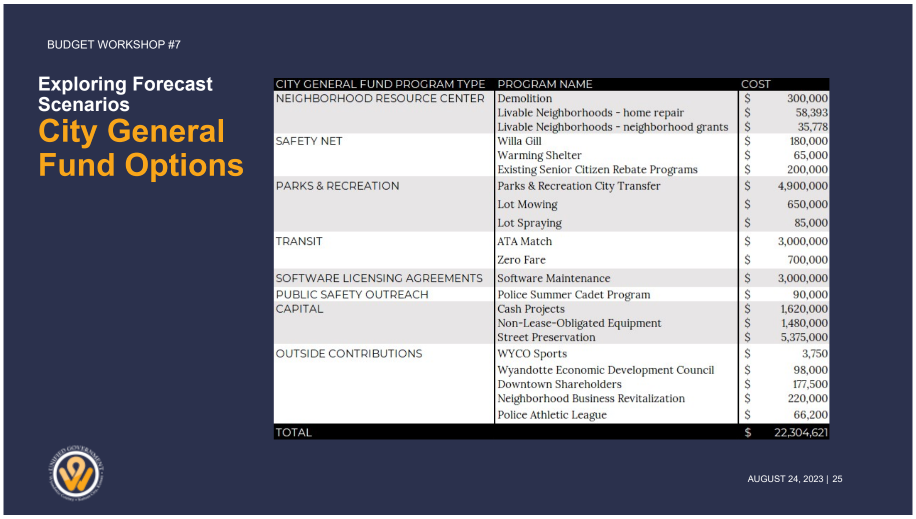
One of the things with the street preservation and moving funding from Special Street & Highway or Dedicated Sales Tax, it is something that we're definitely trying to get away from. One of the things that Administrator Johnson talks about, we shouldn't be paying for some street preservation out of debt and we're doing that now. So, as we start to like backfill expenses back into our Special Sales Tax, that kind of forces us to get debt and stay in the debt revolution that we have been in.

Also, we have listed here and, again, this is all discretionary spending, that we're going to bring it forward is our new Accounting Infrastructure Initiative Fund to go to benefit all the cities—**Mayor ProTem Bynum** said, Reggie, pull your microphone a little closer—**Mr. Lindsey** said all the cities within Wyandotte County so it would include Bonner Springs, Edwardsville and the city of Kansas City, Kansas. What this does is provide $2M of infrastructure that the cities will split across Wyandotte County.

Commissioner Stites asked, would you explain what the intended purpose of that is and I think it goes to help with bullet point number one, right, that's what this would go to address over countywide. **Mr. Lindsey** said it definitely helps the city of Kansas City, Kansas with their street pavement preservation. We did put more funding towards street preservation within the city of Kansas City, Kansas this year and also Bonner Springs and Edwardsville however they choose to spend on infrastructure within their cities, they would have the same ability to do also.

The other category of our budget is our Capital Improvement Program. What we would look at cutting are the things that are discretionary. City General Fund, Capital Projects, so we have Capital Cash Projects which are about $1.6M in the City General Fund and then we have Capital Equipment, it's about $1.4M. Then, we also have County General Fund and we have Capital Projects that are about $1.2M and we have Equipment Allocation that is $900K. The impact there is if we were to eliminate all of these or some of these, we would be definitely doing away with equipment including like buying police cars, buying fire apparatus and also just projects across both the city and the county so we would be greatly reducing what could be done here.

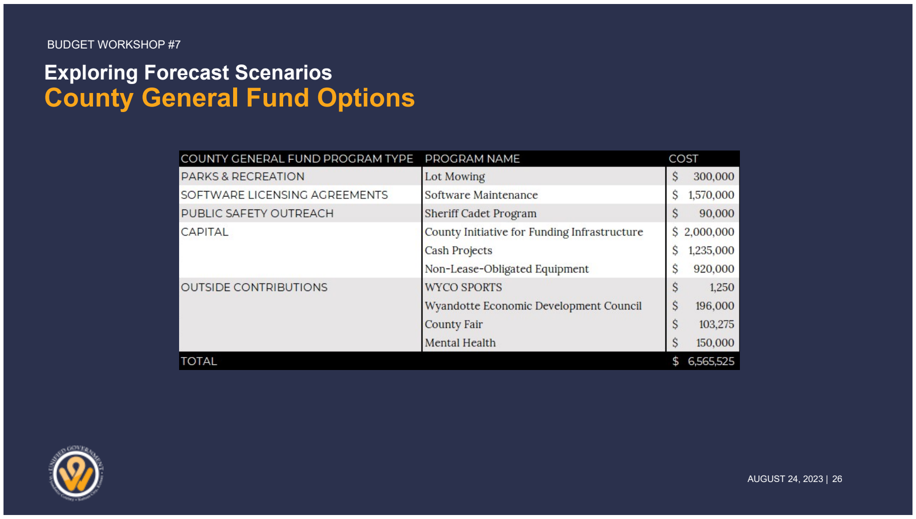
Mayor ProTem Bynum said this slide is—it's CIP. Is it budgeted in cash or debt? **Mr. Lindsey** said we have a combination of this portion what's budgeted within the City General Funds and the County General Fund—**Mayor ProTem Bynum** said all this is budgeted in the City General? **Mr. Lindsey** said yes, but we do have a portion that is debt, but this is only the city and the county.



