

STATE OF KANSAS)
WYANDOTTE COUNTY)) SS
CITY OF KANSAS CITY, KS)

SPECIAL SESSION, THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2022

The Unified Government Commission of Wyandotte County/Kansas City, Kansas, met in Special Session, Thursday, November 17, 2022, with ten members present: Bynum, Commissioner At-Large First District; Burroughs, Commissioner At-Large Second District; McKiernan, Commissioner Second District; Ramirez, Commissioner Third District; Johnson, Commissioner Fourth District (arrived at 5:26 p.m.); Kane, Commissioner Fifth District; Markley, Commissioner Sixth District; Stites, Commissioner Seventh District; Davis, Commissioner Eighth District (arrived at 5:55 p.m.); and Garner, Mayor/CEO, presiding. Townsend, Commissioner First District; was absent. The following officials were also in attendance: Alan Howze, Acting County Administrator; Becky Berger, Interim Assistant County Administrator; Misty Brown, Chief Legal Counsel; Jeff Conway, Assistant Counsel; Brett Deichler, Unified Government Clerk; Monica Sparks, Deputy Unified Government Clerk; Jeff Fisher, Executive Director of Public Works; Gunnar Hand, Director of Planning & Urban Design; Wesley McKain, Manager in Health Department; Stephanie Bell, Economic Development Management Analyst; and LaVert Murray, Economic Development Advisor in Mayor's Office.

Legislative Delegates present: Representative Pam Curtis, Representative Lynn Melton, Senator Pat Pettey (left at 6:00 p.m.); Representative Mike Thompson, Representative Valdenia Winn, Representative Melissa Oropeza, and Senator David Haley (arrived at 5:59 p.m.).

Mayor Garner said before I call this meeting to order, I want to announce that we have individuals attending remotely as well as on-site. All participants joining by phone should mute their phones when not speaking to avoid background noise. During the meeting, please make sure that you announce yourself by name and title every time you speak so the public that is participating knows who is speaking. This is critical given the number of remote participants and is current guidance from the Kansas Attorney General.

MAYOR GARNER called the meeting to order.

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

NOTICE OF SPECIAL SESSION of the Unified Government of Wyandotte County/Kansas City, Kansas, to be conducted in a hybrid format on Thursday, November 17, 2022, at 5:00 p.m. in the fifth floor conference room of the Municipal Office Building for a joint session with Legislative Delegates and the Commission.

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 tonight we have a joint session with our Legislative Delegation to include some new members and congratulations to them. This is about the upcoming session and items of utmost importance to the Unified Government and everybody in Wyandotte County.

I would like to welcome all the members of the Wyandotte County State Delegation who have joined us this evening. We know that there's more coming along that will be joining us shortly. We're very pleased to have you and that you've taken the time to meet with our Commission and we are looking forward to sustaining this relationship moving forward as we move into the legislative session in 2023. As we all know what happens in Topeka can have a big impact on Wyandotte County and in the discussion tonight we'll value your input from the Legislative Delegation, what needs to be included, what we need to modify, and perhaps what battles need to be left for another day.

We're joined today by Paul Davis, who many of you know. Paul is our lobbyist in Topeka and is a strong advocate for both the interests of the Unified Government and anybody that calls Wyandotte County home. We hope you will utilize his expertise and his experience and insight as we move forward in this coming session. Before I turn it over to our Assistant County Administrator Alan Howze, who's going to walk you through the draft agenda, I would like to ask each member of the delegation to introduce themselves and the districts they represent. We have a lot of new faces in Wyandotte County as far as the delegation is concerned and I think it would be great if we start this off by just making ourselves acquainted.

Representative Pam Curtis said I represent the 32nd District which is downtown Kansas City, Kansas and the surrounding neighborhoods. It grew a little bit. It almost mirrors Commissioner McKiernan's district. It really did before redistricting, so I lost the Armourdale portion of my district and I gained from 18th Street to 635. Now my boundaries are State Avenue, the river, I-70 and 635. It's a pleasure to be here tonight.

Representative Lynn Melton said I'm newly elected replacing Kathy Wolfe Moore for District 36. My district runs south of Hollingworth, north of Parallel, a little bitty piece of 55th to 72nd Street and then 72nd Street to 7 Highway. So at this point I'm just drinking it all in.

Representative Valdenia Winn said 34th District, runs from 5th essentially 75th, State to Georgia and I'm very interested in listening to the priorities and seeing how we can help.

Representative Mike Thompson said I'm newly elected District 33. It includes Turner, Muncie, Morris, Edwardsville, and Bonner Springs.

Senator Pat Pettey said I represent the 6th District and the district goes from 7th Street all the way out to 110th. Actually, if you get over to Parallel and then—so, it's changed just very little and a lot—all of this outside and I could go through the communities; Argentine, Rosedale, Armourdale, Turner, I live in Turner, Muncie, a portion of Edwardsville. In town, all around Ward High School. As I say, it's a lot of Wyandotte County and a small portion of Johnson County. You know we have—Senator Pittman has another portion. It's a small portion of Wyandotte County in his district and then Senator Haley has the rest of Wyandotte County. We're happy to be representing us. **Mayor Garner** said, Senator, you were commissioner as well at one point, right? **Senator Pettey** said yes, I was a Commissioner, District 6, as well.

Representative Curtis said we do still have another member of our caucus, Representative Tom Burroughs, until his replacement is sworn in.

Mayor Garner said thank you and I was just getting ready to get to that because we would all be remise if we didn't recognize Representative Tom Burroughs. He did not run again this year. He

decided, obviously, not to seek that re-election opportunity, but he continues to serve Wyandotte County as a Unified Government Commissioner in the At-Large Second District. I believe he still remains the dean of the Wyandotte County delegation for a few more weeks. I think that's—if I'm accurate.

Representative Tom Burroughs said I believe that honor belongs to Senator Haley, but a fourth most senior member in the entire legislature and that comes with opportunities for our community when that seniority is gained. So, to my senior members that are moving up in seniority, remember home. That's what got you where you are and that's where you'll come when it's over, but it's been my honor and privilege to serve not only the community, but to serve with my colleagues and I wish Mr. Thompson the very best in your endeavors and you know Wyandotte County is our home and that's inclusive of Bonner Springs and Edwardsville.

Mayor Garner said with that being said, I'm going to turn it over to the Acting County Administrator Alan Howze and he's going to take the meeting from here.

Alan Howze, Acting County Administrator, said as a reminder as we get into this conversation tonight that the legislative agenda will come back before the UG Commission on December 1st for approval, so our discussion here tonight is really to kind of flush that out in more detail, and as the Mayor said, to kind of get your feedback and we hope that this will really help you prioritize as we go in—as you all go into the session next year about what the priorities are of the UG Commission.

We do in this year's development of the agenda we tried to reflect feedback we received from the delegation about trying to tighten up the legislative agenda and make sure that it was really focused on what those priorities were. In this agenda it's composed a little bit differently than commissioners would have seen in years past in both that it has a set of potential priorities and what those—in this case 13 items, but really trying to maybe get that down to a top 10 that would be priorities from the UG Commission for their legislative agenda. There's actually 39 items in total. There's 13 that are identified as priority items and we'll walk through those, so you're looking at the word document there for the PowerPoint.

The other thing that is different about this year is that in years past portions of the League of Kansas Municipalities agenda was taken out and put into the UG legislative agenda and I think

members of the delegation found that sort of duplicative and sometimes confusing and it elongated the agenda. So with the exception of two items that are related to STAR Bonds, because those are so specific to Wyandotte County, everything else that is in the League of Kansas Municipalities agenda is sitting within their document and is not in the UG agenda. We're trying to keep it really as focused as we can on Wyandotte County this year. We'll see if we succeeded in that effort.

