

Sedgwick County

525 North Main Street 3rd Floor
Wichita, KS 67203



*Sedgwick County...
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Meeting Minutes

Thursday, August 6, 2015

6:00 PM

SPECIAL MEETING

BOCC Meeting Room

Board of Sedgwick County Commissioners

Pursuant to Resolution #007-2016, adopted by the Board of County Commissioners on January 20, 2016, members of the public are allowed to address the County Commission for a period of time limited to not more than five minutes or such time limits as may become necessary.

Anyone who requires an auxiliary aid or service for effective communication, or a modification of policies or procedures to participate in a program, service, or activity of Sedgwick County, should contact the office of Crissy Magee, Sedgwick County ADA Coordinator, 510 N. Main, Suite 306, Wichita, Kansas 67203. Phone: 316-660-7056, TDD: Kansas Relay at 711 or 800-766-3777

Email: Crissy.Magee@sedgwick.gov, as soon as possible but no later than 48 hours before the scheduled event. Please include the name, location, date and time of the service or program, your contact information and the type of aid, service, or policy modification needed.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

The Special Meeting of the Board of the County Commissioners of Sedgwick County, Kansas, was called to order at 6:12 p.m. on August 6, 2015, in the County Commission Meeting Room in the Courthouse in Wichita, Kansas, by Chairman Richard Ranzau, with the following present: Chair Pro Tem Commissioner Karl Peterjohn; Commissioner David M. Unruh; Commissioner Tim R. Norton; Commissioner James M. Howell; Mr. Ron Holt, Acting County Manager; Mr. Mike Pepoon, Acting County Counselor; Mr. David Spears, Director, Bureau of Public Works; Ms. Kristi Zukovich, Director, Communications; and Ms. Erika Rice, Deputy County Clerk.

GUESTS

*Mr. Bruce Blank, 1937 South Millwood, Wichita
Ms. Patricia Rodriguez, 1705 North Holyoke, Student, KANSEL
Mr. Byron Watkins, 1436 East Prairie Hill, Park City
Ms. Carolyn Gaughan, 7570 West 21st Street North, Kansas Academy of Family Physicians
Ms. Susan Estes, 151 South Whittier, Wichita
Mr. Max Weddle, 862 South Zelta Court, Wichita
Mr. Doug Kutilek, 11303 Springwater Drive, Clearwater
Mr. Bruce Witt, 8200 East Thorn, Via Christi
Dr. Ed Hett, 8200 East Thorn, Via Christi
Ms. Anne Nelson, MS, Executive Director Central Plains Health Care Partnership
Mr. Nathan Davis, 2262 West Manhattan, Student, University of Kansas Medical School
Ms. Rochelle Thompson, 1321 Woodland, Wichita
Mr. Thomas Dalton, 119 South Bleckley Drive, Board of Trustees, Young Professionals of Wichita
Ms. Suzy Finn, 350 West Douglas, Young Professionals of Wichita
Mr. Djuan Wash, 1751 North Ash, Sunflower Community Action
Ms. Marylou Cortez, 1139 1/2 South Market, Wichita
Ms. MaryBeth Jarvis, 444 East William, Wichita Festivals
Mr. Collin Stienben, 13308 Tallwood, Board of Trustees, Exploration Place and Zoological Society
Ms. Cynthia Schwan, 711 North Linden Court, Exploration Place
Ms. Elizabeth Redler, 9422 Cross Creek Court, Exploration Place
Mr. Thomas Bloxham, 9106 Windwood Court, Wichita
Mr. Bill Livingston, 641 Preston Trail, Wichita
Mr. Gary Schmitt, 14000 Pinnacle Drive, Wichita
Mr. Charlie Peaster, 9453 North 135th, Sedgwick
Mr. Gerald Domitrovic, 1219 George Washington Drive
Ms. Laurel Nichols, 1506 North Salina, Sedgwick County Zoo
Mr. Michael Brincefield, 4730 South Ida, Wichita
Ms. Peggy Johnson, 28 Norfolk, Wichita
Ms. Kirsten Bruce, 3243 East Murdock, Executive Director, Kansas Affiliate of Susan G. Komen
Ms. Connie Zienkewicz, 221 North Parkdale, Non-Profit Chamber of Service
Ms. Lori Horton, 325 East Louisa Street, Derby
Mr. Albert Sanchez, 100 East English, Wichita
Dr. Donna Sweet, 1010 North Kansas, Project Access*

Mr. Dan Hamel, 3025 May, Board of Exploration Place
Mr. Jon Rosell, 1102 South Hillside, Executive Director, Medical Society of Sedgwick County
Mr. John Dailey, PO Box 381, Valley Center
Mr. Brandon Johnson, 5203 East 20th Street North, Wichita
Ms. Schaunta James-Boyd, CEO, E. C. Tyree Health and Dental Clinic
Ms. Novelene Ross, 2011 North Porter, Wichita
Mr. Arlen Hamilton, 2086 North Westridge Court, Wichita
Ms. Natalie Aramburu, 3546 South Walnut, Wichita
Ms. Kari Rinker, 110 East Waterman, National Multiple Sclerosis Society, Mid America Chapter
Mr. Ben Blankley, 3404 Country Club Place
Ms. Sybil Strum, 326 North Walnut, Wichita
Mr. Kelly Parks, 8005 North Hoover, Valley Center
Ms. Marilyn Bower, 156 North Sedgwick, Wichita
Ms. Mary Ware, 1444 North Perry, Wichita
Ms. Sharon Ailslieger, 1421 South Lark Lane, Wichita

ROLL CALL

The Clerk reported, after calling roll, that all Commissioners were present.

NEW BUSINESS

15-0519

PUBLIC HEARING REGARDING THE 2016 SEDGWICK COUNTY BUDGET.

Presented by: Ron Holt, Acting County Manager.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Open the public hearing, receive public comment and close the public hearing.

Mr. Ron Holt, Acting County Counselor, greeted the Commissioners and said, "This is the second of two public hearings regarding the Sedgwick County 2016 recommended budget. Since the budget was presented back in mid July, we have been conducting an online public hearing. And I might just give you, as of about 30 minutes ago, a very brief, quick overview of the numbers that we've received on the online public hearing. There have been 116 comments on the online public hearing. Those comments were in support of the [Sedgwick County] Zoo, 11 in support of the Zoo, and Exploration [Place], too, in support of the Health Department, too, arts, support, too, support of quality of life, 38, support of KANSEL, 6, support of MAPD (Metropolitan Area Planning Department) 1, support of WATC (Wichita Area Technical College) 2, in support of cutting services, or don't cut services to pay for roads, 23, soften the cuts, or don't cut at all, 17. And do find ways and means to follow through on these cuts, 8. So a total of 116.

"The 2016 recommended budget for Sedgwick County as presented on Monday, July 20th, totaled \$394,143,119, which included a property tax levy of \$129,580,173. The property tax levy is equivalent to an estimated property tax rate expressed in mills of approximately 29.359 mills. On Wednesday, July 22nd, the Board of County Commissioners authorized publication of a maximum budget of \$394,625,119, which included a property tax levy of \$130,103,986. The maximum property tax levy is equivalent to an estimated property rate of approximately 29.478 mills. Both mill levy rates are based on estimated assessed valuation and subject to review and technical adjustments. Again, Commissioners, I would recommend that you would open the

public hearing.”

Chairman Ranzau said, “Commissioner Norton.”

Commissioner Norton said, “I’ll wait till we open the public hearing.”

Chairman Ranzau said, “Okay. All right, with that, I will open the public hearing regarding the 2016 Sedgwick County budget. And we’ll start off just like the Fire District (No.1), each person will have three minutes to speak, please give us your name and address for the record. And if you have any handouts you want the Commissioners to have you can hand them to staff if you haven’t already, and they’ll give them to everybody. And if anyone is here tonight that has spoken in the previous meetings, we’re going to let everyone who has not yet spoken speak first, and then those who have already spoken in previous meetings will do that at the end. Right now, I think there is only one, so. First up...”

Commissioner Norton said, “Before we get started, I have received 91 letters that I’ve got. I would like to enter them into the record so that they are official. I’m not going to read all of them, but I’d like to make sure that they, the people feel confident that I’ve read them, that that they’ve sent me. And that they are in the record. I also have over 90 emails that I will eventually print, and I would like to be able to enter them into the record, get them to the clerk so that the public feels confident that, number one, their emails were read, but that their voices were heard and put into the public record as we move forward, if that’s okay with the Commission.”

Chairman Ranzau said, “Yes, and I have a couple more pieces of testimony that people couldn’t be here tonight and wanted to be included as well. All right, now we’ll proceed. Bruce Plank [sic] is the first one.”

Mr. Bruce Blank, 1937 South Millwood, Wichita, greeted the Commissioners and said, “Gentleman, I’ve been, last week, I was here and I paid very close attention to the various speakers, who for the most part, are professionals, here defending organizations and causes that they are very passionate about. Now, sadly, I cannot claim to be of any organization, I am simply an individual. A citizen of this county, a taxpayer, and it is my money that you, Commissioners, are entrusted with. And I have to believe that you are looking out for responsible ways to make sure that my tax dollars are invested prudently and wisely.

“So, many of these speakers will discuss tonight how much bang for the buck they get, in terms of your funding. I haven’t heard much about the things that I, as a citizen and a taxpayer, are concerned with. So I need to consider this a little heart-to-heart talk. Now, I believe that a great government, large or small, is measured in how it treats and supports its lowest citizenry. And how that voice is given to the least fortunate. And I look for compassion in our leadership, and a view that beyond capital acquisition comes from a place that believes and values diversity, and supports these institutions that add to the quality of life that’s beyond the balanced ledger book, whether you pay by cash or check.

“Now, take Project Access, I don’t use it, but I have several of my friends who have. I know of a mother, single, who has three children and she struggles to purchase her school supplies. But she goes once a year to take her kids to either the Zoo or Exploration because she wants them to value nature and the sciences. Now that is true for my house, I have a Vietnam Veteran who is to rely on the Lord’s Diner and has had several of the community services as scheduled for budget reductions.

“Gentlemen, if any of you Commissioners sitting in your current positions feel that

you, and this county, are immune from the long term effects of these proposed cuts, you haven't considered the cascading effects. People unable that GED (General Education Development) can't advance into better paying jobs. It's going to lower the tax base. Folks who now have to go to the emergency room for a [inaudible] that a service could have provided, will add to the increased insurance rates. A company that will now shop elsewhere to set up because their best employees will not relocate to areas without quality of life offerings and attractions that contribute to thriving families. You won't get their taxes either.

"Now, while I read, the core services are an important factor in county government. I also feel that supporting these services that help the least in our community could not have the needs to go forward. We as a society, and as a county, are slicing our own throats. I'm due to retire in a few more years, and as a citizen, a homeowner, and a taxpayer in this county, I have to ask myself one question. Do I really want to stay here in a community that cares so little about its most vulnerable, about services that contribute to life, to make life for my friends and my neighbors better, not worse.

"In conclusion, I consider supporting the arts, the Zoo, civic organizations that assist in education, health, and human services, as core investments. Everybody is as deserving as roads and businesses. Please remember this as you make your decision that will be impacting my tax dollars. Thank you very much, I appreciate the chance to talk to you."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you, Bruce, for being here this evening. And I'll apologize ahead of time to anyone if I mispronounce your name tonight."

Mr. Blank said, "Thank you."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Next we have Patricia Rodriguez."

Ms. Patricia Rodriguez, 1705 North Holyoke, Student, KANSEL, greeted the Commissioners and said, "I am currently in foster care, I am 16 years of age, turning 17, and I will be spending my 17th birthday in foster care. KANSEL was my second chance. It was second chance towards everything. I was on probation, and I'm on probation till I turn 18 for gang affiliations, for possession of weapons, and let me tell you, if it wasn't for KANSEL, I wouldn't be here today. I would be on the streets doing something else. It was my second chance at school, at my education. And now I'm looking forward to going to college to major in my criminal justice career in the correctional facilities for young teenagers. I'm ready to start my life, you know, I'm ready to go forward with my life.

"I have never seen a GED program so devoted and so dedicated to getting students in and out into society. The teaching them new morals, teaching them a higher life, a higher way to look at their life, a higher way to get an education and not hesitate to try. Cause we see students walk in and out of there all the time who just want somebody to help. They just want somebody to be there. And for the future generations that are coming, I want future generations to be able to go to a school and be able to feel like they are welcomed and not have to worry about how they are going to pay for it. Not have to worry about how they are going to come up with the tuition money. Not have to worry about who is going to be there and if they are going to get cut next year.

"KANSEL is a school that deserves the money they are getting today and should still deserve to get it. It was my second chance, and I want our future generations to be set up for success, not failure. So we ask you, we beg you, and we plead you to help our generations be set up for success. Thank you."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you, Patricia. Commissioner Norton."

Commissioner Norton said, "Thank you, Patricia. It takes guts to stand up there and tell your life story in front of these people, and I applaud you for that. And all the best in your future, you've got a bright future ahead of you. We're all right behind you."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Next we have Byron Watkins."

Mr. Byron Watkins, 1436 East Prairie Hill, Park City, greeted the Commissioners and said, "I'm also speaking on behalf of KANSEL, tough to follow that speech. My name is Byron Watkins, and I serve on the board for KANSEL. I understand that you have heard from several of our board members at the last public hearing, as well as online and through the online forum as well as emails. Now citizens of Sedgwick County, I think most of us can agree that all residents should be responsible contributing members of the community. And I believe that education is important for the vast majority of individuals to help them achieve their best.

"Our students have taken the initiative to try and get that. They are in class learning and working hard to improve their lives. They know they will have a better chance in life with a high school diploma. The KANSEL staff also works individually with them to help them find jobs or enroll in higher education or technical training programs. It's an extremely hands on school, one where the students receive mentorship and guidance at a level that I don't believe that they would receive elsewhere. I also know that sometimes people get to have second chances, as we heard. And that's what KANSEL is all about, second chances. We serve 500 adult GED students every year, more than 200 of who are classified as at risk youth and are supported under the Sedgwick County Crime Prevention Grant. We work with numerous non-profits who serve at risk youth and who refer students to us. We also work with dozens of probation officers who do the same.