CITY GENERAL FUND PROGRAM TYPE	PROGRAM NAME	COST
NEIGHBORHOOD RESOURCE CENTER	Demolition	$ 300,000
	Livable Neighborhoods - home repair	$ 58,393
	Livable Neighborhoods - neighborhood grants	$ 35,778
SAFETY NET	Willa Gill	$ 180,000
	Warming Shelter	$ 65,000
	Existing Senior Citizen Rebate Programs	$ 200,000
PARKS & RECREATION	Parks & Recreation City Transfer	$ 4,900,000
	Lot Mowing	$ 650,000
	Lot Spraying	$ 85,000
TRANSIT	ATA Match	$ 3,000,000
	Zero Fare	$ 700,000
SOFTWARE LICENSING AGREEMENTS	Software Maintenance	$ 3,000,000
PUBLIC SAFETY OUTREACH	Police Summer Cadet Program	$ 90,000
CAPITAL	Cash Projects	$ 1,620,000
	Non-Lease-Obligated Equipment	$ 1,480,000
	Street Preservation	$ 5,375,000
OUTSIDE CONTRIBUTIONS	WYCO Sports	$ 3,750
	Wyandotte Economic Development Council	$ 98,000
	Downtown Shareholders	$ 177,500
	Neighborhood Business Revitalization	$ 220,000
	Police Athletic League	$ 66,200
TOTAL		$ 22,304,621

Mr. Lindsey said the current slide is a view of all the options that had discussed that are related to the City General Fund. You can see it kind of list down the left-hand side of the page. We had possible cuts that could come from the Neighborhood Resource Center. Also, category of Safety Net Programs, Parks & Rec, Transit, Software Licensing Agreements, Public Safety Outreach, our Capital Program, and then Outside Contributions that we paid to vendors that provide outside services for us. The total here is $22M.

Commissioner Stites asked, Reggie, could you explain under Software Maintenance. How is that $3M different than if you were to back up maybe two or three slides where we talked about the—where Commissioner Johnson spoke about the Software Licensing Agreement and such where we're talking 4.6 here, is this $3M that's in this bullet point the $3M that is being depicted in this slide that we're talking about now? **Mr. Lindsey** said yeah. (inaudible). The slide we were looking at earlier everything was for the City General Fund and we see on this slide right here the City General Fund is $3M. **Commissioner Stites** said okay, got it.



COUNTY GENERAL FUND PROGRAM TYPE	PROGRAM NAME	COST
PARKS & RECREATION	Lot Mowing	$ 300,000
SOFTWARE LICENSING AGREEMENTS	Software Maintenance	$ 1,570,000
PUBLIC SAFETY OUTREACH	Sheriff Cadet Program	$ 90,000
CAPITAL	County Initiative for Funding Infrastructure	$ 2,000,000
	Cash Projects	$ 1,235,000
	Non-Lease-Obligated Equipment	$ 920,000
OUTSIDE CONTRIBUTIONS	WYCO SPORTS	$ 1,250
	Wyandotte Economic Development Council	$ 196,000
	County Fair	$ 103,275
	Mental Health	$ 150,000
TOTAL		$ 6,565,525

Mr. Lindsey said this slide is similar to the slide we just looked at and it is exclusively for the County General Fund and it' the options that were there. We have Parks & Rec. We also again have Software Licensing Agreements, Public Safety Outreach, also our Capital Improvement Program and then the contributions we make to outside agencies. The total there for the County General Fund is $6.5M.

Commissioner Kane said I don't think the County Fair is an option. I think we have to give them that money, don't we? **Mayor ProTem Bynum** said that was actually going to be one of my questions. Are these outside of the mill levy required funding amounts for Fair and Mental Health? **Debbie Jonscher, Interim CFO,** said for the outside agencies yes. **Mayor ProTem Bynum** said these are in addition to. **Ms. Jonscher** said right and I think we talked about the fair. The $100K is the UG's contribution to the fair. It was, I think, there were additional expenses that we are required to pay to reimburse them for supplies, but the $100K portion was the amount that you could choose to not—you could elect not to give to the County Fair, but you do have to reimburse them for any supplies that they spend in relation to the fair.

Mayor ProTem Bynum said within our Tax Levy Funds we are obligated to spend a portion of a mill, am I right, on disability services, the County Fair, the County Mental Health Center and those, that I just referenced, is separate and different from this. **Ms. Jonscher** said right. These contributions are all within the County General Fund. The Mental Health, the Developmental Disabilities, those are all separate Tax Levy Funds. **Mayor ProTem Bynum** said okay. **Ms. Jonscher** said these expenses are not in those funds. **Mayor Pro Tem Bynum** said oaky. **Commissioner Kane** asked does the fair still get money? **Mayor ProTem Bynum** said yes. Does that answer your question? (Inaudible)

Commissioner Ramirez said well, we asked for a list, they've given a list and again to what we all have been saying, what do you want us to cut. From the list I've been given, the majority of these services and programs are things that people use every single day. We can provide the relief, but again, the other side is going to have to give way. We see the list that we've asked for and it's been given. Now we have to do an exercise to see if we cut anything or if anything happens. We can have relief, but again, which of these things do we need, do you want, are we going to cut, the Warming Center, Parks & Rec, City Transfer, a Cadet Program to get us more Public Safety Police, which we need already more. Capital Projects, Infrastructure, do we want to cut those. Lawn mowing, that's something that we get a lot of constituent complaints is upkeep of not only private property, but our property, Land Bank property, parks, cut that. Sheriff Cadet Program. A list has been given and so now we go through an exercise of if we go through tax relief, what do we get to cut. I know we're here.