In the process of developing this, we did survey UG departments to make sure that we're getting input from departments about those legislative priorities and then working with Mr. Davis to identify which items we thought would be sort of most likely to be advanceable this year in the legislative session. There are items that are carried over from the '22 agenda as well as a number of new items. We also sort of tried in this document to identify items whether they were legislation or whether they're appropriations and recognizing that maybe that may make a difference in terms of how the delegation approaches trying to get traction on those issues. Then we grouped them according to four areas; Economic & Community Development, Local Government Operations, Public Health & Human Services; Public Safety and Tax and Finance.

I thought for the purposes of this conversation we could run through all the items sort of in brief and then if there are clarifying questions, we do have staff available that can answer specific questions on items. Then, if there are items that the Commission or the delegation wants to suggest be added to this or removed from it, have that discussion and then leave some time for the priorities discussion as well to really kind of see if we can hone in on what those top priorities are of the Commission for this legislative agenda with the goal being to adjourn by 6:30 this evening. So that's our target ahead of the 7:00 commission meeting, so there's an opportunity for folks to eat before the meeting as well.

With that kind of overview, I'm going to turn it over to Mr. Davis who's going to give us a brief overview as well on Topeka.

Paul Davis, Lobbyist, said it's good to see all of you and I think this is really a unique opportunity for some good dialogue about what the UG's priorities ought to be in the 2023 session. All of you except for Senator Pettey, are fresh off the campaign trail and you've been talking to lots and lots of your constituents and probably have the pulse of your districts as well as anybody. I think you've been hearing on the doorstep about what people are interested in and want to see from the

State Legislature and so I hope you'll express those opinions here because I think they're definitely very relevant.

I don't want to get too much into the election results because I think everybody knows what happened and they are glad the elections are over. You can now safely turn on your television and not have to see the mudslinging tv ads. No matter where you are on the political spectrum, I think everybody agrees that they're relieved when that happens. One thing—some comment that was made to me by somebody that I think is kind of relevant is there's always change with every election, but actually if you look at Topeka now versus what it's going to look like when you convene on the 9th of January, it's going to be pretty similar. Things have not changed a great deal. The same Governor is going to be there, a couple of different statewide officeholders, but the composition of the legislature is largely going to be pretty much the same as it has been before. When you have a gubernatorial election, I think everybody knows the Governor more than anybody else sets the agenda of what's going to happen and they prepare the budget.

I think probably the attribute of the Governor's office that has really the most power is the preparation and submission of the budget. I mean they really set the baseline for what's going to be considered budgetwise and you oftentimes don't know what exactly is coming down the pike. Governor Kelly talked about a lot of things on the campaign trail so we know what some of those things are going to be. For instance, moving up the elimination of the food sales tax is on her agenda and definitely will be proposed, but there are probably a lot of other priorities that were yet to hear about and maybe some of you have some insight on some of those from discussions that you've had with the administration.

Alan and I have worked together to try to pare down, I think he may have mentioned we had about 100 items on this list originally after all the departments were surveyed, and we tried to pare that down. If any of you get complaints from people in the departments about their specific items not getting on the list, you can defer blame to Alan and I for taking some of those items off and we tried to list some of those priority items, but I think really, hopefully, through this discussion there may be some changes to what you see as priorities. So, just look forward to discussion and here is a resource to answer any questions or any insight that I can offer. Alan, I'll send it back to you.

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UG Legislative Agenda

Discussion with Wyandotte County Legislative Delegation



November 17, 2022 Legislative Agenda

Mr. Howze said there are several documents at your seat. There's this brightly colored one. The League of Kansas Municipalities document. This is the one the League puts out and I'll note that the Mayor is on the Executive Board of the League of Kansas Municipalities and this is something that the League puts out every year which is a statement of priorities across a bunch of different municipalities, so there's a lot of common ground in here with other cities. Again, with the exception of two items related to STAR Bonds, this agenda stands on its own and is not inclusive included in the UG Legislative Agenda, but I wanted you all to have it so you can see what is in the League Agenda and if the Commission so decides, they could endorse the League Agenda or just let it ride.

You also have this word document which you received ahead of time and I think Mr. Davis sent this out to the delegation on Tuesday, so hopefully, you had a chance to look through it. This is the 39 items now that are kind of the meat of the draft proposed Legislative Agenda.

Potential Priority Areas

1	Star Bonds & Food Sales Tax	7	Substance Abuse Treatment
2	Expanded Development Financing Tools	8	Clean Slate Automated Expungement
3	Childcare and Pre-K expansion	9	Mental Health and Jails
4	Medicaid Expansion	10	Funding Public Defenders Office
5	Foster Care Support After Age 18	11	Reducing Violence
6	Drug Paraphernalia Definitions	12	Extreme Risk Protection Order
		13	Alternative Revenue Sources



November 3, 2022 Update on Severe Winter Weather Shelter

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As I mentioned, staff working with Mr. Davis, kind of took a swing at what these top potential priority areas could be and this is from listening to the discussion amongst the Commission and what is other kind of bodies of work within the UG. This is the initial list that we came up with

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and, again, I think we can go through these and then kind of come back around towards the back side of the discussion and see whether there are changes to these priorities that would be recommended for the legislative agenda.

Starting with the first one, Food Sales Tax, obviously we just heard about this and the elimination of that and then the challenge specific to the STAR Bond districts and making sure since our STAR Bond districts relies in part on that sales tax, that that doesn't get cut away in a way that leaves that sales tax district more vulnerable. Maybe I'll pause there and see if there's any questions on that one.

Commissioner Burroughs said I think it's significant the impact the STAR Bonds have had for Wyandotte County and is extremely important that we keep that momentum going and I think it's only been reinstated for three, quite possibly for review, no more than five, so be mindful there's a very short window and there will be request to change it. Just be mindful that every little change can have a dynamic effect on what we've accomplished here and what we can accomplish with STAR Bonds moving forward. Those of us that have been around STAR Bonds long enough to know that there's a lot of people out there that wants STAR Bonds to meet their projects, but don't want the project to meet the criteria of STAR Bonds. I think we've been very fortunate to be able to utilize STAR Bonds and were held out as an example of how they work and I would just encourage us to be mindful that is something that has been very important to this community.

Mr. Howze said I would say too that these are numbered, but they're not numbered in any attempt, you know, what is number one, what is number two. They're just numbered so that we can refer to them so in the prioritization process. We can come back and if you all have strong thoughts about the ranking of those we can incorporate that, but didn't want you to see this and be like that number one is the very most important.

Senator Pettey said I don't want to leave out saying that Food Sales Tax definitely—I'm glad to see is number one. It's going to be one of the number one things on the Governor's State Agenda and that doesn't mean that the legislature is going to embrace that movement, although I'm sure that every legislator running for office heard that at the door about, you know, food costs have

gone up. I would say definitely it should be at the top of the Wyandotte County agenda to see that because our citizens would all benefit from that.

Mr. Howze said the second one here, Expanded Development Financing Tools. This is one that is kind of an extension of the second story legislation that Representative Curtis worked through last year and would expand the set of financing tools that are now available—that rural counties would be available to Wyandotte County as well. Representative Curtis, do you want to add anything?