"Many of our students also come to KANSEL because they were referred by family members or friends. But no matter how these students come to KANSEL, we want to be there for them when they are ready to learn. While our main focus at KANSEL is to help every student pass all four parts of the GED exam and to earn their high school diploma, which due to recent national changes has become significantly more difficult and expensive to do. We are also building confidence and a can do attitude. Our teachers and staff work to help students see the possibilities. We see many students turn their lives around. Sedgwick County funding is crucial to help our at risk youth to succeed and prosper. At KANSEL they are learning and they are not getting into trouble. If Sedgwick County is about supporting programs that reduce recidivism, continuing to fund KANSEL only makes sense. We currently stand at a 98 percent reduction rate. On behalf of the KANSEL board, I would like to invite each of you to come to KANSEL for our tour. We are located at 2212 East Central. Come to our classrooms, the computer lab, and our testing center. I invite you to walk in the shoes of our students and see the challenges they face. I believe they Sedgwick County has made a smart investment by supporting KANSEL's youth crime prevention grant. Lives are changing for the better, as we ask that you continue that investment. Thank you."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you, Byron. Next we have Carolyn Gaughan."

Ms. Carolyn Gaughan, 7570 West 21st Street North, Kansas Academy of Family Physicians, greeted the Commissioners and said, "Thank you for this opportunity to be here tonight, to address you with my concerns about proposed cuts and funding. I'm Executive Director of the Kansas Academy of Family Physicians. Our

organization was formed in 1948 with a mission to promote access to an excellence in healthcare for all Kansans through education and advocacy for family physicians and their patients. We have about 1,640 members spread across the state. Our headquarters are here in Wichita, unlike many statewide associations that are based in Topeka. Sedgwick County is fortunate to have a [inaudible] best group of family physicians. And a strong department of family and community medicine at KU (University of Kansas) School of Medicine.

"So, Wichita and Sedgwick County are considered home for family medicine here in this State. Tonight, I come before you to urge you to choose people over pavement, and to restore funding to public health and to the Health Department. Public health is a key and a core function of a thriving community. Treatment of chronic diseases accounts for more than 75 percent of all healthcare costs. Family medicine and public health are becoming more closely integrated as we become more aware of a social, environmental, and community determinates of health. Sedgwick County should support proactive prevention programs. Cuts will just set us back into a more reactive mode in which that will increase the need for healthcare treatments that will be far more expensive. Cutting prevention and screening programs will cost lives.

"I want to focus one of the Sedgwick County Health Departments programs, that being Health Promotion. This program helps champion prevention in the healthcare and the business worlds. Health Promotion staff provide residents with education and evidence based tools to help them take personal responsibility for their health, and to change their own unhealthy behaviors. For example, the chronic disease self-management education program is effective in reducing individual participants health costs, while improving their quality of life. Health Promotion has helped coordinate efforts for many public and private organizations in the county, including schools and churches. This has reduced duplication of services and saved taxpayer's dollars. The Health Promotion program is just one of many important programs of the Health Department. Project Access, the Community Health Assessment, the Health Navigators, Health Free Screenings, Healthy Immunizations, and Healthy Babies programs all play a hugely important part in the collaborative network that we have of public and private health providers who take care of the sick and who try to prevent disease in our county. Cuts to them will also be detrimental to our health and wellbeing. In short, please help Sedgwick County thrive, please choose people over pavement and preserve funding for public health. Thank you again, I'd be happy to answer any questions you might have."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you very much for being here. I see no questions, next we have Susan Estes."

Ms. Susan Estes, 151 South Whittier, Wichita, greeted the Commissioners and said, "Good evening, Commissioners. First of all, I'd like to thank you for holding this public hearing. I think you generated a lot of discussion and debate in our community about what is the role of government, how do we prioritize our wants and our needs. As I listened at the last budget hearing that you guys had, and I walked away with several questions. I know you don't want to get into questions, but maybe a short answer would be okay. But what I think I heard said was that part of what gets borrowed for roads, and bridges is actually also getting used to pay bonds, and that we're in the neighborhood of \$20 million a year in what our debt payment is.

"And so, my question to you is, how do we live within our means? We have a lot of families who barely can afford the tax burden that they now have. How do we make ourselves more attractive? And our we really using bonding to pay back other bonding, and is that good for our long term financial health? And I'll be happy to take any questions."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you, Susan. I see no questions, thank you. Next we have Max Weddle."

Mr. Max Weddle, 862 South Zelta Court, Wichita, greeted the Commissioners and said, "I'm a cranky old man, so if I offend anybody, forgive me. I'm also 80 years and I ain't got time to be nice, so...the public hearing, the last public hearing reminded me of the situation with the Greeks and the Germans. Now the Greeks were real comfortable spending the Germans money, but the Germans got a little irritated with that and cut it off, and then what did the Greeks do? They protested in the streets and everywhere else because they didn't want to give up their comfort zone. Now, I heard from the budget folks that the three indicators for economic growth in this county are flat or negative for the next quarter. Correct me if I'm wrong, Mr. Chronis. So, the piles are going to get bigger.

"I'm really dazzled, I've been fortunate in my life, because I'll I've had to prevent myself of any of the services that you people so passionately defend. And God bless you for doing that. But, having said that, I'm on a fixed income. And I'm looking in the future, and some of the things I'm going to have to give up is my charitable giving, my hauling off the recycles is going to have to go away, I'm going to have to keep my flow up to where I can survive. So, we're all in the same boat, and the boat's getting smaller. But I don't believe that the people that protest really represent the 450,000-500,000 people. There's another way to count that, and I think Charlie is going to talk about that later. But I'm a little bit disturbed about ruling by demonstrations and riots and whatever. I applaud Mr. Howell, he's my representative, on trying to process from an analytical standpoint, because the way you do it is you identify, you analyze it. You come to a conclusion, and then the decision is made that will be substantiated by the analysis. And if you don't have the analysis you're building on sand. My blood pressure is going up so I'm going to quit. Thank you."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you, Max, for being here this evening. Doug Kutilek."

Mr. Doug Kutilek, 11303 Springwater Drive, Clearwater, greeted the Commissioners and said, "I've been following the budget process primarily in the papers and the news media. And it seems that more and more of the people are clamoring for more and more money for just about everything under the sun. Pet projects, favorite causes, some of them which, no doubt, are worthy of support. Who should support them is another question. But I'm reminded in all this of a statement made by Senator Everett Dirksen years ago, he said a million here and a million there and soon you're talking real money. The pie is not limitless. You know, I appreciate the difficulty that you have, you have to deal with this massive of a budget. I have to deal with my family budget and it confuses me sometimes, it gives me headaches. So I appreciate the difficulty you have. You have to sort through these things.

"And I want to speak to the general matter of budgeting. The easiest thing to do when you are spending someone else's money is to say yes to everybody that asks for it. And this was said before, from a different perspective I will say, the money that aren't budgeting is not yours. It was extracted, by law, by legal means, from the taxpayers of Sedgwick County. And I am one of them. It is our money and you are the stewards and the trustees, and you have a serious responsibility to go through the budget line by line, item by item, to say okay, this may be good, but is it necessary? Is it an essential part of what county government is designed to do? Can it be done by someone else, can it be done some other way? And everything that you look at in the budget, and I'm sure you have, you ask is this an essential part. Can we justify taking money from the taxpayers through property tax and other taxes? Can we justify taking their money involuntarily and spending it on this cause, or on this purpose?"

And I know you have to decide that. Another thing that you have to decide, what about things that were funded in the past? Just because something was funded in past years does not mean that it is worthy of support this year. I'm reminded of the fact that around 1800 the British posted a sentry to watch for Napoleon's coming invasion. They finally eliminated that position in the 1990s, 180 years after Napoleon was dead. Some things are not worthy to be continued to be funded.

"Ronald Regan said the only thing, the closest thing to eternal life in this world is government programs, because they never die. So some things you have to decide are they worthy of funding this year? I see I have a very short, on time, but I would hasten to guess if you funded everything that you are asked to fund this year, to the maximum, every penny they asked, people would be back next year and wanting more money for more causes and more money for the same causes. I pay 40 percent of my income in taxes. The biggest part of that is federal, but there is also property tax which is the second highest tax load that I carry, and it takes a substantial amount of my money. But I am pleased to see that you are giving close scrutiny in each item in the budget and prioritizing and say can we afford this, can we not? Because you work for the taxpayers, it is our money you are spending. And I want to thank you for that. I want to thank you for being good stewards of the taxes that we pay, thank you."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you, Doug. Next we have Bruce Witt."

Mr. Bruce Witt, 8200 East Thorn, Via Christi, greeted the Commissioners and said, "I'm here to represent Via Christi Health, we also respect the difficult you have as Commissioners to balance the needs of the community you serve with the limited financial resources available. However, the cuts to various health and human service proposed in this budget are, in our opinion, penny wise and pound foolish. Over the last several years, the county, has chosen to invest in health programs that not only provide much needed access to healthcare to the most vulnerable of our friends and neighbors, but also a number of preventative health services ranging from the Healthy Babies program to oral health screenings.

"We believe the financial commitment the county has historically dedicated to public health has been an extremely positive investment. You will likely hear several statistics from others who speak, but data has proven that dollars spent on health prevention result in significant financial savings to the overall healthcare system. It's been suggested that maybe it's the community's role and responsibility to provide assistance to those who are less fortunate, rather than the government. In our opinion, the community has does play a significant role in caring and assisting for our most vulnerable residents. In 2015, Via Christi provided nearly \$70 million in community benefit in Wichita, of which approximately \$39 million was traditional charity care. These numbers are not getting smaller, they are growing. There are many other charitable programs and organizations providing access to healthcare to those in need. One of the most notable is Project Access. I know you'll be hearing from Anne Nelson more specifically about this program, but the proposed cut and county funding to Project Access represents one third of its overall budget. This will significantly limit the programs ability to provide healthcare access to thousands of uninsured patients.

"So, there are many examples of the community stepping up to provide access to health services to uninsured and low income residents of Sedgwick County. Unfortunately the needs continue to exceed the capacity of Via Christi, and our community partners to provide the appropriate access and care to all of our uninsured and low income residents. The health and human service programs currently supported by the county provide and invaluable safety net for those who fall

through the cracks of our current system.

"Finally, we believe the business community, in this county, and surrounding regions, would much rather see our most vulnerable residents receive access to not only healthcare at the most appropriate time and in the most appropriate setting, but also preventative services that improve the overall health of our population. Without access to these vital services, the poor and vulnerable of our community, in most cases, will have no choice but to seek care in local hospital emergency rooms. This is the most expensive setting, with the lowest opportunity to achieve positive health outcomes. These costs are ultimately born by individuals in businesses through higher healthcare costs and insurance premiums. Thank you for allowing me to speak to you today."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Next we have Dr. Ed Hett."

Dr. Ed Hett, 8200 East Thorn, Via Christi, greeted the Commissioners and said, "I've been a practicing family physician for the past 31 years in the Twin Lakes area. And for the past 3 years I've served as Medical Director for Via Christi in Population Health. As healthcare providers we are living the struggle to maintain and improve the health of our employees, and the citizens of our region at the lowest possible cost. We certainly appreciate and embrace the need to figure out how to lower the cost to those we serve, while helping improve the health of our citizens using the most effective measures and tools."

"We have been working for nearly three years to build and develop the systems to better serve our employees by lowering the cost and providing the most effective tools to improve their health, which ultimately helps us maintain the best work force and better serve those citizens who seek healthcare at our organization. The population we serve with those tools started with only 16,000 associates, and now includes nearly 40,000 individuals across the state. However, and this is the point I would like to have you hear, we are only beginning to see those systems mature to the point where they are trustworthy with information and furnish us with the ability to address the needs of our associates reliably and consistently. Especially those who are most needing our services. If you choose to continue budget cuts to public healthcare services in a system already strapped for resources, I would challenge you to do so in a manner that partners with diverse community organization who provide those resources. And which allows time to develop systems and programs that will address those programs that would be discontinued. Those among us who are most vulnerable and unable to attain resources out of their own means will be most affected, which will in turn affect the health of the business environment of our community and citizens."

"Preventive care to those most in need in turn reduces more costly expenses to our community. Programs which have developed over time to the Health Department to address the needs of our population cannot quickly be replaced by community programs in a short time. All of this will not only bear the financial cost of more costly conditions, which not prevented in their early development will suffer as citizens if such programs are not carefully sustained. Thank you."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Next we have Anne Nelson."

Ms. Anne Nelson, MS, 1102 South Hillside, Executive Director Central Plains Health Care Partnership, greeted the Commissioners and said, "We administer the Project

Access program which coordinates donated medical care for uninsured people in Sedgwick County. We have a strong safety net system in our community, Project Access is an integral part of that safety net. Since 1999, Sedgwick County has been a dedicated funding partner along with United Way, the City of Wichita, foundations, and private donors. And we thank you very much for your partnership over the last 16 years. There are 65,000 uninsured adults here in Sedgwick County. As of today, 12,659 have received donated care through Project Access. Hundreds, up to several thousand constituents in each of your districts, have access to care, I believe you have a handout with some figures. On behalf of those patients, we have leveraged \$175 million in donated care, and \$9.5 million in medications. Every dollar the county contributes to Project Access helps leverage \$75 in donated care in return.

“Most uninsured people work, and mostly in the service sector. They’re preschool teachers and daycare providers, barbers and hairstylists, restaurant servers and retail workers, and small business owners. When they get sick they need care, just like the rest of us. And we are not talking about the common cold, I’m talking about brain tumors, breast cancer, other cancers, cardiac conditions, serious issues that are fatal if left untreated, along with serious chronic conditions that have to be well managed. Sixty-five percent of our patients work when they enter the program. Twenty percent of those who are unable to work when they enroll exit the program employed. This is not a handout, it’s not an entitlement program. Personal responsibility is built into Project Access. We expect our patients to partner with us and their healthcare providers on their treatment plans. If someone abuses the system, they get disenrolled. Our patients want to get well and they are very grateful for the program. This is about justice and integrity, compassion and volunteerism. Being pragmatic, reducing health disparities, reducing the effects of poverty and preventing bankruptcies. And physicians giving back to the community. Caring for those in need and reducing costs in the system.

“Project Access has been recognized nationally, it’s a model that has been implemented across the county. Your proposed 2016 budget eliminates funding for Project Access. Please don’t abandon hard working people who have no access to, and can’t afford health insurance. Now please don’t turn your back on the dedicated volunteer medical community willing to care for them. You do have other budget options, rather than a destructive budget that cuts funding for good public health and Project Access, we respectfully ask for your continued support. Your support in full in 2016 and beyond. And if I can have a moment to share a patient’s story with you, may I do that? I’ll do it as quickly as possible. Thank you.