It's been stated many times throughout these last budgets the reason why we're here is to make the big decisions. I understand we're here to make those big decisions, but why are we being forced to make those big decisions. That's all I've got to say.

Commissioner Stites said just a real quick question. Reggie, would you just tell me under Capital Cash Projects $1,235,000, what would that be? What would fall under that category? **Mr. Lindsey** said one thing that definitely would be there is a new Sheriff Intake Center and it's about a half million dollars. **Someone** was inaudible. **Mr. Lindsey** said yes.

Mayor ProTem Bynum asked, is it something they would configure within their space? **Mr. Lindsey** said yes. They currently have an intake facility over there now and it needs to be improved. It needs to be greatly improved, that's why it's here.

Commissioner Stites said it sounds like there's numbers to support that. What's the other $700K? I don't know if some of it was earmarked for a park out west. **Mr. Lindsey** said some of it is for— one of the things is for upgraded EOC audio visual system. Also, annual hardscape landscaping that goes on at all our UG buildings. **Commissioner Stites** said all UG buildings? **Mr. Lindsey** said all Unified Government—**Commissioner Stites** said all city buildings or county or just all? **Mr. Lindsey** said there's a portion of it, we have some in the City General Fund and we also have some in the County General Fund and that's for county buildings—a portion that's in here. We also have District Attorney software upgrades that are here, we have outdoor warning systems, we have Everbridge contract, HR database. **Commissioner Stites** said so its all accounted for. I mean it's not just a pot of money that when something pops up we use it. **Mr. Lindsey** said right. **Commissioner Stites** said okay.

Commissioner Kane said the audio is terrible and can't hear and the noise is buzzy. That's from the folks trying to watch. **Mayor ProTem Bynum** said okay, we'll take note of that and see what—maybe we all talk better into our microphones for one thing.

Commissioner Burroughs said, Reggie, I'm looking at the totals. We have $22,304,000 on the previous slide and we have $6M, a little excess, $6.5M on this slide, discretionary spending. Many of us feel it's very necessary. It's things that—as it was stated that these are things that people in the community have grown accustomed to having funded. I don't think anybody has talked about eliminating them and I believe what we have discussed is what can we do to ensure that we put ourselves back on the financial track, still provide services and if we have to tighten our belt a little bit, where can we do it. When you talk about a 5% cut across the board, which is one of the most onerous ways to do things; however, it is a starting point that if you look at the 26-28M, I think we're roughly talking about $1.5M in savings with a 5% cut. You take 5% off of $2M for the County Initiative Fund, that's not a whole lot of money out of a fund that large, but when you start taking 5% out of the WYCO Sports, that might affect some equipment for a ball team or something along those lines. I might just encourage my colleagues as we start working through this, I don't—it's never been the intent, I don't believe of anyone here, to eliminate a program, flat out eliminate it unless it's not serving a purpose and that money can go for a more common good.

I would just state that these funds are funds that have grown over the years or they have been stagnant for a period of time and they're still providing services. It may be time for us to look at that and see what we all would refer to as a return on investment. We have to find some savings somewhere. If we don't want to eliminate a complete program, then by all means let's look at what we can do about maybe cutting back the funding for a year or two, keep the program out there and ask those organizations to find sponsors or to our neighborhood groups to come forward with some additional volunteer activities. There's ways we can get through this budget and share the pain and not cause deep cuts.

Commissioner Kane said I thought the purpose this year was to figure out a way for us to get through this year's budget with the least amount of disruption all across the board and then the Administrator, the day after we agree to do this, then he come back and starts figuring out where we can do these things right out of the gate. Am I wrong in that Mr. Administrator? **Mr. Johnston** said I think you so eloquently succinctly, and that was rare, stated it correctly. I think one of the things when we started this, I said my goal when we started this whole process about seven weeks ago is we were facing a $10.7M debt—or deficit in the City General Fund and then the alarming what would happen in 2026. So the goal was to eliminate that $10.7M with the idea that buys us time and as you saw in those presentations that Reggie and Michael put together, it did and it pushed it out to 2028 if not further, which then buys us time to really do the deep dives that we talked about.

I think what you asked for here, and you got presented, are General Fund non-essential government services. These are things that you've heard you and previous commissioners have heard that the public wanted, wanted to meet a public need, but you're not required to provide it, but you did it because you were trying to address the community. What you're saying, it's $22M, it's a lot of money and I think as we work into the next year, two years, there's got to be some tough discussions while at the same time staff and I look at how we provide our services already. I mean I get complaints that it takes forever to get a permit, why is that? We have lack of communication to our public, so improve customer service, maybe an attitude towards servant to leadership where we remind ourselves that we're here to provide services to our citizens, not serve my own agenda and so that's a reorientation of focus and at the same time look at efficiencies. Bring recommendations for your consideration and discussion about are some of the things we're doing actually needed today or as we look to our continued budget, is it time to maybe put those on a shelf until we get back on better footing.