Representative Curtis said yes. The city of Topeka what they did last year on that same piece of legislation was they added that the whole city of Topeka would be eligible for our HID which then made them eligible for all of those role incentives for housing, so we should consider that for KCK. But then I also, just in thinking about it, we should insert every time we're talking about incentives that are specific for rural communities, we should insert rural communities and economically distressed urban areas. We should insert that in everything that comes across like every time we see that, every time we see a specific to rural and economically distressed urban areas because we all share a lot of the same challenges. Even though our approaches might be a little bit different, there's no reason to separate us geographically that way so we should help the most challenged areas in our state, so yes, definitely I support that and will continue to work on it as much as I can.

Commissioner Ramirez asked, what are a couple examples of what are those rural incentive programs that we don't have that ability to get to? I'm just curious. **Representative Curtis** said one that I would be particularly interested in was the pot of money that was set-aside for pretty much Workforce Housing. The jobs that we are creating in the state that make between \$60-\$80K, what kind of house can that person or that family afford and so that's the kind of housing that we need to be building and so we know that there's a gap in that so the rural communities now have a pot of money that they can access that will help them.

The other thing that I think would be helpful for our community is that when we did all of our demo we didn't do it anticipating that lot was going to be developed on at some time in the future. So right away when we have somebody, particularly on Land Bank property, when we have somebody who wants to develop that, right away their first costs are doing all of the remedial stuff, all of the environmental cleanup, so if there would be a way to access one of those pots of

money that has that flexibility to address that, then maybe we could be building more affordable housing or helping with that. Those would be a couple of examples.

Mr. Howze said moving to number 3, Childcare and Pre-K Expansion. This is a new item that has not previously been on the agenda and it's really kind of emerged from the economic development perspective and then a focus both of the Community Health Improvement Plan and WYEDC have spoken extensively about the need for this and the barrier that it creates for job creation and families.

Representative Pettey said I'll just say you already know we're in a desperate situation here in Wyandotte County when it comes to childcare availability and affordability. There is a group, I'm serving on it as well as Commissioner Davis, it's Raising Wyandotte and we have a grant to proceed with planning strategies for how do we address that. This is a great item to have on here because this is not just a critical need in Wyandotte County although we probably are—of the larger counties, we're probably in the worst shape of all when it comes to childcare affordability and availability, but it's statewide. It certainly is an issue that we need to work on and need to be supportive of.

Representative Curtis said just to add to that, last year we did pass the Business Tax Credit—Childcare Tax Credit which does allow businesses now to have a tax credit if they are providing childcare for their employees. That would be something I've been asking at the recent briefings that we've been on, does anybody have an example of a business that has taken advantage of that tax credit because that would be very helpful if we know that is an incentive that is working to be able to expand upon that or at least address that when we go back to session. I'm not really sure, you know, this happens a lot of times, we will pass legislation and there it sits, but it really takes somebody else then to take it the one step further. That was kind of like with the upper story, I think there was maybe some enabling stuff that you have to do to allow that to happen. It's like that with the business Childcare Tax Credit, who's responsible for going out and marketing this, so like all the business that we have in our community we should figure out some way to get that information to them. Maybe this is something that they could take advantage of.

Senator Pettey said I would agree because that's been available to large corporations, but not to small businesses and now it's available to any size business to either provide their own or to contract with and it's a 50% tax credit. It's a great incentive but you have to have the workforce as well as the Childcare Workforce in order to contract with them. That's the other important piece.

Representative Winn said I would like to add that Representative Curtis and I also serve on a working group on that same topic so—**Senator Pettey** said we're on the same one. We're actually all on the same one. **Representative Winn** said so we are likely to have to want to continue this conversation because there are things that the local government can facilitate this initiative.

Mr. Howze said number 4, Medicaid Expansion. I don't want to skip right over this, but I think people are fairly familiar with it, well-trod ground, but it is certainly a priority and a tremendous benefit of opportunities for Wyandotte County.

Senator Pettey said another economic development tool that our citizens need so much and it's going to be—the Governor has always supported Medicaid Expansion and she will be pushing and it'll be in her State of State again this year.

Mr. Howze said number 5, Foster Care Support After Age 18. This is the issue of children that age out of foster care, kind of have a steep cliff where they hit 18 and then there's not support underneath them and so there's a risk that they have in terms of showing up in the criminal justice system and other risk factors. This is really thinking about are there ways, and I think other states have started to look at this as well, to provide support for children who age out of foster care so that they have a better shot and a stronger start as they go into adulthood.

Mr. Howze said number 6, Drug Paraphernalia Definitions. This kind of has two flavors on this. This is related to sort of both marijuana and the definition of paraphernalia under state statute that can allow for charges on the possession of paraphernalia around marijuana. So that's part and then the other part is around—that is not legal to have needles and syringes in Kansas and so any sort of needle exchange programs or anything like that, that begins to try and address harm reduction with regard to the opioid epidemic are not permissible under current state law. This is really kind

of two of those that fall into that drug paraphernalia definition piece that have been recommended for this agenda and it really come through our conversations with the Health Department as well as with other public safety agencies.

Mr. Howze said number 7, Substance Abuse Treatment. This is again kind of related to the opioid epidemic and expanded state funding for inpatient and outpatient treatment facilities in Wyandotte County. You know we've seen the increase in overdose and deaths associated with that and we've also seen now that they're some of the changes that Wyandotte County is losing its only—or its major inpatient facility with the closing of Mirror, Inc. at the end of this month. There's both an increasing need and a decrease in supply within Wyandotte County of inpatient substance abuse treatment centers so that's where this item comes from.

Mr. Howze said number 8, Clean Slate Automated Expungement. This was on the agenda last year and this is related to the automated expungement of qualifying criminal records from public view as opposed to going through the process of petitioning to the court for that.

Representative Curtis said fingers crossed that we have success this year. This is something that we've now introduced for the last three years. It started with our Healthy Communities Wyandotte. It was their initiative. I kind of helped champion it, but it really became the House judiciary's committee work and so almost everybody on that committee is very passionate about trying to get this bill through. It went through the Judicial Council. It's scaled way back from what our coalition would really like to see, however, it gets the ball rolling. It puts a process in place that then would be easily expanded to other expungements. So, fingers crossed, this year we get it across the finish line. We got it out of committee, full support. I really don't think there will be much objection in the House, but then we'll have to work with the Senate and you never know what's going to happen there.

Mr. Davis said I might just add to that, one of the impediments has been the opposition of the County and District Attorney's Association and due to a lot of Representative Curtis's work, they are no longer taking that position and that's going to help significantly.

Representative Curtis said in fact they even appointed a member to be a member of our committee, so they're meeting with us on a monthly basis. So, yeah, we won them over.

Mr. Howze said number 9, Mental Health and Jails. This is really related to full state funding for mental health services including additional bed space. This also has to do with the waiting list now at the state facilities related to the criminal justice system and you know that wait time then translates directly into dollar costs for Wyandotte County in terms of people staying in the Wyandotte County jail that should be getting evaluated and/or treated at state facilities. So there's both a need for this from a treatment perspective as well as from a cost perspective.

Commissioner Bynum said, Alan, just a comment that I've been thinking about over the last few days and I think it pertains. We had a homeless camp set up near a neighborhood where they have requested the police assist with—basically it was on private property where the police assist with a trespass warrant. So, I'm assuming those one or two or three; however many people are there, are going to jail. You may know better than me, but, you know, where else will you go.

Then just yesterday I was telling Commissioner Burroughs about a gentleman who had appeared to set up his spot a couple miles from where I live and it was just a really odd spot. Right after we talked about that, on my way home I turned the corner and there's the two police officers dealing with him. Once again I thought he's headed for jail because where else will he go. Sadly, we just don't have the resources.