“Last year a woman became connected to your Health Departments Community Health Navigator program. She knew nothing about the healthcare system. Through the Navigator program she learned about community clinics. She and her husband, who was very ill with uncontrolled diabetes, he had a blood sugar of 600, established their primary care at one of those clinics, GraceMed. Later, the husband developed a very serious condition and was enrolled in Project Access through GraceMed. He had successful brain surgery, donated by a participating neurosurgeon. This is one example of the positive effects of your health department’s services, the collaborative nature of how we work together with so many providers to form a strong safety net system. We’ve saving lives together. Thank you for your partnership, and thank you for your consideration.”

Chairman Ranzau said, “Thank you, Anne.”

Ms. Nelson said, “Thank you.”

Chairman Ranzau said, “Next we have Nathan Davis, Commissioner Norton, sorry,

Nathan Davis is next, but we have a comment by Commissioner Norton.”

Commissioner Norton said, “I’m not the Chairman, but I’m going to ask people to keep down the applause and everything, because that’s what turns this away from just listening to the public to people being emotional and everything. And I’ve sat through, this is my 16th of these, and I want to focus on the speaker and not on the passion and the clapping and the applause, I mean that’s what we do at basketball games. But here, this is serious business, I understand you’re passionate, but I would prefer that I can focus just on the speaker and the information and get good notes. So please try to hold those outbursts down just a little bit, for me, if nothing else. Thank you.”

Mr. Nathan Davis, 2262 West Manhattan, Student, University of Kansas Medical School, greeted the Commissioners and said, “I’m a fourth year medical student at the University of Kansas, I serve on the board and Family Medicine Interest group with the school. I’m a member of the Kansas Academy of Family Physicians, and the American Academy of Family Physicians. I also work as a board member in my community and my neighborhood association, and I’m glad for the opportunity to speak tonight.

“I’m here because, like a lot of you, I care about this community. I’ve lived here almost all my life. My family had a farm, still has it, south of Goddard where I grew up working on. I grew up on the west side of Wichita, running around at Sedgwick County Park learning how to fish. Running around the Zoo learning to appreciate animals. I grew up and I became a biologist. I worked for several years as a biologist before I decided I wanted to change careers and devote my life to medicine and working with people and trying to relieve suffering. This kind of helped shape who I am. And so I’m passionate about it. I’m not an expert on budgets, I know you guys have to deal with a lot of details on issues related to the budget that I know nothing about. But I know my personal experiences. And the experiences I’ve heard from the folks here, and last week.

“We have little children, they are in daycare, and they have a foster grandma at their daycare. Every year when they have an annual celebration the daycare director stands up and she makes a point to say that we couldn’t do this without Grandma Wanda here. She’s a big part of this. And my sister-in-law is a kindergarten teacher in that area of town, and kids from that daycare to go to her kindergarten and she will tell you that the kids that go there are prepared for kindergarten. They are not behind. They know their stuff. That’s something to be proud of, that’s a good investment. That’s something we should all be proud of as Commissioners and taxpayers.

“For years I didn’t have health insurance. I didn’t think I needed it, couldn’t afford it, I got lucky. I never got hurt. I never had any diseases, but ever since I’ve been in medical school we go down to the Guadalupe Clinic and we see patients and, you know, most of them don’t have health insurance. And another story about Project Access, you know, this guy comes in and he can’t use his hand, his hand won’t squeeze, he’s been a sheet metal worker for 15 years, the repetitious work of his job has injured a nerve in his arm. He can’t even pick up his own grandbaby. He comes in, asks if we can help him, if we can do something about it. Yeah, let’s get you set up with a neurosurgeon through Project Access. And, you know, he’s got to have somebody to call, he’s got to have somebody there that can pick up the phone and coordinate that visit. Somebody that can call the doctor’s office and when they can get him in. And, you know, that seems to be what the money, the county, is footing a buzz. It helps facilitate that.

“So, that’s a, seems like a good investment. Especially when the numbers you hear

about how much is donated compared to how much the county has to invest. And I don't know all the details about the Health Department cuts, and that sort of thing, but I know that chronic disease management, immunizations, Healthy Babies, all these things, all preventable programs. These are all where we know we get the most bang for our buck at. This is where we need to invest at. And so, cutting these type of programs is, doesn't make sense financially. If the goal is to save money, so...finally I just want to say, we just can't keep refusing to participate. Finding opportunities for our community, we can't keep driving our citizens, depriving them of opportunities, and make safer, happier, and healthier county. And I really hope you change your mind on the budget. Thanks."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you, Nathan. Next we have Rochelle Thompson."

Ms. Rochelle Thompson, 1321 Woodland, Wichita, greeted the Commissioners and said, "I'm here to advocate for Project Access as well. I will share my story, and the positive impacts that Project Access has had on my life. I'm a single mother of two, Raven, my son, is a freshman this fall. He tried out for the football team and has joined the chess club. Raven completed his 8th grade year with a GPA of 3.0, and has a very bright future. Raymon, my daughter, will attend Mayberry Magnet as a 7th grader. She is an honor student as well. She sits at the choir and as first chair cello, with the school orchestra. God has blessed me with two bright, young individuals, and have given me the privilege of being their mother.

"Currently, I am putting myself through college. This fall will mark year four returning as a full time junior at Wichita State University (WSU). I'll be majoring in History and Secondary Education with a minor in Political Science. I'm on the Deans' List and receive scholarships for academic excellence. This journey in education has made a positive impact on my life, as well as the lives of my children and the community around me. With that said, in September of 2011 I was diagnosed with cancer and unable to afford medical care for myself. My family physician referred me to Project Access. I applied, and attended an appointment, was screened, and met the requirements. Within weeks I had an appointment with an oncologist. The oncologist recommended a procedure, and that procedure was successful. This November marks year four of cancer free.

"Project Access has empowered me to move forward with my life and good health. My health has allowed me to become a better person and role model for my children. The impact of the staff, who showed genuine care in time of need, are a valuable asset to the community. The generosity of the doctors who donate their services are proof that community still exists. Today, I speak on behalf of the public that receives services from both Project Access, their staff, and doctors. Who give their time and attention. I ask you to reconsider cutting the funding for this project. Sedgwick County is responsible for bettering the community on an individual basis. Allowing community members to grow and prosper in good health through public access. Please consider the consequences of the cutting the funds for Project Access, how it will affect the community, and the character of Sedgwick County. Thank you."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you, Rochelle. Next we have Thomas Dalton."

Mr. Thomas Dalton, 119 South Bleckley Drive, Board of Trustees, Young Professionals of Wichita, greeted the Commissioners and said, "I would like to thank the Sedgwick County Commission for providing the opportunity for me to come and provide input for the 2016 proposed budget. I'm a Design Engineer at Textron Aviation, working on that Citation Latitude program. And I'm here tonight as a member of the Young Professionals of Wichita (YPW), Board of Trustees, as it's advocacy lead.

"As YPW represents over 2,600 individual young professionals in the area. The YPW board feels compelled to speak in our community by executing our mission to attract, engage, and retain diverse young talent, and to effect positive change for a brighter future. We have been working on this goal for 10 years, we cannot accomplish this mission alone. We recently conducted a YP (Young Professionals) community survey where we asked 312 respondents to tell us what level they supported a few local initiatives, including partial public funding for the arts and for cultural institutions. The results show that 76 percent respondents favor partial public funding of the arts. And 84 percent favor partial public funding for cultural institutions including the Sedgwick County Zoo and Exploration Place. More than 89 percent of these respondents live in Sedgwick County zip codes. These are your constituents are they are the ones who are deciding whether to settle here or to look for opportunity elsewhere.

"Therefore, after much deliberation, and not taking the decision lightly, the YPW Board of Trustees voted and adopted the stance, and recommended that Sedgwick County Commission maintain funding at the levels previously committed, particularly for the arts and for cultural organizations to promote a quality of life that attracts, engages, and retains young professionals.

"In that same survey mentioned previously, the top five factors that individuals say play into their decision on what city to live where opportunities for career advancement, cost of lifetime, family, diverse job opportunities, and healthy lifestyle options. A vibrant downtown and arts and culture scene follow closely behind. There were all things potentially impacted by these adjusted budget cuts. We've been paying close attention to previous input meetings, and the online discussions. And we are glad to hear that there may be an opening to discussions on funding alternatives. At the same time, we do believe the county committed to previous funding levels, and it should stand by those commitments. These organizations are a critical part of the community infrastructure that provide the kind of thriving place to live, work, and play that can support our vibrant local economy.

"Disrupting the ability of quality life institutions to provide top notch programming only hinders the county's ability to attract and retain businesses and towns with individuals. I would again like to thank the Commission for providing the opportunity for us to speak on the proposed 2016 budget. And on behalf of the YBW Board of Trustees, I strongly urge you to consider the alternative options that have been presented so that you can maintain funding for the arts and cultural organizations, along with the healthy lifestyle options that are so important to our local economy and are there to attract and retain talented young professionals. Thank you."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you, Thomas, Next we have Suzy Finn."

Ms. Suzy Finn, 350 West Douglas, Young Professionals of Wichita, greeted the Commissioners and said, "Since 2013, our staff and volunteers have taken 41 perspective employees on a driving tour of Wichita during the recruitment phase. On every tour, we take them by the Sedgwick County Zoo, Exploration Place, and many of our arts and cultural institutions. I'm proud to tell them about our nationally recognized zoo, our state of the art science center, and our strong arts traditions. I also share information about things such as Final Friday.

"During these tours, they ask about our school systems, the economy, what there is to do for families with kids, or for single people looking to make new friends. They want to learn about their options for riding their bikes, running, and spending time outdoors. And I have great things to tell them about our recent efforts in economic and downtown development. About the miles of trails for biking and running, and the

new bike path lanes and trails that are under development. But we all know that there's still work to do in all of those areas.

"I understand that it's important to be conservative with the taxpayers money, and that you have a lot of priorities to consider. But it's also important to understand what attracts and retains talent to a city, and why that's so important. In May, the millennial generation officially became the largest generational group in the American work force. However, last fall demographer James Chung told an audience of Wichita business and community leaders that by 2020 the single largest cohort of workers in the Wichita work force will still be those over 55, assuming that there are no changes to attract and retain more young talent in the community. Why does this matter? Because, he told us, a smaller population in peak earning and spending years will reshape aggregate consumer spending patterns. In other words, the age structure of Wichita means that the economy will inherently slow down if there is no inflow or population growth. That can mean a continued recession for Wichita, unless there is growth in bringing more people in peak earning years.

"In our recent YPW survey we asked respondents to tell us what Wichita needs more of to keep them here. Of the 297 responses to the question, more than 100 indicated there needed to be more things to do and at least a quarter of those specifically mentioned family friendly activities. Another 100 of them responded were related to the need for more jobs and career advancement opportunities. Thirty mentioned downtown development and healthy lifestyle options, including bikeability, walkability, and alternate transportation methods. There are the things our community both public and private entities need to invest in to ensure that talented young professionals stay here and help attract other businesses and other young professionals for the future of the community.

"For those reasons, I encourage you, again on behalf of the YPW Board of Trustees, to consider retaining funding for arts, cultural, and recreation entities as previously committed. We look forward to continuing to partner with all of our city and county partners, as well as the companies and individuals that supports YPW to make this a great city and a great community to live, work and play. Thank you."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you, Suzy. Next we have Djuan Wash."

Mr. Djuan Wash, 1751 North Ash, Sunflower Community Action, greeted the Commissioners and said, "In the past week and a half we have knocked on 3,434 doors and are out canvassing as we speak, talking to the voters about the cuts to healthcare. What we've found won't be news to you, but the community at large is overwhelmingly against these cuts, as they will negatively impact thousands of people who are relying on these services for staying healthy.

"In the 723 conversations that we've had with voters, many understand that county Health Department is a vital component in servicing many of those left out of gaining health insurance through their Affordable Healthcare Act, and our states refusal to expand Medicaid. The reality is that these programs shouldn't be equated to the Affordable Care Act, and any attempt at doing so is unfounded and short sighted. Florence, who is 94 years old, along with her family, depend on the Sedgwick County Health Department for her screenings. We also spoke with Linda, whose 18 year old daughter can't afford healthcare, and she's relied on the Health Department to receive her care. In addition to these women, we've also spoke with Louise, who at 73 tries her best to live a full and healthy life, struggling with a thyroid disorder and diabetes. Louise, like many of us present here today, is concerned about the 2016 budget health cuts.

"Have any of you ever depended on the services offered by the county? And if not, do you know any of these people whose access to healthcare you're deciding to cut? If not, try to put yourself in these people shoes and predicaments. These are people lives that are being affected. This is not a matter of budgeting roads, over trees, or parks, it is not that simple. Lives will be shaped by the cuts you all are planning to enact. We understand the necessity and the obligation to balance the budget, however myself, Sunflower Community Action, along with our members and the community at large is asking you to vote no on the 2016 budget as is. Balancing the budget while widening the gap between those that are uninsured is a wrong move. Thank you."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you, very much. Next we have Marylou Cortez."

Ms. Marylou Cortez, 1139 1/2 South Market, Wichita, greeted the Commissioners and said, "I'm a member of Sunflower Community Action, and I am one amongst many people who don't have health insurance. When I needed help I was able to rely on Project Access. They made it possible for me to afford my doctor's visits and medications. One of my medications alone cost \$164 for only a week's worth. This is why I'm asking everyone to not pass these cuts as is so we can keep these programs that people like myself rely on. If these programs are cut, many of us won't be able to receive the care we need. So Jim Howell, and Karl Peterjohn, and everyone else on the Board, on August 12th please do not pass these budget cuts as is, which will affect many people lives. Thank you."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you, next we have MaryBeth Jarvis."

Ms. MaryBeth Jarvis, 444 East William, Wichita Festivals, greeted the Commissioners and said, "First of all, a couple of basic facts, of which I'm sure the Commissioners are aware, but others may not be. I am here representing [Wichita] Riverfest, an agency that set, or an entity set for a cut in its funding from a relatively small amount, \$10,000, to zero, by Sedgwick County. Putting that in perspective, that is about a half a percent of the budget of Riverfest. We enjoy a very broad base of individual and business support. We are more than 96 percent privately funded. Though we are proud to have a couple of local private, or public entities, as our historical partners. Riverfest has a 44 year history of fulfilling its unique mission to bring this community together, to bring the region together, and we try to deliver on that mission for both our private sector and our public sector donors and sponsors and partners.