There's a lot of dynamics that I see us going through as a team from Commission, Administrator's Office and staff. We have to realize we have a structural imbalanced budget even after we dealt with that $10.7M deficit. You know, the best budget is to have more revenues than expenses and we're dropping $3M out of reserve, $6M, still you know eventually there's a day that you can't continue to do that. At the same time Commissioner Ramirez and a few of you said we need to be able to attract investment that will provide more revenue into our Unified Government coffers, but if we aren't providing good services to our citizens and our businesses, they talk to their family members and their business fraternity members and that will possibly influence future investment decisions. We don't want that.

I think I presented a budget that met what I told you was the goal is to reduce the immediate budget that created the alarms in 2026 and bought us time to do the work necessary that we do. This exercise showed you how much those discretionary things cost and I don't think you ever had a list like this and so now you have it.

You also had a presentation on how much we rely on debt to do our jobs and where you have today 44% of your General Fund revenue from property taxes pay for debt. Don't forget that debt adds mills to our taxpayers and I think what we've done over time is rely on debt to do what we feel we need to do for our community, but it's time—I said this once before publicly, it's interesting that I'm the schmuck sitting in the chair that has to deliver these types of messages. I just had a couple staff members today say, hey Dave, we knew this day was coming. Now you're the schmuck on the chair that has to deal with it and I don't have a problem with that. It's just that we can't ignore it anymore.

If we want to remain a viable community and a better community in the future, we have to accept where we're at, make tough choices over the next couple of years to get us back on a better trajectory they want to where we don't have to be criticized by our public saying you're not doing anything to provide me relief, my mother relief, or being asked to provide more funds to meet the growing social demands in our community. Sometimes we have to have a hard stop, take a hard look at where we're at and then take the time to make adjustments to address things in the future. I think we're there. We don't have—we can't be Congress and kick the can down the road. We can't be Congress and print money we don't have.

We're required to have a budget balanced by our state laws and you have that in my recommendations. If you want to modify it, as I told you, I'll give you recommendations to cut, here's a start and there you go.

Mayor ProTem Bynum said I think you've laid it out for us.

Commissioner Kane said I don't think I would call you a schmuck in public. Maybe I would. **Mr. Johnston** said you've used other words, but we won't go there. **Commissioner Kane** said the bottom line is, what you're recommending is what I think we're talking about and that we should move forward for this year so you can put us back on track for next year, correct? **Mr. Johnston** said yes, and that's a strong message to my staff that there will be changes. **Commissioner Kane** said I think we're where we should be. I think everyone realizes that we're in tough spot and that we need to do what you said and then if you come back next year that we're going to hold you accountable—well, the community is going to hold us accountable, so we're going to hold you accountable. So I would think we would move forward with what he's presented and tell the folks this is the best we could do and the goal is to correct it next year because if we don't, we are going to be broke in a couple years. I mean if anybody thinks I'm crazy, tell me.

Mayor ProTem Bynum said a couple of things, comments and questions I guess kind of interspersed. The list of City options and County options, to me assume other things are just off the table. I guess we talked about that. I sure don't remember it. I will say to the Administrator's point and to Commissioner Kane as well, we've been through some really hard times here and Commissioner Kane was here for those and he knows what those difficult decisions looked like and they included furloughs and getting us through the economic downturn of '08 and '09 and we lived through that as residents. We know what it was like and a lot of the employees here lived through that and you had to help us come to those difficult decisions of what we're going to do as a government to survive that. Saying that, I say it because it gives me hope. We've been there and we can come through times like that again.

I am going to be very bold and put my two mills on the table because I would like to look for two mills on the City side. I want the $750K PILOT Relief Program, it's paid for, so to me that's a wash and given what I just said, on the City side on the list of stuff that's optional, $18.4M of it to me is not optional. Again, $3M for Public Transit, not optional in my opinion. I don't understand the $3M Software Maintenance. I don't understand how that's optional, but somebody might be able to help me understand how Software Maintenance is optional and 5.37 for Street Maintenance to me is not optional. I guess I understand it in the sense of it's not mandatory, but to me it's certainly not optional. That's the number one thing people ask for. Talk about responding to what the community asks for, what they ask for in the number one spot year over year is street maintenance, so that doesn't feel very optional. I'll stop, but here's what I just said. Two mills on the County side that I'm willing to work with you all to find—City side, City side, that I'm willing to stay here and find and I just told you the stuff that doesn't sound very optional to me.

Commissioner Davis said I guess in even not having the Mayor here really doesn't give us kind of a full opinion or the guidance forward for this Commission, so I do worry about the effectiveness of what we're about to do and whether or not it holds any weight. I am absolutely for BPU PILOT Relief. When it comes to cutting the mills, I would love to see what one mill will look like on the City side and then, of course, we do have two right in front of us. I do think though, colleagues, that we might be cutting it a little close given the time of which we're doing this activity and the fact that for a lot of these programs that we are looking to cut, we do not have representatives that can give us the context before us and say, hey, this is what this particular program is and this is why it would be valuable. We don't have Greg Kindle here from WYEDC, we don't have folks from the County Fair here to say, hey, wait a minute, this is why.

The other thing is it's not an all or nothing deal. We could look at reduced funding, not necessarily no funding, but I just worry about on paper identifying and just saying we're not, you know, we shouldn't fund this or we need to reduce it without getting the full context from the people that actually run the program.