I'm sure that many of our folks who are homeless are also dealing with mental health or substance abuse or both and so when we talk about this item I just think the increase that we are all seeing with our own eyes of houseless individuals in the community are exacerbating this issue that was already a pretty serious issue before the pandemic.

Commissioner Stites said I think it's important to point out that just because you are sent out to a dispatched call for trespass does not mean that you're automatically going to jail. You can be issued a misdemeanor summons. You can be verbally warned to vacate the private property, so it's not an automatic you go to jail.

Mr. Howze said we are seeing the increase in the unhoused across the community.

Mr. Howze said number 10, Funding Public Defenders Office. This is really funding for the Public Defenders Office. So the establishment went through last year through the Board of Indigent Services so this is really an appropriation support request to make sure that board has

sufficient resources to be able to stand up the Public Defender's Office. That's sort of the next and final piece to that, to that standing up.

Someone said I just want to be clear, so that's an appropriation at this point, right? **Mr. Howze** said yes. On this document on the right side it says whether it's appropriation or legislation.

Mr. Howze said number 11, Reducing Violence. Also an appropriation and this is around funding for communities like KCK that wish to establish violence, interrupt, or cure violence kind of programs using evidence-based approaches. This is also a new one and looking at how we both at local government, but also can partner with the state to reduce violence within the community.

Mr. Howze said number 12, Extreme Risk Protection Order. This is one that's been enacted in 19 states and it's really a tool to allow law enforcement to take a firearm from an individual that is deemed at extreme risk either to themselves or to others and provides that kind of due process protection to make sure that's done fairly in a way that people can get their firearms back. This is, again, one that's been recommended here.

Mr. Howze said number 13, Alternative Revenue Sources. This is the last of the priority ones. I know the Commission has had a good bit of discussion on this through the budget process this year and so you know part of this is allowing cities to identify and use alternative revenue sources that best suit that individual community so that Wyandotte County and KCK and the cities within Wyandotte County can make those choices around revenue sources that best suits that community. Are there any commissioners that want to say anything on that? **Someone** was inaudible.

Representative Curtis said I think, you know, definitely we're all familiar in Kansas City about a local earnings tax and I think that has been introduced before. That has come up at our Town Hall meetings, a request from citizens to consider introducing that, but I don't really know the history of what has happened. I know it hasn't been successful in the past. I also think perhaps another thing is that statutorily we should be funding ad valorem tax, so that would help. You know as far as revenue funding sources we should be funding the revenue funding sources that are there now that we aren't funding. That would go to help our cities and counties with property tax reduction particularly.

I would say that would be an item I would think that you would want to advocate for is just funding the revenue source that's already supposed to be coming to you.

Commissioner Bynum said that's not the only thing over the years the state has removed from local government control; Machinery & Equipment and you can probably speak to this much more eloquently than I can, but you're absolutely right. What I don't know and we should probably find out, if we don't know in this room, is for example, on an earnings tax I just cannot remember if locally have we asked that question in our community survey and what was the answer because it would be helpful for us to know if we were going to try to work towards something like that what's the community input on that. But, yeah, all of that I think could have been super helpful just this past year in trying to balance the budget that we just went through.

Senator Pettey said I was here when this Commission supported an earnings tax, but I'm going to say I don't think that has any legs in the legislature. I mean everybody who was campaigning, what do you hear people complain about the most, taxes, so talking about earnings taxes, I don't know from your surveys either what the results are.

Commissioner Markley said the only thing we've asked in the survey specifically about is the parks related tax. That's the only tax.

Commissioner Stites said I just wanted to echo Senator Pettey on the taxes, property taxes. I'm sure that you all are getting the emails like I'm getting and the texts and people that are receiving their bills now and how shocked they are and how high they are. Reducing the taxes, in my opinion, is very important.

Commissioner Burroughs said I want to talk about the ad valorem. I think the Governor last session or the session before last introduced \$49M to be reimbursed to local governments. Over the last 10 years they've taken \$2B away from local governments in ad valorem taxes, but that was to start that payment back and we would continue to kick that down the road.

In reference to the sales tax, any tax issue in this community is going to be met with scrutiny, but I would just state to remember the approval of the legislature is important on that and our members to the south now have the largest voting block within the caucus. I would just share

with you that even if our community wanted it, it would be a difficult lift when those that come in to work in our community choose to go back. They don't want to have to pay that additional tax so I think we've all dealt with that, but that's how it works through the legislative process. I'm going to miss working with you all on that one.

Mr. Davis said I might mention one item that's a little bit farther down the list, but Commissioner Bynum and I had a discussion about the sports wagering bill that passed the legislature last year and the revenue from that does not function or equate like the gaming revenues do from the casinos where there's a local share. As you might recall, the vast majority of that money is going into a "professional sports fund" that is aimed to maybe lure a certain professional team to come to Kansas. But I think it's fair to say that there was a lot of consternation about that provision in the legislature and so I've certainly heard some discussion about how that may be revisited and if it is revisited, there's an opportunity for those local units of government I think to make its case to the legislature that those funds ought to equate to how regular gaming funds work with regard to the local portion.

Mr. Howze said I'll add that the ad valorem tax is an item in the LAKM Agenda which is one of the reasons it's not on ours, but recognize that it's an important one.

Mayor Garner was away from the meeting from 5:46 p.m. to 6:14 p.m. Commissioner Bynum was Mayor ProTem during his absence.

Economic Development

14	Prevailing Wage
15	Community College Funding
16	Tourism
17	STAR Bonds and Economic Development
18	Riverfront Authority



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Mr. Howze said number 14, Prevailing Wage. This was in the 2022 Agenda and it's prevailing wage on Public Works projects, Economic Development projects when tax incentives are given.

Commissioner Kane said we have guests and people watching on tv so I can't say what I really want to say, but I will say this, prevailing wage in my mind needs to be in the top 10. It stripped us of people working here that live here where they now have to go on the road to perform the function. Then they bring people in from Minnesota and Texas to perform the job at half the price or less with no benefits, no insurance, no nothing and so in my mind that needs to be in the top 10 and trust me, the Governor has heard me more than once and she will hear me again.

I do want to comment on the Food Sales Tax. The first thing when I talked to the Governor-elect when she first got elected, but not sworn in, I talked about prevailing wage, Workman's Comp, and then I switched to being a commissioner and I said the elimination of Food Sales Tax because it hurt Wyandotte County and now that the food is really going up, it's a great time to lower it down.

Commissioner Ramirez said I just second everything Commissioner Kane said. I know a lot of members of our delegation have been continuing over the years fighting for prevailing wage even to the point of just for Wyandotte County, you know, not even the state, just Wyandotte County. I would agree that should be at the top of our list because it would greatly, greatly benefit our community. I thank you to all those who have continued to fight for it and to try and bring it back to Wyandotte County.

Representative Curtis said I would say we really need help on educating legislators on some of these issues. Now we have a whole new crop of new people and for years I've tried to do prevailing wage and now I have a new crop of people and I have to go back and go through it again. If you don't lay that groundwork, if you don't educate them, then it's real easy—it comes up on the floor, I get an opportunity to offer an amendment and then the Kansas Chamber sends out an email blast, vote no. It has been killed so many times.

Commissioner Kane said let me tell you how this Chamber works. We had a pamphlet that UMKC came up with and it said all the reasons why you should do this. The Chamber got up there and Stephanie Clayton was a Republican at the time, House Rep, got up there and they say where's your book, it's in the truck. She said go get it, so they said we'll talk about it the next day and never brought it up again and you're right and Representative Curtis has worked her tail off on this. A bunch of these folks have worked their tails off on this, but somehow we need to get the message that this—they wouldn't want this to happen to their families or their family has to go on the road to work when they're building projects right here.

If you remember, the bridge just fell not too long ago and the quality of work that's done by the unions is inspected, there are skills they have to learn, the apprenticeship program, there's things that—and Commissioner Bynum's husband done it all. You know the training that you have to go through to prevent this from happening, then you bring these guys in and one of the state reps said you can take four people that have never worked construction with one guy that's worked construction and build a safe bridge and I about passed out because that's not true. This in my mind is a very large item and I appreciate the work you've done and the work you're going to do. I'm looking at our two new Representatives. Thank you in advance before me talking to you.

Senator Pettey said with prevailing wage maybe the time has come when we particularly talk about salaries and having a workforce being able to provide quality jobs in a workforce and look for local employees. I think that's another—and businesses now just like childcare are embracing some of these issues. Not so sure about prevailing wage yet, but I think we have the economy in our favor when it comes to prevailing wage as well.

Commissioner Kane said I apologize. I meant to say that the new three House Reps.

Mr. Howze said number 15, Community College Funding. It's related actually back to the property tax as well which is, you know, increased state funding for the community college system, decreases the pressure on property tax funding as the mechanism for community college funding. So that's where this item emerged from.

Mr. Howze said number 16, Tourism. This was on the 2022 Agenda and this is an enactment of a Comprehensive Tourism Plan and recognizing that it's such a critical part of the local economy in Wyandotte County.

Mr. Howze said number 17, also on our previous 2022 Agenda around STAR Bonds and ensuring that STAR Bonds continue to be a viable Economic Development tool.

Mayor ProTem Bynum said could I just stop there for a minute. Could I have you help me make sure I understand the current state of affairs with STAR Bonds because I honestly don't know. Who wants to help?

Representative Curtis said Tom can say where we're at. He can probably recall that more, but again, when we modify STAR Bonds and we offer to our rural communities a threshold of \$3M, we should have also included the economically distressed urban areas. I'm okay even if we tie to that like also has some connection to a historical site because again to me our most historic sites in Kansas—you know the Quindaro Ruins and Kaw Point and then you can even include the Central bridge which connected our two states over to the stockyards, but those are our historic sites and it seems to me like they're perfect STAR bondable projects and they're in economically distressed areas and they can be transformative. So, again, every time we see that rural thing, let's put in that economically distressed urban areas. Tom, I think it's a much higher threshold now for 75—**Commissioner Burroughs** said now \$75M. It was \$50M to begin with and there's only—that state ceiling is 50% participation and now there's also been more transparency and more scrutiny that those that do the auditing has to be—can be picked by the Lieutenant Governor's Office, Department of Commerce, so that a feasibility study in the past, that might have been ordered by a local government through a firm. Now the Secretary of Commerce and/or the Lieutenant Governor makes that selection as to who will do the feasibility study to ensure the numbers are a little more accurate and transparent.

STAR Bonds was changed to raise a threshold and 50% is the threshold they want to keep participation at, but I really believe that the lower you can keep the state's participation the local government's participation, the better the project because there are some concerns about what they call false equity. If they took down a bunch of property for \$100K and once they take it down and it's not going to be part of a STAR Bonds project, the value of that property jumps up to \$50M and that false equity then went to the developer and then the state's portion came in and the numbers didn't work out. It's not that the communities are on tab for those STAR Bonds, but the states money has to go to retire that debt and so there was concerns over the years. I will state this, that we've been very fortunate in Wyandotte County that we are held up as an example of how to work it and work it correctly versus other areas across the state. So that's why the changes have come forward with STAR Bonds, but again, it's the best economic development tool in the nation as an incentive.

Mayor ProTem Bynum said so, Commissioner, \$75M minimum value input for it to qualify and then you're saying no more than 50% participation at state or local level for public funding and is there a timeframe? When you all have updated the STAR Bond legislation, is there

a sunset on that or is it just until you make a change again? **Commissioner Burroughs** said no. Anytime you make a change to a STAR Bond project it's got to go back through the analysis, again, the feasibility study. The sunset on the bill is—I can't remember if we settled on three or five—**Someone** was inaudible. **Commissioner Burroughs** said is it five? We settled on five years from the close of the legislation. It might have been putting into the register so from that time it would be five years. But under the original STAR Bonds legislation that we utilized to develop Village West, I did put a very short window that if you didn't break ground within the first 18 months you lost all opportunities to utilize STAR Bonds because we were the first project out. As a matter of fact, the DeSoto site where the Panasonic is now going was the original site for a STAR Bond project, which would have been the Land of Oz that was brought forward by a Senator. I think it was Senator Ben Vidricksen, as a matter of fact, and we grabbed on to that to keep the NASCAR from moving to Kansas City, Missouri.

In addition to that, not only did we pass the STAR Bond legislation and put the Speedway in it, but we also—the local units of government had just changed from 10-year tax abatement to 20 years. Then when the Speedway came forward, they wanted the full 20 years and they'd only been on the books less than six months and then the Speedway came back and said they wanted 30 years and so we had to carve a special piece out to ensure that all the development around the Speedway wasn't given away to a 30-year tax abatement. That's when I carried an amendment on the floor to develop the Legends area which allowed local investors the opportunity to develop that area. STAR Bonds has a lot of different triggers, Commissioner, and I appreciate you, but it's an important tool that's been very good in Wyandotte County.

Mayor Pro Tem Bynum said I think, therefore, it has to stay in the forefront of our agenda and maybe not sitting at 17 but maybe a little higher.

Senator Pettey asked, could I jump ahead, I'm sorry I have to leave, but I wanted to mention number 32 which is the Youth Fatality Review Board. That was a priority in the UG's agenda in the past and, of course, we were successful at getting a local Youth Fatality Review Board and then the state Child—Youth Fatality Review Board raised some angst about security of local boards, so that is in the works. I would encourage the Commission to look at putting that higher up than number 31, sorry.

Mayor ProTem Bynum said welcome Senator Haley.

Mr. Howze said, Senator Pettey, just to clarify, so there are additional legislative fixes around the Youth Fatality Review Board working through the administrative process. **Senator Pettey** said I've actually been working on this for two years with you guys and I know there is—well, I'm hopeful this is still in conversation of what has to be done for that to—we're the only, other than (inaudible) we're the only one that has a Youth Fatality Review Board and there's reasons why you want to have it and I think that you should continue to work for having it back in place because the State Youth Fatality Review Board has raised some objections. Well, they say that the membership is not as secure in their information and so that's been one of the issues. Paul might have some more information there.

Mr. Davis said we did get a bill that was—we worked with Senator Pettey, and folks at the Health Department worked on a bill, that I believe Representative Burroughs got introduced near the end of the session. We just didn't have time to be able to work the bill, but I think the legislation is there and ready to go and so we can just get on the process earlier and hopefully get it through this time.

Mr. Fisher said we'll jump back here to our last one on Economic Development, number 18, which is Riverfront Authority. This is a new item for this year. This is kind of emergent from all the activity that's taking place around the river and the desire to utilize the river as an economic development and recreational asset. This would be looking at what is the structure—is there a structure that would help to facilitate and accelerate that development.

Local Government Operations

19	Alternate Construction Delivery
20	Energy Efficiency



Mr. Howze said we've got two under Local Government Operations. Number 19, Alternate Construction Delivery, so this was in last year's agenda and there was some movement on it, but as I understand it, and Mr. Fisher is here if there are specific questions, that the threshold is not sufficient to allow local governments to really access that tool for design/build construction manager at risk. That's why it's remains in the agenda for this year.

Mr. Howze said number 20, Energy Efficiency and Development of a Statewide Energy Policy. This was a carryover from last year's agenda as well to allow local governments to act individually or in cooperation with others.

Commissioner Ramirez said I support all of this and then just in general I would be remiss if I didn't state for our delegation to continue to advocate and protect local control. Since we're under the heading of Local Government Operations, you know, protect our local control and be able to take care of our own affairs without state interference. So, I just ask the delegation to keep advocating and keep fighting for our local control.

Public Health & Human Services

21	Local Health Department Funding	25	Adequate Funding for Nutrition Services
22	Expedited Partner Therapy	26	Fentanyl Testing Strip Legalization
23	Remove Active Consent for School Surveys	27	Good Samaritan Overdose Law
24	Funding for services to Senior Populations	28	Source of Income Discrimination



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Mr. Howze said Public Health & Human Services. We've got a number in this area. Number 21 is Local Health Department Funding. This is an appropriation request around increased investment in public health funding. As you can see in the description there, the State of Kansas doesn't invest a lot compared to other states and certainly we have seen the benefit of that investment when it's made in our local Health Department and its ability to respond and address local health needs.

Mayor ProTem Bynum said that's a big one for me. I mean obviously everything we've been through and you know our local Health Department has done so much. I won't say with so little because it's an expensive preposition but we've got to keep—I think we've all come to

understand the value of a local Public Health Department, sadly, more so than we probably ever understood before. Now we do understand and just anything at all that can be done to support local public health.

Commissioner Ramirez said just to add on that, you know, I would tell our Health Department, and this is not a knock against them, but it's a department that's kind of in the back burner that's just in the back working, doing their job for the community, that's never really up front. You know we hear about our Economic Development, we hear about our Planning, our Budget, our Finance, but not so much our Public Health Department. During COVID, during the pandemic, they were the forefront of operations. They were the ones taking care of everything, controlling all of this. They are our Health Department and was the best in my mind and the best in our state that was able to work with us, work with the community and do what was best for our community. They based it on the science and not the politics of the issues. I completely agree and second everything that Commissioner Bynum said. This is something—we need our Health Department. They need the resources. They need to provide—Wyandotte County is still one of the unhealthiest communities in our state. Our Health Department needs the resources. They need to help us get out of that ranking.

Mr. Howze said number 22, Expedited Partner Therapy. This was a carryover from last year and this is legislation that would allow for automatically giving prescription therapy to a partner in a sexually transmitted disease instance to reduce the spread of that.

Mr. Davis said I might just add to that, that bill has passed the House before, but I think there is one senator in particular who has been an impediment to that, but just wanted to point that out. Not you. **Senator Haley** said thank you for the clarification.

Mr. Howze said number 23, Remove Active Consent for School Surveys. This is also a carry forward. This is the removal of active consent for school surveys to allow for a better survey pool that allows for the Health Departments to make better decisions.

Mr. Howze said number 24, Funding for services to Senior Populations. This is an appropriation request that comes through our Area Agency on Aging that we have full funding for home and

community-based services and really increasing funding to support some of our most vulnerable populations.

Mr. Howze said number 25, Adequate funding for Nutrition Services. This is an appropriation request and this is around restoration of state funds for nutrition services for older Kansans and caregivers and this is another funding area that has kind of sat stagnant for a long time and the Area Agency on Aging sees the effect of that in their service delivery to the community as well.

Mayor ProTem Bynum asked, 25 is specifically to older adult population? **Mr. Howze** said it is, yes.

Mr. Howze said number 26, Fentanyl Testing Strip Legalization. This is a harm reduction strategy related to the opioid epidemic which is to allow—and it goes maybe perhaps a little bit with drug paraphernalia. One we saw earlier allowing for fentanyl testing strips so that people can test whether there's fentanyl and drugs that they are consuming and to prevent what has become a more common occurrence where people don't know that it's there. They ingest drugs and they have an overdose and so this is another one of those harm reductions strategies.

Representative Curtis said we actually had an amendment and had that one introduced on the House floor but it didn't quite garner, so it's going to need some—again, like some of these issues, they need some, you know, just hardcore education with legislators so that they understand them better when they come forward like that, otherwise it's kind of hard to get them over the finish line.

Senator Haley said to the fentanyl issue—to those who I haven't met, I'm David Haley from the Fourth Senate District. Ironically I'm coming from Topeka on the Sentencing Commission, which I—pardon me again for being delayed. One of the issues is how we balance the crime meeting the time and paraphernalia in and of itself and what constitutes drug paraphernalia and the use of certain substances. It's a major issue that really causes great disparity between Kansas and now actually Missouri when we look at other issues for substance possession and how it will be changing in Missouri among others. We're trying to get a grasp of how we bring balance to it and as Representative Curtis just stated, it made it through, the fentanyl on the strips made it through the House, got over to the Senate and in Conference Committee it was confused.

The educational curve I think will be in place easily enough to get this through probably at the beginning hopefully. It was just a glitch toward the end as to whether or not this was a greater enabling of what is an epidemic in our country and indeed our state regarding the use and possession of fentanyl. I think a little better understanding will be in place and we'll be able to get this legislation through and check it off our list rapidly.

Mr. Howze said number 27, Good Samaritan Overdose Law, in a similar vein. This is again encouraging people who find themselves in a situation where someone they're with overdoses, that they feel like they can call 9-1-1 without fear that they will be arrested when somebody shows up. We want people to call, we want people to get help, and we don't want them to not do that because of fear of prosecution.

Mr. Howze said number 28, Source of Income Discrimination. This is from our Health Department and our Human Services Department and this is a source of income non-discrimination policies and what this is related to is recognizing that there are up to 400 vouchers estimated in Wyandotte County, housing vouchers, that go unused in a given year because landlords don't accept those. So this would codify that those are required to be accepted.

Commissioner Ramirez said this is something that—I think I believe I had a conversation with Commissioner Bynum probably a year or two ago about this. This was something that I—and I believe I've talked to our Legal Department about too in the past of something for Wyandotte County to pass as ourselves as an ordinance. I believe this is something that just because of where your income comes from should not be a detriment for housing. If you can check all the boxes that you have good rental records, if you have no bad marks against you, but just because of where your income comes from, that it's not from a job, it may be from alimony, it may be from federal purposes if disability, social security, I believe a landlord shouldn't say no to you just because of where the money comes from.

I am a very firm believer and support this as something that we should continue to fight for.

Mayor ProTem Bynum said, Mr. Howze, I'd like to derail the rest of the bullet points and make sure that I say to my fellow commissioners that if there's an item 39 through whatever, 35 through

39 or whatever number we're on, excuse me, 29 through 39, and I'm going to do it quick because the Mayor's coming back, make sure we bring that up. What I want to just make sure we get on the table for this room is what this community needs desperately is your help and support with every single possible infrastructure dollar that can come to Wyandotte County period and it really sits at the top of all of this for me. There are funds from almost every federal department of government, many of which are being funneled through the state, if I'm not mistaken, correct me if I'm wrong, that a lot of those dollars are going from fed to state to local. Several of us have sat in conversations with the Secretary of Transportation and, which is a real learning experience I will add, to learn things about how many bridges there are in the state. I think we are, through the Mayor's efforts and these partnerships that we're creating in some of these large grants that we're writing, we're actually making some headway. But by golly, if there's anything, anything at all, that needs more attention than that, I really don't know what it is. So I'm just asking, please whatever support you can bring, so I'll stop there, but I sure didn't want to leave our time together without putting that on the table because I really think it's one of the largest things that confronts us as a local government. I'll stop talking for a moment. Mayor, I took advantage of you being out of the room.

Representative Curtis said, Commissioner Bynum, I would just echo that. I mean I've spoke to many of you. You know infrastructure is at the top of my list because in downtown KCK we are getting choked off. Like we are getting choked off. You can't get around the town and we desperately need some attention on infrastructure and I've been engaged in some of those conversations. A lot of those federal dollars that are flowing for infrastructure are federal dollars that we have to apply for and that is why KDOT through Secretary Lorenz, they set up that infrastructure hub and she has been very clear, do not wait for us. Like if there's a program, a bridge replacement program that will fix the Central Avenue Bridge and get it reopened, please apply for those funds. We've got to be aggressive about that.

Commissioner Bynum said I won't speak for our Public Works Director, he's in the room, you know there's no way he's not looking at that hub, but I'm speaking from a policymaking place, but I do know that for Kansas Avenue specifically, we've got the mega grant in process and it's a big one. We need it for Central and we need it for all those other locations, but infrastructure in general, it's the thing that makes your city period.

Commissioner McKiernan said yes, let's go out for every dollar we can. Let me just point out the obvious. If we don't choose to spend the proactive money for the ongoing maintenance of those assets, we will be in this exact same place somewhere down the road. So, yeah, let's go get everything we can right now. Let's fix everything we can. We, around this table, need to make the commitment to proactively funding the maintenance on an ongoing basis else it's fool's gold.

Mr. Davis said I can add one comment to that. I know we have some new legislators. A significant thing did happen this past year in that so-called bank of KDOT was closed, which means no longer is money being diverted away from transportation projects to fund General Government obligations. You know 10 years ago there was absolutely a huge amount of money that was going away from transportation. Lots of projects that never came to fruition and I think we just have to be mindful of not going back to where we were at. I mean keep the door shut to the bank of KDOT so that those projects which are—we also have a rolling program which means you can be constantly applying for new dollars that are coming on down the road, which is really a great thing for communities like ours that desperately need those.

Public Safety

29	Community Corrections
30	Restoring Executive Branch authority to manage emergencies
31	Youth Fatality Review Board
32	Medical Cannabis
33	Assault on Public Transit Employee
34	Enhanced Support for at-risk youth in care of the State



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Mr. Howze said I'm going to kind of move quickly here. I'm going to kind of jump through 29 and 30. If you have questions on those, the description is here. I think those are pretty self-explanatory. We've talked about 31, Youth Fatality Review Board.

Mr. Howze said Medical Cannabis is number 32. This was a carry forward from the agenda last year. I just wanted to make sure there was a little bit of time. That space continues to shift as we saw what happened in Missouri, so if there's discussion amongst the Commission, the delegation, on Cannabis, just wanted to make sure we had a little bit of time for that.

Senator Haley said I appreciate this issue very much as we look at the changing regional perspective especially on not only medicinal, but also legalization of Cannabis Marijuana in and of itself. I am concerned as to what the response might be here among the Commission, across the street with our District Attorney, in terms of those who find themselves in possession of small amounts of Cannabis, especially where that's been obtained legally and maybe may even be taxed right across the river just a mile or so away from here. I appreciate any insight, any support that this Commission might give as we continue to debate it.

The state has a commission, I don't know if any of our members sit on the Interim Committee. There's an Interim Committee studying and they may speak to, so we can get a policy in place that just has us not be the odd person out asking law enforcement to do their job to enforce the law that no one else has on its books. That is those that possess small amounts of marijuana and that being the only crime. As we know, the federal action has been taken already and so I just hope we would have some continuity and clarity and the policy for KCK, for Wyandotte County, and ultimately the State of Kansas in this.

Mayor Garner said to hit on that question Senator, thank you. I think some of you—our commissioners have been at the table. I know our Legal team, our Chief, our DA, we've had that discussion because we are sandwiched between two states that now have legalized marijuana. I saw that coming and so as a result of that we've had that conversation. The initial conversation was how to de-penalize similar to what Wichita has done. The recommendation from the committee that's put together from our judges and others that were involved in the meeting was to look at education, prevention and treatment. The reason for that is because even though we're looking at making the first time your possession of small amounts of marijuana not as punitive, the problem is after your third possession it's a felony. So our DA and the others were really concerned that if we de-penalize it, we're giving people maybe a bridge to ultimately getting a felony because even though we may not be as hard on small amounts here in Wyandotte County, good luck taking your chances in other counties that may not be as lenient in that regard when you talk about other people that might look and review cases of small amounts of possession.

I would ask—I believe that maybe legalization—I don't know where the—I know you all are having the discussion with recreational, but I think to go out in context with that is maybe look at not making small amounts of marijuana after a third strike a felony. I mean it has an adverse impact on communities, especially communities of color, historically, if you look at the

data. I think that something is maybe a minor compromise that maybe could be had short of full legalization of marijuana in the State of Kansas as we start to move towards that process and that debate at the state level on what reflects the values of Cannabis. So that's kind of an ask that I would like to consider. I just—a felony for being in possession of marijuana where it's legal in two neighboring states, I think that just needs a second look.

Commissioner Davis said I'm going to take a different approach here. I think at the local level yes and amen. I think at the state level I'm for full legalization. I just do not see the point especially in the Kansas City metro area where for many folks it really does not matter if they're in Kansas or Missouri. I think without advocating for full legalization, we put our residents in a very compromising position where they're going to have to look and see whether or not they cross state line. I think we're missing out on incredible business opportunities for folks to really change their lives and within the full legalization would include all the things that come with medicinal use and more commercial use and understand I may be in the minority here and that is perfectly okay with me, but I think we are going to see it happen. It's not a question of if, it is a question of when and we saw that happen on Election Day where about half the country is already there now.

Senator Haley said just to add to and I appreciate this discussion. I'll be brief. I know we're here to get direction from the Commission for which way you go. I'll pose a similar ask to the policy that you both have articulated, both you, Mayor Garner, and you, Commissioner Davis, might be shared with our law enforcement and indeed our prosecutorial arm, we don't have to or you don't have to prosecute, arrest, detain certain amounts. That's a policy that can be made at a local level. As we push to get policies changed at the state level, there are counties that opt out. I was personally a bit concerned during the discussion with Missouri when the District Attorneys of both, our county and Johnson, we're looking at what the initiative might be in Missouri and how it would affect or not affect the policies that we have here at home.

I would hope that this Commission might consider the adverse impact of over enforcement of our existing possession law regarding marijuana would have on our populations here were our law enforcement to be overly burdened by having to detain, by having to arrest and then have potentially prosecuted those small possession amounts especially when they're coming from neighboring counties. And that this Commission might share with your departments, both the police and the prosecutorial arm, how we are a little bit concerned about how our jails and our

system will be clogged if they overly enforce these marijuana possession penalties as we strive to bring changes about in Topeka.

Mr. Howze said I'm going to keep pushing through here. We're close to the end. Number 33 is a new one. It's Assault on Public Transit Employees. This is something that was seen nationwide as well in terms of increased assaults, so this would actually make that a felony versus what it is today.

Mr. Howze said number 34, Enhanced Support for at-risk youth in care of the State. This is an appropriation request to provide additional cognitive behavior, counseling for youth. This is also one of those upstream efforts to prevent youth from getting into the criminal justice system and to put them on a better path. So, that's what that one is about.

Tax and Finance

35	Motor Vehicle Taxes
36	Golden Years Property Tax
37	Impact Fees and Exactions
38	E-Commerce Delivery Fee
39	Sports Betting Revenue



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Mr. Howze said Tax and Finance. We've got number 35, Motor Vehicle Taxes. This is a carryover and equalization of that formula so that a same make and model in Wyandotte County is taxed the same rate as make and model in any other county in Kansas which is not currently how it works.

Mr. Howze said number 36, Golden Years Property Tax. This was also on last year's agenda. This is a property tax relief program for seniors.

Commissioner Burroughs said I believe there was a bill in the Senate and, Senator Haley, I think it was Senator Holland's bill if I remember correctly, that identified—it was at age 65 or 72, I don't recall the age, but it would have an impact on local governments, but I think there

was some criteria in there for the state to make up that portion. I can't recall. I know it got hung up in the Senate.

Senator Haley said I thought there was some provision that did pass, something that has cleared that will be implemented. I'm not sure and should be of all the provisions, but I think it's in the 60s. **Representative Curtis** said it's 65. **Senator Haley** said of course primary residential, but I don't know what impact, but there is some piece of that. At least it was advanced.

Commissioner Bynum said I thought that it didn't impact local. That the state was funding the rebate or what have you.

Commissioner Burroughs said I can't recall how it came out of the conference committee report. I just remember that there was an argument over if they raised it to 72, would it lower the cost to the state and that's why it didn't get through the Tax Conference Committee report which I'm not one. I will state that is a very important remedy to the rising cost of property tax particularly for seniors on their property tax, whatever it is, so 65 or the age they agreed upon moving forward.

Commissioner Bynum said, Mr. Davis, can you get something to us because there's probably a window like the way Homestead and the Utility Rebates has a window for applications so I feel like we need this information ASAP so that we can push this out.

Representative Curtis said I found it. I actually had forwarded it to, I think, Commissioner Davis, so it's the Golden Years Homestead Property Tax Freeze Program. The bill that passed this year that would establish a new Property Tax Circuit Breaker Refund Program that has a maximum refund of \$2,500 on property taxes paid. To qualify the taxpayer must be 65 years of age or older, a disabled veteran, have a household income of less than \$50K, own a qualifying residential homestead property less than \$350K in value and not be claiming the existing Homestead Property Tax Refund.

Commissioner Bynum asked, can you send that to us because that's a lot—**Representative Curtis** said the question I have is I don't know how people access this. Like I talked about it, but I don't know how do you get that. **Commissioner Bynum** said my point is, those other rebate programs open January 1 and end in March or April, so we need to know how it's operating right now. **Representative Curtis** said I will try my best to, and I don't know, does anybody have—**Becky Berger, Interim Assistant County Administrator**, said Monica has

actually been doing a lot to make sure that this program gets distributed throughout the county, so I would love for her to have an opportunity to kind of talk about what she's doing.

Monica Sparks, Deputy County Clerk, said well I wasn't quite prepared for that, but I'll just give a brief information. This year the Clerk's Office, of course, is responsible to administer these programs on behalf of the UG and the state. We are creating a scenario where we will actually be going out into the county during the time that these application periods are open and that will be from the first working day in January through March 31st. We will be working out in the community to process these applications for qualified individuals. We do have a training session with the State coming up on December 16th that will give us more information about these two new programs, which is the Golden Years and the Disabled Veterans Program, so we will know more then.

Our other two programs are Homestead Safe Senior and our Utility Sales Tax and we are prepared to go now, so as soon as we get that we will provide more information to all of you.

Mayor Garner said the Mayor's Office will be working with that to help facilitate that with the Clerk's Office and part of that is that we're going to be reaching out to the commissioners that are districts that are impacted to make sure that you all are directly involved too because we really need you all at the table as well and other opportunities as well as far as things that the Unified Government may offer as well as other benefits. We're looking at what those are so we can have kind of a resource center type event as we go around the four corners of Wyandotte County.

Commissioner Davis said I appreciate that information Representative Curtis. I talked about this at my Town Hall along with other provisions that have been passed through the State so that Wyandotte Countians can access tax relief. Those particular—I don't want to say they're restrictive, but it is very specific on who this applies to and if there's any appetite with your colleagues with these upcoming sessions to expand who that applies to, that would be phenomenal particularly the income restriction. That's a lot of the feedback that I got. I think a little bit more just enough, it's always like this any time there's an income restriction, but I know that would be a super beneficial, but thank you, it's been very helpful.

Mr. Howze said our last two items here, number 37, Impact Fees and Exactions. This is related to development and allowing for impact fees to again help to fund infrastructure and other community needs.

Mr. Howze said number 38, E-Commerce Delivery Fee. This is again related to the shift in the economy to a delivery-based economy in a lot of ways, so that's adding a lot of vehicle miles to the roads and so this is another kind of revenue source as we're talking about alternative revenue sources that could come into play to help fund infrastructure and road maintenance.

Mr. Howze said number 39, Sports Betting Revenue. We believe we've covered that earlier.

So, that's kind of that list. We can survey the Commission to kind of help identify what those priorities are. We heard a couple things that maybe we should want to add. I didn't really hear a lot of take off or de-prioritize. We've got to figure out through that process what those priorities could look like.

Commissioner Ramirez said just as always, continued support to fully funding our education and specifically special education. I work with special education with students who have dyslexia, dysgraphia and dyscalculia and it's something very special and dear to my heart, so it's asking our delegation and just on both Chambers to fight to fully fund not only education but special education because that's a part of education that doesn't get much praise for especially staff and those teachers who work and for those students who need the help, who need those resources and that support. So it's just something dear to my heart to ask, is continue to fight for that and for that full funding.

Representative Winn said if I may, you know, I just sat through an entire day on that discussion and so I'll say the unfortunate aspect is that there will be attempts to change the definitions or add definitions in the state statute that currently exists. You always—if you don't like something, you do a little voodoo math and so there's a little voodoo math going on, but it will be a full-blown discussion. So, please when we do have hearings come and participate and have real examples of the excess costs that's not being covered and that it impacts all students and, of course, gifted are

considered special ed, so there's a lot of students that potentially, whatever that decision—however that decision comes out, it's going to impact, so please stay involved.

Mayor Garner said I believe we had some Representatives show up. I don't know if you've had the opportunity to introduce yourself. **Representative Oropeza** said I am the new elect representative for District 37 and I'm excited to be here and will enjoy serving next year. **Mayor Garner** said thank you and congratulations to you.

Mayor Garner said we also have Senator Haley. **Senator Haley** said I'm honored to continue representing the fourth district which is wholly contained in Wyandotte County, the only Senate District that is, and just pleased to be a part of this continuum of discussion between this body and our new Representatives that are going on board. I'm the Judiciary ranking member for our Senate Judiciary Committee and also on Public Health & Welfare in the Senate. I'm pleased to have this ongoing dialogue. Thank you Mayor, this Commission, and Mr. Davis for helping this come together. United we stand.

Mayor Garner said not with us today was Representative Robinson who is replacing Representative Henderson. He's newly elected and so we're also looking forward to having a positive relationship with him as well.

We've gone a little over our time today so just in the interest of our staff needing to be able to set up the IT function for the full commission meeting, we're going to push this back to 7:20 where we have our full commission meeting. I apologize to the public on that, but they do need time to get transitioned from special session to full commission meeting. At this time I'll adjourn the special session. Do I have a motion to adjourn?

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

**MAYOR GARNER ADJOURNED
THE MEETING AT 6:40 p.m.**

Brett Deichler
Unified Government Clerk

dt

November 17, 2022