"Given the scale of the county's contribution to our budget each year, I frankly thought seriously about not representing at this public hearing, or other occasions at all. But thought about it, and frankly I'm here for two reasons. The first is, that I do believe that the Wichita Riverfestival, and the organization I represent, does have valuable information to add to your thoughts about the 2016 budget. We have fulfilled, what I believe to be exactly the mission that both our private and our public sector investors have asked us. We've diversified our donor base, our support base. We have gotten multiple, literally hundreds of partners involved in making this event happen. We have managed a budget of about \$2 million a year to bring, in the course of nine days, the execution of our unique mission, which is to unify uniquely the diverse groups of people in this area. Bring them together, and in the course of that nine days add between \$25 and \$30 million to the local economy. That's a large impact for, from the county's perspective, a very small investment. And that impact is monetary, but it is also reaching literally hundreds of thousands of people. We have 410,000 attendees at this year's Riverfest. You take that over the four plus decade history of our event, and that tiny investment by the county hits not only the county citizens, but also visitors and others to our area in a way that is uniquely amplified

compared to other budget line items.

"The second reason that I decided to come out was that, frankly, to not be present is doing a disservice to the 6,000 volunteers that we presently have working to make the Wichita Riverfestival the unique and unifying event that it is. And did thousands of those that have come before us, and that have created and managed this community institution into the region's largest and most inclusive community event. I'm proud of that, and I want to give credence to the energy and the sweat and the effort that they've put in. Their own gift to making this community richer. So, if you are hearing from your constituents, whose taxpayer dollars you are stewarding, that they do believe that the county and other public sector entities have a roll in contributing the quality of place, then I believe that Wichita Riverfestival can remain a very good steward of even small amounts of those funds. And we look forward to the opportunity to continue that. Thank you."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you, MaryBeth. Next we have Collin Stienben."

Mr. Collin Stienben, 13308 Tallwood Drive, Board of Trustees, Exploration Place and Zoological Society, greeted the Commissioners and said, "Thank you, for taking the time to listen to your constituents. I appreciate the difficult task that you Commissioners have before you. I have the privilege of sitting on both the Board of Trustees for Exploration Place (EP) and the Sedgwick County Zoo. I've tried not to take these cuts personally. My wife and I made the decision to give up a promising career in another wonderful state in order to relocate back to our roots in the Sedgwick County area to raise our family. We choose to make this our home.

"I'm here today because I care very deeply, and am very passionate about Sedgwick County, our community, and specifically these two wonderful organizations, Exploration Place and the Sedgwick County Zoo. You know the attendance statistics about both EP, and the Zoo. And their importance not only for Sedgwick County, as well as on a state level. My young children, along with countless others throughout our community, have experienced the first rate educational outreach programs provided by both of these organizations. These two organizations contribute significantly to the overall quality of my family's life. As a member of the board of trustees for both organizations, I see firsthand how the financial support provided by Sedgwick County is put to use. Gene Luth and Mark Reed, along with their tremendous staff, are stewards of the financial support of the citizens of Sedgwick County and they count on what the County Commission provide. Each dollar is an investment with both measurable, tangible returns, as well as some immeasurable results, while providing a quality of life for our area residents, as well as those guests who, while visiting, return home, telling their family, friends, and neighbors, what a wonderful place Sedgwick County is to visit. What I see as a young executive in this community, are two gyms that make my kids eyes light up every time we visit there as a family. In turn, that makes me want to continue to make Sedgwick County the place we call home. I urge the Commission to fund these organizations at the levels as agreed upon in the existing agreements. These two are crown jewels in our community. Thank you for the time."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you very much for being here this evening. Next we have Cynthia Schwan."

Ms. Cynthia Schwan, 711 North Linden Court, Exploration Place, greeted the Commissioners and said, "First of all, I think all of us can agree on at least one thing. What a great country we live in that encourages its citizens to give their thoughts and opinions about important topics to their elected officials. I am truly grateful for this opportunity to speak here this evening.

"I am proud to serve on the board of Exploration Place. The Sedgwick County Science and Discovery Center. Exploration Place is a leader in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) education. In the STEM education pipeline, STEM standing for, of course, Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math, it is the only science center in our city, region, and state. Kansas City, of course, has one in Missouri. It is an iconic building for Wichita. And in fact, was one of the first projects for downtown redevelopment. I'm a former educator, so I was drawn to EP initially because of the educational opportunities it offered to my children and our community. But Exploration Place is so much more. People visit Wichita and spend money in Wichita because of attractions like EP. In fact, Exploration Place is a top tourist attraction in our county, and our state. Serving more than 200,000 visitors yearly from every county in our state, and many coming to visit from outside of the State of Kansas.

"Obviously when these tourists come, they spend money at our hotels, our restaurants, our shops, our gas stations, boosting the economy and paying taxes. We need interesting strong ever changing attractions in our county to keep people coming back. Exploration Place, the Sedgwick County Zoo, and the Arts Council are all about quality of life. A key reason people and businesses choose to locate and stay in a community. EP is an affordable attraction that adds to the quality of life in our community.

"I understand that there are many things to consider in the budgeting process. Stable funding the and the five year funding agreement have enabled Exploration Place to plan it's future, book new exhibits, and provide what the community wants. As some wise person once said, if it ain't broke, don't fix it. I urge you to honor the commitment the Sedgwick County Commission made to Exploration Place. Thank you."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you very much. Next we have Elizabeth Redler."

Ms. Elizabeth Redler, 9422 Cross Creek Court, Exploration Place, greeted the Commissioners and said, "This is my story. My husband and I moved to Wichita in 1990 from Washington D.C. when we were expecting our first child, and I wanted a career to become a stay-at-home mother. I actually came to Wichita under duress, it wasn't my first choice. However, Wichita has been very good to us. Twenty-five years later my husband and his partners have grown a business here, Freddy's Frozen Custard and Steakburgers, which relies on bright, engaged young people as employees. We have raised two successful adults who are now living in other cities, and I hope they do come back, but I'm not so sure about that.

"I became involved with Exploration Place first as a frequent user. Joined the board in 2002, and was chair of the board 11 years later. In my full time job of raising children, it became apparent to me that a child not exposed to arts and sciences outside of the classroom is not getting a complete education. Children learn from hands on experiences and exposure to all sorts of different ideas. Wasn't it Bill Gates who became interested in solving puzzles, hunting down lost books while volunteering at a library? And who knows what sparks the interest in future aerospace engineers to start a business in our city. Possibly the upcoming design build and fry exhibit at Exploration Place.

"And, along that route, I fully believe that a cure for cancer will be found by one of these multi-tasking, inquisitive young children exposed to a STEM background at

places such as Exploration Place. And this is why I believe organizations are so important to the vibrancy and future of our city. My parents taught me to support spending for the greater good. As children of the depression, they remembered if a house was on fire you relied on your neighbors to help you put it out. If there was a major medical emergency you hope the neighbor with the car can drive your loved one to the hospital. And they grew up in education and enrichment provided by museums and zoos were available only to the wealthy. Quality of life is one of the key reasons people choose to live and stay in a community. And I want that community to be Wichita, Kansas.

"I am asking you to keep the funding agreement for the arts and sciences in our city. The funding agreement has enabled our organization to plan for the future, and I thank you for your support and partnership in the past. I know we can work together to find a solution to support our county assets such as Exploration Place. And thank you for your time."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you, Betsy. Next we have Thomas Bloxham."

Mr. Thomas Bloxham, 9106 Windwood Court, Wichita, greeted the Commissioners and said, "I'm a physician and president of Center Plains Healthcare Partners, affiliated with Medical Society of Sedgwick County and the parent organization for Project Access. I've been a Sedgwick County resident and practicing physician for 35 years. I'd like to express my deep gratitude to the Commissioners and the community for the support Project has received from county government over the years. Sedgwick County was an original partner with us, a major source of financial support from the very beginning. It's not proposed that the current \$200,000 a year in county funding to Project be eliminated in next year's budget. I'm not a fan of increasing taxes, I deplore wasteful government spending and inefficiency. I also know a good deal when I see one. For ever thousand dollars our county government invests in Project Access, \$17,000 of healthcare is provided. Of the \$200,000 yearly, leverages \$3.4 million in care to our fellow residents who are in need, and could otherwise not afford this care.

"This is done without loans, it's done without bonds, but with donated care from 650 volunteer physicians, other healthcare professionals, and our local hospitals. Many drugs and much in the way of medical equipment is donated or provided at cost. This donated care adds up to \$15 million a year. And over the course of this project, \$175 million. When we invest \$1000 in infrastructure, which is important roads or bridges, we get \$1000 worth of roads or bridges. No one offers to come and work and build for free, and I doubt that we get the building supplies at cost.

"I don't believe we have anything before us that provides more service for less investment than Project Access. I realize there are deeply held views regarding the role of county government in financing many services in our community. I understand and respect these ideas. That notwithstanding, to go from major support to zero, over the course of a single budget season, is drastic, and places the healthcare of many of our most vulnerable neighbors at risk. If, it's the public's wish to change the direction of county government, then surely we don't need to do so all at once. I respectfully urge you to continue the funding of Project Access in the 2016 budget."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you, Tom. Next we have Bill Livingston."

Mr. Bill Livingston, 641 Preston Trail, Wichita, greeted the Commissioners and said, "I'm a business owner, taxpayer, and volunteer chairman of the Wichita Downtown Development Corporation (WDDC). I want to thank you this evening for this opportunity to speak with you. It's so good to see so many people here that are taking

their time on a Thursday night to provide input to you all on the budget process. It shows just how much, and how so very many care so much about Wichita, and the region.

"Now, while I'm a chairman at WDDC, I'm here tonight as the long time business owner, who's invested the past 40 plus years a great deal of my personal time, energy, and money in economic redevelopment of downtown and the community. I'm here to talk about partnerships and economic growth. First, we know that economic growth and development requires both public and private sector involvement. When we work together, as a team, and as partners, we demonstrate to businesses that they should remain here. That they should invest here. That they should grow here. We show them that as a community, we have processes, policies, and plans that indicate to them we value them here.

"The second part of that is that just like any business, a community has to continue to invest in itself. When a business stops growing, there are some leaders who reduce that investment in themselves. And for many of those, that results in a continuing decline in their business. I call this the death spiral. Those that choose to invest carefully, however, in the right things to generate additional revenue, most often enjoy success and growth. In a community's case, the only way new revenue is increased, is through growth in jobs, and people, and property. We cannot have high taxes, so we have to be careful and create a careful balance. The goods new is you, Commissioners, have capped the county property taxes already. So what we're really talking about is the decisions about where you place that investment within the current budget. Like businesses, everything is a balance. And that investment needs to be in all areas to cover as much as we can, but with a focus on where it can provide the highest return on that investment. For our community, it's even more important for us to invest in ourselves, because we are a medium sized community. This comes with a great benefit, but not one that is easily seen by all. It means we have to be even better, to tell our story better. Market ourselves better, and have a great product, which we do. That requires investing in our self in two different ways.

"First, we have to invest in a great quality of life, because so many midsized communities offer much more in natural amenities such as mountains or oceans. We don't have many of those here. We have so much to offer though, and yet we can't ever assume it's good enough, because other communities continue to increase their ability to recruit young people, families, retiree's, with greater and greater quality of life amenities.

"Second, we have to invest in ourselves by working closely with our local businesses. Working with them has to be one of our highest priorities, and it's so important that we do that as partners together. Those businesses and businesses looking to move into our communities are looking for information to help them in making decision to come here or to expand and grow here and invest. Providing that market information to them requires resources. It also requires resources to get hundreds of businesses in the same room for the Blueprint for Regional Economic Growth, known as BREG, and listen to what they need. We've had great response from these industry clusters on what they need. And the county has been a valuable partner in that effort to date, and it's most certainly appreciated.

"Now it will take resources and time and collective work to help them succeed and grow. Working with small and medium sized business in seven different industry clusters, and with our partnership with Wichita State's Innovation Campus, this is the time to fully invest and continue to partner in this efforts to move our economic initiatives forward. Thank you very much."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you. Next we have Gary Schmidt."

Mr. Gary Schmitt, 14000 Pinnacle Drive, Wichita, greeted the Commissioners and said, "I'm here to speak on behalf of the Greater Wichita Economic Development Coalition (GWEDC), at 350 West Douglas. First, we've appreciated the partnership and opportunity to work together to keep great jobs here in Sedgwick County. For the past decade, during the very tough economic downturn. With you, other partners, and with community volunteers, like myself, our mission is to work together to make Sedgwick County the best place for businesses to create new jobs and to keep existing jobs here.

"Tonight, I'd like to talk about a few of our efforts. The first one is our visits to local companies. We call these idea visits. And each year we make approximately 100 or more visits to local companies. The mostly small to mid-sized companies with employees of less than 75. They are companies already here that we want to grow here and include a wide range of industries, manufacturers of all kinds, oil and gas, advanced medical, distributors, technology, value added agriculture, and more. During the visits, we ask questions and listen to understand their business and industry better. Each visit we ask if there's anything impeding their potential growth in Sedgwick County. They usually provide a number of issues they have with workforce, exporting, expansion opportunities, these are great news, because these are the initiatives that we are working on.

"Last year, we helped prepare an export plan to educate and help companies export their products. Last month, our staff worked with Senator Moran to hold a highly successful supplier conference for Northrupp Grumman. We have hundreds of companies that are potential suppliers to Northrupp Grumman, and we have many that already are supplying work and parts to this company. More than 80 companies have valued their one on one contact directly with Northrupp Grumman representatives. Plus all of them heard directly from the company on how to get more work, which directly leads to more jobs here. Those 160 people from small and medium sized businesses signed up on the web and attended to help them increase their business here by doing hard work that they can't do on their own.

"Our staff continue to do more and more of this. Helping our businesses get in front of more global businesses so they can continue to grow here through trade shows, other supplier conferences, and now through BREG, the Blueprint for Regional Economic Growth. GWEDC has worked closely with WSU and hundreds of local business leaders, to bring together businesses and seven different industry clusters. Those businesses have been telling us what they need most to grow their industry here. Now we must commit to showing those industry sectors we are serious about addressing their top issues. We focus on initiatives that help businesses grow and increase jobs in our region. GWEDC is committed to our community. And we need support from the private and public sector to meet the needs of the community, and all businesses. Growing our community and jobs provides an increase tax base and lower taxes for our future. Thank you for your time."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you, Gary. Next we have Charlie Peaster."