Commissioner Markley said well, Mayor ProTem, I don't want to crush your hope because I do think there's lots of hope, but I do think it bears pointing out that coming out of that recession, some of the public work problems we face today were created by the decisions we made during that time to make things stretch and that we then spent years paying back our own funds that we borrowed from in order to make things stretch. So, I do think there's hope, but I would say—I would caution that some of the decisions we made to make things work during that time are probably not decisions we would want to repeat because they exacerbated the issues that we're now facing in terms of our street issues and park issues.

Commissioner Ramirez said I think I could possibly support the BPU PILOT Relief because seeing the scenario it still pushes us back to 2028 to possible we need to take action. We still have time for us as the Commission—sorry, I was covering my microphone. It gives us time as a Commission and the Administrator and staff to sit down, have those tough discussions about what needs to change, so I could support the BPU PILOT providing that because it still works within our budget. It still pushes back our doomsday, financial doomsday.

Two mill, I not so much—I'm very, very hesitant on the two mill reduction because we've seen with the two mill reduction what it looks like and it kind of speeds up the financial doomsday. So, then that doesn't give us and our Administrator and staff enough time to have those tough discussions and make those tough decisions. I am a person that I don't like to be rushed in my decisions. I want to take time, contemplate, talk, have discussions with the community.

So, yes, I could do the BPU PILOT Relief, but possibly no to the two mill reduction at this time and in general I'm in support of the Administrator's budget. He worked hard to get it where it was, he worked very hard with staff to make some tough decisions on his own and staff to make their tough decisions on their own as well in reducing expenditures as best as they could. Yeah, we have to have the tough discussion, but not late at this time in the budget season. We need to start as soon as we pass this budget. The next day we need to start the planning process for the next one so that we have more time to have those discussions.

In my opinion, I ask—I know I see Ashley over there, she's ready, she's raring to go, she's ready to go for this, but is this exercise necessary for tonight? **Mayor ProTem Bynum** said okay, hang on though. We have Commissioners Stites, Kane, Johnson and then Ashley.

Commissioner Ramirez said that's my last thing and only question, is this exercise necessary? **Mayor ProTem Bynum** said I understand.

Mayor ProTem Bynum said I would like to hear the commissioners and at least understand what the exercise would do for us.

Commissioner Stites said, Mayor ProTem, I agree with you in the aspect of year after year that our constituents out there have overwhelmingly said that street maintenance is on the top of their list, but I would have to think that was prior to the last two years when their valuations went through the roof. Now, I think that if you were to ask that same question, they would say tax relief is probably at the top of their list, not street maintenance.

Commissioner Johnson said I agree with the BPU PILOT Relief. I think I was one—so I guess to the Administrator, I recant my recant. Can that be done? The $750K if it can be worked into the budget, I'm for that. If in fact we have to have a discussion about—and let me just go back, that's an inclusive of also the rebates that you were talking about as well, yes, so all that's done. If in fact we were talking about any level of mill reduction, which I am not in favor of, none, but if in fact we were looking at that, then I will be more inclined and also to lean towards what Commissioner Burroughs said and let's look at doing a 5% or whatever reduction across the board. I don't think you can have both. I mean you have to—if you're going to cut your mill levy, that's money coming in and that means they're trying to cut somewhere. I don't want to do either one of them quite frankly. I'm not in favor of any mill reduction. I agree with the PILOT Relief and I agree with the rebates. That's where I am on this.

Commissioner Kane said one, I don't want to play this game anymore. I played it too much. I don't like it, never have liked it. I was here when we froze wages, we laid people off, we lowered the mill, raised the mill and I think what the Administrator has presented—I can buy into the $750K, but what he has presented to us is going to make all of us a knot in our throat for a year. If we don't do something now, all hell is going to break loose in a couple of years and I think we can explain it to our constituents and say we did the best we could and the fact the Administrator already knows that right after we go into this he's got to go in there and look at what Commissioner Burroughs was talking about, about some of these deep dives and stuff like that. I just don't want to layoff any employees. I want to make sure that we maintain what we have, but we have to come up with a budget in short order and the more modifications we try to make at this late date, we won't—well, we have a timeframe, right? We all know that we would have liked to have this before he hired in and we didn't. I guess I'm saying let's live with what we got and move on.

Commissioner McKiernan said last year I said that I would vote for the Interim County Administrator's budget if we promised the day after the budget to start working on this year's and we did not do that collectively because we didn't have the leadership that we have now. I am

100% confident that we, collectively, will start looking at next year the day after this is done. In the meantime, what I would suggest that we as a Unified Government can do is improve our delivery of services within the structure that we have so far so that we deliver excellent city and county services and so that the people see the results of what they are contributing to this city. That we get excellent at street maintenance, that we get excellent at park maintenance, that we get excellent at people who come in for driver's license renewal, whatever it is, we get excellent at it and people say, you know what, well I'd really not prefer to say this, but you know what, I'm getting good service while we are on the one-year path to making substantive changes in how we do business. I am confident we can do that within the year.

Commissioner Burroughs said I don't believe anyone has called for employees to be laid off and I do respect that position because it's never been, I don't believe, anyone's commitment here to lay off employees and impact the budget that way. We should provide efficiency, we should provide professional services, we should provide a listening ear to the constituents no matter what the issue may be and I believe overall, we as a Commission, do that. I said the 5% because that's the easiest way to do something, but we can't keep digging at our reserves and continue to think that we're righting the ship because we're not and all we're doing is playing a shell game with finances.