Mr. Charlie Peaster, 9453 North 135th, Sedgwick, greeted the Commissioners and said, "I don't envy any of you up there, but I know at least three of you had to work hard along with city staff to prepare a budget. A little bit of information. I've heard that you guys, a whole lot of people have called you saying you need to change your outlook on the budget. I thought little facts and figures might be appropriate.

"Two years ago, Commissioner Peterjohn ran for office again. He had an opponent.

Commissioner Peterjohn, in a primary, won by 7,040 votes. His opponent had a little over 6,000. That's 13,000 people that voted from his district. In the general election, he had nobody run against him, but he had 29,749 people that voted for him. And part of the reason they voted for him was because he went around in his district, and talked to the people about what they wanted, and what they needed from him.

"Now we got to Chairman Ranzau, Chairman Ranzau just ran for reelection. In his reelection, he had an opponent. He got 12,000, I'm sorry, to run again, he got 12,248 votes to get him elected. Commissioner Howell had to run, for the first time, for election. In his general election, he got 14,696 votes. That's 56,693 Kansas taxpayer, Sedgwick County taxpayer, voters. So, you commissioners are doing what the people in your district wanted you to do. Commissioner Unruh ran for reelection; he had nobody against him in the Primary [Election] and nobody against him in the General [Election]. He got 24,530 votes, but he also had 450 people who didn't care for the way he looked, because there were 450 write ins. Commissioner Norton, I didn't research yours, because yours was two years ago. You guys have done something that I have to do, at home; I have a budget. I am retired. I don't have an income, other than my pension and Social Security. Things go up and I have to decide what's important, in my life; medical bills, food, insurance, taxes; and I make those choices. You guys have tough choices. At least three of you got together, with the staff, to bring this budget to the people. I applaud you for your job and tell you to continue doing what you're doing. I am not here for a freebie, like a lot of these people are. You got to do what you got to do to keep Sedgwick County solvent. If that means doing away with some of the frivolous things that we have, so be it. I have been in this state, in Sedgwick County, since 1961, when I got out of the United States Navy. I left, for a short period of time, and came back in 1974 and have been here ever since. When I retired, they asked where I was going to move to. I said I'm not going anywhere. I retired after 25 years. Thank you for the choice to be able to speak to you on the budget and hopefully you keep it the way it was.

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you, Charlie. Next, we have Gerald Domitrovic."

Mr. Gerald Domitrovic, 1219 George Washington Drive, greeted the Commissioners and said, "Thank you, first of all, for being involved in the budget. I personally find budgeting to be so boring that I can't make myself do my own budget. I appreciate you having the concern to do the budget for the county. Now, I am speaking not in favor or against any particular program, in this matter, but I was in the room, next door, last Wednesday, and I listened to the tenor and the tone of the, particularly the opposition, to some of the proposed spending cuts. My understanding is the total spending cuts are three percent and some of the programs will be more than that and some, missing entirely, in this matter. I was concerned about the tone and tenor about the opposition to the matter. One thing here, is that, in terms of having the limited government, the federal government is useless. They don't even talk about a balanced budget anymore. A good year for the federal government is when they go from a \$1 trillion deficit to a \$500 billion deficit, in this matter. So, if we are going to get any fiscal responsibility, it's not going to be from Washington [D.C.], it's going to have to be from the lower level, the grassroots level; the county, in this matter. Also, these tie in with some of the other things we've heard here. Intentions do not equal results. If they did, look at all of the great things that we'd have from the great society. Trillions have been spent, we were going to blow on poverty, we were going to get rid of this and cause more of this and to a great extent, we subsidized the negative things and after 50 years, things are not any better and they're worse, in many ways. Now, in regard to the proposal, here, in this matter, like I said, I was getting that there was a sense of entitlement and that's because it's the way the government has worked in this country. Over the years, it's promised people more and more. You have Social Security and then we'll give you this, and in the last couple of years

we've had ObamaCare and No Child Left Behind, and it's just more and more, things don't get better. I have heard people talk about the lack of medical care. I thought ObamaCare was going to cure that and we're still in dying need, in this matter. The other thing is, the history of this country. This country has a history of people doing things on their own. I know that people get tired of pulling themselves up by their boot straps, but they did. I have traveled around Kansas and people, in the early 1800s, they formed their own orchestras, they formed their own opera companies and opera houses; they did a lot of things themselves. They didn't say oh, we can't have arts, because the government isn't subsidizing it. We can't have an orchestra or medical care, because the government isn't subsidizing it. They went out and did it, to a great degree. Now, the character of the country has changed in that time, obviously, in this matter. The other thing is that spending has become an emotional activity. The words that we hear; compassion, the most vulnerable, show that you care, people telling their own stories, in this matter, quality of life, show you're a good person. How do we show that we're a good person, in America? We put a bumper sticker on our car, we put a label on our lapel and we spend other people's money, to show how nice we are. Society has gotten so insane. If you have an adult discussion about balancing the budget or saying no to some people, people think that you're mean. Mr. Ranzau, I have heard that you're crazy, from some people that I've talked to; you're so off the edge of what society has gotten used to, in this matter. What I am asking you to do is not to be for or against any program, but have an adult approach to it. The fact that a program is good and it does good things is not enough. Exploration Place is a nice place, that's not the issue. The Zoo is a nice place, that's not the issue. The issue is; with all of the other things that you have to spend money on, how much of a subsidy do they deserve. And that's the adult question. I would be the worst County Commissioner, because I am an easy mark. I hate to say no to people. Nice people come up and they say I'm doing good work, don't you support that? Won't you help me? I say yes, here's some more money. That's why I'm not a County Commissioner and you are. My main thing is; make adult decisions. We have become childish in this country, immature about money matters and a lot of other matters and I appreciate the fact that you are taking a more adult approach and I was concerned about the tenor and tone of people that if you talk to them like grownups that you're being mean to them. Thank you."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you, very much. Next we have Laurel Nichols."

Ms. Laurel Nichols, 1506 North Salina, Sedgwick County Zoo, greeted the Commissioners and said, "I was asked to speak, tonight, by the curator of education at the Sedgwick County Zoo, to impart to value that the Zoo has to the teaching community. I am a teacher of gifted students, with 16 years of experience, educating at the elementary level, for USD 259. My mission today is to share why it is vital to honor the promised five year financial agreement that the county has made with the Sedgwick County Zoo. As a teacher, I am strongly concerned with maintaining educational opportunities in the Wichita area community. Educators view the Zoo, not only as Kansas' leading outdoor family tourist attraction, but also as a critical resource for teaching science, technology, engineering and math, or STEM concepts. The National Academies of Science and Engineering, in 'A Framework for K-12 Science Education', state that 'The percentage of students who are motivated by their in school experiences to pursue careers in STEM fields is too low.' Our district works hard to integrate science concepts into language arts activities, but currently, we are provided with only a few isolated blocks of time, weekly, to focus, specifically, on teaching science and that must be combined with social studies. Therefore teachers rely on out of school resources to help fill the need, with engaging, real world, educational experiences.

According to the U. S. Department of Commerce, growth in jobs requiring STEM

backgrounds is three times as fast as job growth in other fields. Educational experiences at the Zoo and of course, other organizations, such as Exploration Place, help provide that science background, as well as providing a global perspective, which will guide students as they grow to make personal and civic decisions, which will affect our community and our world. Three generations of my family have worked to educate guests, at the zoo, including my mother, Margaret, who has spent more than 4,000 of her hours, educating as a volunteer of Zoo Docent. Around 700 donors contributed to the \$10.6 million capital campaign for the completion of the new elephant exhibit, with the understanding that the county had agreed to provide additional money, which is necessary to sustain operational costs of this exhibit. This demonstrates that not just educators, like myself, but our entire community is deeply invested in maintaining the critical educational experiences at the Sedgwick County Zoo. Now, it is up to the county to fulfill their original financial promise to our Zoo, our community and our future. Thank you."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you, very much. Next, we have Michael Brincefield."

Mr. Michael Brincefield, 4730 South Ida, Wichita, greeted the Commissioners and said, "I appreciate the commissioners having a time in the evening when people are normally at work, can make it. We had a family business for 30 years and I didn't make one public meeting like this, until after it sold in 1996, when I started attending Derby City Council meetings. I no longer reside in Derby and I don't make it to enough of these meetings, but that's my fault, not yours. I do appreciate the accommodation, in the evenings. I wish more government entities would follow that example. My folks both grew up poor. My mom took assistance from what was then commonly called the (inaudible) and Commodities Program. My father grew up, out in the country, he said I didn't realize I was poor, because everybody else was the same. He started in the food industry and he stayed in the food industry and he worked our family out of poverty; I never knew it. I heard the stories about it, but I never experienced it, personally, because of his hard work. Not everyone can do that hard work. I have had people who worked for us and our family business, before we sold it, who wouldn't have made it in most businesses. A lot of our customers came in and said that we hired some more of the mentally challenged, is what they would call it now a days, or physically challenged and if they could do the job, they could do the job and if they could come close, sometimes we could kind of help them out. If they couldn't do it, we had to let them go, because we did have to keep the business afloat, so we could support the people that worked there and were depending on it. Government is not a business, it doesn't operate the same way, but it does have to stay afloat or it can help no one. I look at the roads and bridges as extremely important, because without those, nobody gets to any of these other organizations, to do anything. The food doesn't come off of the farms and get to the people, to feed them; the airplanes don't go from here to there, without these things being intact and serviceable; so they have to be a priority. A lot of these other things, I wouldn't call them frivolous, because they need to happen, but the government shouldn't be the hand that is feeding that process. There is a shining example, in our community, which I am aware of and have participated with; the Union Rescue Mission and that takes no government money. Some of these individuals need to check in with them on how to run some of these organizations, without government help. I would, it would be beneficial to the taxpayers, but it would be beneficial to them, because they would have the freedom to do more things that they want to do, without government constraints. That is all that I have to say."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you, very much. Next, we have Peggy Johnson."

Ms. Peggy Johnson, 28 Norfolk, Wichita, greeted the Commissioners and said, "Thank you for this opportunity. I am the Executive Director of Wichita Medical

Research and Education Foundation. I have been a volunteer health care advocate for over 25 years. In that time, I have traveled across the U.S., helping to set up programs, evaluate programs and provide guidance on access to services. Early in my career, I became aware of how fortunate we are in Sedgwick County, to have a well developed and organized Health Department. My first involvement with the Health Department was in 1989 when the Junior League of Wichita brought the Komen Race for the Cure to Wichita. Our single goal was to set up a free mammography program for the women of Sedgwick County. We met with the director of the Health Department and she helped us develop that program from the very beginning. Today, that program has spread beyond S C and has provided 44,000 free mammograms for women and men, in the State of Kansas. As I have visited other communities, across the U.S., to help develop programs like ours, in Sedgwick County, the Sedgwick County Health Department was the exception, not the rule, of what I have found across the U.S. The Sedgwick County Health Department is an active participant in our community by providing life saving programs from infants to seniors. We and you should be very proud of the work they do and the coalitions that they have helped to develop and the work that goes on in Sedgwick County, as a result of this environment. You, as a Sedgwick County Commission, should take pride in their work. While the Health Department doesn't provide all of the programs in our community, and they shouldn't; nobody believes that they should, they are partners in our good health. Wichita Medical Research and Education Foundation provides funding for locally developed medical research. Much of the research is done by medical students and residents. If the research is community based, they more often than not, use county wide data, provided by the County Health Assessments, through the Health Department. If you stop or delay funding for the County Health Assessments, you are limiting the kind of resourceful research that can be done in the county. We don't as you to fund the research, we will do that. We are asking you to continue to support this effort by continuing to fund the County Health Assessments. Additionally, the direction by the county health staff in interpreting the health assessment is a tool that many community organizations use to set their programs and their funding goals. One last comment; I shared with you the help that the Sedgwick County Health Department started with us with the free mammography program. I am asking you not to cut the breast and cervical medical assistance job. It's one of the FTEs that you have put a red line through. While this program is funded by the county, the services provided by that position are billable to private health insurance and the state EDW (Early Detection Works) Program. Many of the women using that program have been coming to the Health Department for 25 years, since we started the program in 1990. Asking the 650 women seen last year to find another provider builds a barrier for them and puts more of a burden on other clinics in the community and it is not providing early detection. That's not what a partner in our health community does. I am asking you to put people in front of pavement and bridges. I am asking you to keep the present funding for the Sedgwick County Health Department. Thank you."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you, very much. Next, we have Kirsten Bruce."

Ms. Kirsten Bruce, 3243 East Murdock, Executive Director, Kansas Affiliate of Susan G. Komen, greeted the Commissioners and said, "Komen provides grant funds to nonprofit and governmental organizations to provide breast health education and screening. Our largest grantee is the EDW Program; our grant provides funding for breast health services, for women under the age of 50. We have had a partnership with the Sedgwick County Health Department for 26 years. This partnership has worked, because there is a mix of private and public funding. Because of our partnership, women and men have better access to care. This access to care allows breast cancer to be detected early; when it is most treatable, which is of course when it is most cost efficient. We are gravely concerned to hear about the proposed cut to

eliminate a position in the Sedgwick County Health Department that provides breast screenings for women and men, right here in Sedgwick County. In the last year, more than 600 women were seen at the Health Department. More than 550 women were referred on to the EDW Program for mammograms. While yes, there are other clinics, in Wichita, that can provide breast health services, 600 Sedgwick County citizens have been coming to the Sedgwick County Health Department for breast health services and this is their medical home for preventative and early detection services. If this position is cut, not only will citizens lose their medical home, they will be an additional burden left on the remaining providers to provide timely services. Taking away medical care options for the most disenfranchised members of our county will most definitely impact their access to quality healthcare. Moreover, while the medical position at the Sedgwick County Health Department is funded by the county, all services that are provided, such as clinical breast exams are paid through a direct access to the EDW Program. Thus, this position is basically a budget neutral position, because the employee's hours are reimbursed by the state and organizations like Komen Kansas. It does not make sound economic sense to cut this position from the Health Department budget and the consequences are grave. If this position is cut, local women and men will lose their medical home and many of them may not seek medical screenings somewhere else, until their cancer is advanced and their treatment options are few. Susan G. Komen Kansas asks you to consider the health care of the citizens of Sedgwick County and the fact that the county is not losing, financially, by keeping this position intact. Keep the medical assistant position at the Sedgwick County Health Department. Thank you, for your time."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you very much. Next, we have Connie Zienkewicz. I am sure I didn't get that correct."