We have interest rates that are climbing, so we might want to look at our investment policies to increase our revenue. From that we might look at some of our contractual services to see if we need them all and go back and maybe renegotiate. There's things that we can do within the budget and I'm not hesitant to do a deep dive and I really think that's an opportunity for us to collectively learn more about the budgeting process.

I agree with Commissioner McKiernan, the Budget Director, the Administrator, both collectively worked to present this to us this evening. Had we not seen the total cost of these additional services that we have put on the back of the taxpayer to provide them the services they requested, we wouldn't know what that cost is and so are we getting a return on the investment that we are giving them and if not, can we enhance it even better or can we eliminate a program that is not being utilized by anyone that was set up 10 or 12 years ago. That's the opportunity to go back through the budget.

I get a little passionate about the fiscal position our community is in because if we come upon another hardship, our federal dollars are gone and then the tough decisions will be made for us. With the economy and the uncertain position it's in, I'm real concerned about watching our reserves diminish. I'd like to see 30% reserves if we could providing we're providing the right services, but we don't know that yet to the extent that I believe that we should, and this is just my opinion, the $750K for the PILOT—I know you all have put a lot of work into it, I'm one that believes that if we're going to reduce PILOT for someone, we ought to reduce it for everyone. Everyone should have an opportunity to have a reduced PILOT and I don't know how that fits into other people's opinion, but I just hate picking winners and losers when it comes to fees and something that everybody is paying and we're only going to give it to a certain population.

Other than that, the mills, I'm pleased to hear us talking about lowering the mills. I'm really pleased to hear the budget discussions that we've had in the last handful of weeks and I can't thank the Administrator enough because he's put confidence in us that we can resolve this issue and I don't believe that was something that was here two years ago, so thank you Mr. Administrator for giving us the confidence—or at least giving this commissioner the confidence to go back and know that we're going to right this ship in the future as we move forward.

Mayor ProTem Bynum said it's 7:30. How are we feeling, good. I was going to check in on whether we needed 10 minutes because I don't want to break the momentum of the evening, but just checking if we needed 10 minutes. I might need it. I did take a phone call about a family member and I'm hanging in as best I can because what we're doing is important, so part of the reason I suggested 10 minutes was kind of selfish, so we'll recess for 10 minutes. Thank you. I did have kind of some more things I wanted to put on the table and I don't want to interrupt what we're doing, but if I could have a couple minutes, that might be good.

Recessed at 7:29 p.m. for 10 minutes.

Commissioner Kane said what I'd like to do is take a straw poll to accept David's budget and see where we're at, so I guess those in favor of that could raise their hand. If you want to amend it with the PILOT, that's fine with me.

Mayor ProTem Bynum said I appreciate that, can we keep talking. **Commissioner Kane** said well, you've got about 15 more minutes.

Mayor ProTem Bynum said I was talking with Commissioners Burroughs and McKiernan right when we were coming back and I wanted Commissioner Burroughs, if you don't mind, to layout—when we mentioned the 5%, maybe a scenario where we could look at that.

Commissioner Burroughs said, colleagues, if that confused you, my apologies to you because that's not what the intent was. The $22M figure and the $6M figure that was presented here, those are discretionary fundings that we have an opportunity to address should we choose to do so, but just a 5% cut of those would generate a mill, either on the County or a set—it's 1.4M that we wouldn't have to take out of reserves, if we chose to do that. That was just an example. That is not what I'm requesting or mandating that we do. There's other ways in which to right size this budget across the board. We can eliminate programs, we can streamline them, we can do things that the community sees that we are really trying and then when a tax increase occurs through a valuation and appraisal, they know that we have looked deep into the budget and made some tough decisions. It wasn't to cut 5% off the entire $466M budget and lose personnel. The personnel is the easiest way out and we don't want the easy way out, we want to do our homework to ensure it doesn't impact personnel. So, if there was confusion on my part, I'll own that, but my comments have always been budget oriented, efficiencies and effectiveness and how we go about the budget, not the easy way out by eliminating personnel.

Mayor ProTem Bynum said, Ashley, I know you're here and you wanted to help us with something. I think we've heard sort of a consensus that we don't really want to do a group exercise, but I'm going to—I remain an advocate for some mill levy cut of some form and yes, I want the PILOT Relief Program. It seems to me like we had a presentation a long while back that one percent, PILOT reduction was a million dollars and we've got $750K.

Mr. Lindsey said so how we came up with that $750K, that was an increase from the rate—**Mayor ProTem Bynum** said correct. I'm sorry, I don't want to misspeak. The $750K from the increased PILOT collections would pay for the targeted PILOT Relief Program and I'm good with that, but if my fellow commissioners would rather see a small reduction in the PILOT across the board rather than the targeted PILOT Program that my committee brought forward, it's more money than $750K is what I'm driving at, like a one percent reduction in the PILOT for everybody is more costly than $750K. You all had brought us that information months ago that it was at least a million dollars. **Ms. Jonscher** said I believe it was three—one percent of the PILOT was $3M.