Ms. Connie Zienkewicz, 221 North Parkdale, Non-Profit Chamber of Service, greeted the Commissioners and said, "Thank you, Chairman Ranzau, for coming to lunch with us last February to discuss with our membership, the view of the council. This history of the Non-Profit Chamber of Service began when the former County Manager, Bill Buchanan, and the Hugo Wall School decided that there needed to be some support for non-profits in Sedgwick County, so they could be strong entities to serve the public. That was about ten years ago. Currently, we have 160 members in the Non-Profit Chamber of Service and the Non-Profit Chamber of Service is there to provide training, conferences, a job board, and other support to make strong non-profits in our community, that serve so many of the citizens through many of the programs that you have heard from today. The current budget proposal cuts the county's funding to the Non-Profit Chamber of Service, in half; from \$20,000 to \$10,000, making it much more difficult for the Non-Profit Chamber of Service to provide those services to the many non-profits that it serves. In essence, it's a cut to all of those non-profits in the way that they can access training for their members and their staffs. We hope that you will reconsider that cut, because it cuts, not only, this particular organization, but all of the organizations served by the Non-Profit Chamber of Service. Thank you."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you very much for being here this evening. Next, we have Lori Horton."

Ms. Lori Horton, 325 East Louisa Street, Derby, greeted the Commissioners and said, "I am here because of me and because of Project Access. I am a client of Project Access, just as of March 5, 2015. I was selected because of low income and no way to pay for my chronic medical condition, which includes regular blood tests, doctor visits, diabetic nurse visits, dietitians, and physician assistant visits. The doctors decide whether they can help you or not through a very thorough process and they let you know the same day, so it's a wonderful program. It's amazing. It has,

literally, saved my life. There is no way to thank Dr. Cline and all of his wonderful, professional staff, for everything they have done so far. I have just started and I can't afford for it to be cut. I know that Project Access has saved my life and will continue to do so, as long as it stays funded through the public support donations, such as Dillon's; if you sign up your card, they donate, private donors, it may even be coming out of some of the doctor's pockets, for all I know. I don't know how it's all funded, but I know it's one of the best programs I have ever heard of. I know one thing; without Project Access, I was in trouble. I had no job, no insurance, no prescription coverage, and so on. They have paid for pretty much everything; specialty visits, labs, cancer screenings and general medical needs, for almost everything. I have almost paid for nothing, except for low prescription costs. Today, they asked me to give a speech, so I said yes, I'd be glad to. The first day, when I was told that I was accepted, I cried and cried; it was just unbelievable that I had been turned down everywhere; from Medicaid to Medicare to ObamaCare. Even free clinics aren't free. I had to raise money through friends, just to get the blood test to discover what disease I have. I had no way of surviving. I take many medications each day. I am slowly getting better. I can't work yet, but they are working on getting me back to work; the doctors try to get you back there. They are very professional, they have great emotional support, I believe that if Project Access wasn't there, I wouldn't be here today. I can't give them enough thanks. And the doctors; they are always waiting there with a smile, in the office, they're just great. From reception to drawing your blood, to medical assistants; it's just like a big family. Project Access is so easy to use and has no complications, no stress, is extremely organized and is, as I understand, expanding, which I believe it needs to do so, so they can continue to help more people who have nowhere else to turn. It's a ground breaking idea that should be followed across the country and more doctors need to get involved and do more, to save lives. Funding Project Access is not an option, it's a necessity, for my survival and for another 1,200 to 1,500 people, per year, that they help. Thank you, Commissioners, for your efforts in supporting Project Access and for Project Access for stepping up and supporting the local community. I especially want to thank all of you Commissioners for your time and understanding the only option we have is to support a great and growing cause. Project Access saved my life and I want to thank all of the doctors for creating this life saving system. I will continue to support Project Access, even when I no longer need them; which I will get there. It has been a pleasure being your client and I want to thank them for choosing my life. You are all in my thoughts and prayers and thank you for your time."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you, Lori. Next we have David Tackitt. David are you here? Okay, we will move on to Albert Sanchez."

Mr. Albert Sanchez, 100 East English, Wichita, greeted the Commissioners and said, "First of all; I am here, representing my family. We have lived here, in Sedgwick County, over 18 years. It's the longest we've ever lived, in my lifetime and I've moved around quite a bit, to various cities. I am also here to represent my employer, Fidelity Bank, I talked to Clark [Bastain] and Aaron [Bastain], earlier today, and they are fully supportive of your efforts and want us to consider this carefully. I am also here on behalf of the Board of Trustees of the Sedgwick County Zoo; so you know what I am going to talk about. Before I do, I want to thank you, Commissioner Ranzau, for letting me speak. I want to thank the other Commissioners for having this hearing, because this is important and it's going to make an impact on a lot of people. We also want to thank you for your support that you have exhibited over the years; the Sedgwick County Zoo is a great example of a public, private cooperation that works, and it works by some of the members that I am going to emphasize, but the last thing

that I want to say, before I get started on the numbers, is that listening to everyone, this evening; this is a tough job, so it's a heartfelt thanks to you guys, just like the passion from everybody asking for the help, so also thanks to you guys, because this is tough and there are a lot of people talking about a lot of serious things here. What I want to emphasize is a couple of simple points, as a marketing person, that make a lot of difference. The Sedgwick County Zoo regularly draws 540,000 people, inside its doors, on an annual basis. That's more than the population of Sedgwick County. That's a lot more than a lot of the other things that we enjoy and we appreciate, in this community. I do not want to belittle anyone else that does their efforts, but I think that you gentlemen are all familiar with our wonderful downtown arena. Over the course of the year, that draws only 55 percent of the people that go into the Zoo. The Zoo has a huge impact for everybody, to enjoy the Zoo and to improve the quality of life, here in Wichita, Kansas. So, I first want to ensure that everybody is aware that as we talk about the Zoo, the magnitude of the people that it will impact, as you consider what is important to help in that public, private partnership, that has worked so well in the past and we believe that it will work well into the future. That's the first point. The second point is another one. We are always talking about investment and return and it's important to maintain the roads and the health and everything else, but it's your Zoo; the community comes together and they've built world class orangutan exhibits, they've built wonderful tiger exhibits, the gorilla exhibit, they've raised the money privately and then they turn that asset over to the county. Right now, to rebuild the Zoo, I believe it's got \$100 million insurance policy, so it's important to realize that what we are asking for is not frivolous; it's important because we are working to maintain your asset. The people who work on the Sedgwick County Zoo Board of Trustees, and I have done that for the majority of the years that I have been here; worked to make sure it's the best it can possibly be, and it's a community asset and we all know how excited we got when the Shockers went to the Final Four, and it's great and it's good for the community, but the Zoo goes to the national championships, every year. In terms of their popularity with the populous, in terms of the delivery of their education systems and what it means for the quality of life around here. Please consider it very carefully; I know you will make the right decisions. Thank you."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Last call for David Tackitt. Next we have Donna Sweet."

Dr. Donna Sweet, 1010 North Kansas, Project Access, greeted the Commissioners and said, "I am a General Internist and an AIDS (acquired immunodeficiency syndrome) Specialist. I was born in the county and I have lived my entire life, professional and otherwise, in the county. I am the immediate President of the Sedgwick County Medical Society, representing over 1,200 physicians who work and live in this community. I am still on that board and I am on the Central Plains Healthcare Partnership Board of Directors; the official overseer of Project Access. Project Access is vital to Sedgwick County. We, as doctors, know that and I think that you've heard from a number of patients that would agree with us. It serves the working poor in a way that couldn't happen without its oversight. Yes, I can give away my time and expertise and I do, regularly. I have had 460 of my patients end up on Project Access. I am an Internist, you can come to me with your right upper quadrant pain and I can guess, by differential diagnosis, what it might be, but it requires ways of proving that. I cannot do that, I can't do the sonogram; I am not a radiologist, I can't do the surgery; I'm not a surgeon. If I just take care of their medical needs, they are still left without. With Project Access, I donate my time, then the patient goes somewhere that is donating their radiology services, after I get the result, I pick the next surgeon on the list and they get their gallbladder removed, if it needs to be so. At a time when it's not critical, they don't miss a lot of work and they don't end up in the ED (Emergency Department), with a substantial sepsis and hugely expensive bills. They get back to work without emergency care. Since the start of Project Access,

and you've heard this, there's been over 12,000 uninsured patients who have received care, \$175 million it's a good, cost effective way of doing business. I am asking you, please, not to pull your support of this very vital and cost efficient program. My second ask is that you do not take \$800,000 away from the Sedgwick County Health Department. As you may know, many of you do, I take care of a huge population of HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) and AIDS patients, in this community. The Health Department helps us contain this disease and all of the other things that people in our community are just as vulnerable to, as anyone else. GC (Gonorrhea) is on the rise, syphilis is on the rise in this community. The disease intervention specialist and the people at the Health Department help us keep these diseases in check. Without it, we will see further increases in our kids with all of these detectable, communicable illnesses. I am going to trust that you, the Board of Health of Sedgwick County, do not undercut the efforts to keep our citizens healthy and free of disease. I appreciate your consideration for changing some of what you have budgeted. Thank you."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you very much. Next, we have Dan Hamel."

Mr. Dan Hamel, Exploration Place, greeted the Commissioners and said, "Exploration Place has been a part of our family life since it opened, 15 years ago. It's a place that brings families together, in a learning environment. Over the last 22 years, our family has routinely included science museums in our family vacations, when we have made those. I am here to tell you that there are very few that can hold a candle to our Exploration Place. It's truly an asset and envy of other communities. Exploration Place has been a leader in the STEM education project, here in south central Kansas. Wichita was built on entrepreneurial spirit. Many of us here in this room, rely on entrepreneurs who have created the jobs that we have today. Exposing our children and our community to the STEM concepts we can inspire a new generation of entrepreneurs. With the work being done on the WSU Innovation Campus, one can't help but think that the community is onto something that will lead to the next big thing for our community. By the county breaking contractual agreements with its partners, it hurts the trust between the county and those partners. Personally, I encourage the Commission to find a combination of ideas to resolve the budget issue. If it is the Commission's intent to do away with bonding road projects; phase the concept in over multiple years. Delay less critical projects while developing new and replacement revenue sources to create a win-win for everybody. Stable, predictable funding is key to providing the quality programs, such as Exploration Place and other quality of life organizations in this community. With the proposed reduction in property taxes will not make a material difference in the individual tax payer, but a small investment in our community for Exploration Place and other quality of life organizations. It just may be the next big thing for the Wichita community. Thank you for allowing me to speak."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you. Next, we have Jon Rosell."

Mr. Jon Rosell, 1102 South Hillside, Executive Director, Medical Society of Sedgwick County, greeted the Commissioners and said, "Tonight, I would like to address two specific concerns, regarding the 2016 proposed budget. First, Project Access and secondly, the cuts to the core functions of our county Health Department. Each of you is familiar with the purpose, form and function of Project Access, this grassroots community based program that coordinates donated health care to the working poor, as a national model and the benefits are well documented. Despite the positive comments I have heard from most of you, about Project Access, we were surprised to see that Project Access was entirely eliminated from the 2016 budget. Project Access addresses the medical needs of the working poor in our community, by coordinating health care services donated by 630 physicians, eight area hospitals,

and 85 pharmacies. Since 1999, Sedgwick County has been equal and a valued partner with United Way and the City of Wichita, in providing funds to support the structure needed to operate this program. We feel taxpayers in Sedgwick County get an incredible return on their \$200,000 investment. A loss of Sedgwick County support for Project Access will result in fewer patients being properly diagnosed, treated and returning to work. Many of these patients will turn to the emergency room, as a substitute for coordinated primary and specialty care, provided to Project Access. The cost of this uncompensated care will simply be added to the cost of care already provided by employer groups, in this community, including groups like Sedgwick County. Project access is a highly successful program. It has benefited thousands of Sedgwick County residents. It's success is based on a solid level of support, provided by three primary funding partners and we encourage you to continue your level of support for Project Access.

"The second issue that I would like to address tonight, the nearly \$800,000 cut from Sedgwick County Health Department. These cuts go to the very core of the purpose and function of the Sedgwick County Health Department. This begs the question are you relying on data or evidence to suggest the elimination of health promotions, health navigation, community assessment and community health improvement? If so, what data or evidence suggests that these programs are not worthy of tax payers support? The current state statutes, which direct your responsibility as a local Board of Health, are sadly outdated. The first was passed in 1901 and last revised in 1979, local county health departments across Kansas have continued to grow and reflect a great body of evidence that public health programs are effective and serve the needs of Kansas citizens. The Sedgwick County Health Department, until now, has been a responsible leader among county health departments and it's kept track with fundamental functions of local health departments. Unfortunately, the proposed budget will march our County Health Department back in time and our citizens will be the losers.

"Let me close by saying that living within your means is a responsible form of leadership and we recognize and support your efforts to use tax dollars responsibly. There's no question that a large organization, such as Sedgwick County, have areas of waste that should be challenged and eliminated, if unjustified. The Medical Society of Sedgwick County firmly believes that fundamental health programs like Health Navigation, Health Promotion, Community Health Assessments, and Community Health Improvement Plans are clearly justified. I would encourage you to restore the funding. Thank you."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you, Jon. Next, we have John Dailey."

Mr. John Dailey, PO Box 381, Valley Center, greeted the Commissioners and said, "I am a 40 year resident and taxpayer of the rural incorporated Sedgwick County, before that, I lived the rest of my life in Wichita, so I was in Sedgwick County then. I am interested on how my property taxes just keep raising every year. It seems like they rise somewhat, all of the time. I am not on a fixed income; I am on a shrinking income, the last eight to ten years, along with the rest of the Country's problems. I know that at least two of the Commissioners do their work on computers and research to find out what programs really do help out, what is cost effective, and is the money spent on them wisely. If they don't work, you have tried to get rid of them and I hope that you can keep doing that. The non-profit groups that come up here and ask for money, they have their name on the group, but they don't invest in that group with their own money. They may spend time or provide a building, they don't just add funds. I learned that with one big one from the last hearing that you had. Also, the City of Wichita; they think of all of these projects to spend money on and then they come to Sedgwick County and want at least a partial payment to help pay

for that, and they call it a partnership. Well, a lot of non-profits say well, let's call it a partnership. Well if you are in the wrong partnership and spending money where you shouldn't, then that's not a good idea.