Commissioner Bynum said I'm going to maintain my support for the targeted PILOT Relief. I wrote down I know that Davis, Bynum, Ramirez and Johnson all said they support that. I'm still looking for at least a mill. I saw the straw poll answer. **Someone** was inaudible. **Mayor ProTem Bynum** said correct, okay, so you're in there too. **Someone** was inaudible. **Mayor ProTem Bynum** said okay, well good, so we can have our targeted PILOT Relief. I think I even heard you say you'd live with it. Take the temperature in the room, where are we? Anybody willing to keep working on a mill?

Commissioner Stites said so the people that have contacted me and I've had outside meetings with and it kind of goes to what exactly Commissioner Burroughs was saying that we all need to feel the hurt a little bit and I think that 5% and I'm totally 100% on board with you. I didn't understand initially that you were not saying that it would affect the pay of our employees because I'm not for taking any money out of our employee pocketbooks at all, not at all. I do understand and if we could go back to the slide where it's the $6M and the $22M and I think Commissioner McKiernan is working on it right now. On the City if we were to take 5% off of this number right here, it's $1.1M, just 5%, and that affects no personnel at all.

I'm thinking on the County side, if we did the 5% on the County side, that's $1.2M. Okay, stand by. **Someone** was inaudible. **Commissioner Stites** said I'm getting false information. So, 328. **Someone** said the zeros are really hard—**Commissioner Stites** said I just wanted to put that out there as those are the numbers we're looking at, $338K—328 and then 1.1 on the City side and that would not touch—that's the 5% as we start looking at how we're drilling down into the budget for next year.

Commissioner Ramirez said yes, it's a 5% reduction, but then that's a reduction in services and part of that is mowing. Again, I repeat, that is mowing. That's something we all get constant complaints about. Land Bank properties, our parks, our right-of-ways not being maintained. That is a constant complaint we all get. I can tell you, I've gotten three just this week from constituents, so we can't even keep up with the current inventory we have and that also includes Parks & Recreation. They're doing more than they need to, more than they should. I, at the moment, cannot support any mill reduction at the moment and if that hurts me come election time, so be it. I will stand by my decision and I will speak my decision and why I chose to do it because I understand we need relief, but I think what we need to work on along with having these tough decisions is what specifically Commissioner McKiernan said, we need to have better delivery of those services. We need to have staff work to make sure that we're being efficient and we're being prompt in providing those services, so that yes, you may be paying a little bit more, but it shows that you're getting those services.

This is a tough decision, it's a tough discussion. I was telling a constituent the other day if you look at a picture of me when I first came here and look at me now, completely different. I want to provide relief, I do and I don't want it to be my words twisted elsewhere and taken out of context out in the community. I want to provide relief, but we are not in the position to do so. If we had more revenue than expenditures, and we were a lot better, I would 100% support revenue neutral. I would because we have more money coming in than we're spending, but as of right now, if we don't accept the budget that our Administrator has given us, in two years, we don't know what's going to happen. I don't want us to play poker with taxpayer money. We do not want to play poker with taxpayer money. I don't want us to do this and vet that we're going to be better off in a year and then that year comes, as has happened in the past, we cut mills, cut too deep and we had to raise taxes. I don't want that to happen again, so I understand. Again, I don't want my words twisted out in the community. I do want relief, it needs to happen, but we're not in the position to do it. Can we make those tough decisions, yeah, we can, but as Commissioner McKiernan said, that discussion should have happened last year, at the end of our budget last year, but again, we didn't have the leadership to do so.

I hear you, I do hear the community. Your concerns, your pleas are not falling on deaf ears because Lord knows, I get it from my family as well, the complaints. My family, every family—I can guarantee you there's a family gathering, somebody is going to bring up property taxes to me, so I know. I hear it all the time, I hear it, but we're not in the position to. After a couple years after we work with David and do make those tough decisions, maybe we can, but let him do his job first. Let him do the job we hired him to do, we approved, we consented him to do. He has the experience with budgets like this, let him do his job.

Commissioner Townsend said I agree with accepting the Administrator's budget. I think he did a great job. The removal of the red ink with the balancing of everything last year. I did not vote to accept the major part because of all that red ink and where we would spend it, so to see this is a major step forward. I would go along with the $750K, but I would leave it at that point. On the way here tonight I drove by several lots that were weeds 6 ft. or more, so even if we're talking about a 5% reduction, and then we hear about areas, and I hate this word because that's not it, disinvestment. It's decisions such as this that eat away at our ability to provide those services, to cut those lawns, to take care of vacant property which we really shouldn't have to do, but that's a fact of life. When we're looking at the City, where would we cut. You know 5% would be a lot. Livable Neighborhood Home Repair, you're only looking at $58K there. Livable Neighborhood grants, the Willa Gill Center, we just heard for three hours last Thursday about the Willa Gill and associated problems, issues, needs, concerns with that.

Parks & Rec, lot mowing, street preservation, that still has to be number one with the bullet, although I wouldn't contradict what you said earlier, Commissioner Stites, about tax relief, but as we have all of these meetings about these things, these are some of the things that we can least afford to cut this late at night in a budget that to me looks pretty balanced all things considered.

Same thing on the County side, the lot mowing. Do we want to cut Cadet Programs, WYCC Sports; some of those may be more amenable to cutting with not the same impact on what it would look like to drive around in this city, in this county from week to week. So, that's why I would not support just across the board diminution of services for these reasons. The big money left the barn several years ago with contractual obligations. Now, if we're going to start talking about cutting those, our problem solved, but I don't know that we can do that now, so I'm in favor of moving forward with the Administrator's budget with the amendment of $750K and that's all I have to say on the matter.

Commissioner Davis said I will say this and this isn't popular, but I just think if you watched the presidential debate last night, you saw a lot of wild, absolutely very interesting things. I think for voters they want to hear maybe what sounds good, but not necessarily the truth and we have the privilege of being the local government where we can be a little more honest because we are not working all the way in Washington DC. We're working 15 or 5 minutes away or 20 or 30 minutes away at City Hall and we see these folks—we see our constituents everywhere. We don't necessarily hide from them. I say that because everybody wants to go back, I want to go back to my district and say I cut property taxes. I had the benefit of doing that this year because if you all recall, we did reduce the mill by two last year. How many people thanked us for it, noticed it, gave us credit for it at all. Yes, it's nice to say it, but what is the real benefit when we're only 46% of the property tax bill and we cannot control what the other 54% does. I'm glad that Dr. Mosier came and said we're going to lower the mill for the college. Quite frankly, that win is ours more than it is theirs because we pressured them to do so. That's our mill reduction, but it's just not—I'm not in favor of cutting any of this because I have a list of probably 50 constituents that are complaining, and rightfully so, about home repair issues, about flooding, about traffic calming issues, about potholes and what have you.

A 5% reduction would be absolutely catastrophic to some of these—to all of these programs. I agree with Commissioner Townsend, we just heard from Willa Gill, how do we advocate for them to stay with the college and then turnaround and say you're going to get less funding. I think we have to swallow the hard pill.

The other thing I'll say is this, you all are probably getting emails from our colleagues across the state in regards to the LEVTR, in regards to the Special Highway Fund and other funds that the state by law should be giving us for this specific purpose of lowing property taxes and that has not happened. Our efforts should be there working with our state delegation putting those items at the top of our legislative agenda so that they help us. They can help us by funding LEVTR, they can help us by funding the Special Highway Tax. They can also help us by capping the valuations, which is how we got here to begin with. We can do the mill game all we want, but at the end of the day if we can cap valuations specifically for our seniors, if we can do that, we can make the difference that we want to, but I fear that we are just putting our efforts in futile endeavors just to say that we've done something when we know that no one is going to give us credit for it, no one.

Then, we're going to have to deal with the monetary implications of our actions by more red on our budget sheet. I would love to cut property taxes, I would love to, I just don't see it happening and to make it very clear, if we were to cut 5%, that still doesn't add up to the mill on the City side or the County side so we get reduced services and programs that help our constituents and we don't even get to say we cut a mill, it's just not worth it. I'm a no.

Commissioner Burroughs said, again, I thought I made it clear but evidently I didn't. I'm not asking that we do a 5% cut. It was an example of how we get through things and this conversation has taken a whole different approach. There was a straw poll in reference to accepting the budget of the Administrator. If the votes are there, run it. We all have the opportunity to vote up or down on it. There are things in every budget some of us are going to find complications with, that we don't support, that we don't like. We have heard over and over tonight—many of you that we're ready to go. I brought up the 5% as an example, only as an example, not to attack it tonight, not to do anything. It was just on that one little budget portion and it turned into a 45 minute discussion, but that's okay because we know where we are as far as accepting the budget from the Administrator. If there's the votes to do it, then I think we've found our budget solution. That's all I've got to say. We've all have an up or down vote, that's it.

Mayor ProTem Bynum said, Commissioner Burroughs, I appreciate the discussion. I mean I think that's a good, healthy discussion to have.

Commissioner Stites said I appreciate it and I agree, let's move her on down the road, but I will tell you when it comes to mill levy reduction, I'm not looking for a pat on the back and I'm not looking for somebody in my constituents to say, hey, good job you lowered our mill. I'm looking at those people to see it when they go and pay their taxes and when they decide whether they can go buy groceries or buy medication or buy gas to drive to the store. I'm not looking for a personal accolade. I got voted in to be responsible with their dollars and that's all I'm trying to do.

Mayor ProTem Bynum said just a quick comment. We definitely need assistance from our delegation and others in Topeka because you are so correct, local ad valorem tax is huge and we have got to really have to hone in on that item sooner rather than later with our local delegation and any other elected in Topeka that will listen to us. There are things that state law precludes us from doing that would be helpful to our constituents right now. You all probably got the emails that I got asking us to do things like these people can't afford to pay their taxes, so please take them out of the tax sale. The state law will not allow us to do that. I'm not suggesting that necessarily be a state law that's changed, but some creativity around those kind of issues would be nice, but we don't have that flexibility. We must follow the state statute as it relates to how these properties are appraised and how those taxes are collected. That's just a fact. So, would it be nice to have some more flexibility around those issues, it most certainly would and our time could be very well spent asking for help from the state legislator to give us that kind of flexibility within a community like this where we do know that folks are hurting.

Commissioner Kane said I think we've beat this horse to death. I think we've given the Administrator direction, so motion to adjourn.

Commissioner Kane made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Johnson, to adjourn. Roll call was taken and there were ten "Ayes," Markley, Stites, Davis, Bynum, Burroughs, Townsend, McKiernan, Ramirez, Johnson, Kane.

MAYOR PROTEM BYNUM ADJOURNED
THE MEETING AT 8:05 p.m.

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Brett Deichler
Unified Government Clerk

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