"The Zoo is nice; I have been out there a couple of times, in the life of it, just once last summer. I heard, tonight, that's 540,000 visitors and I think it was the hearing before this, that said they were subsidized \$10.00 for each time a person went in. Exploration Place, which I've never been to, except the parking lot, for a free car show, it's a nice place, probably. I've never been to it and I don't know if it needs supporting like it has been, or should have been money borrowed for it, to build the building. Also, I thought that the law required everyone to have health insurance and it seems like there's 65,000 in the Sedgwick County area that don't have this. Well, this works worse than the car insurance that you're suppose to have and some people don't, so something is wrong there. So, I am asking you to support the required projects that you should be building and supporting; fire department, safety and so on and they benefit the tax payers and citizens. Reduce the property taxes."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you. Next, we have Brandon Johnson."

Mr. Brandon Johnson, 5203 East 20th Street North, Wichita, greeted the Commissioners and said, "Thank you all for opposing those Westar rate increases. Those bills are pretty bad and they, typically, impact those who can least afford them, so thank you for that. I am here because I am concerned about the direction that we are heading with this proposed budget. To me, it strikes me as being out of touch. I am confused why when I call the County to see about this meeting tonight, to see how I could get on the list and they say it's a public meeting. One of the infomercials that you hear says that a community is only as healthy as its residents. I thought about that and we look at more than \$1 million being cut from health care in access and prevention efforts. I am just confused by that. Free screenings, navigators, educators, healthy baby program; all of those are losing funds, but that's what people hear when they call in.

"As I read through the budget presentation, there was a slide that said priorities are a problem and we must figure out which priorities to emphasize, but I am shocked that arts, something that for centuries we cherish, is a low priority. Our Zoo, which happens to be better than the Dallas Zoo, I just went to Dallas on vacation with my family and it was a great zoo, but I think Sedgwick County Zoo is better. It seems to be a low priority, we're looking at cutting there. Exploration Place, we went to a museum in Dallas and I think that Exploration Place has the potential to be there and we really should be strengthening the Zoo and Exploration Place and organizations like that. Exploration Place, for me, it's a place where we had our wedding reception. That's a memory that I will never lose, for the rest of my life. The Zoo is a place where my son loves to go. Both of those worksites, I used to run the Summer Job Program, those are work sites for the Summer Job Program, we sent youth there to learn skills on how to get a job and how to keep a job; learning all of those things. We had young people interested in being, whatever the term is for studying animals, I forget it right now, but they were interested in that and that was a great place. I just hope that you would reinvest and invest more in that.

"I am also baffled by the fact that we aren't looking to help our disabled or mentally challenged brothers and sisters. We should be increasing funding in that, we shouldn't be decreasing funding to that. I'm not here to act like the sky is falling or anything like that, by those decreases, but as an executive director, myself, of a nonprofit, and I am not here on behalf of that nonprofit, but as an executive director, myself, I know what those budgets look like. I also served on the State Advisory Board for ten years and we allocated money; year to year contracts, as we have

seen as being proposed is not something that is successful, it doesn't work, because now we have to look and guess every year what we're going to get help for. I would propose a two year contract, that was something that we did on the state level, at least we proposed, I left that group beforehand. At least we know, for two years, what funding we will get and that makes things a little more stable and it helps us out, a lot.

"In closing, because I saw the sign, I just hope that you all reconsider the cuts that you were going to make. I think that we should invest in what is important to all of us, make that final decision next week, think about the young people who work at the Exploration Place and the Zoo; think about those people. Think about the 540,000 people that come here and go to the Zoo. Think about all of that, the quality of life that we have been ignoring, that is so important to this county and this city, as you are making that decision. I hope that you don't cut access to health care because it's so important. Those free clinics were some of our work sites, as well. Young people got to see the impact that was being made and how homeless people, who don't have insurance, can get help there. I hope that you all consider that. It may not be government's job, all of the time, but we have to look at how we can really help our citizens to be productive citizens and make sure they have good health is one way to do that. Thank you."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you, Brandon. Next, we have Schaunta James-Boyd."

Ms. Schaunta James-Boyd, CEO, E. C. Tyree Health and Dental Clinic, greeted the Commissioners and said, "Our clinic is a safety net clinic that has been around since 1986, serving the needs of the underserved within the Wichita community. I am here to, particularly, bring your attention to the underserved population. They're unique, they're diverse and honestly, it takes a team of individuals, together, in order to equip them for success. I am here on behalf of supporting my friends and partnership in this journey with the Sedgwick County Health Department and Project Access and if I didn't have these partnerships, as a safety net clinic, we would not be able to get our patients where we need them to go. In particular, the Sedgwick County Health Department, we are partnered with them in several avenues, for example, the Sedgwick County Health Department is the lead coordinator of the schools of USD 259; access to dental health in the schools where four of our clinics come out to the schools and provide services. Over the last few years, Sedgwick County has been the lead; they have allowed us and assisted us with coordination that has improved less implications, more efficiency for the clinics, and now all of the USD 259 schools have clinics tied to them, that they are receiving outreach within the schools of oral healthcare for their students. Also, we are able to partner with the Sedgwick County Health Department with the Navigation Program. The Navigators are able to assist our residents in executing our system, that many do not know and this system allows them to filter into our community health clinics. Also, we will take the Early Detection Works Program, for example, for that one, just in the last month, we were able to use the Early Detection Works Program to identify breast cancer in a 35 year old woman, get her into services and start that process of coordinating care. If we did not have that program, that young lady would not be able to access care. We are able to tap into Project Access, which is very critical in providing specialty resources, as well as medications for our consumers. If we did not have those services, those without resources would not have access to care. So in other words, in short terms, we would not be able to do what we do without these critical services. Together, we are able to bridge gaps in care, we are able to limit the number of individuals presenting at the emergency department, so what we are wanting to plead you to do is to really consider the impact of reduction in Project Access, budget items as well as all of the critical services for Sedgwick County Health Department. I know it will be a critical setback for Wichita Kansas and I just want you to support funding those services and

help keep Wichita well. Thank you very much.”

Chairman Ranzau said, “Thank you very much. Next, we have Greg Dye. I don’t see Greg here. We will go on to the next. Ms. Novelene Ross.”

Ms. Novelene Ross, 2011 North Porter, Wichita, greeted the Commissioners and said, “I really want to thank each of you for your investment of time and effort, in public service, because contrary to some cultural myths, public service is an honorable and noble calling. So, thank you. I also appreciate your patience and endurance, this evening, to listen to all of the speakers whom have come here. I do want to say that I differ with the majority of the Commission, in regard to your attitude about healthcare policy. I argue that healthcare should be a responsibility of the government and it should be one of the financial priorities of the government. I have just three, brief, reasons here, to site. Number one, healthcare workers and healthcare agencies are like police and fighters, first responders, in the event of emergencies; natural or manmade. For the safety of all of us, there should be a centralized organization to design action plans in the event of disasters; tornados, massive floods, fires, mass shootings, or other terrorist acts. Such disaster plans, when needed, should be carried out by professionals in cooperation with the other first responders, with the government agencies. Reason number two, the healthcare of all people in the community, all of us, may depend upon the help of just one person and that one person could be a homeless derelict; somebody who is beneath our contempt, it could be a visitor, or a tourist; a high official from a foreign country, it could be a person who is a productive worker, but who simply can’t afford health insurance, or it could be a CEO of a very powerful business, who has to travel quite a bit around the world, to watch over all of his interest. If any one of these persons was to contract a dangerous, contagious disease and bring it back to Wichita, we are all at risk and community wide action must be taken. There should be a centralized health agency available to all, to develop a preventative plans and to guide the citizens in preparing for defense against disease. Third, the financial burden of public safety is substantially increased when a health problem, whatever it may be, it could be a population who are afflicted with mental illness and have no access to healthcare or it could be an outbreak of a contagious disease. At any rate, the safety of all, is our financial responsibilities. If these problems are not addressed before they become an epidemic, before they become a very visible threat, will be greatly more expensive than if they were treated in advance. We know that prevention is cost effective. For example, the United States can be very proud of its health leadership in banning smoking. That’s one area in which we’ve been leaders. Think of all of the money and lives saved, simply by this national preventative action. I would ask you to think about the leadership that you have in this community. We are proud of the health programs that we have, but it could be great. We could be taking the lead in establishing a superior health environment for all. Thank you.”

Chairman Ranzau said, “Thank you, very much. Mr. Dye is not here. Next, we have Arlen Hamilton.”

Mr. Arlen Hamilton, 2086 North Westridge Court, Wichita, greeted the Commissioners and said, “Tonight, I am here to speak as a citizen of Sedgwick County and as a Certified Public Accountant. There are some that have said I’m not a budget expert, when they’ve stood at this microphone and I can tell you that the opposite is true for me, I am a budget expert, that’s what I do for a living. The budget cuts proposed by the county will reduce, in size and scope, many of the programs, departments and organizations that make the county a great place to live and this is opposite of a community must do, to grow and thrive, in the competitive region that we live in. If we were experiencing an economic crisis across the region, then the counties across the region would all be making cuts to their amenities and their

services and a lowering tide would be lowering all ships; therefore our competitive landscape would stay even. This, however, is not the case. Our competitors are actually increasing their budgets for amenities, quality of life issues, and their services, because they are competing for jobs in companies. We have heard from young professionals, tonight, talking about what is important to them. These other places get it and they are competing; they are fighting for our people and we need to be fighting for their people. We all need, in Sedgwick County, to have a united front, that shows we are all working together, towards making things better. I am here to say, tonight, I've mentioned that I work on budgets a lot and I'm here to say that the good news is that there's more of a tax increase required. There are people that have been concerned about tax increases. We don't have to increase taxes to fund all of the organizations and departments that are important. What we can do is we can look at this budget, we can look at our funding options, we can look at our revenue streams, we can either go ahead and spend the \$25 million budgeted for the identified roads and bridges, in the 2016 budget, put the unassigned spending of \$3.29 million back into the organizations that the community appreciates, needs and is here, tonight, protecting. This achieves your goal of no more debt in a year, while giving time to closely analyze how much we should be spending on road maintenance. Another option; if we are convinced that those roads indeed do need the \$3.29 million, our other option is to go back to bonding criteria, that has earned the county a AAA credit rating. This has worked for many, many years. You can look at the credit rating agencies and they all give kudos to the county, over the years, for their financial restraint and what a great job they have done. We could just go back to what we have been doing, just pause, analyze what's going on, call together a group of community experts, bring in economists from Wichita State [University], subject matter experts from the community from the big companies that are here; there are a bunch of smart finance people in town, to address the concerns of the commissioners, to address the concerns of the community. I just ask that you go for a one year pause and let's all work on this together, let's take the county forward. I believe in Sedgwick County and I would appreciate you also believing that there are great things that can happen in Sedgwick County. Thank you for your time, I know it's been a long night."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you, Arlen. Next, we have Natalie Aramburu. You guys are making it hard for me, tonight."

Ms. Natalie Aramburu, 3546 South Walnut, Wichita, greeted the Commissioners and said, "The first thing that I have to say to you, I have been taking notes, \$200,000 to Project Access and your pay off is \$3.5 million; if you don't keep that program, you're bad businessmen, that's just plain and simple. I didn't know that until tonight, but you need to keep that program. The thing that I do want to talk to you about is your reduction of the Development Delay Challenging Behavior Program; you're going to cut it by 50 percent. I don't know if you know a lot about kids and things that are going on, but we have a rise in developmental delay children. The more and more that we go, as far as that, I don't know if it's in the environment or what's causing it, but we have a lot of kids coming into schools with that. As you cut that program, you are going to cut things for them, that they need. I have a cousin, that has developmental delays and she receives a lot of services and if this is for adults, I know particularly in our neighborhood, Osage park was recently leased by KETCH (Kansas Elks Training Center for the Handicapped, Inc.), from the City of Wichita and that has adults with disabilities, that have developmental delays and that's one of the best programs that is in there. Now they have changed it and put in a senior program for adults with disabilities. We need to support those people, because they don't get money anywhere else.

"The other thing that I would like to talk about is ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act)

compliance. First of all, you should know that I am a special education teacher. I teach over at Truesdell Middle School. My first nine years of teaching, I was in a self contained classroom of kids that were emotionally disturbed. In our building, we house the children that need wheelchair access, because our building is one city block long with no stairs. I will give you an example of things that people don't think about. Our speech therapist was housed in our library, in her office. We had a young man that had to go to speech therapy every day, but he was in a wheelchair. He doesn't have a Para and when he went to the library, there's not a clear door there, he had to sit at the door until someone noticed that he was there, for him to get into the library. Nobody ever thought about what he needed. When I noticed that, I threw a fit with the Board of Education and approximately one month later, Chip Gramke got us a door, for access for that young man. People don't think about people in wheelchairs. My best friend, Christine Hoppman, works here in the courthouse; many of you know her. She has to think about where she can go and whether or not she can get in. She came outside to meet me, tonight, and to get back in, I had to come in the building and then use the door to let her back in, because it wasn't unlocked. If anybody wanted to come in here, in a wheelchair, tonight, that door would have been locked for them. We don't think about the things that are going on. Project Access, someone mentioned the healthcare that comes into schools, just to give you an example and some numbers; Truesdell houses over 1,000 students, we had 341 seventh graders; I know this because I am the team leader, all of those 341 students were given a dental check. They can find out what is wrong with them, they come back and give them the service to fill their cavities or whatever it is they need to do. The other thing that you need to know is that seventh grade is a crucial year for immunization. Of those 341 students, 150 were excluded on exclusion day, from the state, for no immunizations. That's half of our class. This doesn't include the other part of our students in sixth and eighth grades. On August 8th, the county is giving away free immunization and we publicize that as much as we can. There are people that don't have doctors and don't go get that until we actually force them, until they're excluded from school. If you eliminate that county program, our kids are going to be eliminated from school, because they don't have shots. You have to think about how this impacts kids. It's vital that you keep those supports for those people to have access to healthcare, to get them where they need to be and to just live, because those of us who just have our normal everyday life and you don't access and see things like that, everyday, you're not thinking about that every day; I know. Nobody thought about that little boy in front of that library door. And you have to. Thank you."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you, very much. Next we have Kari Rinker."

Ms. Kari Rinker, General Manager for Advocacy and Programs, National Multiple Sclerosis Society, Mid America Chapter, greeted the Commissioners and said, "The National Multiple Sclerosis Society helps each person affected by MS (multiple sclerosis), in our area, address the problems of living with MS, including the 900 people, living in Sedgwick County, that have this disease. The National Multiple Sclerosis Society has two areas of concern pertaining to the proposed budget; the elimination of Project Access funding and the elimination of the full time ADA Compliance Coordinator. The MS Society respectfully requests that funding to Project Access be restored. Project Access has provided uninsured Sedgwick County residents, living with MS, access to necessary neurological care and assistance with obtaining their expensive, disease modifying therapy drugs. The average annual cost for someone living with MS is approximately \$69,000. Prescription drugs to treat MS are among the most expensive on the market. Part of our services at the MS Society include connecting people with resources within their community, to help them with various challenges, related to multiple sclerosis. Marceline Dover, standing here with me tonight, is an example of a person who contacted our chapter searching for her, much needed, neurological care. She is uninsured and receives her care from Project

Access. You may remember Marceline, she's stood before this body before, regarding funding issues. She testified, here, on another occasion. She is a 20 year old WSU college student, working part time at my daughter's high school, as a teacher's aide. The donated specialty care that Marceline receives from Project Access is truly her lifeline. Her MS drugs would cost \$2,000 to \$3,000 a month, without their assistance. However, Marceline and the other 33 MS patients who have received care from Project Access can only receive healthcare from that nonprofit as long as they are financially able to provide it. Marceline, I am sure, will not mind me saying that she is truly concerned about the fate of this organization that has meant so much to her, personally. The National Multiple Sclerosis Society also respectfully expresses concern regarding the proposed elimination of the full time employee that has historically worked to ensure our county meets accessibility standards, for government standards, as set forth in the ADA. July 26, 2016 marked the 25th anniversary of the ADA. Over the past 25 years, the ADA has reduced barriers for people living with disabilities and allowed people, affected by MS, to live their very best lives. However, there is still room to grow. The goal is to reach full ADA implementation, across the country, in all communities, and at all levels of government, even here at the Sedgwick County Courthouse, which is on your list. We ask that the Commission do it's best to ensure the elimination of the ADA staff position will not adversely affect the completion of the pending list of identified modifications needed to make county facilities and public areas disability accessible, as well as projects identified in the future, that are not currently on the list. Government should lead the way in ADA compliance efforts. We are concerned that without staff and adequate funding for compliance, they will be delayed and not achieved. My friends Linda and Gary Hepner, here with me today, recognize the importance of an accessible community and they, too, had trouble with your front door. I stand, for them, and ask you to consider the human impact of this fiscal decision making. Additionally, we receive no government funding at the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, at this mid America chapter. However, cutting the funding for all of these organizations, represented here, that are on the chopping block, merely create a greater competition for limited contributions within this community. Furthermore, we have a lack of neurologists in this community who would like to add another neurologist to their practice, but is unable to move someone to Wichita, Kansas. Cutting quality of life programs will not help us gain more neurologists, that are needed. And, on a personal note; my husband and I own 15 houses in Sedgwick County, we pay property tax on them all, and I would pay twice the tax that I do now, to make sure this woman gets care. Thank you.

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you, very much. Next, we have Ben Blankley. Is Ben here?"

Mr. Ben Blankley, 3404 Country Club Place, greeted the Commissioners and said, "I moved to Wichita in 2007, right after college, and started my career as a Systems Aircraft Engineer. I started volunteering at Wichita Community Theater, a recipient of an Arts Council grant. I met a gal, started dating, got married; proposed to her at Wichita Community Theater, so short while later, we had a baby, right here in Sedgwick County. So the thing is, when we go through our careers as Systems Aircraft Engineers, in my position; mid-career, we get recruiting emails; weekly, monthly, pretty often. I am not alone and we have to make a calculus, every time we receive one of those; do we stay or do we go? My wife and I look at the state situation with education funding, we look at the proposed county budget, which cuts all sorts of things, across the board; things that we care about, and we look at our property tax bill and go you know what, I've talked to my friends, it's not high, it's actually fairly low, for what our house is. Would we pay more, for more services? Sure. So, I am asking the Commission, on behalf of myself, my wife, my friends and family in the city; give us a reason to stay. Thank you very much."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you. Next, we have Sybil Strum."

Ms. Sybil Strum, 326 North Walnut, greeted the Commissioners and said, "I am the mother of seven. I have eight grandchildren. I, once, was an assistant teacher of USD 259. I worked the election boards from 1984, my last time in 2007. So, I do know a little bit about politics and budgeting. I have a son that is mentally challenged. He is going to (inaudible) and also COMCARE. I urge you guys to help people, because help is more important than anything. I have seen the progress of the roads and the highways, it's not good; it's dangerous. People are more important and more better investment. I'm offended, all of the time that people talk about Exploration Place and the Zoo, Cowtown, and other places. Let me tell you about Cowtown. Cowtown has a CEO, I don't know if any of you knew of it that took money and did not establish it. Then, a new person came. The Mid-America [All Indian] Center had pow wows, museum stuff and supposedly their CEO took off too. (inaudible) had a Canadian group running it and they did not pay vendors. I am sick and tired of all of these businesses asking for money. If I own my own business, I would not ask for money. I would try to earn it. I would not go to the city. I would not go to the county. I would go do it myself. I have done this in a lot of ways. I have been a housekeeper and I did not bill the city. I went to businesses and I asked them do you want things done? John Kennedy said ask what you can do, or whatever, ask not what you can do, but in my language, why don't you just go and do it yourself. I get a little leery about all of these businesses asking for money. We aren't the bank, we are on low income, I don't need medical, but I do give to charities, because that's what I was taught to do. I am sick and tired of all of these businesses come up to you all and say I need \$10 million to get my business going. Look at some of the people I know, like my father, he was a janitor, he was in the military, he was in the aircraft industry, he never asked for money, he went and got him some. Medical is more important and I urge you to vote for Project Access, because people like me, we need help. Thank you."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you, Sybil. Next, we have Kelly Parks."

Mr. Kelly Parks, 8005 North Hoover, Valley Center, greeted the Commissioners and said, "Thank you for having a 6 p.m. meeting that is probably going to get out of here about midnight. It's late in the day and I am going read this pretty fast and try and stay inside my 3 minutes. By the way, Commissioner Ranzau, don't worry about the names you are pronouncing, because they butcher your name all of the time, even the media outlets don't call you Commissioner Ranzau. I initially planned on speaking at the July 29th meeting, I had a conflict with that, however, I am glad that I missed that, as it changed my speech here, in listening to what was going on there. I was able to watch that meeting. Most of the people that spoke that spoke on July 29th had a viable program, although most, obviously, lacked cost-ratio effectiveness. I heard organizations, some other government functions, mainly being [259] and KANSEL, some religious nonprofits which are not the responsibility of the county, wanting Sedgwick County to fund them. Okay, now I am going to go on, quickly, to the Zoo. I have called people and emailed them, asking them when they come from out of county, when they come to the Sedgwick County Zoo, whether it makes a difference to them whether that facility has accreditation. By and large, the answer is no, they just want their family to enjoy it. Our mark is great out there, but anyway, they just want their family to have fun.

"Bonding indebtedness; in my term in 2007, as many of you remember, about six months, when I asked Mr. Chronis whenever the capital projects fall off of our total bonded indebtedness? Having worked for two other government units for 30 years, I was surprised to learn that the light at the end of that tunnel is constantly pushed

forward and further down the track, by combining bond issues. I applaud three Commissioners for trying to put an end to this practice. Stay focused on what the role of Sedgwick County government is. Alternative examples. Private programs need to step up and do their own fundraising. As a teen, I attended a church service where they passed the plate twice. They counted the money at the altar and they came back and they passed it twice. I don't know if they need to do that again, or not, but some of these private places need to step up. WATC have those aviation companies step up and on the job training. Whatever happened to the on the job training thing? How many times, in 2007, was I told that WATC was going to be a revenue neutral situation, when they were trying to govern our vote to support in that. I remember when I was here, last December, when the previous Commission was hurrying to push through those long term contracts. Mr. Unruh, before you say our promises, make sure you tell the people what went down on those December long term contracts, with another Commission, not this one. I ask you to think about certain issues: selling the IBA (INTRUST Bank Arena) to the City of Wichita for \$1.00, the media always says the Wichita Area, as the claimant, so just sell it to the City of Wichita for \$1.00. Exploration Place, sell that to the City of Wichita for \$1.00, too, they brag it up and want it so bad, both of those facilities are going to be a drain on the Sedgwick County budget in the future. Quickly, I will end with a quote from Ben Franklin, 'Beware of small expenses. A small leak will sink a great ship.' Thank you."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Next, we have Gary Wright. Is Gary Wright here? While we're waiting, we will move to Tom Butherus. Is Tom here? Tom Butherus, I think. How about Janel Richardson? Is Janel Richardson here? Marilyn Bower, I believe."

Ms. Marilyn Bower, 156 North Sedgwick, Wichita, greeted the Commissioners and said, "As you can see, by my shirt, I am a zoo enthusiast. I moved here in 1985 and have seen Wichita get better and better and better, every year, it seems. They have had some setbacks, you know, but it's a good place to live. But, the star, one of the stars, that brings people in and I see all of these little children going to the Zoo, all of the time and it's fantastic. I was so excited to hear about the elephants of the Zambezi, because I have been to Kenya twice. I went to the big park down by Kilimanjaro and watched the 24/7 lighted waterhole. Then, I found out that we are going to have that in Wichita, where the elephants can actually get down in the water and act like elephants. It was fabulous. But then, I get the information that you are dropping that. It's halfway done. Can't we pushed that forward another year and get that established, then get some other funding in the community, which has done very well? It would just be a real shame to lose that. But it's just to do the commitments, the other gentleman that knows all about budgeting, I think he had some great ideas. Do what you have to do, with you commitments, and then work towards getting those roads fixed and keep making Wichita wonderful. Okay, thank you."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you, Marilyn. Next, we have Mary Ware."

Ms. Mary Ware, 1444 North Perry, Wichita, greeted the Commissioners and said, "Clipping down the line rather quickly, I didn't expect to be next. I am going to guess that most of those folks that have spoken in support of the cuts, tonight, have never been in the position to need the services that a lot of these programs, in particular, provide. The benefit to our way of life, the Zoo and Exploration Place, that's a wonderful, wonderful thing, if you are a suburban person that's a real benefit, but there are many people in this town and in this county that need more than that. The folks that think it's a good idea to make the cuts, you know, I am happy that they have had the cushion that life has provided them to not realize just how close to the bone, literally, life can get. The situation that most of those folks, who benefit from these services, find themselves in is quite precarious; they are on the brink. They are not looking for a handout, most of them are as employed as they can manage, with the

troubles that they have, therefore they are taxpayers, they aren't moochers. Where we are going with that line of thinking of pulling the safety net out from under these folks is to suggest that the poor among us, are less important; lower quality people. Intellectually, we know that is not true, but you know what, that's what it suggests and that's certainly what it feels like to someone who is in that position. I have had the fortune of living in lots of different levels of income, in my life. I have a total understanding of what each one of them is about. As I am saying, they aren't looking for a handout. Most of them need short term help, to get their lives going again, so they can start earning a living again and paying taxes, again. I have to say that I am pleased that folks have a cushion and good fortune that they have, but I am wondering just how in touch they are with the realities of poverty. Several people have said you know there is only so much to go around and don't touch my slice of the pie and I am glad that they have a slice, but what about those who don't even have a slice? Thank you."

Chairman Ranzau said, "I want to go back and see if there is anyone in the other room. So, Gary Wright, Tom Butherus, Janel Richardson. Now we will go to Sharon Ailslieger. I am sure I got that wrong again, because you were here last time."

Ms. Sharon Ailslieger, Co-President, League of Women Voters, greeted the Commissioners and said, "I was going to say I bet you are glad to see me, because I am the last one, but I guess not. I really don't have a personal dog in this fight. I am not here to talk to you about a specific item. What the League is concerned about is we don't want to go backwards. Let me ask you, when you have a jewel, why would you get rid of it? Why would you downsize it? Why would you cut it? Someday you're going to have to play catch up and that's going to cost more money, in the end. We are not a third world. If you look at the third worlds, of this world, the third world countries, many of them are that way because the government never does anything. The money goes into their pockets and you have the poor and you have the rich and they think that's okay; it is not okay. The League is concerned about the quality of life, but we are also concerned about city and county cooperation, because some of these cuts sound like little children; he got more than I did, you know, he got a cookie, two cookies, I got one. We are concerned. I went to the city, yesterday. I will say their budget room only had two of us and I was one of them, so I am sorry guys. We are concerned about city and county government. The League of Women Voters has studied that. Back in 1991, I was appointed, by one of the County Commissioners, to a task force on city and county cooperation. The League has studied it and we want that to continue, we do not want rough battles, we want you to put your hands out to each other in friendship and see what you can come up with. We are all Sedgwick County and we are all citizens in this, together. If somebody pays a little more than the other guy, in the end they are all Sedgwick County residents. Just because I live in Wichita doesn't mean that I am not in Sedgwick County. That's what we hear sometimes and I will just throw this out; when I was a little girl, 1952, my grandma died. She died in the county hospital. That's what you had, back then. That's where the poor people went and my family was poor. So, my grandma was in the county hospital, that's where she died, and the county paid for that. My mother always said if she were in a better hospital...but that's not the point. The point is that's all the poor had, that county hospital. We have come a long way. We have some wonderful programs, a quality of life. Let's keep it. So, if the league asks you to please reconsider your budget cuts, to reconsider how you are doing things and don't go backwards, please. Thank you."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you, Sharon. Next we have Abdul Arif. Oh, he left? Okay. Is there anyone else, here, who would like to speak? Alright, I will say thank you to everyone who is here, for all of your comments. We appreciate it. Thank you to everyone for being courteous, as well. Are there any other comments from

Commissioners? I don't see any. With that, we will close the public meeting, with respect to the Sedgwick County budget. Mr. Manager, is there anything else to come before the Commission, tonight?"

Mr. Ron Holt, said "No, sir."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Seeing none, we are adjourned."

ADJOURNMENT

There being no other business to come before the Board, the Meeting was adjourned at 9:06 p.m.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF
SEDGWICK COUNTY, KANSAS

*RICHARD RANZAU, Chairman
Fourth District*

*KARL PETERJOHN, Chair Pro Tem
Third District*

*DAVID M. UNRUH, Commissioner
First District*

*TIM R. NORTON, Commissioner
Second District*

*JAMES M. HOWELL, Commissioner
Fifth District*

ATTEST:

Kelly B. Arnold, County Clerk

APPROVED:
