

Sedgwick County

525 North Main Street 3rd Floor
Wichita, KS 67203



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Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

9:00 AM

SPECIAL MEETING

BOCC Meeting Room

Board of Sedgwick County Commissioners

Pursuant to Resolution #131-2010, adopted by the Board of County Commissioners on August 11, 2010, members of the public are allowed to address the County Commission for a period of time limited to not more than five minutes.

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 Robbie Berry, Sedgwick County Interim ADA Coordinator, 510 N. Main, Suite 306, Wichita, Kansas 67203

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Email: Robbie.Berry@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 9:01 a.m. on July 20, 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; Ms. Erika Rice, Deputy County Clerk; and Ms. Jill Bailey, Deputy County Clerk.

GUESTS

*Mr. Gary O'Neal, 4967 North Hillcrest, Bel Aire
Mr. Michael Burrus, Catholic Charities (Foster Grandparents)
Dr. Lyndon Drew, Wichita, Catholic Charities, Director, Foster Grandparents
Ms. Elma Lisk-Anani, 5640 East 21st North, Wichita, Foster Grandparents
Ms. Linda Galloway, Catholic Charities, Foster Grandparents
Ms. Helen Healey, 13 South Hampton Rd., Eastborough, Exploration Place
Ms. Mellissa Gregory, KANSEL
Mr. Mark Koch, KANSEL
Ms. Linda Eaves, Director, KANSEL
Mr. Lyndon Wells, Wichita Area Technical College
Ms. Sheree Utash, President, Wichita Area Technical College
Ms. Suzanne Scott, Spirit AeroSystems
Mr. Ian Tomlinson, 3629 North Hazelwood Street, Wichita
Ms. Janet Hamous, Wichita Business Coalition on Healthcare
Ms. Kelsey Witherspoon, Student, University of Kansas Medical School
Ms. Christina Bourne, 250 West Douglas, Student, University of Kansas Medical School
Ms. Claire Thomas, Student, University of Kansas Medical School
Mr. Edward Wills, Student, KANSEL
Ms. Dawn Morse, KANSEL
Mr. Pat Hanrahan, President and CEO, United Way of the Plains
Mr. Gary Plummer, President and CEO, Wichita Chamber of Commerce
Ms. Venetia Miller, 1102 South Hillside, Wichita
Mr. Nate Davis, 1830 South Topeka, Wichita
Ms. Jenny Pennock, Thunderbird Firearms Academy
Mr. Abdul Arif, Executive Director, South Central Kansas Economic Development District
Ms. Shirley Koehn, 442 Waverly Street, Wichita
Mr. James Roseboro, 4518 Greenbriar, Wichita
Mr. Colin McKenney, Chairman of the Board, Non-Profit Chamber of Service
Ms. Diana Schunn, Executive Director, Child Advocacy Center of Sedgwick County
Ms. Susie Santo, President and CEO, Visit Wichita
Mr. John Todd, 1559 North Payne, Wichita
Dr. George Lucas, 1715 North Cypress, Wichita
Ms. Betsy Anderson, Kansas Junior Livestock Show
Ms. Rhonda McCurry, Kansas Junior Livestock Show*

*Ms. Lynn Stephan, Women for Kansas
Ms. Pat Lehman, 515 Manlow, Wichita
Ms. Sharon Dyer, 2637 South Rosemary Court, Wichita
Ms. Sandra Carlo, 1311 W. Harvest Court, Wichita
Mr. Benny Bowman, 1914 Euclid, Wichita
Mr. Ryan Pennock, Thunderbird Firearms Academy
Ms. Martha Linsner, 9804 West Harvest, Wichita
Mr. Dominic Canare, Make ICT
Dr. Mary Boyce, 1312 North Rutland Circle, Wichita
Ms. Sharon Ailsleiger, Co-President, League of Women Voters*

ROLL CALL

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

NEW BUSINESS

- A [15-0515](#) ELECTION OF A KANSAS REPRESENTATIVE TO THE GOVERNING BOARD OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES (NACo) FOR A TWO YEAR TERM, SEPTEMBER 1, 2015 THROUGH AUGUST 31, 2017, BY MAIL BALLOT

Presented by: Richard Ranzau, Board of County Commission Chairman

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Elect Kansas representative and complete certification.

Chairman Ranzau said, "Commissioners, you have the item before you. What's the will of the Board? Commissioner Norton."

Commissioner Norton said, "We are no longer in NACo (National Association of Counties), so I don't know that it matters who the Kansas representative is going to be. I've worried that maybe we're not even go to be in the Kansas Association of Counties the way we're going with our partners and relationships with people. So this has much to do about nothing for me. Having said that, I served as the President of the Kansas Association of Counties (KAC) and was very active in NACo on four of their steering committees.

"I know Richard and Dr. Steve Garten, who are County Commissioners in the State of Kansas, well. I have served with them for many years on Boards at the state level. Either of them would be excellent representatives. I think Steve has been on the Board before. I think Richard, from Jefferson County, would like to be on it. I would be okay with either one of them, if we are going to move forward with something like this."

MOTION

Commissioner Unruh moved to elect Richard Malm to the National Association of Counties Governing Board.

Commissioner Norton seconded the motion.

Chairman Ranzau said, "Just a point of clarification, we are in NACo until December 31st of this year, and we are a member, and there is no plan to change that, and that's been made very clear. With that being said, madam clerk, call the vote."

There was no discussion on the motion, the vote was called.

VOTE

Commissioner Unruh	Aye
Commissioner Norton	Aye
Commissioner Howell	Aye
Commissioner Peterjohn	Aye
Chairman Ranzau	Aye

B [15-0511](#)

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 Manager, greeted the Commissioners and said, "As Kristi said at the opening of the meeting, this is the first of two public hearings that you will conduct on the 2016 budget. The second one is next Thursday, August 6th, at 6 p.m. in the evening. We will be in this room, as well, and again, but these hearings are regarding the Sedgwick County 2016 recommended budget. The 2016 recommended budget for Sedgwick County, as presented on Monday, July 20th, totaled \$394,143,119, which includes a property tax levy of \$129,580,173. This property tax levy, as we talked about on Monday, is equivalent to an estimated property tax rate, expressed in mills, of approximately 29.359 mills. On Wednesday, July the 22nd, the Board of County Commissioners authorized publication of maximum budget of \$394,625,119, which includes a property tax levy of \$130,103,986. The maximum property tax levy is equivalent to an estimated property tax rate of approximately 29.478 mills. As we've had a lot of discussion about both mill levy rates. Rates are based on estimated assessed valuation and subject to review and technical adjustments. With that, Commissioners, I believe with the number of people wanting to speak, that's all I would say as opening remarks, and would recommend that you get on with the public hearing."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Any questions for the manager? Seeing none, we'll open the public hearing with respect to the 2016 Sedgwick County budget. I want to say a couple of things, so everyone knows kind of the guidelines here. Everyone will be given 3 minutes to speak, and the clerk will keep the time and let you know when that time is expired, and we'll ask you to wrap up. Please give your name and address, for the record. If you have any copies of testimony, you don't have to, but if you happen to have paper copies, make sure Ron gets a copy, because we like to have copies and enter them into the record. I will apologize now, in advance, if I mispronounce anyone's name, I will try to do the best I can. We are planning at noon, to take a 30 minute lunch break, because we expect to be here that long. So everyone knows, for planning purposes, that's what we are looking at doing. With that, we will begin with Gary O'Neal."

Mr. Gary O'Neal, 4967 North Hillcrest, Bel Aire, greeted the Commissioners and said, "Thank you for allowing me to speak this morning. I served three terms as the Mayor of Bel Aire and Chairman of the Sedgwick County Association of Cities in 2002, 2003, 2004 and part of 2005. My opinions that I'm going express today are mine alone and have nothing to do with organizations I belonged to in the past.

"I'm here this morning to speak regarding the proposed Board of County Commissioner's to remove the three mile Zoning Area of Influence around the 17 cities that are effected, around Sedgwick County. I do not think this is a time to open such a major policy issue, in the absence of a Planning Director, with the retirement of Mr. Schlegal. I think the Board of County Commissioners should focus on hiring a new Planning Director and take advantage of that person's expertise, to advise the Commission on future policy changes. The current system of a public hearing at a City Planning Commission and another one at the MAPC (Metropolitan Area Planning Commission) is a good way to get local, affected, people to hear about it and weigh in on proposed development. The current system protects the public and gives them more say. It also protects the County Commissioners, but ensuring that they have both sides of an issue, before they vote. Most members of the MAPC know very little about local customs, development patterns in economies in many cities in Sedgwick County. They should appreciate hearing from local planning commissions. Most developers want to communicate directly with local communities, to ensure they build strong relationships in their proposals, given to the community.

"All cities promote growth and development, the wisdom of local planning commissions and the city planning staff should help developers make better planning decisions that better fit their communities. This system has worked since 1985, over 30 years. What is the reason for the change, now? Why has this come up? Has there been a problem? Eliminating review by local planning commission makes it more difficult for people to be involved and it risks the Board of County Commissioners only hearing one side of an issue. Why would a County Commissioner want to reduce public input into decisions? Quickly, I want to read from the 'Tulsa World' on Economic Development, from July 14th, this is an editorial page by the editors. It says welcome, Macy's facilities, a boom for the county. 'Area leaders, public and private, including the Tulsa Regional Chamber came together and worked hard to land the new Macy's-Bloomingtondale's Fulfillment Center, and the result of that hard work was evident last week when the massive facility offered a sneak peak at what is to come. The 1.3-million-square-foot facility on 72 acres of unincorporated land near Owasso will employ 1,500 core associates and at least 1,000 seasonal employees when it becomes fully operational next year. A formal dedication will take place August 6. What will it do? It will ship millions of items to customers, mostly in the middle of the country. Outbound orders actually started going out last week. All those new workers will be spending money in Owasso and Tulsa, bumping up the sales tax receipts for both cities. Tulsa's suburbs continue to grow and that is good news for the entire county. Welcome to Macy's-Bloomingtondale's. We're counting on this being the beginning of a beautiful friendship.' I would just like to end by saying that if the current majority, of the Board of County Commissioners, continue to reduce funding for economic development, I have six grandkids. I have one in Tulsa, one in Kansas City, and I have four in Wichita. When they ask their grandpa, their papa, where they should look for their future, I will encourage them to look at Tulsa or Kansas City. Thank you."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Next is Michael Burrus."

Mr. Michael Burrus, Executive Director, Catholic Charities, greeted the Commissioners and said, "Thank you for the opportunity to speak this morning, on behalf of the Foster Grandparent's Program. It was established 50 years ago, as a way to establish mutually beneficial relationships between low income, mature, wise, experienced, mature Senior Citizens with children having either special or exceptional needs. Locally, the Foster Grandparent program began in Sedgwick County, in 1976. In 1981, Catholic Charities became the sponsor. We have been operating the program for 34 years, with the generous support of the taxpayer of Sedgwick County, for the past 31 years. This morning, I would like to share with you, just a small amount of information about the program and the Senior Citizens and the struggling children that this benefits. During the school year that ended last June, our program employed 123 Foster Grandparents, all of whose income was at or below 200 percent of the poverty level. They were paid minimal, but much needed stipends of \$2.65 per hour. More importantly, they benefited greatly, by remaining active and productive and being great resources they were assigned to serve. They served 32,049 young people in Sedgwick County, most of whom are economically disadvantaged and, or, are struggling academically. They provided 117,000 hours of caring service to the children, through 58 sites; schools, Head Start, childcare centers, homeless and domestic violence shelters, etc.

"From a funding standpoint, we received and have been receiving \$23,326 from Sedgwick County, for the past several years and in the previous years, it was higher than that. We have utilized the County funds as part of a ten percent match, that we are required to provide, in order to receive a large federal grant, from the Corporation for National Communications Services. We have been able to parlay the \$23,000 match and almost \$235,000 of funding, including the \$210,000 federal match. The total foster grandparent budget of \$570,000, the county has been providing four percent of the total budget, which combined with the federal grant, has funded over 40 percent of our overall budget. In summary, I believe that the citizens for Sedgwick County have seen a great return on their annual investment in the Foster Grandparent Program; a program that costs less than \$5.00 per hour, in service provided. If the funding, that the county has provided in the past, is eliminated, it would severely limit our opportunities to place foster grandparents to do the things that they do so well, serving young people. Also speaking today will be Doctor Lyndon Drew, Director of our Foster Grandparents Program and representatives of both the foster grandparents group and the children that they serve. Commissioners, this is a great program. We would appreciate your consideration of our request, to continue to providing funding for this valuable program that benefits both the people providing the service; aging citizens, and the people receiving the service; struggling children. Thank you for your consideration."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Mr. Lyndon Drew."

Doctor Lyndon Drew, Catholic Charities, Director, Foster Grandparents, greeted the Commissioners and said, "Foster grandparents are a community treasure. In April, Foster Grandparent, Nen Bui, won a Friend of Education Award for her work at Oakville Elementary School, in Haysville. In April, Earline Jackson, Bernadine Gosch, Judi Fellers all won Good Apple Awards, for their work in Mendenhall, Peterson and Curtis Schools. In June, Foster Grandparents Lillie Newman, Rachel Rubalcaba, Linda Johnson, Barbara Booker, Agnes Pata, Nancy Smith, June Whitted, Esther Bland, Rosie Walker, Verla Sellers, Mary Becker and Pat Pericola, won A Champion of Children Award from Child Start, with the work at three Head Start sites and three Opportunity Project sites.

"Now, these grandparents are the latest of a 37 year heritage of older adults working with Sedgwick County children. It's been my privilege to work with them for 15 years and my hope today, is that Sedgwick County will continue to support their work. I have with me and I would like to introduce one of our foster grandparents, Elma Lisk-Anani, and then one of our former site supervisors; Linda Galloway."

Chairman Ranzau said, "We will go with Elma is next."

Ms. Elma Lisk-Anani, 5640 E. 21st North, Apartment 2301, Wichita, greeted the Commissioners and said, "I was privileged to be introduced to the Foster Grandparents Program, about five, six years ago. I cannot tell you the immense change it has made in my life and in the life of the children we take care of. It has a two prong approach. It has rejuvenated the seniors and it has kept us focused and it has enabled us to reconnect with society and to help the kids be who they can. We still have a little fire in us, and so we go to the class and we warm up their little hearts and make them be focused and attentive and willing to learn. We have found this experience very, very gratifying and for me, it's the purpose of living right now. Otherwise, at 74 all we do is sit home and vegetate, but now, I look forward to going to school, helping the kids, seeing tangible results and getting them ready for the next class. So, as far as Foster Grandparents is concerned, I think that it's a unique program. I think that it's a program that should be endorsed, should be encouraged, and it does so much for us and the children. Most of those children are underprivileged, but I tell you, by the end of the year, they're ready to move on and they're going to the next class. For this reason, I would advocate that we have funding for the program. Thank you, very much."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you. Next, is Linda Galloway."

Ms. Linda Galloway, Catholic Charities, Foster Grandparents, greeted the Commissioners and said, "You have heard from my friends and associates with the Foster Grandparent Program. The tasks performed by our grandparents are as varied as the colors in the rainbow. I would like to share with you, just a snippet of what was recorded to us, by other site supervisors and classroom teachers."

"Verla Sellers works at the Opportunity Project North. The staff says one child in our classroom was especially bonded with grandma and often asked grandma to read books with her. This child's home life is uncertain and the consistent, loving attention that Grandma Vera gives, has improved the child's self confidence and self concept. Grandma Vera has been in that assignment for three years."

"June Whitted worked at the Opportunity Project South. The staff, there, says we love Grandma June. She showed patience and kindness to her chronically sick child; spending quiet time with him, during class time, letting him sit with her when he was too lethargic to play with other children, on the playground and upon his diagnosis of neuroblastoma cancer, he often reminisced of his times with Grandma June and her kindness to him. Her assignment was three years, at that site."

"Earline Jackson works at Minneha Core Knowledge Magnet School. The staff there says Earline takes eight to ten children, each day, and works, individually, with each child on math and reading activities. Each of these children was very low, when school started, and they have showed good progress, academically. Ten years, at that site."

"Lee Garland works at Black Traditional Magnet School. The staff there says the students love to get to learn with her. Her quiet demeanor and patience help struggling students blossom. She is organized and quite knowledgeable on how to help those late bloomers. Eleven years, at that site.

"Martha Villa works at St. Anthony Family Shelter. Here is an example of what Martha helps. St. Anthony Family Shelter had a child that would refused to interact with other kids. He would not leave his mother's side without screaming, kicking and crying. His mom started leaving him with Grandma Martha for 15 minutes at a time and gradually increased the time. One morning, after breakfast, the boy asked his mom if he could go see Grandma Martha. He stayed, in the playroom, most of the morning, playing, without crying. Nineteen years, at that site, with those children.

"Why do I love foster grandma, we would ask the children. These are some of their comments. She takes me to our school library to find the funniest books that we can, and then we read together. I love Dr. Seuss, the best. She tells me about books she liked to read when she was in the second grade. She liked the Boxcar Children Adventures. Grandma is never in a hurry, she waits for me to come to her room and she always gives me a hug and a smile when she sees me. Sometimes I get a high five when we are finished working on multiplication and subtraction. Grandma listened to me, when I was really sad, when my kittens died. She told me about how her little dog, Wiggles, had died. He was really old and he couldn't walk anymore. She had to carry him everywhere, even outside to potty. She cried with me.'

Chairman Ranzau said, "Ms. Galloway. Your time is up, we need to ask you to wrap it up."

Ms. Galloway said, "I respectfully acknowledge that. I would only ask that you consider Foster Grandparents in the budget process and that you not reduce their funding."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you, very much."

Ms. Galloway said, "You're welcome."

Chairman Ranzau said, "I think Commissioner Howell has a comment or a question."

Commissioner Howell said, "I do, thank you very much. In fact, if you don't mind, I'd like to go back to Michael Burrus. They've had four speakers, in a row, speak about the Foster Grandparents Program. I think Michael is the most likely to be able to answer my questions. So Michael, if you wouldn't mind, I would appreciate that. Thank you, Linda, I appreciate your testimony. Michael, I think that you and I have talked about some of this, privately, in my office and I wanted to just establish a couple of points, I think , for the audience and for the listeners. I want to make sure they understand some of the details that came out in our discussion, I wanted to talk about that. Can we talk about what was our funding level before it was the \$23,326. What was the funding level before that?"

Mr. Burrus said, "It was in the [S]30s, in some years before that."

Commissioner Howell said, "And do you know about what year that was reduced?"

Mr. Burrus said, "We have been at the \$23,326 for the last three years."

Commissioner Howell said, "Okay, and when that funding went down, how did you guys respond with the funding cut, last time? What did you guys do?"

Mr. Burrus said, "I believe, and Linda, correct me if I am wrong, but we were able to hire fewer foster grandparents at that point. United Way funding came in when the federal budget sequester came in, two years ago. At that point in time, United Way stepped up for some funding for us."

Commissioner Howell said, "So, federal dollars did go down a little bit, so United Way stepped up and filled in, just a little bit, where that went down."

Mr. Burrus said, "Correct."

Commissioner Howell said, "But as far as County funding, when it went down, did you guys find a solution to backfill some of that?"

Mr. Burrus said, "Not that I am aware of."

Commissioner Howell said, "Just contracted the program a little bit?"

Mr. Burrus said, "Yes."

Commissioner Howell said, "Okay, and then let's be clear. I wanted to talk about, you gave me a information sheet and I just wanted to name some of these things and ask you a couple of questions about it. One thing that you say here is 117,241 hours of services provided, by the grandparents, to the children. Approximately 64 percent of that was to USD 259. I just did a little bit of math, that's 75,034 hours, in that one year, was to USD 259 and I believe that you are in the other schools as well, is that correct?"

Mr. Burrus said, "We are."

Commissioner Howell said, "So subtract out all of the public schools altogether, do you know what percent would be outside the public schools, altogether?"

Mr. Burrus said, "Outside of all public schools?"

Commissioner Howell said, "Yes, sir."

Mr. Burrus said, "Outside of all public schools or 259?"

Commissioner Howell said, "All public schools."

Mr. Burrus said, "No, but it's the majority, in the schools. I am going to guess, probably 80 percent, in the schools."

Commissioner Howell said, "And do the schools give you any type of funding for this?"

Mr. Burrus said, "We do not request it and no, they do not provide funding."

Commissioner Howell said, "They do make a comment here, the value to the USD 259, specifically, for what you guys provide is about \$1.5 million."

Mr. Burrus said, "That's their estimate."

Commissioner Howell said, "The schools are saying they get a \$1.5 million benefit, but they don't provide any funding to that, at all. Are you able to fund raise outside of the United Way and Sedgwick County government? Are you fund raising any other way? Are you able to fundraise and provide people donating into your program?"

Mr. Burrus said, "We are able to. With the money that we receive from you, the United Way and the federal grant, it's not been necessary to do that."

Commissioner Howell said, "You aren't currently fundraising outside of those three sources?"

Mr. Burrus said, "Not for Foster Grandparents, no."

Commissioner Howell said, "But you could, if you wanted to. I mean that would be an option if you had to."

Mr. Burrus said, "If we had to, yes."

Commissioner Howell said, "So, even though it's called Catholic Charities, the Catholic church doesn't provide any funding for your program?"

Mr. Burrus said, "They provide funding for a number of our program and for our overall Catholic Charities Program, but they do not specifically designate any for the Foster Grandparents Program."

Commissioner Howell said, "And that's what we're talking about today, is the Foster Grandparents Program."

Mr. Burrus said, "Correct."

Commissioner Howell said, "So they don't provide any funding for that, specifically."

Mr. Burrus said, "Correct."

Commissioner Howell said, "Okay. That may be all of my questions. I guess just one more thing, for a grandparent that wants to be in this program, they have to be a certain level of income, is that correct?"

Mr. Burrus said, "In order for us to pay them, yes."

Commissioner Howell said, "Are they able to be in the program and volunteer hours if they are not in a qualified category?"

Mr. Burrus said, "They can, yes. We do not have any, currently, who are volunteers."

Commissioner Howell said, "That's new information. When we talked about this, in my office, you told me the answer was no."

Mr. Burrus said, "I did."

Commissioner Howell said, "Because that's a change of information."

Mr. Burrus said, "I stand corrected, when I got back."

Commissioner Howell said, "All right, that does help. Because, again, if someone wants to be a part of the program and they don't have a need for that stipend, they would be able to volunteer in this program if they wanted to."

Mr. Burrus said, "That is correct."

Commissioner Howell said, "And be around the kids and that type of thing. So, are the grandparents doing this, primarily, for the money then, is that why they're in the program?"

Mr. Burrus said, "I am going to look at both of our speakers as I answer this question. I think the money is important to them, but no, that is not the main reason."

Commissioner Howell said, "I am just surprised that there aren't volunteers doing this, that aren't being paid. I guess that just surprises me a little bit. I think there are plenty of people in the community who would love to be around kids and money may not be important to them, and they would like to be involved in this. I guess this is just a curious point of mine. I know 100 percent of the people who are volunteering are being paid a stipend and are qualified by income."

Mr. Burrus said, "I can tell you that we aggressively recruit for grandparents, continuously, and in a lot of Senior Citizen publications, ones where we would hope to attract those kinds of people you're describing."

Commissioner Howell said, "I may have some other questions, later on, but you have done a good job and thank you for your presentation and for your information."

Mr. Burrus said, "Thank you, for your attention."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Next, we have Helen Healey."

Ms. Helen Healey, 13 South Hampton Road, Eastborough, greeted the Commissioners and said, "I am a past chair of Exploration Place; the Sedgwick County Science and Discovery Center, and I just returned to the Board, this year, after rotating off for three years, in large part, because of my concerns about what this Board of County Commissioners might do to this organization, that is so important to this community. My husband, Ed, is also a past chair of Sedgwick County Zoological Society, and he is very concerned, also. We have lived in Sedgwick County for almost 40 years, supporting and partaking the wonderful culture and arts, in this community and enjoying the quality of life here. This room is filled today with people who also care, passionately, about this community. But before I allow them to speak, for one minute, I would like to resubmit, for the record, the comments of approximately 25 people, who spoke at the May 13, [2015] Board of County Commissioners Meeting. They were there to speak on behalf of Exploration Place, [the Sedgwick County] Zoo and other organizations who have agreements with the county. Their words are still relevant today, to the budget hearings, that we are hearing today. Thank you, very much."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Next, we have Melissa Gregory."

Ms. Mellissa Gregory, KANSEL, greeted the Commissioners and said, "I am a member of the Board for Kansas School for Effective Learning (KANSEL). The proposed Sedgwick County budget for 2016 would eliminate \$84,500 in funding, that KANSEL uses to provide for GED (General Education Development) preparation and testing, for students ages 16-18. These students are referred to us by the Juvenile Division of the District Court, right here in Sedgwick County. They are usually not in high school; they may have been expelled or the traditional school setting has not worked for them. Of the 200 students that KANSEL serves, between the ages of 16 and 18, 75 percent of them come to us with test scores in math and reading, at or below the eighth grade level. The KANSEL teachers are very dedicated, I have to say. I have been privileged to observe some of these classes. They work with them, at their level and they motivate them to stay with the program and study hard and pass the GED exams. As a result, and these figures are according to the Sedgwick County Juvenile Intake Center, 98 percent of the youth enrolled in the KANSEL GED prep, have not committed or recommitted a crime. KANSEL has worked with the Sedgwick County Juvenile Court for 17 years and is proud to be a proven provider of GED prep and testing. It is likely that most of the people, here in this room today, already have a high school diploma, but there are over 40,000 Sedgwick County adults who do not. These Sedgwick County citizens have limited options for employment and zero chance of advancing to higher education. The Sedgwick County grant simply helps cover the cost for at-risk youth to participate in the GED Preparation Program and in the process, encourages them to start in a new path that starts with education and ends with career opportunities. I ask you to consider reinstating the funding for KANSEL, in the amount of \$84,500, in the 2016 Sedgwick County budget. Thank you, very much."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you, very much. We have Mark Koch."

Mr. Mark Koch, KANSEL, greeted the Commissioners and said, "I am here, today, on behalf of KANSEL. I am a Board member. I serve on three other Boards, here in the community. Quality of life and what's happening in this community is very important to me. I have two children that I have raised here, in Wichita. I am a lifelong resident of Wichita. I have four step children and nine grandchildren that all reside in Wichita, so quality of life is very important. That's why I'm here to discuss this with you. I am here, today, to ask you for continued funding for the KANSEL Juvenile Crime Prevention Grant that we have received for 17 years. This money, \$84,500, provides GED classes for Sedgwick County at-risk youth, including some who are on probation or in county residential facilities. The overall rate of recidivism is 17 percent, in Sedgwick County. The recidivism rate for KANSEL students is only two percent. This program works, it keeps kids out of jail, saving the county money, all while helping these youth get high school diplomas, so they can get jobs and become productive citizens. When they pass the GED test, you earn a Kansas high school diploma equivalent, which leads to better employment opportunities, higher education; in fact a person earns 28 percent more with a diploma, than without any high school credentials. There are very few options in the county for continuing to pass the GED exams. Dozens of the Sedgwick County probation officers, the Sedgwick County Youth Program, the USD 259 Guidance Counselors, and non-profit partners; like the Salvation Army, regularly refer at-risk youth to enroll at KANSEL. Our program is unique and effective. It includes classroom time with experienced, empathetic, tough teachers, in addition to online learning program. If KANSEL loses funding from the county, this adult education program, serving Sedgwick County's at-risk youth will be in jeopardy. As a Sedgwick County voter and KANSEL Board member, I am asking you to reinstate KANSEL's funding in the 2016 proposed budget. Thank you for your time."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Just for the record and for everyone out there. Staff and the former Manager, Bill Buchanan, recommended that the funding for KANSEL be eliminated, because they have not met their performance objectives in the past. Every organization that we give money to, we ask them to have certain performance objectives and we reevaluate them on a yearly basis, for their effectiveness. Certainly, we want our dollars to go to those programs who meet those objectives. We also had a study from Wichita State [University] that evaluated all of these crime prevention programs, and they were ranked at the bottom, with another organization, so they were recommended to be eliminated. With that being said, we have met with representatives from KANSEL and asked them to respond to the information that has been given to us, by staff, and they have. We will take all of that together and consider everything that is said and make our decision at a later date, but I just wanted to get that on the record so that everyone would understand that basis for the recommendation. Commissioner Peterjohn."

Commissioner Peterjohn said, "Yes, Mr. Chairman, in light of your comments, also a news report that I saw recently talked about how graduation rates have gone down, I would like to give Mr. Koch or Ms. Gregory the opportunity to respond to the comments that were just provided, in terms of effectiveness of the program and changes in that regard, if they would like to do so."

Ms. Linda Eaves, Director, KANSEL, greeted the Commissioners and said, "You addressed the concern that they had not met our outcomes. Let me explain, to you, a little bit, what happened in 2014. In 2014, the GED test changed to align with Core Curriculum. It is not a four part test. Nationwide, there was an 89 percent drop in the number of people, nationwide, that took the test. In fact, people weren't even going to learning centers. Our staff at KANSEL did some research; we talked to other GED programs across the state, many programs, who are affiliated with universities, in our state, were looking at closing, because people were not coming to take the GED test. They had heard it was so difficult now, as it aligned with the Core Curriculum. This is one of the reasons that our numbers were lower, because students were unable to pass.

"We were in the process, in 2014, when we realized that ramifications of the change in the test, that we had to change our teaching style and how we present the information. We teach the test. We do everything that we can. We try to understand what is on the exam, so the students will be fully prepared and will know how to do advanced algebra, trigonometry, a multi, 300 word, grammatically correct essay on science, social studies and language arts. So we had to readjust how we presented the information. That took some time. This is one of the reasons, in 2014, again, that our numbers were low. We didn't see the outcomes that we wanted. That was frustrating to us, as well, please trust me. We are turning that around now and we are very proud of that.

"I think that continued funding will prove and you will see much better numbers. I also ask you to please remember the audience that we are dealing with. These are at-risk youth, they're not used to finishing things. When you guys start a project around your house, with your child, you finish it. Sometimes, these kids, they just don't finish what they start. They haven't had the leadership in their life, for whatever reason, whatever barriers are in their life, so often times they come to us, because a probation officer instructs us to come to us and then when they're off probation, they're gone. We don't know where they go. But coming to KANSEL, as I have said jokingly so many times, is not like eating a bowl of ice cream. This is tough stuff to do. This is having to go back and learn and accomplishing a big deal; passing four batteries of the GED exam.

"Please also note that over 40 percent of our graduating students could not pass the GED today. Are there any other questions?"

Chairman Ranzau said, "I believe Commissioner Howell has questions or comments."

Commissioner Howell said, "I thank you, again, for being here today. Thank you for your testimony and your explanation. We did meet on KANSEL and we had a good meeting with you all and a good exchange of information. I had a couple of questions and I think you had some for me. I would like to ask you, I guess a new question, I did go on your website and I am trying to find, in your purpose statement or your about KANSEL statement. It doesn't mention anything about juvenile offenders or troubled youth; it just talks about adults. Let me actually read it, it says 'KANSEL prepares students for the GED exam. We provide instruction in reading, writing, and math. When a student successfully passes the GED exam he/she is awarded a Kansas High School diploma.' It doesn't mention anything about a certain population. So, some of the people who are using KANSEL, are they all juvenile offenders or adult offenders who have a criminal history?"

Ms. Eaves said, "No, sir. We have 200 students that fall under this grant, first thing. We have over 500 students that come to KANSEL. Our students age range anywhere from 16 up to 80. There is a gentleman that's in his 80s that's working on his GED right now. The average age of our students is in the mid-20s. We do have a lot of students in the 16-18 range. No, they are not juvenile offenders; they're people who are working class folks, who are trying to get a better job. So, this is just a portion, a segment, of who we serve. When a student is no longer in school, they are classified, to us, as an adult learner. At 16, if you aren't in a traditional school setting, to us, you're an adult learner."

Commissioner Howell said, "I don't have the other paper in front of me, but this is in a crime prevention class, for Sedgwick County, that's why we have funded this in the past. Is that correct, that it's in a crime prevention class?"

Ms. Eaves said, "It is the component, for students that are at-risk, some of them have been involved in criminal activity, for them to come. We are the education component for the probation officers, ISO (Intensive Supervision Officer), case workers, that sort of thing. So, we are there to help them get on track and stay focused with their life. The probation officers have other activities for them, as well, but our component is the education."

Commissioner Howell said, "One of your staff asked me about my comment about other GED completion programs throughout the Wichita area, and they were surprised by my comment. They asked me to elaborate on that. I have that information with me now and I'd like to read that to you. I do know that Youth For Christ has a program that's what they call Phase I and Phase II, I actually visited that program. Goodwill also has a program, and I have visited that program as well. On the Kansas Department of Education website, they've got the state broken down into a number of regions. In the Wichita region, there are a number of these and I'd like to read these to you and then I'll ask you a question at the end of this."

"There's the Haysville Learning Café, which is in Haysville; Project Encore, which is in Andover, El Dorado and Rose Hill; The Learning Connection, which is in Mulvane and Clearwater; 259 Learning Centers, which is in the Dunbar building, Towne East and Towne West centers; Valley Center Learning Center, which is, of course, in Valley Center; The Wichita Learning Connection, which is in Wichita; Derby Public Virtual, which accepts out of district students, and it's based in Derby; the Goddard Virtual Program, which is based in Goddard, they only take in district students; the Learning2 eSchool of Wichita, is in Wichita; Maize Online; Maize Virtual Preparatory; the Learning Center at Valley Center; Wichita Area Technical College has a program and the Wichita Indochinese Center Incorporated has a program. That's a lot of programs and a lot of different locations. I guess I am wondering why, and I'm not sure that any of them receive other subsidies, and I think 259 receives state subsidies, but why do we need another program in Wichita if we have a lot of programs already out there and many of them are fully funded from the State Board of Education."

Ms. Eaves said, "You're talking about two different animals, Mr. Howell. A lot of the programs that you just listed off, the Indochinese Center helps work people toward the GED, they specifically help students who are in the ESOL (English to Speakers of Other Languages) Program. So it's a branch off of their ESOL. Many of their students are internationals are working towards getting their GED, as well. Their credentials from their country do not qualify here. The Youth for Christ Program is, specifically, as I understand it, is for their students that they minister to and they have in their program. I do not know that it is an open door, and perhaps they would correct me, I don't know if it's an open door program, where if someone was 35-40 years old, wanting to secure their GED, if they could do that. Goodwill is very similar to us. We do have some differences, but they are also state funded. When you list Goodwill, Goodwill and WATC are one in the same, they are a partner program. Okay, so those are the GED programs. The other programs that you listed are credit completion programs. What I mean by that is; if you are out of school and you came out of school in the tenth grade and you only have four credits, you have a lot more work to do. If you will notice, in the notes that we sent you, Ms. Fish, from the Board of Education, at the State of Kansas, she said that if a student has a few credits to his or her name, they need to be in a GED program, because they will be 40 years old by the time they get out of a credit completion program. Many students need one on one attention, they need tutoring, they need a different environment than the traditional classroom, but again, please understand that when you list all of those programs off, you're listing programs that are credit completion, not GED based. The encore program that you spoke of, we're partners with them, as well, we work with them a lot. Often times that just have a few credits, maybe one or two credits to complete and they just need to go to the encore program, that would be ideal for them. Please understand that you need to compare apples to apples."

Commissioner Howell said, "So, are you telling me that the program that 259 offers, does not end with a diploma? I know that they have graduation, every year. I know that, because I have actually visited the program, they do help adults throughout our community, with that."

Ms. Eaves said, "It's a credit completion program. That means their students work on one credit at a time. They work on their social studies credit, they work on their English credit, they don't take the full GED battery of tests. It's a different pathway you take to get to the end result of a high school diploma. That fits for some students, for some students, it doesn't. It kind of depends on what you had for your coffers when you left school."

Commissioner Howell said, "Thank you for your answers, I appreciate that."

Ms. Eaves said, "Thank you, Mr. Howell."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Next, we have Lyndon Wells. Wait, Commissioner Norton."

Commissioner Norton said, "I am not going to speak to the micro of KANSEL, I would like to speak to the macro. As we have done studies and as we understand how many people in our community have not completed high school and then you step up to how many people got high school and a little college, but did not complete, the talent in our community that is being wasted is an abomination and we all know that education not only makes us more socially conscious, but it makes us have a better ability to secure a financial future and a job. In general I am supportive of more capacity in our community, not only in our schools, but with outside agencies that deal with all of the different populations, for whatever reason, didn't finish high school, because one size, one program doesn't fit all. In fact, it's almost customized for every individual child, young adult, or older adult, of the pathway they got to not have education. We can see that in higher education, degree completion and also GEDs. At a macro look, I do not think there is enough capacity in our community to complete the system that makes us a very well educated community. Let me tell you, if you look at the high school rates and the college rates, and compare them to some other flourishing communities around the state and in the nation, sometimes we lag, and that's not good for our community, on so many levels. That doesn't speak just to KANSEL, but that's the whole system that I believe, as a Commission, we need to be a part of. We don't need to fund the whole thing, but we need to be a part of the system to make our community better. Thank you, Mr. Chair."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Sure."

Mr. Lyndon Wells, Wichita Area Technical College, greeted the Commissioners and said, "Thanks Board of County Commissioners for the opportunity to speak. I have the privilege of serving as current Chair of the Sedgwick County Technical Education and Training Authority, which serves as the Governing Board of the Wichita Area Technical College. First of all, let me say, to follow up on Commissioner Norton, thank you for your leadership in technical education and the advancement of that over the last 10 or 12 years, in our community. With the Board of County Commissioners action incur the debt and build the National Center for Aviation Training, that WATC is privileged to serve as managing partner for, we are honored to be able to do that, and we understand that part of the program that requires funding is the maintenance and upkeep, of that facility, in the manner in which you expect it to be maintained and we take that very seriously. We do appreciate the opportunity to work in that facility. I would also appreciate the annual funding that the Board of County Commissioners has provided for a number of years, that began when this converted from the USD 259 management oversight, to a Board of Regents School, we are grateful for that."

"For the first few years of that reorganization, there were fits and starts, there was a challenge in trying to get the school up and running. With the help of aviation and leadership in the industry that is supported by the students that come out of WATC, a lot of effort has been undertaken and over the last five years, the school has seen a 22 percent increase in credit hours sold to students, in all of the degree completion and certificate programs that are provided.

"We have gone from 55,000 credit hours, to nearly 67,000 credit hours, and that's happened, only, in the last five years. We have also become a technical hub for high school students in Sedgwick County and in the region. With the help of Senate Bill 155, which was created several years ago, high school students can pursue certificates of completion and credits, while in high school, in a technical education tract, that can prepare them for further education as they graduate from high school. The success of that program, at WATC, has been critical to the ongoing financial success of the school. However, that's a program, much like many of the programs, WATC does not have taxing authority, nor do we have the ability to incur debt, so it's important that we seek our funding on an annual basis from resources at the state and national level. I would also like to remind you that 28 of the 106 programs represent aviation. With 78 programs that include things like; healthcare, manufacturing, carpentry, auto trades, business, technical, police and design. We partner with Wichita State [University] and Shocker Pathways to provide affordable education for students to get into advanced education that, hopefully, will raise the tide for all of the votes in our county. Thank you, for your support."

Chairman Ranzau said, "I think Commissioner Peterjohn has a question."

Commissioner Peterjohn said, "Mr. Wells, thank you for your service on the WATC Board, if I can abbreviate it, as opposed to the longer name that you provided. You've been on that Board quite awhile, haven't you?"

Mr. Wells said, "I have."

Commissioner Peterjohn said, "A number of years?"

Mr. Wells said, "I would say 10 or 11, I don't remember exactly. About 2004 is when I became associated."

Commissioner Peterjohn said, "This proposed budget would impact WATC's budget by about \$100,000."

Mr. Wells said, "That's correct."

Commissioner Peterjohn said, "Your overall budget is a little over \$30 million?"

Mr. Wells said, "No, sir. Our revenue projections for this year, including all revenue sources, is \$24 million."

Commissioner Peterjohn said, "So, \$24 million. Last year and I think back in 2013, there were some reductions that the Board of County Commissioners had in WATC funding, too, I believe."

Mr. Wells said, "That's correct."

Commissioner Peterjohn said, "I think they were, roughly, in the same range; somewhere between \$50,000 to \$150,000, somewhere in there?"

Mr. Wells said, "Something less than \$100,000. Five or six years ago, the county funding was \$1 million. So, today, I believe it's \$830,000. As I said, we are very appreciative of that. Of the \$24 million in proposed revenue, roughly 60 to 65 percent of that is represented by payroll, because you cannot provide education without faculty and staff to be able to impart the training and knowledge to the students. Clearly, as with any education enterprise, staff and payroll is the largest, single expense."

Commissioner Peterjohn said, "So I understand clearly, because you alluded to it. My thinking is Sedgwick County is paying about \$3.2 million to \$3.3 million per year, in principle and interest, for the buildings up on North Weber Road, for the long term mortgage that's in place. I don't think that's included with the \$24 million, is it?"

Mr. Wells said, "That is not, as I mentioned in my early comments, that building is a county building. It was built by the county and we are a tenant in the building. We have maintenance responsibilities and management of the property responsibilities, along with our other sites, including that at East High School and that at the South Side Campus, but the WATC is the managing partner for the National Center for Aviation Training, in which NIAR (National Institute for Aviation Research) also leases space."

Commissioner Peterjohn said, "I appreciate the information, thank you for taking my questions."

Mr. Wells said, "Yes, sir."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Next, we have Sheree Utash."

Ms. Sheree Utash, President, Wichita Area Technical College, greeted the Commissioners and said, "Thank you for the opportunity to speak this morning. I am the President of Wichita Area Technical College. I want to offer my most sincere thanks for the vision that the county has had and continues to have and the support they have for the mission for Career and Technical Education, for Wichita, Kansas and the surrounding areas. We have just finished our 50th year as a Technical School, moving into a Technical College. I would say that with the Board of County Commissioners assistance and the taxpayers of Sedgwick County's assistance, we have really reinvented Wichita Area Technical College (WATC), in the past eight years. It is a technical college that is totally different than it could have ever dreamed of being. It is nationally recognized, across the United States, and it is certainly the fastest growing, two year, technical college in the State of Kansas. For that, we are very proud and thankful for what we do. We believe that we are a educational and economic driver, for this community; in areas of aviation, manufacturing, design, health care and, certainly, in transferrable general education, to provide students of this community the opportunity to take those first two years, of a baccalaureate degree, at a much reduced rate. So, we are pleased with that.

"I think another thing that is really important, is you heard our enrollment has really grown over the past five or six years. Here's another big, really important, piece; our placement rate of our graduates is 95 percent. So, 95 percent of those people are continuing their education, joining the military, or they are going straight to the workforce. Ninety-five percent is very high, that's a very good metric.

"Many of you, on this stage, as Commissioners, have been on the stage with me, during commencement. You have seen and witnessed the faces of the students that walk across, and receive their diplomas. You've heard their families cheer for their accomplishments. We always say that hope has a face; the face of hope is the students that we have. So, we would really ask for your continued support for the mission that we have, to help provide students and this community, for the chance at a better life and to provide a skilled workforce for our business and industry. Thank you."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Commissioner Peterjohn has some questions."

Commissioner Peterjohn said, "President Utash, quick question of the programs that you've got, we've had some discussion about GED programs. I believe that WATC has one; would you take a minute and describe how that works and how many students go through it?"

Ms. Utash said, "Sure, we had a stand along program, at the technical college, until about four years ago and we actually partnered with the Goodwill, at that point. We have created, what we call, Next Step Alliance. Next Step Alliance; the services there are to provide GED and ESOL training and education for the community. That particular program has a state grant and a federal grant. The rest of the dollars that create the flow of money for that account comes from the retail stores of Goodwill. We are currently serving about 300 students per year and I would absolutely agree with the Director from KANSEL, the new GED test has created some issues, and I think that's being recognized at both the state and national level, and will probably be addressed. We have two different programs. We have a very structured program that they come for half of a day. We also have a program that is more self directed and competency based. Here's another thing that we have been doing, I think it's so important, we had the opportunity to have a federal grant, called Accelerating Opportunities for Kansas, so what we did with that grant was we built the opportunity for our GED students to go in the morning, for their GED classes or in the afternoon, and the opposite half of the day, we are providing a bridge from WATC, of post secondary classes that they can take. For instance, they can take 15 credit hours in Health care, to get them ready for Nursing; or 15 hours of basic concept classes for aviation or manufacturing careers. That's the latest thing that we are doing there, and we are having very good results and very good transferability of those students into full time programs at WATC, once they complete their GED."

Commissioner Peterjohn said, "Thank you."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Sheree, I have some questions, as well."

Ms. Utash said, "Okay."

Chairman Ranzau said, "I just want to clarify, because some information was given that I wasn't aware of. We are looking at reducing funding by \$100,000. The overall expenses for your program is about \$24 million. Is that correct?"

Ms. Utash said, "Our general fund is actual \$19 million. \$24 million is actually with all of our auxiliary."

Chairman Ranzau said, "With everything."

Ms. Utash said, "Yes."

Chairman Ranzau said, "By my calculations, that comes out to approximately .42 percent, would you disagree with that?"

Ms. Utash said, "I'm going to have to refer..."

Chairman Ranzau said, "I calculated it out. \$100,000 out of \$24 million, means a reduction of .42 percent. For the record, we want to make sure that we understand that the total taxpayer support of WATC is about \$4.2 million; we have \$3.4 million for principle and interest and about \$800,000 in operational subsidy. \$4.2 million dollars, so \$100,000 is approximately a reduction of 2.4 percent of taxpayer support, from Sedgwick County, but overall it effects your budgeted by only .42 percent."

Ms. Utash said, "That's correct, that's correct. Just to reiterate, the county owns the building and we have the honor to manage that building and operate it and keep the facilities up to date. Certainly, as those warranties are coming off, which they all have come off that building now, our maintenance costs will exceeded what we have done in the past."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Certainly, Commissioner Howell."

Commissioner Howell said, "Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am curious, do you have students in the GED program, and do they take advantage of Senate Bill 155, while they are there?"

Ms. Utash said, "Senate Bill 155 doesn't apply to them, but the Accelerated Opportunities Program, that I was just speaking to you about, that has the same funding stream as Senate Bill 155 (SB 155). The students that are involved in that bridge program between GED and post secondary, while they are still getting their GED, their tuition is funded, through that program."

Commissioner Howell said, "Why are they not qualified for Senate Bill 155?"

Ms. Utash said, "Because they are not high school students, they are GED students. In Senate Bill 155, you might remember that Natalie Bright and Gayle Gatts were in Topeka, really working hard to get the Accelerated Opportunity concept, funded, just like SB 155. It has been funded, and we have our first students, that were recipients, last year, of that funding."

Commissioner Howell said, "So the students who are doing 259 adult learning, as described earlier, are doing credits, rather than learning how to take the GED test, would they be qualified for SB 155?"

Ms. Utash said, "They have to be actively enrolled in high school, so right now, we do not have any of those students enrolled. I believe that they are excluded from that, because if they aren't, I would think that they would be coming and knocking on our doors, but we have not had that conversation, and I will do that."

Commissioner Howell said, "I will just tell you that I do work with Emily Compton at Goodwill, and I actually helped write Senate Bill 155, I was on the Education Committee, and helped pass that bill, which has been great for our state."

"We did amend that, I think that, not this session, because I wasn't there, but the session before that, we were able to get an amendment on there, that I thought, to allow the people that are in these programs, to access technical education and training, in that program. Emily worked with me, and others, we were able to add that amendment on the Senate floor, and I see a Senator in the audience, maybe she can speak to that later, but I guess I am a little surprised, because I remember that legislation and I believe that the intent of that was that people in her program would be qualified, that was the entire point of putting that amendment on; to the extent that someone who has not received a high school diploma would qualify them, regardless of their age. So, I am a little surprised that people are not taking advantage of that."

Ms. Utash said, "They are taking advantage of it, because this Accelerating Opportunities is a team teaching concept, so you have GED students and a GED teacher is teaching with a post secondary student, and they are qualified for the amendment that came through. The Senate Bill 155 is for Juniors and Seniors that are currently in high school and they have extended it to home school students. There is two different funding streams, but those GED students, at Next Step, are qualified for the funding and they are utilizing the funding."

Commissioner Howell said, "Two more questions. You did say that the text has changed and it has caused some issues. Can you tell us did the students, that were able to pass that test, see a major dip in 2014?"

Ms. Utash said, "Yes, it did."

Commissioner Howell said, "Can you describe, approximately, how much that went down?"

Ms. Utash said, "It was about a 20 to 25 percent drop, because of the various reasons that the Director from KANSEL stated, but the test is extremely difficult and it's not even a statewide issue, it's a national issue. It is being looked at and addressed, on a much higher level, on how they may need to make some adjustments to that test."

Commissioner Howell said, "A future speaker, on KANSEL, if they want to clarify those numbers, I'd like to hear that, but I saw on the news last night, they said 43 percent, in 2013 and 48 in 2014. I am not saying those are the right numbers, that's just what I saw on the news. It's a major drop, it's a lot more than 25 or 30 percent. She had somebody comment that she teaches the test, I am a little surprised by that comment, but would you classify your program as teaching the test?"

Ms. Utash said, "I probably wouldn't use those words, no, but I think that what we try to do is certainly give those students an opportunity. We are trying very hard to contextualize the education for them. I would use those words, instead. We are trying to be very innovative in the way that we are teaching it and innovative in the way that we are doing the testing. You also, you may realize this, but the state did provide some funding for those who take the GED test. Right now, what our position is, is we front load the GED test fees, for our students at Next Step, and should they complete that test, they are reimbursed those funds, which we get from the state. It's part of the same year legislation, through the GED accelerator. Legislation that was passed about one year ago."

Commissioner Howell said, "I really do thank you for being here today, Sheree. You have been a pleasure to get to know and to work with on this issue. I appreciate your comments today."

Ms. Utash said, "Thank you, all, very much."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Commissioner Unruh."

Commissioner Unruh said, "Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Sheree, I don't have a question, I just want to express my appreciation for the tremendous asset benefit that WATC brings to our community. I am proud of the decision that the Commission made, a few years ago, to build that facility and I am proud of the record that you have established, in not only helping the individuals get training for a job or for further education, but as you have referenced, they can actually fulfill their hope and dreams. Another element of your value in the community is that this is what our aviation manufacturing industry asked for. They asked us to provide this sort of support, so they would not only have the resources that they need, in terms of man power, but so there would be an incentive for these people to continue to stay here and grow in our community. So, this has impact and ramifications, way beyond just what happens at the school; not only in manufacturing, but in the health care industry, that you serve, and IT (Information Technology) industry and in the partnerships with WSU and their research capabilities. This has been a huge asset and the college has went through a certain period of real struggle to find their identity and figure out how they were going to serve the community, it has been extremely successful and I believe that it deserves our support. Thank you."

Ms. Utash said, "Thank you, very much."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Commissioner Norton."

Commissioner Norton said, "Don't run off, Sheree. I happen to be involved with WATC and this whole conversation in the dark days, when WATC was about to pull tents and we wouldn't have a technical education presence in our community. I am proud that the county stepped up, I am proud that we built NCAT, and today, it's a much richer, fuller organization that serves our community. I did have a question though, for Senate Bill 155, they attached a \$1,000 per student, to that. How much are they reimbursing, this year, for that program?"

Ms. Utash said, "So, they attached \$1,000 for the high schools, for each student that received a certification that would lead to a high tech job or high demand job, I guess I should say. They have reduced that to \$750, but the entire pot of money wasn't used last year. We aren't really hearing much from the high schools in absence of that, but we do have an incredibly strong high school program that we have built over the last three years, serving over 2,000 in this community. We are working with parents, principals, superintendents, across 14 schools."

Commissioner Norton said, "Thank you, Sheree."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Commissioner Howell."

Commissioner Howell said, "I just wanted to add, I guess, one more point, to ponder here. I did recalculate, just to make sure, and it's a .4165 percent cut, to your budget, should this proposal go through, as planned. I am not sure that's what we will wind up with, or not, that's something that we will have to consider if changes need to be made, but never the less, it's .4165 percent cut to your total budget. Can you confirm today that in the 2015 budget, what was passed last year, before I was here, the adopted budget was, in fact, a \$150,000 cut last year?"

Ms. Utash said, "It was \$100,000."

Commissioner Howell said, "Well, it ended up \$100,000, because they restored \$50,000."

Ms. Utash said, "Right, that's correct."

Commissioner Howell said, "At this point, last year, what they were debating included a \$150,000 cut, last year."

Ms. Utash said, "Then they restored..."

Commissioner Howell said, "Then they restored \$25,000 and then another \$25,000, or maybe it was \$50,000 at one time, I don't remember."

Ms. Utash said, "I believe it was \$50,000 in January."

Commissioner Howell said, "So January the 5th, the restored \$50,000. So, this time, last year, trying to work through the budget, we did, in fact, propose and start with a \$150,000 cut. I just want to make sure that I understand that."

Ms. Utash said, "That is correct."

Commissioner Howell said, "I do thank you for your comments and appreciate your being here, today."

Ms. Utash said, "Thank you, all, very much."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Next, we have Suzanne Scott."

Ms. Suzanne Scott, Spirit AeroSystems, greeted the Commissioners and said, "I am the Director of Global Human Resources at Spirit AeroSystems. Part of my responsibility includes employment, which is hiring. One of the areas of responsibility, in hiring, is keeping a robust pipeline; a supply of people, talented, skilled people, for our workforce, so we can hire them. We have attrition, we have a backlog of aircraft, we have increasing production rates and we have several job openings, right now. In fact, you may have heard that about a week ago, we had a job fair at Spirit. We are looking to hire over 500 skilled mechanics. Of that 500, we made 200 offers, at the job fair. Unfortunately, about 60 percent are not skilled aircraft workers. What that means for us is that we will have to rely on WATC for technical training of these people that we just hired. It's going to be weeks before they can come into Spirit AeroSystems and hit our production lines. We, very much, along with the other aviation companies, suppliers, our suppliers, other aviation suppliers, in the region, we rely on WATC."

"They are a critical component to helping us fill our talent pipelines. WATC has multiple programs, we use them in multiple ways to help us build our pipeline of people. We invest time, we invest money, and talent into WATC, in helping them and we interview every single graduate from their sheet metal training program.

"As we are struggling to fill our job openings, at Spirit, right now, with qualified workers, we can't afford to have the county working against us. We need an expanded labor pool equipped with technical training for aircraft. We want the work staying in our community, instead of going other places that are willing to invest in helping us grow our pipeline of candidates. Instead of discussing about a \$100,000 cut, we should really be talking about how we can expand WATC's capabilities; make it easier for a new generation of aircraft workers to receive technical certifications and degrees. As the largest, private sector employer in this state, Spirit has a tremendous impact on the county's economy. Our ability to be successful requires support and partnership from the county. We are looking for ways to grow our business and have an available supply of people. We also are asking that you ensure WATC is fully funded at the 2015 level. May I make one additional comment, please? We are hiring additional engineers at Spirit AeroSystems, as well. We brought in almost 200, earlier this year. We are bringing in people from other states, into our county. Quality of life and creative opportunities is very important for these engineers. No funding cuts to Sedgwick County Zoo and Exploration Place would help keep our engineers in place and help us retain them at Spirit. Thank you."

Chairman Ranzau said, "We have some questions. Commissioner Peterjohn."

Commissioner Peterjohn said, "Thank you for testifying, this morning. I appreciate you coming out and I appreciate hearing the good news that you all are looking to fill some positions out at Spirit AeroSystems. Can you help me out, in terms of, since you are involved in personnel, in 2014, how many people did Spirit hire within the greater Wichita area?"

Ms. Scott said, "About 1,800."

Commissioner Peterjohn said, "About 1,800. How many of those would have been graduates of Wichita State [University]?"

Ms. Scott said, "I do not know the exact number, but out of the 1,800, about 1,200 would have been, what we call Sheet Metal Assembly Mechanics, so a great majority would have come from WATC, but I do not have the exact information. I am willing to share that."

Commissioner Peterjohn said, "That was going to be my next question. I know you are involved in hiring engineers and we are the only county government in the State of Kansas that provides funding for regents institution and NIAR and affiliation with Wichita State [University] is absolutely huge, but I also don't know of any other counties that are involved in funding a post K-12 institution, like WATC, the way we have, with paying off the mortgage and also operating support. I was curious of the 1,800 positions, if you have any idea of how many received certificates or graduated from WATC, among those 1,800."

Ms. Scott said, "Once again, I would probably need to get back with you, with that information. So the people we hire, they go through the Sheet Metal Training Programs, at WATC, if they are inexperienced, they just have to go through it. Roughly, I would have to figure out how many were experienced and how many were inexperienced with aircraft, but a vast majority of our people do go through the program."

Commissioner Peterjohn said, "My last question, so I understand, this Sheet Metal Training Program, specifically, that you're talking about, of these 500 openings that you have, how many are for the Sheet Metal?"

Ms. Scott said, "All of them."

Commissioner Peterjohn said, "Oh, all 500? So these are hourly positions?"

Ms. Scott said, "Yes, they are hourly production workers, yes."

Chairman Ranzau said, "I have a couple of questions, as well. Correct me if I am wrong, did Spirit previously have a lease with WATC that they cancelled, within the last year, or so? To the tune of about \$350,000, I think. It reduced funding to WATC, to the tune of about \$350,000. Is that correct?"

Ms. Scott said, "Spirit was reducing their footprint, yes."

Chairman Ranzau said, "So that reduced the support from Spirit, to WATC, to the tune of about \$350,00. I am going to try to remain calm here, because I am not happy. You just said that the county is working against you. And that means you're saying the taxpayers are working against you. Let's be very clear. First of all, the mill levy was raised, in 2006, in part for this facility out there. Okay? And there are a lot of people who do not want the property taxes raised. We're paying \$3.4 million in principle and interest out of property taxes. We're going above and beyond that commitment to the tune of \$800,000. Beyond that, Spirit and all the other aircraft companies get property tax abatements from both the city and the county; they're being subsidized by the taxpayers. So I'm sorry, but do not come in here and tell me that the taxpayers are working against you. I just read a blurb in the paper today that the profits for Spirit are up, and you say we shouldn't be talking about \$100,000. I say why you are here talking about a \$100,000 proposed cut, when you took \$350,000 out, when you eliminated your lease. If this is all that important to you, then I would encourage you to go back to Spirit and say, maybe you guys could step up and fill in not only that \$100,000 void, but maybe the \$350,000 void, but don't come in here and say the taxpayers of this community are not supporting that facility and the aircraft companies. That's insulting. Commissioner Unruh."

Commissioner Unruh said, "Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Ms. Scott, I want to say that I want to be on record that the manipulations in business decisions and in county financial decisions are not easily encapsulated in a sound bite. So I don't want to go into all of who said what when or whether that 2.5 mill levy we did in 2005, 2 mills of it has been given back and how much for alternatives for the Sedgwick County Zoo. We'll get into all these different arguments, and we'll be here all day. I just want to say here is one Commissioner who wants to say expressly that I am thankful for Spirit's presence in our community. I look at you as a community partner. I appreciate the jobs that you provide for our community and the economic development that you bring to our community, and I would like to end the conversation with those encouraging words."

Ms. Scott said, "Thank you."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Next we have Ian Tomlinson."

Mr. Ian Tomlinson, 3629 North Hazelwood Street, Wichita, greeted the Commissioners and said, "I would just like to talk a little bit about my experience at Wichita Area Technical College. I started taking classes my senior year of high school, and that's where I earned my sheet metal and my Composition Technician Certificate. Upon my graduation, I received a guaranteed interview from Spirit, and at which point, I was hired on, soon after. From then, I progressed on in my career to Wing Technician job. Overall, my experience at Wichita Area Technical College, I was around skilled teachers, the same type of tools that I experienced in my everyday job, and the transition from my education to job was very smooth. And I also have many family members and friends that have gone through the program and were able to find good-paying jobs with great benefits. I'd just like to thank you all once again for your past support and giving me the education that I was able to receive, and I hope that continued support helps the next generation. Thank you."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Commissioner Peterjohn."

Commissioner Peterjohn said, "Just a quick question, Mr. Tomlinson. I'm curious, how many other students were in your class, and how big was the program when you graduated?"

Mr. Tomlinson said, "I know that there was definitely a morning and a night class. I mean, definitely as many as they could get going. I know in my specific classes, maybe 20, maybe 25. A portion was in class and a portion was hands-on with tools, and that was about the same level of people."

Commissioner Peterjohn said, "Thank you very much."

Mr. Tomlinson said, "No problem."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you, Ian. Next we have Janet Hamous. Sorry if I got that wrong."

Ms. Janet Hamous, Executive Director, Wichita Business Coalition on Healthcare, greeted the Commissioners and said, "We are a group of between 50 and 60 county employers. We are a nonprofit have worked traditionally very closely with the Health Department because we believe that a public-private partnership is the way to move health care forward, and I am here today to ask you to reconsider the cuts that are proposed related to the health assessment and planning that has been a critical aspect of the work of the health department. The community health improvement plan, this is what that document looks like, really serves as a bible for those of us that work in health-related organizations, because it provides a basis of the data collection, assessment, the setting of the health priorities, and then also the measurement that provides the underpinning for the work that many of us do in other organizations to improve health, to improve health care and ultimately, our goal is to reduce the costs of health care for our community."

"Our ability to make a difference in health and to secure grants, outside funding that comes from other organizations, both on a state and national basis, is really contingent on having that data collection, that planning and the measurement in place, and the best place to do that is with the global perspective of the health department. So I'm here just to ask you to reconsider that cut and let us continue to work together as a community in improving health and reducing costs. Thank you."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Janet, I have a question for you. I appreciate your comments. You said that it's important to have the public-private partnership program to help address health issues. The problem that I have, trying to reconcile, and I know that you have that viewpoint, but I have heard from a lot of physicians that believe just the opposite. In fact, just earlier this week, I was talking to a family practice physician who said, I want to let you know that these reductions that you are making are a good idea, because you are just wasting taxpayer dollars. There really isn't a government solution to individual health problems and that people have the mistaken idea that the government can solve our health problems. This is a physician that works in our community and cares about people and is taking care of people and has the complete opposite view as you do. And others, I understand that. How do I reconcile those completely different views of people trying to figure out, you know, what is the right way to go about this."

Ms. Hamous said, "I don't think I am suggesting that we want more government in healthcare. We want the private industry to be able to step up to the plate on health issues. There's a great deal that employers can do in ensuring the health of their employees and family members, that isn't government related at all, for example, one of them, we have been able to receive a couple grants related to diabetes, and have worked with area employers in making changes to health plans, that are fully funded by those employers, and pursue it that way, totally aside from the government aspect, where we need the assistance of the Health Department is in using the global perspective and its ability to gather data on a more global basis than any one of our individual organizations would be able to do."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you for your time, and appreciate that."

Ms. Hamous said, "You are welcome."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Next we have Kelsey Witherspoon."

Ms. Kelsey Witherspoon, Student, University of Kansas Medical School, greeted the Commissioners and said, "I am a KU (University of Kansas) Medical Student, and there are several of us who will be speaking today. So I am a KU educated medical student, I am a fourth year medical student, who attends the Wichita campus, here in town, also third generation Shocker, I went to Goddard High School. I am native, local and I am happy to be here today. Kansas University Medical Students who are interested in staying here and practicing and serving the local Kansas population are here today. A large majority of the KU medical population students right now are actually from Kansas. They might leave for college, but they actually return to go ahead and pursue their medical educations here. There are a lot of reasons for that. A lot of that has to do with the fact that there are family members here, the quality of education we receive at KU is excellent, and a lot of clinical opportunities and opportunities to work with the underserved, underprivileged, and uninsured here locally in Wichita."

"Today, I know that many of you are familiar with the fact that there is a lack of patient providers here in the State of Kansas. There is a significant physician shortage. That's important to us, because we are passionate about staying here, locally, to make sure those patient populations are served. One of the things that's important for us in the next couple years as we graduate and return from residencies, to make sure that Sedgwick County is the place that we want to come back and practice in. And making sure that the public health initiative we are talking about today, the mental health initiative, and even the arts communities are places that don't face, maybe, some of the budget cuts that you all are proposing. There's nothing more frustrating than not being able to provide the level of care that we are interested in providing our patients, and then we are just mostly interested in making sure that anything that happens, we want to be fiscally responsible, but also make sure that we keep Kansas physicians in Kansas and make sure they have access to the resources they need for their patients. I would also like to point out that we have two of our Student Clinic Directors here today, Christina and Claire. We have two additional medical students in the overflow room. Thank you."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Sure. Commissioner Peterjohn had a question."

Commissioner Peterjohn said, "You had mentioned that there is a doctor shortage, of sorts. I have heard that it varies depending on certain specialties or much more prone to that than others. Is that true?"

Ms. Witherspoon said, "As far as I know, that's correct. Yes. KU has a distinct emphasis on making sure primary care physicians are trained specifically, that's the program emphasis and that's something we are looking to go into as general practice, all three of us."

Commissioner Peterjohn said, "Thank you."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you, Kelsey, for your comments. I can assure you there's nothing in this budget that would prevent you from providing the quality care that I know you want to provide in the future. And I thank you for your efforts. Next we have Christina Bourne."

Ms. Christina Bourne, Student, University of Kansas Medical School, greeted the Commissioners and said, "Yeah, like The Bourne Identity. I am also fourth year Medical Student at the University of Kansas. I am here to specifically discuss the cuts that are towards the County Health Department Project Access, and our greater public health infrastructure. First of all, happy birthday, and I also wanted to applaud you all for really trying to be fiscally responsible and address our budget. This is something that we all do, and I know it is something we all struggle with. How I personally manage my budget is I try and think of myself in the future, and where do I want to be and how do I want to be living in the next ten years. I know I want to be healthy, active and serving my community as a physician and as an advocate. Because I have this goal for myself, I shift more of my personal budget to match my health goals, meaning that I invest my personal money into prevent disease in the future. This is exactly what I am proposing to the Commissioners."

"We as a community do not want our citizens to become victims of chronic health diseases like diabetes and heart disease. And specifically to those in our community that already have these conditions, it should be our aim to prevent the co-morbidities and catastrophic health outcomes that come with these, like stroke, amputation and heart attack. What I am asking the Commissioners to envision, is how do you want your community to look in ten years. Chronic diseases are no joke. And the further they advance, they exponentially cost the individual, county, city, state, and nation more money. I understand the public health is difficult to conceptualize at first, which is why it makes it such an easy target for budget cuts. These chronic diseases are nearly all preventable, and with a strong public health infrastructure, we can continue working to keep our community healthy. Physicians and future physicians like myself, have an ethical and professional responsibility to act in the interests of our patients, at all times. I cannot be a quality physician without a strong public health infrastructure supporting me. This is why I urge you to reconsider the budget cuts directed at Project Access, the rest of the County Health Department, and our public health infrastructure as it exists today. This being a budget hearing to put it into dollars and cents, every dollar we spend on prevention saves \$5.60 on future health expenditures. Thank you for your time, and if you have any questions, I would be happy to answer them."

Chairman Ranzau said, "I don't think so. Thank you very much. Next we have Claire Thomas."

Ms. Claire Thomas, Student, University of Kansas Medical School, greeted the Commissioners and said, "I am also a fourth year Medical Student, the last of the three of us up here. I will be echoing a lot of things that have been said before, but my medical student colleagues and I are here today because we are concerned at the cuts to Project Access, and the County Health Department will compromise our ability to provide the quality care that we want to provide to our patients in the future when we serve the Sedgwick County community. Even as Medical Students already, we have seen countless patients benefit from the program. Referred patients who have benefited from specialty referrals in healthcare and the services that the Health Department offers. So we have tangible proof of what these services mean to our patients, that's why it was kind of alarming to read about the proposed cuts. Health is so important, and I know I will be making points that have been made before, and we've made again, but poor health means missed work, means lost jobs, means disability, poor quality of life. It leads to more ambulance rides, ER (emergency room) visits, longer hospital stays, which we have seen in our clinical experiences. Cutting mental health services leads to more and longer jail stays. It leads to more use of state hospital beds, which is a resource we are already struggling with. As Kelsey was saying, many of our colleagues, many of our Student Physicians plan to stay in Sedgwick County, they dream of service through building practices in hospitals and providing excellent care to our community. And this excellent care requires services like Project Access, and services offered by the Health Department to serve our most vulnerable patients. And we are glad that Sedgwick County has been such a great partner in us providing care to our community. We look forward to working with you in the future. So thank you so much for letting us speak today and being a part of this conversation."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Sure. Commissioner Norton has a question."

Commissioner Norton said, "Well, Kelsey, Claire and Christina, thank you very much for being here today. It's encouraging to have young millennials; smart, intelligent, young people come and testify at the County Commission on something that's so important. If you don't have your health, there are a lot of other things that don't matter in your life. I applaud you for the hard work you put into your education, into your service, because you are going to be serving a lot of people for the rest of your life. I know when you do your clinical, sometimes you serve at GraceMed, and you serve in clinics. If you work with the population, as you are starting to do your clinicals and everything."

Ms. Thomas said, "Yeah, actually all of us are pretty regular volunteers at Guadalupe Clinic, as part of a JayDoc Community Clinic. That's how we got to know Project Access pretty well. We are pretty well familiar with the patient population it serves."

Commissioner Norton said, "You have come to this with experiential knowledge of Project Access of what it does for your mission to be servants of people in their healthcare needs. Is that correct?"

Ms. Thomas said, "That is correct. And I think we can all see our patients in our heads who have benefited from this service. It is very important to us."

Commissioner Norton said, "Thank you, and I've been a big supporter of Project Access for many, many years. It is a platform that allows you, number one, to be trained in an experiential atmosphere, but also to save people's lives, make their lives better, and to help the reduction of healthcare costs in our community. Thank you very much for being here, and for the two young ladies that are sitting in the other room. We thank them for coming."

Ms. Thomas said, "Actually, Nate Davis and Leah Speaks are sitting in the other room."

Commissioner Norton said, "So, one young lady and one young man. Sorry, Nate, wherever you are. Thank you for being here today. You are the face of our future. We appreciate you."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Next, Edward Wills"

Mr. Edward Wills, Student, KANSEL, greeted the Commissioners and said, "I am here on behalf of KANSEL, I am a student there currently, 17 years old. You might ask why I am not in public schooling at one of the high schools around here. The reason being for that, is because public schooling was not a very good, how do you say, socialization for me. It is not a very good standing for me. There's peer pressure, there's students that peer pressure you to do the wrong things. Peer pressure, you go down the wrong path. With KANSEL, I have found that the staff there and the students that go there, have pushed me to go down the correct path, and I am currently on probation, which is the reason that I was put in KANSEL. My probation officer had stated that I needed to get a better education than what I was doing at Wichita West High, so she brought me to KANSEL. I have found KANSEL very much success in what I have done and KANSEL. I am very close to getting my GED, as I am standing right here. I have a month and a half in order to get my GED."

"And on top of that, I plan to go into the construction setting they have. The Construction Career Training that they have. I have done three years of woodworking and I would love to go into theirs. If you cut the budget, you will be cutting second chances for people, like me, that are on probation that have done wrong in the community, that are wanting to turn around, get a second chance, and better the community, that could go on a career path like I want to go on to. Again, if you cut the budget, you are cutting the second chance for people. And I am going to state back to what Linda said, the Director, they don't, literally, teach the test, they teach the material that is on the test. They help the students understand the material in order for them to get the test, and to understand it, and to pass the test, what is required in order for them to get a better job in the community and to help the community all around. Thank you. That's all I have to say today. Appreciate you guys letting me come up and speak."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Commissioner Norton."

Commissioner Norton said, "Thank you, Edward. It takes guts to admit that you have made mistakes and step in front of cameras and the crowd and say it, but there's great hope for you, and I wish you all the success in the world. Stay at it, and get through that last month and a half."

Mr. Wills said, "Thank you, Commissioner Norton."

Commissioner Norton said, "You are welcome."

Chairman Ranzau said, "I will just say I got a text from a friend, I want to make it very clear, with respect to my comments when Ms. Scott was speaking on behalf of Spirit AeroSystems, my criticism were directed to Spirit, as a company, in no way intended to make it look like I was directing my remarks to Ms. Scott, personally. She is here representing spirit, and that's what I have a problem with. I want to make it very clear. Next, we have Dawn Morse."

Ms. Dawn Morse, KANSEL, greeted the Commissioners and said, "I would like to address the Commission about the funding cut to KANSEL. You have heard a lot about KANSEL this morning. I serve on the Boards of Directors. I brought along the GED preparation book. A great big book with a lot of scary stuff in it. If you can tackle advanced math, including advanced algebra, upper level trigonometry, along with writing essays; you have to write three, 300-word essays to pass the GED test, lots of questions about social studies, and science, across the total of four tests that take anywhere from an hour and a half to two hours a piece. It is a lot of information they need to know to pass the GED test. Forty percent of graduating high school seniors today could not pass this test, coming out of high school. Most of us in the room could probably not pass this test today. If I gave you the book, you would be surprised at the information. The test is made much more difficult in 2014, and I have some of the information, Commissioner Howell, that you were looking for earlier. The national pass rates for the exam in 2013 was 540,535 people passed in 2014. In 2013, there were 58,524. That's an 89 percent decrease in passes, because of the change in the test. The changes in KANSEL's outcome reflect the same percentage."

"Many students give up trying to take the test. Many agencies gave up trying to help them because it was difficult. KANSEL responded to the drops, by revamping the teaching, tutoring and online learning to prepare students to be able to be successful. Students, both at-risk youth and motivated adult learners are really digging into the program now and making tremendous gains, and it happens sometimes a test at a time. They study for a test, they take the test. They study for the next one, take the next one, until they get all four completed. Sedgwick County's 2016 proposed budget cut of \$84,500 from the KANSEL GED Preparation Program budget that serves at-risk youth is almost 30 percent of KANSEL's education budget. Bottom line, KANSEL will have a great difficulty providing GED classes for youth referred by Sedgwick County and many agencies across the county, along with other students that the funding is lost. In 2014, 98 percent of our KANSEL Youth Crime Prevention Program students did not commit a crime. All of them may not have completed the GED, but they didn't recommit a crime. Those are impressive results. So please, please, continue to support KANSEL in the 2016 county budget. The grant keeps kids learning and keeps them out of trouble. I think that's what we all want for our community. Thank you."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you. I don't see any questions. Appreciate your comments. Next we have Pat Hanrahan."

this annual budget, and I do thank you for your service. I am here today on behalf of the United Way Board of Directors to ask you to consider budget alternatives that would allow you to restore the critical cuts made to the non-profit organizations, many that you have heard from already. Throughout this past week or so, in this process, I have heard comments that the private sector can do more, or should do more. But the private sector is doing a lot. Not only financial contributions, but the gifts of volunteers, and that's one of the reasons I think that makes it a wise investment of county dollars in non-profits, because of the use of volunteers to expand those program dollars. Whether it's mentors at Big Brothers, Big Sisters, seniors working at Catholic Charities, Foster Grandparent and giving a lot more than the stipend they get, or the outstanding example at Project Access with doctors and hospitals that have donated over \$15 million a year to the care of people. United Way is and remains a proud partner, and proud of the fact that we, along with the county and the city, establish Project Access in 1999. It has served us well. I have heard suggestions have been made that funders like United Way can fill in the gaps. I am here to say, as CEO of United Way, that's not possible. We are still reeling from the effects of this recession. Of the \$2 million we have lost since 2007 in the aviation industry alone.

"I can also tell you, as the largest non-profit fundraiser, I think I speak on behalf of the others, this is a very difficult fundraising environment. Even though the economy is starting to improve, it is still difficult. In addition to that \$2 million I mentioned, last year, we had to downsize further our goal by a half million dollars to make up for the merger of Beech Aircraft. Our community needs new jobs and new industries. Bring in that growth in the non-profit sector will generate increased funds. We've been looking at what some of those new jobs will look like, and we've heard the term today of millennials. Millennials are very different in terms of how they give. They look at quality of life in terms of communities that they represent, or where they want to live. That means for Sedgwick County to grow and prosper, millennials will want quality of life attractions like the [Sedgwick County] Zoo, and Exploration Place, and the arts, and they will place a great value on non-profit institutions. Non-profit sector needs your help. This is not a time for cutting; but a time for investment. Please continue these worthwhile investments in our county. Thank you."

Mr. Pat Hanrahan, President and CEO, United Way of the Plains, greeted the Commissioners and said, "I recognize the difficult task you have in putting together

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

Mr. Gary Plummer, President and CEO, Wichita Metro Chamber of Commerce, greeted the Commissioners and said, "I am here on behalf of the Chamber, today, to advocate for stability, to stress the importance of quality of life issues, and to highlight the value of community partners; including economic development, education, cultural and recreational groups, and health organizations. We appreciate your service as well, and the time you dedicate to this budget process. We recognize the need to focus the County Core Services. Many of the cuts you are proposing, including the end for funding for Affordable Air Fares and its current form, we support, actually. We do, however, want to encourage you to consider some sort of a compromise, one that doesn't raise taxes, or over-utilize debt financing. One step would be to leave the property tax flat, lending you an additional \$512,000, on an annual basis. I understand some members. Commission have expressed support for that idea. Also suggesting you consider either reducing next year's expenditures on roads, or continuing to bond for those expenditures, which we think would free up about \$2 million for you. Those sort of changes, I think, would put you in the position where you could work with your county partners and give them a chance to better prepare for a potential cuts down the road instead of having to make the cuts as quickly as you are considering right now.

"A compromise, we believe, would demonstrate the value that you folks recognize in community partnerships, with many of the non-profit organizations you work with, and would also demonstrate that to your county constituents as well. We believe that the compromise would demonstrate the County's continued support on critical quality of life issues, like education, cultural and recreational amenities and public health programs, which are important not only to our current workforce, but actually, they are critical to attracting talented young work force to our area. One of the steps you could take through a compromise would be to restore full funding for the Greater Wichita Economic Development Coalition which, in the last decade, has helped create about 15,000 jobs through partnership with your organization and the city. We think it is a very important public-private partnership. In conclusion, we want to encourage you to consider taking a slower pace on some of the cuts that you are considering. Look at restoring those cuts, as you continue to work on the 2016 budget, you know we recognize that this County Commission and a lot of the organizations that are here today have the same goal in mind, and that is to make Sedgwick County more attractive, and we think the only way we can succeed in that effort is if we all work together. So we want to thank you for your partnerships in the past, and we look forward to worthwhile solution of this issue. Thank you."

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

Ms. Venetia Miller, 1102 S. Hillside, Wichita, greeted the Commissioners and said, "Some of you probably know me. I worked for the County for 26 years, and I didn't know anything about Project Access, and anyway, I had a lot of personal problems. One of the things I had done before I left the County was, through the years, I had tumors removed from my colon, and the last time, the last year, I was with the county, I had one removed from the top of my colon and bottom of my esophagus.

"Okay. I was, like, fired and my last day was April 10th of 2013, and I had to pay off a lot of bills and stuff, and I wasn't quite ready to retire. I had more years before I could get it out without penalties and stuff. But I had to do what I had to do, and anyway, my income is below \$400 a month. And anyway, I tried to get a job, and my reason for getting fired was commonly used, and it was my memory, is what they were saying. Anyway, I was told about a KU research, and anyway, I got into it, and anyway, I asked them now if I get on this medication how am I going to pay for it, because I didn't qualify for any of the help. You either have to own property less than \$2,000, or you have to be of a certain age, and I didn't qualify for either.

"So anyway, they told me about Project Access. And I got involved in it, and anyway, I ended up having to go through emergency room. Well, anyway, the deal is, I have been telling other people about this program, and they had no idea about it, and I have the information here. Like I said, I end up coming across people, who are in a worse place than me. Anyway, one of them, he had no job because he couldn't work, he got injured in an accident or something, and he was also a diabetic. So he had to have some sort of help, and, anyway, his children and his wife were on the street, trying to sell food and stuff. Anyway, I told him about Project Access, and I want you to know how helpful it is."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you, Ms. Miller, for being here. Next, we have Nate Davis."

Mr. Nate Davis, 1830 S. Topeka, Wichita, greeted the Commissioners and said, "Over the years I've come before you here as well as other groups around town to speak in support of the Judge Riddel Boys Ranch (JRBR). I have always had strong opinions about the staff, the programming and most importantly the kids affected by JRBR.

"Now, those opinions were based on my own life, both as a juvenile offender, who lived at the [Judge Riddel Boys] Ranch, and now as an adult working in the community for the betterment of all of our kids. When I was asked to come speak in 2012, it was because none of the Sedgwick County employees, who actually worked at the Ranch, were allowed to. I thought that was kind of strange, that a person who sees what the program does firsthand and can be the best voice to advocate for it would have their mouths covered, so I did start talking. In those talks that year, I got the impression that besides the County Manager, who made the proposal to close, this Commission was in support of the Ranch. So was the overwhelming majority of the community, at that time. You voted to keep it open, and people within the state legislature began working to secure more funding over the coming years.

"Then, time passed and something even stranger happened. People began taking sides, and the next time the story was in the media, it was made to look like a party issue. The republicans were for it, and the democrats seemed to be against it. The Ranch wasn't built for conservative kids or liberal kids, black kids, white kids. It was built for every kid in our community who could benefit from it. The masses responded accordingly. A few false statements were made in the paper, and on the news. The more they were repeated, the more people felt inclined to believe them. The claim that the building was falling to pieces around you, and you couldn't afford the maintenance, the idea that these Sedgwick County kids were the responsibility of the state, and not our community right here.

"Now, I have an article here, written in 1979, taken from the Wichita Eagle Beacon. This is around the time that the State of Kansas stepped in with additional resources at the request of then Judge Morrison. It was meant to add funding to the Ranch, never to replace it. And at that time of that proposal, this Commission understood that very well. And I don't understand what happened. So skip ahead to 2014. At that point, it didn't matter if the state was giving more money for the Ranch than it ever had. It didn't matter that a comprehensive study was done on the Ranch by WSU. That proved JRBR was the best in the state, and rivaled many programs around the country. One person made the decision that the Ranch should fall, and when he couldn't do it himself, he was, somehow, able to entice other people to do it for him. Now I won't imply that I know why that was. Was it because that person was also on the Board of the [Sedgwick County] Zoological Society, and thought that a new elephant exhibit was more important? Maybe, maybe not. What I do know is that the future of our coming generation is now not as certain as it was three years ago. JRBR was a proven program that implemented best practices in the treatment of our county's juveniles, and now it's gone. That's all I got to say."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you, Nate. Commissioner Peterjohn."

Commissioner Peterjohn said, "Thank you. We have had several folks with challenging backgrounds who have come and spoken today. Mr. Davis, I appreciate you. You have spoken to us in the past. I just wanted to thank you and the other folks who have spoken earlier, who, you know, often very hard to speak, number one, fear for a lot of folks is public speaking."

Mr. Davis said, "Big time."

Commissioner Peterjohn said, "But to get up and basically talk about your probation officer, or having been at Judge Riddel Boys Ranch like you had, not talking about you with a probation officer, let me clarify that."

Mr. Davis said, "I had those, too."

Commissioner Peterjohn said, "Oh, okay. Or personal health situations. I just wanted to get that comment there, because I know how difficult that can be for folks, and I very much appreciate your input this morning. Thank you."

Mr. Davis said, "Thank you, sir."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Commissioner Howell."

Commissioner Howell said, "Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Nate Davis, I just want to say thank you for being here today. You present a very unique perspective we need to hear. And to the extent that you related something that was bothering to me; that is that the staff was not allowed to speak in 2012, was that or 2013?"

Mr. Davis said, "They are still not allowed to speak, to this day."

Commissioner Howell said, "We need to fix that. That's not okay. I will do what I can to remedy that problem. That's not okay with me. To me that the community widely supported Judge Riddel Boys Ranch, I think everybody across the county understood the value. I rarely met someone who did not value what they provided and the data that backed up the idea that it was an effective program for Sedgwick County and actually saved taxpayer dollars, and then something funny happened. I agree with you. I appreciate you pointing that out. It became political. This should not be a debate between republicans and democrats, over whether these are state kids or county kids. This is a local problem that we need to be invested in it. I want the people to know that the fiscal 2016 budget is an appropriation for I think roughly \$500,000 for continuation of a program that's evolved, and it has a different look to it. And I think today I would like to get your comments on whether you think this is good for the community or what. I just want to see what your opinion would be. I want to make it clear that there would be some people out there who think this is a waste of money."

Mr. Davis said, "Yes."

Commissioner Howell said, "That we should not be spending \$500,000 for Sedgwick County youth. Let me explain quickly, what this is. We'll have some kids that are retained in their own homes and we will provide programming from our community experts that would be provided to them, in their homes to help get them on the right path. There will be some kids that will be in some of our youth residential facilities. Not Judge Riddel Boys Ranch. There are some other YRC IIs (Youth Residential Center) in our community that don't have enough beds. We have about 30 kids, since JRBR closed, about 30 kids have been sent out of this county, consistently since July 1st of 2014, last year, when this Commission made the choice to close that Ranch down. And as a result, these kids are going to places across the State of Kansas that provide no programming whatsoever. We have no data to know if they are effective or not. We are concerned about that.

"And I think so what we are trying to do with this program is keep kids local, encourage our providers to prioritize Sedgwick County kids and create bed space for them specifically. We will take programming to them wherever they are, whether in their own homes or one of these other facilities. And that program is estimated to cost about \$500,000. There will be people in this community who are going to potentially attack the idea that this is good for the community. I would like the Commissioners, they have shown support, I believe we had a 5-0 vote the other day to approve that program going forward, and in fact, it is going to retain the name of James B. Riddel Boys and Girls Alternative Program. So it is a continuation of what we have tried to do in the past, although it takes a different footprint. It won't be a Ranch. It does include girls. It is for all Sedgwick County youth in these programs. Whether it be in their own homes or one of these other facilities. So with all that being said, I want you to, if you would please present your opinion, whether we should in fact retain that money, which we have limited resources, and I know people are saying put that money someplace more important. They will name a lot of things much. I would like you to make a case what we should do regarding that \$500,000."

Mr. Davis said, "My personal opinion is we are dealing with the Ranch being closed right now, and it is not a popular way of thinking, among the people that feel the way I do, but my opinion is the Ranch should not be reopened.

"The Ranch should not have ever been closed, but now the steps that would have to be taken, it as what it is, I don't think that that's a logical option. Now, what you are proposing, I have a lot of faith in Sedgwick County, I have worked with the juvenile programs all around the county as a participant, and as, you know, as an adult working in this industry now, if you can call it an industry.

"But to answer your question, that faith in them and that faith in what they do, I think that even if it starts out as what it is now, which I am not happy with, I think that they have the likelihood of bringing it up to something that is good. It can still be better than others around the state. Because Sedgwick County is good at what they do, as far as working with their juvenile population, and reducing recidivism which is the goal. You know, my opinions are not just my own opinions. You know, couple of you guys know that I took it upon myself, last year, to start filming a documentary, because I was kind of the poster child for this, and it was always the news talking to me, the paper talking to me, but nobody else was found and nobody else was able to talk. So I started talking to those people. We ended up with several dozen people who have an opinion very similar to mine.

It is not just me alone in the wilderness screaming save JRBR. This is a lot of people. People in this room and people in the overflow room as well."

Commissioner Howell said, "I would say, there were some issues at Judge Riddel Boys Ranch that created pressure on that budget. We actually had more staff at JRBR than we had residents, and that's not a sustainable program with that type of organization. But to the extent that there are some private sector organizations and communities that may be able to provide some more bed space by potentially using that site or other sites, I guess I would be interested in hearing those proposals. I would tell you the problems with that facility are overstated.

"There was a time in 2013 where we were debating, you know, what can we do to make the Ranch last into the future and there were numbers of \$9 million or \$10 million to fix the problems. I asked what exactly do you get for \$9 million or \$10 million, and they said you get a brand new building. That's really not, I think, an accurate assessment of what is going on out there. Then we heard numbers of \$2 million, \$3 million, \$4 million to fix the problems in that facility. Again, that's overstated. I visited that facility just two weeks ago. The only thing that has to be done to make it usable is a sewer line out to the lagoon that's on that property.

"That's around \$30,000 or \$40,000, maybe \$50,000 for the entire repair for all those buildings out there. Everything else out there is actually functional, and still certified. We have a boiler that has recent inspection, up to date on its inspection, the fire safety systems all up to date. The facility is actually a fantastic facility, and if there is a private sector organization that wants to take on some early responsibility to provide some bed space, I would sure like to have them talk to us. But having said that, I do appreciate your perspective. I think you bring a very unique perspective. And you have been a champion for this issue, how to help our kids and our community.

"I appreciate what you've done. In fact, I would give you credit for me being here today, because in 2013 when you came and spoke to the Commission, the legislature was invited, South Central Legislative Delegation was invited and I was in the room and I heard the comments made by the Commissioners. Then we had a meeting later on at Lake Afton, I heard the comments made by Commissioners and people from the State of Kansas, the Department of Corrections also made comments, and there was nobody standing up for Sedgwick County kids. You have done that.

"I just want to say thank you. We need solutions in this community, and this is a conservative position to, put money on kids when you can change the direction of their life. I think we have a responsibility to do that. And I want to say thank you for being here and advocating for that spending."

Mr. Davis said, "Thank you. I appreciate that."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Next, we have Jenny Pennock."

Ms. Jenny Pennock, Thunderbird Firearms Academy, greeted the Commissioners and said, "I wanted to speak to our experience with SCKEDD (South Central Kansas Economic Development District). We had a small retail store, in the Delano area, with intentions to grow and build a brand new shooting range and training center. We are a small business and had worked with SCKEDD for a couple years, packaging our SBA (Small Business Administration) loan application, for a new facility. Projects of our size are so big that we never would have gotten the approval without them. They were instrumental through the entire process, assuring our bank that our project would be worthwhile, and assisting us and the bank, in putting together a successful application. Banks do not have the expertise to do this, because the SBA does not allow for direct contact, which means we had to use a packager on projects of this size. We are so thankful for their help. I don't believe we would be where we are at right now without them. Helping small businesses get through the daunting SBA application, and finally becoming approved is never a bad thing for a community. I ask that you reconsider funding for SCKEDD so other small businesses can get the assistance they need in order to continue to grow in Sedgwick County, and thank you for your time today."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Commissioner Howell."

Commissioner Howell said, "I just want to say, thank you, Jenny, for coming out. I did get to visit your facility last week. I applaud you, it was you awesome. If the community doesn't know what's going on, they need to pay attention to Thunderbird Academy on Greenwich Road. I know we are going to hear from Abdul, in a moment, from SCKEDD. I have questions for him, but appreciate the story about how he helped you make this a reality. So thank you for coming up today."

Ms. Pennock said, "Yes, thank you for saying that."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Next, we have Abdul Arif."

Mr. Abdul Arif, Executive Director, South Central Kansas Economic Development District, greeted the Commissioners and said, "Thank you, Commissioners, for hearing me out. I stand before you today based on the assumption that you are men of reason, rationality and a sincere dedication to Sedgwick County residents, such as myself. At SCKEDD we share those assumptions with you, but believe your decision to cut ties with us will hurt small businesses, the very core of the taxpayer base in Sedgwick County that creates jobs for us. As we sought to explain to you, numerous times to this Board, we seek to serve the needs of small business borrowers, who otherwise would not find funding. You just heard from Jenny, here, a minute ago, when we visited Thunderbird, you heard her emphatically outline the roll of SCKEDD in a nice, new, \$4 million that created jobs. That could not have happened without a packager, such as us. As I said before on numerous occasions, we do not compete with banks. We are a gap funding organization."

"I recall Commissioner Howell, last time at the budget hearing, you had said that the 100 percent cut of \$84,000 to our agency represented 3 percent of our entire budget, but I am not sure where you got that information from. That 100 percent budget cut is substantially higher, because it impedes our ability to increase our loans customer base. Also Sedgwick County residents will receive 100 percent of our services despite you cutting 100 percent of our funding. We only get \$83,000 from you guys, and all of that money goes to technical assistance, loan outreach to the smallest of the small businesses that create jobs. If you would, please, understand the impact of the message that you are sending. There are 14 counties in my range, in my reach, and Sedgwick County obviously is the largest one. If you guys don't see value in what we do, how will I be able to convince 13 other counties that I serve. These are very difficult questions for me to answer when I get undercut by my own county.

"Despite what I read about you gentlemen in the press, I am convinced that you all will listen to reasonable, rationality and restore the relationship with my organization. And to me, it is a ministry to counsel small businesses, make their loans happen and create jobs. And when I joined this organization about nine months ago, I took a substantial pay cut, because I really, truly believe in helping small businesses. Without us, they would have no place to go for us to package loans. Thank you, and I will be happy to take your questions."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Commissioner Howell."

Commissioner Howell said, "Thank you. Let me rebuttal a little bit of the information. You asked where I got my information. I asked county staff to contact various agencies that we're funding, in our 2016 budget. To find out what percentage of their total budget is our appropriation. So I can understand how important it is. Some agencies, WATC is a good example, .41 percent cut for the total budget, \$24 million. For your budget, when I got the data back from our staff, they told me your budget was \$2,760,834. Is that correct?"

Mr. Arif said, "Yes, but there's more to it than that. There is a lot of nuance in there, Commissioner Howell. \$1.9 million of that is weatherization. None of the funds that you give us goes to weatherization. Weatherization is pass-through money that we get from private sources, anonymous, private donors; we don't take taxpayer money here. Only \$850,000 is actual small business budget. If you take away \$84,000, that's more like 10 percent of our budget. So that's, I believe, where the nuance comes from.

"I believe we tried to explain that in some of the meetings we've had with you, so the weatherization is completely a separate part of it, and when you take that \$84,000, it gives you a very skewed view of what our budget is. \$84,000 is strictly devoted to the general operating funds to serve small businesses."

Commissioner Howell said, "I thank you for the clarification. You actually answered my question. I was going to ask about what percentage of your budget was for weatherization programs, and you have answered that question. So that would be a 3 percent effect on your total budget, a 10 percent on that part of your budget."

Mr. Arif said, "Absolutely."

Commissioner Howell said, "I do understand that now. I thank you for the clarification. I thank you for helping the lady from Thunderbird Academy. She came up, and I did visit with her, and she talked about an application that was about six inches thick probably."

Mr. Arif said, "Absolutely."

Commissioner Howell said, "I am trying to wade through all of that. I do have one question that came from my discussion with her. You do charge them a fee; is that correct? What was your percentage, or can you describe how much money you made in that transaction."

Mr. Arif said, "\$2500 is the application fee. And SBA also gives a small percentage of the servicing fee throughout the life of the loan."

Commissioner Howell said, "Thank you very much."

Mr. Arif said, "Thank you, Commissioner Howell. Appreciate the opportunity to speak. I do recall Wichita State [University], we sat next to each other. You commented to me how much you loved SCKEDD, and I hope I can persuade you to continue loving us and restore our budget."

Chairman Ranzau said, "I have a question, Abdul. Been brought to my attention, I know there's multiple counties that participate. I have been told that Harvey County had some discussion as to whether or not to belong to SCKEDD again, and I think they decided to do so. But they had some concerns about some shoddy work with respect to weatherization program. Would you like to speak to that?"

Mr. Arif said, "I certainly will, Chairman Ranzau. Currently we do not serve weatherization needs of Harvey County. ECKAN (East Central Kansas Opportunity Corporation), from Ottawa, Kansas does. We do not do weatherization. I am trying to persuade them to join us, because that decision is made by KHRC (Kansas Housing Resources Corporation). The shoddy work you are referring to was done by ECKAN, not by us, Chairman Ranzau. As a matter of fact, I can share a letter with you, commending our staff for doing a wonderful job to correct the shoddy work that ECKAN had done."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you for the clarification. Next, we have Shirley Koehn."

Ms. Shirley Koehn, 442 Waverly Street, Wichita, greeted the Commissioners and said, "Some of you may already know me; I am a big campaigner against Common Core. I certainly agree with the lady from KANSEL, who said the testing has become, I would say, ridiculously hard. If you want to know about it, look up testing for Common Core, you will find all kinds of teachers coming forward, in public schools, especially in the State of New York, I just want to throw that in there. The presentations, this morning, tug at your heart and sound like something we would be willing to work with. I grew up with a mother who waited tables. A single parent. I never felt poor until my friends started to go to Harvard [University] and places like that and I wondered if I was going to go to college. Long story short, I did. I got a bachelor's and master's, had a little economics, money and banking, et cetera. My husband had a business for over 30 years, here, in town. So we know a little bit about budgets. I know how hard it is. I don't envy your jobs, at all. The taxpayers cannot continue to keep giving more and more money. So it has come to the point where we do need to make some cuts."

"And one of those is, probably, to work towards a cash basis. If you get rid of interest, you will have money to pay onto something else, if you get rid of one obligation, then you have the money you were paying on that obligation, it's freed up to pay cash for something else. Eventually you are on a cash basis. Whether it's personal, the city county shall, or state, the whole world is so in debt, we cannot continue this way.

"So that brings me to what's called needs and wants. That's the way I think you have to look at the budget. There's some very basic things. The role of government is public safety, including law enforcement, fire, and police protection. To build and maintain public roads and bridges, see those are maintained adequately. I would say probably helping the youth who are in trouble to go straight, because that does pay off, and to be profitable, hard workers. Are our current needs being fulfilled adequately? If they are not, then we can't afford the wants. The [Sedgwick County] Zoo, and the additions to the [Sedgwick County] Zoo, the additions to the Botanica, the things that we like to do. I love all those places, and I like to go there. But I am not sure they need to be adding expenses at this point. I think they it probably can cut some expenses. We have to live within our means. We can't continue to live outside our means. It is painful to cut back, and I know that. I have been through it, personally and in business. Sometimes you have to pull in and get down to the very core of what's necessary. And then as you grow better, you can expand back into some of those other things.

"I understand that we are paying now something like \$5.7 million in principle and interest. If you are looking at three percent to five percent interest, that amounts to quite a little bit of money. If that money can be paid off now, incrementally, and we don't take on any more debt, we can eventually get on a cash basis. It looks like some of our debt is old debt that's been swallowed up by new debt. If that is true, and I think it is, then we are like people who are using their credit card to pay off the balances on other credit cards. We are digging the hole deeper. That doesn't make fiscal sense, to me. Being fiscally responsible is a habit. Spending is a habit, too. And it is a habit we need to cut back on. We cannot ever get out of debt, nationally and even here, if we don't cut back somewhere. And I don't envy your making that decision."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Shirley, your time is up and we need to ask you to wrap up. We do have a question from the Commission"

Ms. Koehn said, "Okay, yes."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Commissioner Peterjohn."

Commissioner Peterjohn said, "Thank you. You mentioned a figure in terms of principle and interest payments."

Ms. Koehn said, "I may be wrong on that."

Commissioner Peterjohn said, "I am looking at a proposed budget before us. It has principle and interest cost for debt service, \$18,843,980."

Ms. Koehn said, "\$18 million?"

Commissioner Peterjohn said, "\$18,843,980. We are talking a couple decades, because the county often borrows 20 years."

Ms. Koehn said, "Aren't we borrowing money all the time for roads?"

Commissioner Peterjohn said, "The county has been borrowing approximately \$4 million a year for roads since I have been on the Commission."

Ms. Koehn said, "Okay, and how much interest are we paying on that?"

Commissioner Peterjohn said, "The interest rates have varied at the time it's issued. You are getting into an area that's a little bit deeper. I can give you the aggregate figures. I can give it to you offline."

Ms. Koehn said, "I understand."

Commissioner Peterjohn said, "I just wanted to clarify the numbers."

Ms. Koehn said, "I appreciate that. Are there any other questions?"

Chairman Ranzau said, "Just to clarify for you, we do borrow \$4 million a year for roads and bridges. But we dug ourselves in a hole, but we are paying \$5.7 million in principle and interest. If we are on a cash basis, we could pay \$4 million for roads and bridges and have \$1.7 million left over for all sorts of programs for the public. For example, we could build a new EMS (Emergency Medical Services) station, every single year and have money left over if we hadn't dug ourselves in that hole. So beyond that, because we actually take money out of that \$4 million to pay for principle and interest, we get \$2.4 million worth of bridge loans for \$5.7 million worth of..."

Ms. Koehn said, "Ouch."

Chairman Ranzau said, "So, just to clarify. That's part of our debt. And Commissioner Peterjohn can talk about it."

Ms. Koehn said, "My main point is to make some differentiation between what is really, really the core role of government and mandatory and what is an add-on that we would like to do, but maybe can't. Thank you."

Chairman Ranzau said, "James."

Mr. James Roseboro, 4518 Greenbriar, Wichita, greeted the Commissioners and said, "Happy birthday, Tim. I am here this morning as a private individual. I just want to say I have heard a lot of talk this morning about quality of life, and I am a strong advocate for quality of life issues. And I just want to say some of the cuts, without going in and emphasizing what I have heard here today, the people that we should be trying to help, the most, are the people that are going to be hurt, the most, by some of the cuts that I have heard today. We talk about improving people up where they can be independent and make a living on their own, but if you decide to cut education, WATC, some of the other things that are going on, you are going to hurt the people that need that help the most.

"So I know some cuts need to leads someplace, but the ones, the true quality of life issues decided here, please, keep those cuts to the smallest amounts possible. I heard talking about core values. What are our core values? I don't care where we are today, or where we got to on our own, somebody helped you get there.

"And we owe that to the young, the millennials, or whatever you want to call them, we owe that to our young people. To give them the opportunity to make a decent living. I just came from a NUSA (Neighborhoods for United States of America) conference in Houston, Texas. And they talked about Omaha, Nebraska, getting the NUSA conference in 2018 and the two things they talked about down there, the first, number one, was the aquatic program, and their zoo. And that went over real big. I would like to recommend if you are going to make cuts, you need to partnership, improve the partnership with some of these agencies that's going to be cut, and just don't take money, because these people here are beneficial. Not only are you going to cut the educational level from some people, just think about the amount of people you will put out of work. And the last thing I would like to say, since we are doing cuts all over, has any of you guys thought about maybe taking a pay cut yourself? Thanks you. That's all I have."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you, James. Colin McKenney."

Mr. Colin McKenney, Chairman of the Board, Non-Profit Chamber of Service, greeted the Commissioners and said, "Good morning, thank you for making the time am today. I am speaking, today as Chairman of the Board of the Non-Profit Chamber of Service. I have spoken to some of you in the past, and for some of you, you weren't here when the non-profit Chamber was formed, 13 or 14 years ago. If you weren't here at that time, you may not remember the reason why it came together. And that was, there was and has been a very significant working relationship between Sedgwick County and many non-profit organizations. In some cases that's a business relationship. When those non-profit organizations are not functioning, and, you know, the best possible way, that has a ripple effect back to Sedgwick County. And so as we looked at some organizations at that time that were having difficulties, one of the solutions to that concern was creating a resource, and in this case, the Non-Profit Chamber of Service, which would offer training, outreach opportunities, and basically to serve as a resource for both staff members of non-profit organizations, and Board members of those organizations. You all, as members of a very important Board, understand how important it is that your Board member is prepared, knows what the issues are, at hand, and how to govern. And teaching governance is a big part of what the Non-Profit Chamber of Service has done in the intervening years."

"The proposal, at present, is to decrease current funding levels from \$20,000 a year, down to \$10,000. And as I look at member organizations who have and will continue to come speak to you, it does make a difficult case to talk about how do you prioritize. And you have to make that decision, and I do not. But what I would tell you is that as you are looking at potential cuts to funding for some of the member organizations of the non Non-Profit Chamber of Service, you may also be cutting them twice, if you also reduce funding for our services as well. We are a resource for large and small non-profit organizations. We are a resource for the community as well. And I would just ask that as you are looking to make these difficult decisions, you fully understand what it means to cut services to the Non-Profit Chamber of Service and try to minimize that, or not cut at this time. Be happy to answer any questions you may have."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Commissioner Peterjohn."

Commissioner Peterjohn said, "Just a quick question. What is your total budget for last year."

Mr. McKenney said, "\$108,385, give or take."

Commissioner Peterjohn said, "So \$108,000 roughly. Okay. Thank you."

Mr. McKenney said, "You bet."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you, Colin. Diana Schunn."

Ms. Diana Schunn, Executive Director, Child Advocacy Center of Sedgwick County, greeted the Commissioners and said, "I am here with two of our Board members, Keith Marshall, our Vice President, and Sister Janet Rowley, our Secretary of the Board. On behalf of the nearly 2,000 children of child abuse that we serve each year, and an additional 500 non-offending caregivers, I want to say thank you for your support. We recognize you have difficult decisions. In our current HRSA (Health Resources and Services Administration) \$120,000 grant, 90 percent of our funding helps pay for direct services to victims of child abuse, and the other 10 percent for support services for those victims. Taking care of children and investigating child abuse crimes are essential to the health and to the future of our county. Thank you for your prior support, and we would greatly appreciate your continued support. I appreciate your time."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you, Diane. Just to be clear, there are no proposed cuts to your budget."

Ms. Schunn said, "Correct."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Yes. Thank you. Next we have Suzie Santo."

Ms. Susie Santo, President and CEO, Visit Wichita, greeted the Commissioners and said, "I am here today on behalf of our Board of Directors, our staffs and our partners. And we are here today in support of our partners, Sedgwick County Zoo, Exploration Place, the Arts Council, Riverfest, and the Greater Wichita Area Sports Commission. The current draft budget has either eliminated the county's financial support, or reduced the committed levels to these organizations, who provide entertainment, and/or culture options that are important to Wichita, and to the region. Why do visitors come to Sedgwick County? According to our visitor profile research, they come to our attractions, to enjoy our cultural performances, attend our festivals, or cheer on at a sporting event. These are the specific activities that are created by the organizations which are directly impacted by the recommended budget cuts. Visitors spend over \$1 billion in the Wichita MSA (Metropolitan Statistical Area). And these dollars are important, not only to our economy, but to the local mom and pop store on corner, to the attractions, to locally owned restaurants and hoteliers, and to the partners I am referring to.

"We must have compelling product offering that drive visitors, and their dollars, to Wichita. Other communities are currently looking for ways to attract more visitors. Let's not go backwards. It has been stated many times today that these partners would not feel the impact of the county cuts. As citizens of our community, we look to the county to help create an environment that we are all proud to call home. This takes many partners working together. One could certainly envision a snowball effect. Where one funder cuts and others do the same. If this were to happen, this would obviously put these organizations in a precarious financial position. These organizations do need the county's funding. So why eliminate funding when there seems to be an option on the table that would restore the funding to these organizations and many others.

"We urge you to rethink this budget, to listen to the many citizens who are here today, and to stop the cuts. Thank you so much."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Commissioner Peterjohn."

Commissioner Peterjohn said, "Suzie, thank you for coming down. I've got a question."

Ms. Santo said, "Sure."

Commissioner Peterjohn said, "Visit Wichita used to be known as Greater Wichita Convention and Visitors Bureau, I believe. And what is your budget, roughly?"

Ms. Santo said, "Our budget is about \$5 million. A little over \$5 million."

Commissioner Peterjohn said, "Where does most of that money come from?"

Ms. Santo said, "I should say 95 percent to 98 percent of it comes from visitors who come to the Wichita area and stay at our hotels. So it all comes from visitors who spend the night in a hotel, either through a transient guest tax or tourism fee. Then we do receive a small portion of our budget from our partners."

Commissioner Peterjohn said, "So most of the money comes from the city, hotel and motel tax."

Ms. Santo said, "Yeah. It comes from visitors who stay in our hotel, transient guest tax or tourism fee. It does not come from the taxpayers, unless they happen to check into a hotel."

Commissioner Peterjohn said, "Okay. So \$5 million roughly?"

Ms. Santo said, "About \$5 million this year. A little over."

Commissioner Peterjohn said, "Let me ask you, how much of that money do you all contribute to the [Sedgwick County] Zoo or Exploration Place?"

Ms. Santo said, "Well, our role, as you know, is to market, not only the [Sedgwick County] Zoo, and Exploration Place, but the entire community. That is why we exist. So we market the entire area to drive visitors here to spend their dollars. That's our role. So, again, it is to market these amongst all of the attractions. And we need, quite honestly, we need the product offering, as I talked about. That's why visitors have a choice. They have a choice on where they are going to shop, where they are going to spend their discretionary leisure dollars. That's why the product is so important so we can go out and market it and drive them to the community."

Commissioner Peterjohn said, "There is a proposed reduction in Exploration Place for the county's support of \$75,000 a year. The county is also supporting Exploration Place on the principle and interest, too. When you talk about cuts to the [Sedgwick County] Zoo, in terms of dollar amounts, this year the [Sedgwick County] Zoo's 2015, I am excluding the supplemental appropriation for the elephant barn for \$5.3 million, that was approved last year and paid this year. We are scheduled to spend \$5,617,889, and the proposed budget funding, contained in the budget book, \$5,617,889."

"And for anyone who wants to do the math out there, they can see when you say cuts, I want to just get that on the record, so that we have some accuracy in terms of dollar amounts that are under discussion. I appreciate you coming down and speaking to us this morning. Thank you."

Ms. Santo said, "Thank you."

Chairman Ranzau said, "John Todd."

Mr. John Todd, 1559 N. Payne, Wichita, greeted the Commissioners and said, "First, I want to compliment you on holding a public hearing here today. I believe it is extremely healthy and productive for citizens to have an opportunity to debate around an issue that I see is what is the proper role of government. In the last 100 years or so, government has grown huge, and along with an insatiable appetite for taxing, spending and regulation, it's been driven by special interest groups, with famous claims on the treasury. So some of the programs, I couldn't argue with a lot of the programs I've heard about today. They are wonderful programs. If government, on the national level, kicks can down the road by borrowing money and putting the payment back on shoulders of our children. I congratulate you for your thoughts, I'm reading about, in getting away from borrowing money for these projects. The local government, as I see it, is a microcosm of federal and state government. We, in fact, Sedgwick County, alone, has over 60, separate, government units with taxing authority. The largest is USD 259, current budget of \$639 million, City of Wichita, current budget, \$540 million, Sedgwick County, in the range of around \$409 million.

"If you add these up, the total is over \$1.5 billion. Based on population of 500,000, that's about \$3,000 per capita. Do local governments spend enough money? It is a question I will be asking. It seems clear to me that this year the City of Wichita and the public schools are going to increase their budgets, and the numbers I am seeing is \$20 million to \$30 million each. And USD 259 is proposing a tax increase on the citizens in Sedgwick County, one of the three that I see that is exercising restraint, and I think that we have hundreds of people, taxpaying people out there who appreciate this restraint, because many of them are reeling from the effects of the recession, and at some point we've got to have the argument about essential and non-essential functions of government, and the focus our money on the essential. And based on that, I compliment you for holding this public forum and letting us discuss these issues today. Thanks."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you, Mr. Todd. Next we have Dr. Lucas."

Dr. George Lucas, 1715 North Cypress, Wichita, greeted the Commissioners and said, "I have been a physician for over 50 years. One of my proudest accomplishments has been to participate in Project Access, and also an advocate for Project Access, and a supporter of Project Access. The success of Project Access in expediting healthcare for many of our less fortunate citizens is undeniable and it must continue. There is not any question that there are many, many people in our county who are in need of the services that Project Access can provide, and to significantly defund that program is unconscionable. If time permitted I could give you a lot of specific patient examples, but we don't have time for that. A good deal of my time as a physician has been resident education. And I have repeatedly emphasized to these young doctors about ethics.

"Ethics in very simple terms means fairness and justice, and there's no justice, or fairness in a quick-sided quest to create a budget that minimal taxation and eliminate funding for valuable programs, such as Project Access. We are very proud of what we have been able to accomplish here in Sedgwick County, and we are considered a model for many other parts of the country. We can't continue, of course, without financial support. I am on the Ethics Committee at the American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons, and when I tell my colleagues, on that committee, and other doctors that I know across the country, that over 65 percent of the physicians of Sedgwick County willingly donate their services to persons in need, they are impressed. And you should be, too. In the fact that I mentioned 65 percent of doctors in the county, I think refutes a little bit of what Chairman Ranzau was saying earlier this morning. I am aware, Chairman Ranzau, that you have had a career as a physician's assistant, and surely you have seen people who need the kind of help that Project Access can provide. Don't turn your back on these folks.

"When I came to Wichita 30 years ago, or so, Rock Road wasn't completely paved. Yet we got along, and I submit to you that helping a few people with healthcare has more value than paving the road in rural Sedgwick County. And for you, Commissioner Peterjohn, I happen to know that you have inhabited for a short time, as did I, Athens County, Ohio. The poorest county in the State of Ohio. And I'm sure you've seen the skinny, malnourished men and women with one or two teeth, dragging some bedraggled children along. Surely that made an impression on you.

"For all of you, aren't many of your constituents who voted you into office some of our underserved, not un-deserved, they are underserved. And assure you are aware that Sedgwick County Kansas is nearly at the top of the list of locations in this great country of ours with the highest rate of infant mortality. That situation is not going to improve with cuts to funding of our Health Department and Project Access. I obviously feel strongly about the need to continue healthcare funding in our community, but I also recognize that the arts deserve support as well.

"I think I can sum this up with a quote from Douglas Copeland, who incidentally coined the term Generation X. And whatever you think of him as a novelist or commentator on social justice, I think he said it quite succinctly. Quote, to have a healthy culture you have to have stable healthcare financing, stable arts financing, and stable sports financing. And if you don't have that, your culture becomes a parking lot. So please, don't let the City of Wichita and Sedgwick County become a parking lot. Thank you."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Commissioner Peterjohn."

Commissioner Peterjohn said, "Thank you, Dr. Lucas. The Ohio University connection."

Dr. Lucas said, "Absolutely."

Commissioner Peterjohn said, "Always a pleasure to see another person with Bobcat green and white."

Dr. Lucas said, "Go Bobcats."

Commissioner Peterjohn said, "I would hasten to add that when I was down at Ohio University, because of the university being there, and being a large and relatively stable employer, there were people from outside the area, from some of the neighboring counties, Washington, Gallia, who would actually commute to jobs, in Athens, and I won't argue with you that there was a poor factor there. In fact, there was a lot of discussions about poverty and how to alleviate it. And we set up the great society program, and began to spend trillions and trillions of dollars, Medicaid was established, and despite Medicaid and more recently ObamaCare, we still struggle with health and providing healthcare. And that's an area where I struggle because we could get into areas of government involvement and personal responsibility and trying to set up the system where people will take personal responsibility for their health and if they eat too much, don't exercise enough, you know, you can certainly end up with chronic health problems. I appreciate you coming down and visiting with us again, and thank you."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you, Dr. Lucas. Commissioner Norton?"

Commissioner Norton said, "Before Dr. Lucas gets out of here, thank you very much for taking time to come here today. I know you have plenty on your plate otherwise. I have been a huge supporter of Project Access and the health department for many years, and we need to have physicians weigh in on the complications of what happens when we don't take care of some of these vulnerable situations in our population. Part of it is that the physician community has really stepped up in our community. I applaud them. A little bit of money the county puts in, helps create the foundation, the platform along with United Way and the city that garner that \$15 million worth of care to people that are underserved, disenfranchised, uninsured. And I applaud the medical society, the, all the platform that has been put together to allow us to help out with that. So thanks for coming today and speaking with us."

Dr. Lucas said, "Thank you, sir."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Next, we have Betsy Anderson. I know we have had a number of people leave, and those people that were here and left, I encourage them to email us or contact us at the website. We will certainly still like to hear their comments. And Mr. Holt, could you see how many if there's other people in the waiting room or wherever, let's get a head count on how many people are actually left to speak, because we are going to take a 30-minute break. If there's only a handful left, I would propose we finish them off."

Ms. Betsy Anderson, Kansas Junior Livestock Show, greeted the Commissioners and said, "Since 1933, the Kansas Junior Livestock Show has been held at four locations within Wichita. It began at the Wichita forum, until 1964. Then moved to Wichita Union Stockyards, for the next seven years. In 1973, the Kansas Junior Livestock Show moved to Sedgwick County 4-H Fairgrounds. In 1978, it moved to it's longest standing location, the former Kansas Coliseum; Kansas Pavilions, from 1978 to 2014. Last year's show, we were informed that the people that own the Kansas Coliseum were selling the main building that we use. We are the largest livestock youth event. It didn't give us enough room. We had to find a new location. There was not a bigger location to serve all of our animals in Sedgwick County. The Kansas Junior Livestock Show is the state's largest livestock youth event featuring goats, sheep, swine and cattle. For all Kansas 4-H and FFA members. This fall, the total of 760, 4-H and FFA members, from 90 counties, entered 126 steers, 308 heifers, 332 hogs, 131 gilts, 275 market lambs, 228 ewes, 226 meat goats and 105 commercial doe. That's a lot of livestock."

"We are sad about the move, but we are moving to the Kansas State Fairgrounds, and we want to thank you guys for your support for all of these years that you guys have helped us keep the show going, and keep the kids going. We are still holding one of our main events in Wichita. We are holding it at Cowntown. Our Beef Eater Barbecue will be held on September 21st at Cowntown. That is one of our main events for the show. So we would like you to consider maybe helping us with the rent of Cowntown for that event. Do you want to go ahead?"

Rhonda McCurry, Kansas Junior Livestock Show, said "Thanks. Our cost for renting the facility at Cowntown, which we are very excited about doing, is \$4,200. So we realize there has been a significant reduction, zero, that you were going to provide to our show. We just want to really clarify with you, that we still have a major part of our organization, and an event in Sedgwick County, and are very excited about keeping it in Cowntown, it is a great venue for us. We are going to rent the entire grounds, and bring in about 1,400 Wichita business community members. We serve steaks; Cargill is a part of that. We have other groups as well. We have a band. Employ some volunteers to do a gun fight. Really going to make Cowntown stand out at our event, too. So anyone who has not been visiting lately had got a chance to see the great things in Cowntown that we do have part of our event still continuing in Wichita. We want to make that clear with you."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you. Commissioner Howell had a question."

Commissioner Howell said, "Thank you, both, for being here. I hope my voice holds out. I have not had a chance to speak with either of you before today, so I am glad you came so you can answer a couple of questions. I do see, again, I asked staff to provide some data regarding total budget to different organizations. They told me the budget for Junior Livestock was \$425,000. Does that sound about right?"

Ms. Anderson said, "Yes."

Commissioner Howell said, "So we are talking approximately Sedgwick County, donate just about five percent of your total funding."

Ms. Anderson said, "Correct."

Commissioner Howell said, "Can you tell me who donates that \$425,000, besides Sedgwick County?"

Ms. Anderson said, "Well, we have fees. Entry fees, and things such as that. Most of that \$425,000 goes back to the kids. So it is awarded in premiums."

Commissioner Howell said, "So, Sedgwick County and fee. And that's it?"

Ms. Anderson said, "No. We do have other sponsors. Along with Sedgwick County."

Ms. McCurry said, "We have looked to find, you know, new sponsors, too, in terms of when we knew that the budget cuts might be coming, forthcoming. And we know the reality out there, so we have looked for other sponsors to come in and work towards our event. But what Betsy is saying, of that, about \$200,000 does go back out as award money to those young people. So we bring in money, but we also give it right back out to the 4-H and FFA kids."

Commissioner Howell said, "Sponsors like businesses and that type of thing throughout the community?"

Ms. Anderson said, "Yes."

Commissioner Howell said, "That's all I have. Thank you, Mr. Chairman."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you. Next, we have James Kilpatrick. I don't see James here. No James Kilpatrick. Lynn Stephen? Mr. Manager, how many people do we have?"

Mr. Ron Holt, said "We know there's seven for sure in the other room that are still on the list to speak. We know a few ran to plug meters or ran to grab a quick bite to eat with the thought they would come back, based on the break for lunch."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Okay. We will just declare a recess. We will stands in recess now for 30 minutes, and the next people to speak will be Lynn Stephen, Pat Layman, and Sharon Dire. We will be back in 30 minutes."

The Board of County Commissioners recessed at 11:58 a.m. and returned at 12:28 p.m.

Chairman Ranzau said, "We are now back from recess. We will begin here, in a moment. We just want to reiterate that we greatly appreciate all of the comments and remind people, out there, who can't be here today, that they can contact us through the website or email. We would highly encourage you to contact us and give us your viewpoints. This is, certainly, just the beginning of the discussion, with respect to this budget. Next, we have James Kilpatrick, who I don't believe is here. Lynn Stephan."

Ms. Lynn Stephan, Women for Kansas, greeted the Commissioners and said, "I am in the advertising business. I believe in truth in advertising and I couldn't help but notice, on your Commission website, the wonderful Keeper of the Plain logo, and your slogan 'Sedgwick County, Working for You.' I do not believe that is an accurate slogan. I would like to have you consider, (inaudible) that 95 percent of the comments in this audience today, 95 percent of the emails that you have received are against the cuts. I would like to have you consider this, as a slogan; Sedgwick County, three Commissioners in the majority, working for their own ideology, the public be damned. Thank you."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you, for your comments. I will just remind everyone that there are thousands of people out there, that have a different view, and they won't be forgotten, either. Next we have Pat Lehman"

Ms. Pat Lehman, 515 Manlow, Wichita, greeted the Commissioners and said, "Hi, Karl. Recently, I learned about a study that has been ongoing for a number of years. People that conduct seminars, for decision makers from companies; CEOs, CFOs, Senior Vice Presidents, so on and so forth, are invited to seminars. At these seminars, they are divided into teams of five and are tasked with the responsibility of coming up with something to produce. Don't care if it's an aircraft part, body lotion, whatever. It doesn't matter. The real study, is about the next part."

"They are given a choice of where to locate the plant. There is Community X, with very low taxes, there are virtually no zoning laws, very few environmental laws, and most of those are not enforced, city and county government don't even talk to each other, very little public health, poor schools, very little citizen participation, quality of life is almost non-existent, parks are in disarray. Then you have Town A, the taxes are higher, it's a well planned community, it's very carefully zoned; you aren't just going to dig willy nilly, wherever you want, they do have good schools; because they pay for them, they have constant city, county community participation, by citizens, they will jointly form task forces, they will plan all kinds of projects; where public and private come together and work on that, environmental laws are strict and enforced, and they have great quality of life; they have music, theater, museums, they have zoos, they have gardens, you name it.

"Now, our teams of five have to choose where they want to locate their business. Even up to ten years ago, the logic was to locate the plant in County X, where the taxes were da-da-da-da-da and you housed your executives in the other town, the other county, that's 45 miles away. You collect workers from wherever you can and you get them to live wherever they can. Your top professionals, you would expect will live in Town A. Now, that's changing. In the last ten years, it's changed tremendously, because the millennials and the professionals that we all want to attract to communities and the jobs that we want to attract are no longer willing to work for companies that are not concerned with the environment. They don't want to live and work anyplace where there is not a quality of life. This is a group of people who think differently than people have in the past. They are very concerned about quality of life. So, if you want to attract those kinds of people, and we certainly want them in this town; we depend on engineers, we depend on good professors, we depend on good business leaders and we want them to live in our community and you have to think about what really brings them here and what keeps them here.

"I have lived in both kinds of communities. Quite frankly, I am disappointed in the very narrow political agenda that I see being carried out by this Commission, by some of you, anyways. I think I live in Town A, right now, but if you continue on the track that you're on, and you can say we're cutting taxes, we're lowering taxes, we've seen that. We've been there, done that, seen what it's done to our state. I don't want to live in County X, I want to live in a community where there is good public health. I don't want sicker, poorer people. I don't want overcrowding of the jails, because we don't have any treatment for mentally ill people, and that's what is happening all over the place. So, I am just telling you; shame on you for not considering the quality of life that we have worked hard to have, in this community and the trials and tribulations that we have gone through, and I think that you need to reconsider your budget priorities. Thank you."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you. Sharon Dyer is next."

Ms. Sharon Dyer, 2637 South Rosemary Court, Wichita, said, "I am on Project Access. The doctors donate their time. I am walking now, because of one of those doctors; Jason Ward. He has helped me a lot. He has been taking care of me, now, for a year. I had surgery on both legs, to put stints in. Project Access has helped me before, many years ago, when you're between jobs or on hard times. I am really happy for them and hope that they can continue and stuff, thank you."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you, Sharon, for being here. Next, we have Sandra Carlo."

Ms. Sandra Carlo, 1311 W. Harvest Court, Wichita, greeted the Commissioners and said, "I am first going to start with my experiences that I have had at the [Sedgwick County] Zoo. I started taking up the [Sedgwick County] Zoo's educational opportunities, with a Wee Wiggles class; when I was a toddler. Since then, I have participated in numerous educational opportunities, including the Junior Zookeeper Program and Zooniversity; that sheds light on the everyday work of being a Zookeeper, as well as volunteering my time. From the [Sedgwick County] Zoo, I have learned the importance of dedication and a strong work ethic. To me, the Sedgwick County Zoo is a place of community and involvement. It displays the hard work of Sedgwick County residents and it's a place to come for intellectual enrichment.

"I am going to go ahead and talk about why I am here, today. In Sedgwick County, we are presented with a unique opportunity with our zoo. It is AZA (American Zoological Association) accredited and every step is taken to ensure proper care of the animals. Citizens of the county and members of the [Sedgwick County] Zoo are extremely grateful for the funding from the county. However, it is of upmost importance to honor prior funding agreements. If 2016's funding remains flat, as proposed by the budget, that will mean a lack of \$388,000 that are needed and expected. If the money would not have been promised, by the county, they wouldn't have moved forward with the current elephant exhibit that is currently under construction. The funding is essential to accommodate for the extra zookeepers. It is important, to me, that this funding is received, because I have seen firsthand, the good the Sedgwick County Zoo has done and that they are continuing to do. Attention must be focused on the intellectual enrichment of the community and one way to do that is to accommodate the needs of the Sedgwick County Zoo. Thank you."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you. I believe that Commissioner Norton has comments or questions."

Commissioner Norton said, "First of all, Sandra, thank you for being here. It's wonderful to have a young, fresh face address us, every once in awhile. I have to tell you that in a few years, one of my granddaughters may be in that same place, because she's in the Junior Zookeeper Program, out at the [Sedgwick County] Zoo. It's amazing, I talk to her mother everyday and she says that she comes out of there with the biggest smile on her face, that you could ever imagine, and she's been shoveling poop and sand. She's dedicated, she loves the animals and she loves the [Sedgwick County] Zoo. It appears that you have that same passion, in your heart. Thank you for coming today, we appreciate it."

Commissioner Howell said, "I have a question."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Commissioner Howell."

Commissioner Howell said, "Thank you, Ms. Carlo, for being here today. I was pointing out, it's interesting to me, 50 people signed up to speak today and you are the only person that has named the [Sedgwick County] Zoo, specifically. Thank you for bringing that to the Board today. I think that you stand alone, in that regard. Other people have been advocating for lots of things, but you are advocating for the [Sedgwick County] Zoo, specifically.

"You mentioned a couple of things that I'd like to make sure that we have clarity on. You mentioned a promise of funding that was made in 2013. I wasn't here in 2013, I understand that agreement that was made in 2013, was intended to give the [Sedgwick County] Zoo some ability to plan for the future and one of the things that they wanted to have, at that time, was to have an elephant exhibit. It was their intention, at that time, that they would raise the \$10.6 million, for the exhibit. It came back to the Commission, late last year and they approved, basically, 50 percent of the exhibit. So, that's never happened before, in Sedgwick County, when Sedgwick County Board of County Commissioners actually paid for a part of an exhibit, specifically. So, that's a very unusual thing that happened. In a sense, they did not intend that, in 2013. They were planning on raising the money, but they were unable to do so. In that agreement in 2013, there was also an opportunity for either party to terminate that agreement for any reason.

"I believe when they signed that agreement, in 2013, they were in the process of 6.6 percent, across the board, cuts for non public safety, 6.3 percent cuts for public safety. They laid off around 70-90 employees in 2013. They laid off another 70 or so, in 2014. I can look those numbers up, if anyone needs to know them. They cut both the Exploration Place and the [Sedgwick County] Zoo in those years, hundreds of thousands of dollars. As I mentioned, a minute ago, they cut WATC, last year, \$150,000. When I look at the funding agreement that was signed in 2013, there are a couple of things have changed; number one, I think they signed that with the intention that the revenues in Sedgwick County would been increasing and we would be able to pay those commitments, to the [Sedgwick County] Zoo, but the termination clause gives us an opportunity to actually exercise whatever difficult decisions we have to make, and so, that's where we are today.

"Our economy has been, somewhat, flat and we have had small increases in the economy growth, in Sedgwick County. Things are slightly getting better, but not quickly. Let me just point out that the funding agreement included a 45 percent increase, over a five year period. This year, alone, is a seven percent increase. Our assessed valuations only went up by 1.5 percent. We only have one choice, really. Actually, we have a couple of choices. We could raise taxes to find more revenue to fund these things or we could reprioritize and tighten our belt a little bit, to try and find a way to make things work. I have been talking to the [Sedgwick County] Zoo and I believe that there are ways that they can fully function with something less than \$380,000 more, this year. That is a discussion that we need to continue and I believe that is our intention to see that elephant exhibit open on time and I believe that it will do that. They need to be partner with us and realize that this is a tough economy. A seven percent increase, this year, that money has to come from somewhere. I just want to make sure you're aware when you use the word promise, I would use this word before and it was in print the other day. It was a conditional commitment. It was based on the idea that we would have revenue to cover that desired spending and unfortunately, that just hasn't happened. In previous years, when they had budget troubles, they cut the [Sedgwick County] Zoo hundreds of thousands of dollars, in those previous years. So, this is not an extraordinary year, in that regard. We do have increases in our utility costs and increases in our insurance costs, for employees. There is pressure on the budget, for things we have no control over.

"I want to just speak to the issue that you used the word promise, as if we are breaking a promise or we are doing something that is unethical or immoral. I just want to present the background for that, because I don't believe that's a good description of what that agreement was. It was an intention to provide funding and that, clearly, can't happen when we don't have a revenue increase to cover that type of increase in one part of our county budget. I do appreciate you coming out, today. I am impressed that, as a high school student, you wanted to come up and speak before the Board of County Commissioners and you've really impressed me today.

"I think that you're a great person. I want you to know that I love the [Sedgwick County] Zoo too, I think that we all do and I think that it's going to continue to be a great zoo for our community. We have invested \$110 million of infrastructure, out there, and we've got a fantastic zoo, already and it's going to continue to get better and it will do that, this year as well. I have every intention to make sure that will happen, but again, we have to have some sort of understanding between these agencies and organizations that share in our budget shortfall. That is all that I have, Mr. Chairman. Thank you."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Commissioner Unruh."

Commissioner Unruh said, "Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Well, Sandra, thanks for being here. You don't have to stand there and listen to me talk. You are welcome to, but I am not going to ask you a question, I just want to express to those who are watching and listening that there is a different interpretation or analysis of the events that have just been described. A few years ago, when we made the changes in the funding agreement, it was due to external circumstances and to the economy and to real revenue stream crisis. It was not produced by a new financial system that includes no bonding. This is driven by the fact that there is a decision that we aren't going to bond anymore, but we are going to continue to do those projects that were bonded. In order to accomplish that, we have to take money from our General Fund. This is a completely different set of circumstances that drove the changes in the funding agreement, a few years ago, with the [Sedgwick County] Zoo. There was a different way that it was handled.

"The Manager and a few Commissioners sat down and talked with the folks, at the [Sedgwick County] Zoo, long before any of it even became public knowledge and they worked the issue out and came to a common agreement about what was going to be done. The [Sedgwick County] Zoo did not just arbitrarily receive a notice that we were going to break the contract and then later on receive a notice that we were going to cut their funding. This was done, it was worked out through staff and within our budget ability and everyone came to an agreement. I just wanted to throw a different spin on it, so the characterization of the events might have a little balance. I am sensitive to it. For several years, I was on the [Sedgwick County] Zoo Board and I fully realize the cultural and economic impact it has on our community. As much as I can, I want to preserve that."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you. I will say, for the record, I think that to try and pin any one particular budget decision or reduction, based on the idea that we are going to be more fiscally responsible, is disingenuous. There are a variety of things that happen in our budget. We were hoping for 1.9 percent, but we only got 1.5 percent.

"With that being said, I think there are some facts that need to get out there about the zoo exhibit. I think there's unanimous support, on this Commission, for the zoo. My family belongs to the zoo. My daughter spent three weeks out there, this summer, with the Zooniversity Program. We all support the idea of an elephant exhibit. The question is if we are going to do it in the fiscally responsible manner, or not? The AZA requires us to have three elephants. We can have three female elephants, but the Zoological Society is determined to have six or nine elephants and they are committed to breeding them, because they think they can save the world population of the elephants, in Africa. While that is a noble cause, is that going to be effective and is that a function of Sedgwick County taxpayers. The difficulty we have up here, is that we have constituents that are on both sides of the issue. I have had some constituents say raise money for the zoo. I have had others say you're giving them \$5.6 million a year, but you shouldn't be giving them anything, it should be run by private dollars. So, we have these different viewpoints that you have to try to work on. It's important to remember that we are giving them close to \$11 million this year, if you include the \$5.3 million for the elephant exhibit.

"Now, we don't have to have six to nine elephants, we can do that in the future, when we have more money. There have been numerous meetings with the members of the [Sedgwick County] Zoo Board, seeking some sort of compromise. All of the other organizations that we have talked to are open to some sort of compromise. There has been no willingness, at all, on behalf of the [Sedgwick County] Zoo Board, at all, to compromise. That's unfortunate and it makes this difficult. You add that with the fact that we have the information we were given when the agreement was approved, indicating to me that they should have enough money to operate, even with the elephants. Now they're trying to change their song and say no, we need more money. We are going to try and work that out. We are going to continue to meet with them and try and work on a compromise, but it goes both ways. When they needed us, the taxpayers spent \$5.3 million out of our reserves. Now we need them to work with us and work some sort of compromise and I hope they are willing to do that, at some point in the future. Commissioner Peterjohn."

Commissioner Peterjohn said, "Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Since January, I have had the privilege of sitting in the Dave Unruh seat, I think they have a name plaque on that, out at the [Sedgwick County] Zoo Board. Did you miss that? I have had the opportunity to visit with [Sedgwick County] Zoo Board members and management, out at the [Sedgwick County] Zoo, fellow Board members and a lot of citizens out there who have an interest in the Zoological Society and I am a little bit more optimistic, in that I think there is a possibility of reaching common ground. When we are in a situation when they are projected by the funding agreement, to have a seven percent increase in funding, and as the Chairman pointed out, the tax base has grown 1.5 percent, that's a challenge. The bigger challenge is that the current funding agreement, next year, has another six percent increase in it and the year after that is about an eight percent increase. I just don't think there is any way that our tax base is going to be able to grow, in proportion to that.

"That makes for a very challenging environment. I wanted to provide that context and comment, because I know that the [Sedgwick County] Zoo is important to a lot of folks out there and my family has always had memberships out there, for many, many years, and unlike the Chairman, my children have not been involved in volunteering or working out there, but I did want to provide some context, because I know that county staff, myself and the Commissioners up here, have been in discussions with the [Sedgwick County] Zoo Board and we're trying to see where we can come up with a way of getting some common ground and I am looking forward to visiting with the head of the [Sedgwick County] Zoo, Mr. Reed, I understand he's traveling at the moment, but I think he will be back in the country soon. Thank you, Mr. Chairman."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Commissioner Unruh."

Commissioner Unruh said, "Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just want to say, for the record; to characterize my remarks as disingenuous is, I think, disingenuous."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Let me say, they are inaccurate."

Commissioner Unruh said, "I think they are not inaccurate."

Chairman Ranzau said, "And not appropriate, according to our CFO (Chief Financial Officer)."

Commissioner Unruh said, "I think they are accurate."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Okay, we will have to agree, to disagree."

Commissioner Unruh said, "And how would they be inappropriate, sir?"

Chairman Ranzau said, "Well, because in our thousands of decisions that we make in the budget, some push up and some push down, he explained it to us, before and you still don't understand it, so I guess we will agree to disagree."

Commissioner Unruh said, "I guess we will."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Commissioner Peterjohn."

Commissioner Peterjohn said, "Mr. Chairman, I just want to make sure, Commissioner Unruh, I wasn't implying in any way, shape, or form, that your remarks were either disingenuous or inaccurate and if that's the case, I just wanted to clarify, for the record..."

Commissioner Unruh said, "I was pushing back at the Chair."

Commissioner Peterjohn said, "Oh, okay."

Chairman Ranzau said, "I will accept that pushback."

Commissioner Unruh said, "Thank you."

Chairman Ranzau said, "One other point; I think it's important to realize that the funding agreement would have projected about a 45 percent increase for the zoo and we couldn't promise that to the Sherriff Department, EMS, Fire Department, so I didn't support it, at the time, because I knew it was a commitment that would be very difficult, if not impossible, to keep, because of this new economy. In our budgets, we keep having overly optimistic projections of how much revenue we are going to bring in and we don't ever meet them, so I think we need to start with a more realistic baseline in our future budgets so that we don't end up making commitments that we know we can't keep. Then again, sometimes we have a difference of opinion on that, as well."

Commissioner Howell said, "Let me just go ahead and say that they did have some cuts, leading up to 2013. I think it was intended to be some restoration to some of the cuts that they've had in previous years, but 2013 was a low point in funding for the [Sedgwick County] Zoo. They did make it and we had a great zoo in 2013 and we've had a great zoo before 2013 and we have a great zoo today, so they did restore a lot of funding, but from that point in their difficult history, from that point to the 2018 planned funding agreement, it's a 45 percent increase. This year alone, it's a seven percent increase. That is exactly what the agreement shows, thank you."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Next, I believe, is Benny Bowman. Benny Bowman."

Mr. Benny Bowman, 1914 Euclid, Wichita, greeted the Commissioners and said, "I have sympathy for you, for having to sit through all of this. Commissioner Howell and I spent quite a few hours, up in Topeka. Of course, anybody can tell, I have been around for quite awhile, especially through the political arena and I just heard you get two lashings from a couple of ladies, here. If there is anything that I have found out about the public and when it comes to politics, is that it's easy to motivate people to hit the polls or come to meetings or what not, it's money. When you start passing out money, you attract a long line and of course, when we start cutting money, we're going to have a longer line. And all of those people, 95 percent of people speaking out and emailing you and everything, the ones that are against you cutting those programs are the ones who probably wouldn't show up, because they're out there earning livings to pay the taxes. I commend you for holding the line on the spending, that's a hard thing to do. To go out and borrow money, at this time, in my opinion, is very irresponsible, because of the economy hasn't picked up and just like Richard just got through saying, we don't have any indication that our economy is going to pick up."

"Here is something that I would like to say though, when it comes to debt, I don't know how many people realize this, but back 20 years ago, the state got us \$4 billion in debt and I was just in Commissioner Peterjohn's office, a minute ago, and I know I got some information at home, but I didn't think to pick it up. Anyways, I have a book of 2014 that says the projected balance of June 30, 2015, is \$3.9 billion for the state. When Jim and I were serving up there, in 2011, the balance of the state debt was \$3.8 billion and it costs \$300 million and some, to service it, in 2011. The FY [20]13 principle and interest is \$410 million. The per capita debt, in Kansas, is \$1,112. That's for each and every one of you. Nebraska's per capita debt is \$14. Now, how we gonna compete with other communities, when we get so far in debt, when we owe so much money. I am sorry for this young lady, but she will never see that debt paid off. It won't be paid off in 1,000 years. That's what I'll say. Anyone that encourages you to go into debt, it's a very seductive trap. Thank you."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you, Benny. Next we have Ryan Pennock."

Mr. Ryan Pennock, Thunderbird Firearms Academy, greeted the Commissioners and said, "Thanks for sitting through all of this, today. I really am here, today, to talk on behalf of SCKEDD. Without SCKEDD having done everything that they have done for us, over the last two years, we wouldn't even be here. That doesn't even tell the story, but I am on limited time today. All I wanted to say is; really you're considering, and you guys have lots of numbers and things, Jim is the numbers guy up there, so I don't have access to all of those. I can tell you about a few numbers that are effectual, in my world.

"Our project was a little over \$7 million. That's an awful big project, by any standard, here in town. There were an awful lot of construction people employed, monies to the city, to the county, there are still ongoing monies that were effected there. I would say, without hesitation, that there was a lot more than \$84,000 that came back into the county, just on the construction, alone. Your challenge today, is to listen to everyone out here and weigh and make a decision on what to cut and those things. That's a difficult decision and I don't envy you, there, at all. I would challenge you to look at things that are revenue generators, not liabilities. We hired an additional 18 employees at our facility. That's a huge economic impact, right there. Every one of them that I hired received a raise from their current job, every one of them. So, that was meaningful and it wasn't just a lateral move for them. My real estate taxes are going to be, roughly, \$125,000. I use professionals, like accountants and such, that are going to take up more than \$90,000, that's our local money, in the pool. Especially the real estate and things like that, that go right back to the county. You're talking about \$83,000 and some change or \$84,000, for SCKEDD. I think that just our project alone, we have more than paid that back and we are just one little piece of SCKEDD's success story. I would really take that into account. I realize that my time is up. Look at the assets and the revenue generators when you look at this, and I am sure that you do. I am not sure that you get to speak to the benefactor that often, so, thank you."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you. Commissioner Peterjohn has some comments."

Commissioner Peterjohn said, "Thank you. I want to wish you the best on your business venture. Anyone going into business or an expansion of an existing business, is to be commended. I am just curious; how many square feet building did you have built up there on Greenwich road?"

Mr. Pennock said, "27,000."

Commissioner Peterjohn said, "27,000 square feet?"

Mr. Pennock said, "Yes, sir."

Commissioner Peterjohn said, "Okay, thank you."

Mr. Pennock said, "Yes, sir."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thanks, again, Ryan."

Mr. Pennock said, "Thanks guys."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Next, we have Martha Linsner."

Ms. Martha Linsner, 9804 West Harvest, Wichita, greeted the Commissioners and said, "I am the President of the Trust Company of Kansas and a resident of Sedgwick County, on the west side of town. I am speaking today, on behalf of the Arts Council, so thank you for this opportunity. With no offense, whatsoever, to the 15 or 20 other community related meetings that I attend every month, I do have one favorite meeting to attend, every month. There is a meeting that's held the first Thursday, of every month, at Mead's Corner, and you are all welcome to join us at 8 a.m. for that meeting. That meeting is the Arts Council's Development Committee, for which I chair, and like I said, we meet at Mead's, on a monthly basis. I prepare the agenda and it includes events, calendar, grants, programming and other items, of course. Serving on the Board of this committee is not about me, it's about making our community a better place, so if you ever find a growing community in this country, you will find that it has a vibrant Arts community. It's about discovering what the people want, from a cultural perspective, and serving their needs. The Arts Council is making a difference in the quality of life, in Sedgwick County, and we could not do this without funding; hence the name of the committee I serve on, the Development Committee. We couldn't do this without Mya, who is on the Arts Council Board, and a full time member of Red Cross. We couldn't do this without Jessica, who is an Arts Council Board member, a yoga teacher, a community volunteer, a supportive wife, and a young mother. We couldn't do it without Sharon, who's on the Arts Council, she's retired, she's passionate about the Arts, she's a donor, as well as a community volunteer. We couldn't do it without Arlen Hamilton. He is also on the Arts Council Board and a full time CPA. It's my favorite meeting of the month, because every month, we discuss making things happen and then following through. We meet, again, a month later, and we do that process all over again. That's the leadership that we have, in this community. These people who are volunteers, giving their time, to make Wichita a better place. It's giving back and it's making a difference. We lead with passion and I ask that you do the same. Leadership is action, not words. Leaders are role models whose behavior sends powerful messages throughout the community about what is and what is not important. Leaders set the standard by which other people calibrate their own choices and behaviors. This ability to translate intention into reality and to act on your intention, comes from commitment; a characteristic that is common to all individuals who are recognized as leaders.

"Commitment consists of a set of possible beliefs, coupled with an equally appropriate set of positive action and behavior. Without this action and behavior, there is no commitment, merely good intention. Effective leaders not only say what they want to do is the right thing, they follow through, with appropriate action. They walk the way they talk. Leadership then, is the act of setting the right example; serving as a role model, having actions that speak louder than words, showing the way, holding to the mission and espousing positive beliefs. Commissioner Unruh, I thank you for your positive passion that you deliver to District 1. Commissioner Norton, thank you for leading District 2, especially my hometown of Haysville. If you are there, on Saturday night, having steaks, be sure to tell my mother hello. Commissioner Peterjohn, thank you for leading District 3, with passion, that's my district and I am very passionate about what happens in west Wichita, as well as the rest of the county. Please listen to the people that you serve, remain focused on their desire to create something special and make everyone in Sedgwick County happier citizens and making this a vibrant, wonderful place to live. You have been presented with options and I hope you will see that they make good financial sense. Commissioner Ranzau, thank you for leading District 4 with passion, please listen to the people that you serve. Commissioner Howell, thank you for leading District 5 with passion, please listen to the people that you serve, be pragmatic, weigh each decision on its own and consider the options on the table.

"Thank you for being reasonable, thoughtful and approachable, throughout this process. Again, I hope that all of you will take advantage of joining me, at Mead's, on August 6th, at 8 a.m., for my favorite meeting of the month."

Chairman Ranzau said, "I think that we have Commissioner Norton."

Commissioner Norton said, "Thank you for being here today, Martha. I have been on almost all of the Visioneering trips, to visit cities. It's interesting that every city showed us their creative class. Those that innovate, those that think, those that inspire and create. Whether it's arts, architecture, engineering, or whatever. I think, to inspire and set a platform; of course we don't deliver the arts, I would suspect that five County Commissioners probably couldn't draw a straight line, if they had to, but we need those individuals that create, that think, that produce the things that inspire us and make our lives better and we will continue to help with that platform, I hope. The arts are important; the creative class is important, in your community, and all of the great cities of the United States have a creative class. Have the position and platform for them to inspire us in so many ways. Thank you for being here, today, to advocate for the Arts Council."

Ms. Linsner said, "It's my pleasure to serve on the Arts Council Board and what we are doing, firmly believe supports the comments that you heard earlier, from the KU Students, the residents here, in Wichita, that they want to be here and they want the vibrant culture surrounding them, as well as the engineers from Spirit."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Commissioner Peterjohn."

Commissioner Peterjohn said, "Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The information that I've got, and correct me if I am wrong, you all are receiving a little over \$14,000 a year, from us, and your total budget is \$145,000. Does that sound about right?"

Ms. Linsner said, "That sounds about right."

Commissioner Peterjohn said, "Okay, for the Wichita Arts Council. I know the City of Wichita has a dedicated mill levy for the arts. How much do you all receive from the City of Wichita?"

Ms. Linsner said, "I am sorry, I do not know that number off of the top of my head."

Commissioner Howell said, "I can answer that question."

Commissioner Peterjohn said, "Oh, thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman."

Commissioner Howell said, "Fiscal Year 2016 is proposed to be \$6,341, for 2016, for Wichita."

Ms. Linsner said, "Thank you."

Commissioner Howell said, "I would like to continue, if you don't mind. Alright, thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank you, for being here. You obviously did your research and know about each one of us. I appreciate your challenge to each one of us, the way that you presented that was really good. I guess I did want to make the point that Wichita is funding the Arts Council at \$6,341 and historically, we have funded over \$14,000, at least last year."

"I had a good discussion with Arlen Hamilton, the other day, about the Arts Council and he made a point that it's really not the Wichita Arts Council; it is Arts Council, Inc., that's the business filing name.

Ms. Linsner said, "Correct."

Commissioner Howell said, "I am on the website and I'm taking a look at this and it's actually [www.]wichitaarts.com. Is that correct?"

Ms. Linsner said, "Yes."

Commissioner Howell said, "Okay, the [www.]wichitaarts.com website and if you look at the mission statement and the things it talks about, the Arts Council, it is arguably, directly connected to the City of Wichita. There is no discussion about art throughout the county or any other cities in our county. I am having trouble with his argument that this is a county wide benefit. I understand that people from all over the county do visit Wichita and they enjoy that art, but I live in the City of Derby and they have art throughout the City of Derby, as well and the City of Derby takes responsibility for investing in the art things that they put into their community. I think that every city in Sedgwick County takes some sort of role in providing art for their own communities. Wichita has a tremendous amount of art being invested in this community. The question is; should we, as Sedgwick County government, be invested in only one of our twenty cities?

"I could read some of this, but I would hate to bore the audience, but it mentions Wichita over and over and over and over again, throughout their website. There is no discussion about anything outside the City of Wichita. Even the website itself, it's [www.]wichitaarts.com. I just have a concern that we are putting more than twice what Wichita puts into this. In this time of lean financial forecasts and trying to find ways to balance our budget, I think that we need to look at the Arts Council. One of my discussions with Arlen was what could you or how could you tighten the belt a little bit and what could you guys live with? We had a discussion about that and I won't elaborate on that, right now, but again, that's the discussion that we need to have. I would even look to Wichita to challenge them to come up to even what we have been funding this at. I'm looking at their budget of 1.33 mills funding is their mill levy for the arts. They have over a \$9 million budget for the arts. There's \$26,000 left over, in fiscal year in 2016 and the following year, over \$100,000 left over in their projected budget. So, there is money in the community, available for the arts. I think it should, primarily, come from Wichita, rather than Sedgwick County. I will continue to think about it. I do appreciate your comments. If there is anything that you would like to say to me, I would love to hear what your comments are."

Ms. Linsner said, "I would just repeat what you said, that there are citizens in Sedgwick County and throughout the state, that come to Wichita for entertainment. It's vitally important that we have arts and culture, whether that's the zoo or sculptures in Old Town, for people to enjoy. That's what makes a city vibrant and what makes a city survive over not survive. If we focused on the arts, first, we would be a stronger community."

Commissioner Howell said, "I do understand that point of view and I do appreciate that and I do agree, to some extent. Thank you, very much."

Ms. Linsner said, "Thank you."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you very much, Martha, for your comments today and for you being here. Next, we have Dominic Canare."

Mr. Dominic Canare, Make ICT, greeted the Commissioners and said, "Chairman, I wanted to call out, earlier, you said that government is the people and I wanted to echo that. People lose sight of that, especially young people, and it's not hard to see why, when the actions of the elected officials do not represent the people who voted them in. The drastic cuts listed in this budget do not represent me, they do not represent the county that I want to live in. Please do not misunderstand me though, I love where I live. I have traveled abroad and this is exactly where I want to be. Like many others, I need Sedgwick County to support our cultural assets and efforts to improve education, workforce development and quality of life. I sure do not understand your desire to emphasize core county services while defunding services that make this county exactly what people know it to be. We identify Sedgwick County by this stuff, take Exploration Place, for example; it's not just a place for kids, I bring my college students to Exploration Place, every fall semester, to showcase some of their projects. For most of the students, it's the first time it's ever presented outside of the classroom and it's a rewarding experience for them and the patrons. Every year, I hear from each of them on how unexpectedly meaningful it was for each of them. Besides that, if it weren't for the staff of the Exploration Place going above and beyond their duties, to partner with my nonprofit, Make ICT, we wouldn't have been able to bring the Maker Fair to Wichita, two weeks ago. We had over 2,000 people, in a single day, come to the Maker Fair to share ideas, projects, collaborate, discuss and innovate and inspire people to do new things.

"Exploration Place is Sedgwick County, it's an important part of life here and the county needs to support it. They aren't the only ones at risk. What this budget will hurt, represents the very identity of Sedgwick County. I see a lot of things that are on the list that are a part of my, personal, daily life. I have been to community events, family gatherings and I have even had dates at places like Exploration Place, Riverfest and the Sedgwick County Zoo. The Arts Council represents and supports a lot of things that make living here, in Sedgwick County, meaningful for me. They work with people like (inaudible), to bring things like giant puppets to the Riverfest parade. They work with CreativeRush and Tallgrass, to bring the Down to the Wire Film Race. They participate with the North End Urban Arts Festival, the annual Book and Art Fair, the murals around Sedgwick County and sculptures.

"Now I want to talk about culture. We need culture in our lives, but I'm not even done yet. I see the Health Department on your budget cuts and MAPD (Metro Area Planning and Development) programs; bike and pedestrian master plan, we're talking about quality of life for Sedgwick County residence. Your approach to this budget needs to be reconsidered. I hope that you understand that as an active participant of this community, my voice represents the thought of many. I sit on the Board and I am the President of the Board of Make ICT. I also sit on the Board of Bike Walk Wichita. I teach at WSU, where I also study and do research. I fund an annual scholarship that I started several years ago, that I fund with money from my small IT business, where I work exclusively with local clients and I spend a lot of time volunteering for organizations that provide services for people with additional needs and groups that advocate for animal welfare. On behalf of all of the people, in all of those circles, as well as my family and my friends, I would ask that you reconsider all of your options, which do not require these dramatic cuts. Thank you."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you, very much. Next, we have Mary Boyce."

Dr. Mary Boyce, 1312 North Rutland Circle, Wichita, greeted the Commissioners and said, "I am a Family Physician and I work at Wesley Family Medicine Residency. I actually moved to Wichita, in 1989, as a third year medical student, so I couldn't have been more proud, than to see those students here, today. I stayed in Wichita for residency training and I have had my entire professional career here. My parents kind of took that personally, because I am from Kansas City. So, you are my adopted community. My career spans an interesting time. When I was a third and fourth year medical student, the HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) vaccine was just beginning to be used. I have skills in lumbar puncture that residents don't get, because there were a lot of kids with meningitis, when I was a medical student. To see the Health Department cuts on the table, I have to advocate that you reconsider that. When you talk about trying to assure the present and future well being of the county, which I think is the wording on your website, I think some of those core services are vital. We do offer immunizations through our office and our office is a Vaccines for Children (VFC) provider, but that program, that VFC program, the vaccines come here, free. That's a hard thing to administer, so not a lot of private practices do that, the people that go to the Health Department to get immunizations are being individually responsible and responsible to our community and I really don't think we should put any more barriers in their way, to do that. Please call your counterparts in Reno County, and ask them how they feel about a pertussis (whooping cough) outbreak, which is going around there, right now.

"My other issue that I wanted to address today is that of Project Access. My career spans a time prior to Project Access and since Project Access. Our office has, I actually asked them for the numbers, we have referred 383 people, through Project Access channels, since it's been in existence. So, what that means is that I am a Primary Care Physician and I identify problems that need specific services. Two of my patients gave me their permission to talk about their health problems, without violating all of their confidentiality. I want to put a couple of faces or conditions into the mix. These are both female patients, both wives, both mothers, kind of the linchpin of their families. Patient A is someone that I started taking care of, as a resident, and she has worked the entire time that I have known her. Her jobs don't offer insurance, she has come to me as a self-paid patient. I identified a gynecologic problem that was essentially pre-cancer. It was endometrial cancer and through Project Access, she got a hysterectomy. She is now healed and she's back at work, she works at a nonprofit that serves youth in Sedgwick County. The second patient has also worked the entire time that I have known her. She came in with headaches and we worked through this and we were able to get an MRI through the Project Access services. We identified a neurosurgical problem and she got neurosurgery through Project Access. If you think that I have the clout to call around town and get my neurosurgical comrades to do surgery at a whim, you are wrong. I would have tried. Before Project Access, there would have been a significant delay in her care. She is healed, she is working, she provides daycare for her grandchildren, she drags her husband to the office when he needs care, which I believe is the secret to all married men's length of life; their wives. They are both incredible people and I just wanted to put the idea out there that these are people that are working and they're the working poor and they need this assistance. Thank you."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Thank you, Dr. Boyce, for being here today. We have two more, Mr. Manager. Unless more have signed up. If that is the case, could you have someone provide us with that list? Could you double check, please? Next, we have Janis Bradley. And then there is one, I guess. No Janis Bradley, I guess, I don't see her. I will probably get this last name wrong, but Sharon Ailsleiger."

Ms. Sharon Ailsleiger, Co-President, League of Women Voters, Wichita, greeted the Commissioners and said, "Close. I married it, so. I am Co-President of the League of Women Voters, Wichita Metro. The League, really, in a way, doesn't have a dog in this fight. We do not represent any group that has spoken, but what we do is we look at issues. We are totally nonpartisan; you might be my buddy today on one issue and you might not be my buddy, tomorrow, on another. We are very concerned about the budget cuts we study issues before we take a position, so we have looked at the pros and the cons of issues. We are concerned about the quality of life and all of these things that everyone has talked about, today, comes down to the quality of life. I am Wichita, born and bred. Kansas born and bred. I have lived in other places. I remember the zoo when it was at Riverside. I am not sure that all of you are as old as I am, but I remember that zoo and you know what; it was shameful, it was shameful. If I was going to bring someone to town and show them my zoo, I wouldn't have. I was a child and I still remember that I thought that zoo was awful. So, I remember the times.

"I remember moving back from California, in 1978. I remember thinking that nothing has changed much, don't have many restaurants, don't have this, many that; that's quality of life, gentlemen. The League is concerned. Our health care is quality of life. We don't want people on the street dying. Not that it's going to happen, but it's always a possibility, the more you cut. We will cut a little this year; we will cut a little next year. It's like a house. If you don't take care of it this year, it will cost you twice as much to get it back in shape. So, the league is very concerned that the community, as a whole, can go downhill. We have positions on quality of life, we have positions on healthcare, we positions on education and we believe that citizens should have access to all of that. And you are cutting property tax. There's no money and then you're cutting property tax; \$1.37 on a \$100,000 house? My house, I'll give you the \$3.00. Cutting is not the answer. We want to maintain our quality of life and we want to have a positive view. The League is concerned that we hear negative. We can't do it? Well, no you can't. Not if you have can't. So, we would urge you, as a Commission, to look at these cuts. To look at the quality of life that we now have, in Wichita, and believe me, it's so much better than when I was a child. So, thank you."

Chairman Ranzau said, "I think we have a couple Commissioners with questions or comments. Commissioner Howell."

Commissioner Howell said, "Thank you, Mr. Chairman. How do you say your name again?"

Ms. Ailsleiger said, "Ailsleiger. Its ale, like you drink; sleigh, like you ride; and grr, like a dog."

Commissioner Howell said, "Oh, I love that. Ailsleiger. Well, thank you, Ms. Ailsleiger, for coming out today. I just want to make a few comments and make sure that you are aware of our current proposed budget, because you mentioned one thing that I think is old data. You mentioned \$1.37 tax cut."

Ms. Ailsleiger said, "That was on the television and in the paper."

Commissioner Howell said, "I understand that. Unfortunately, that media is representing old data. The last meeting that we had, I made a motion and I had two Commissioners, up here, supporting me. I made a motion to not do the tax roll back. I would like to explain to you what that was intended for. As you probably already know, each year we pass a budget; we can't pass a mill levy. We pass a budget as a dollar figure, then to calculate the mill levy and the budget is assessed on a projected assessed valuation, which by the time when they get around to actually making that calculation, there have been adjustments in the assessed valuation. I am getting down in the weeds here, but the point of it is; there is a technical correction that happens after the budget is passed and so what happens is that mill levy tends to creep up, little tiny bits, every year. In the last five years, it's gone up .119 percent no Commissioner voted for that, it was not intended to be a tax increase, but what we are trying to do this year is make a technical correction to undo that five years worth of technical adjustments that nobody, up here, voted for.

"Having said that, I wasn't here in 2010. With all due respect to the two of my Commissioners that would love to see that done, to me, it's an arbitrary date. I think that we need to be vigilant not to let that happen in the future, but I'm not concerned with rolling it back to 2010, so I made a motion to not do the rollback. So, that \$1.37 is not part of the plan, at this point. You did mention something about if we don't take care of this stuff now; it gets harder, down the road. I just want to say that I applaud your comment that is absolutely correct. I think the concern I have is that if we are bonding out of our end balances and we are bonding everything that we possibly can and our revenues are somewhat flat and our expenditures continue to rise to things that we have no control over, things like insurance costs and utility costs, that budget becomes unsustainable, very quickly, and that's what we are dealing with this year. We have a \$10.3 million shortfall; we need to take care of all of our public safety, all of our core functions and the many things that you mentioned. The arts and cultural recreation, our health services, those are all very important, as well. We have to find a way to make all of that balance in a way that doesn't kick the can down the road, making next year's budget even harder. If we don't take care of some of this, this year, next year's budget will be more drastic than this year. I hope people hear that. We don't have more revenue and it's unlikely that we will have more next year."

Ms. Ailsieger said, "That's sad and I'm not here to argue with you, but I think a more positive outlook, up here, helps a lot."

Commissioner Howell said, "I appreciate your comments, I just want to say that if there is a way that we can somehow manage these important things, in such a way that gives us an ability to not project an even more dire budget forecast next year, we need to take those actions this year. That must means that we need to make very difficult decisions. We don't have more revenue coming in. I think that it's unlikely that we will have a better source of revenue next year, but yet our expenditures continue to climb. We have to maintain things like roads and bridges and public safety and all of the things that make Sedgwick County a safe place to live and we have to have an EMS system, we have to have 911 services, a lot of things we absolutely have to have; we have no choice over. It makes it really difficult for us to prioritize within this budget and make it so next year our budget isn't more difficult than this year has been. I think that's the message, I hope people understand. This is not made up, there actually is a budget shortfall. We have to find a way to make it work; that's the challenge."

Ms. Aillslienger said, "I would say, just as a citizen, forget the League. I don't think that my taxes are too high for what I get. I have traveled to other cities and states and believe me, I think we are doing pretty good on many things. I just want to see that it stays that way. I would say that I'll bet you're glad that I'm up here, because I am the last speaker."

Commissioner Howell said, "Thank you, very much, again."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Commissioner Peterjohn."

Commissioner Peterjohn said, "Maybe you are and maybe you aren't. I do appreciate you coming to testify. I was going to make some of the same comments that Commissioner Howell had. I would throw out to you, in your area of responsibility; there has been a problem identified, taxes shouldn't be increased without a vote by the people, on the elected board, that's responsible for them. I think that is just basic, good governance, 101. We have a situation where the mill levy was increased. No one up here voted for it. Unfortunately, what happened here is not an isolated event; it can occur in other local governmental bodies, in Kansas. That's because, I think, there's a defect in state law. I would think that the League of Women Voters would have an interest in, and please feel free to respond to my comments, Ms. Aillslienger, because how can you have accountability, if the governing body doesn't take responsibility for setting the mill levy or whatever tax levies that they are able to impose or fees, or whatever, I'll use a broader term; revenue enhancement, that is out there. I think that it's incumbent, if you are going to have good governance that elected officials take full responsibility and you can't have any environment where the mill levy is increased, without the vote of elected officials. That's happened here and it's happening elsewhere. It'll happen tomorrow. It could happen with this budget. I hope that it doesn't, but the facts are that it has and it could. I appreciate your comments and everyone else who is in this room that has testified. Thank you, Mr. Chairman."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Commissioner Norton."

Commissioner Norton said, "Well I'd like to thank everybody that came here today and joined the Public Discussion about the budget and our common interest and common good. I do have two letters that I have received from concerned citizens; one from Art and Betty Wood and one from Nick Bock. They didn't go on the online forum and fill out anything, but they did send in a letter and I'd like to enter them into the record. I am not going to read them today, but they can go into the commentary and be distributed. As we continue, our next meeting, for public commentary, will be August 6th at 6 p.m. in this room. We would urge citizens, that have an interest in the budget, and want to display their thoughts to the Board of County Commissioners, to participate. This is the Towne Square that many of our founders talked about, where people need to engage and be part of the democracy, if they so desire. We thank all of the 30, plus, speakers that came to us, today, to help us think through what we are going to do for our county to make it not only fiscally responsible and healthy, but a great place to live, work, and play. Thanks, everybody, for being here today."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Commissioner Unruh."

Commissioner Unruh said, "Are we about ready to close our discussion?"

Chairman Ranzau said, "Go ahead."

Commissioner Unruh said, "I just want to say hearing this exercise that we went through today recalls to my mind, a scene from Les Miserable, when Enjolras sings 'Do you hear the people sing? Singing the song of angry men?'. I think that we have heard a sense of restrained anger, but genuine passion and concern about the quality of our community. I think we, as public officials, should hear that, and respond to it. In Les Miserable they ended up, the next day, with a revolution. We aren't going to have that, either way. We have all said, I think, at one time or another, that it's not our money; it's the people's money. I think we have heard, in a large part, what the majority of our citizens want us to do, and I think that we need to, if possible, find a way to respond to that. We have talked about alternatives and Commissioners, the other day, I suggested one alternative that we could capture the revenue, from that mill levy reduction, that we aren't going to take; which amounts to about \$512,000, and I would suggest that we cash fund about \$2 million worth of roads, instead of \$3.29 million of roads, which would allow us another \$1.29 million, a total, then, from those two revenue sources, \$1.8 million. With that money, we could then fund, in our economic development area, we could restore these fundings to GWEDC, SKEDD and to WATC. We could restore the funding in culture and recreation, to the [Sedgwick County] Zoo, Exploration Place, the Arts Council and RiverFest. We could restore our funding cuts in Health and Human services, to Project Access, the Foster Grandparent Program, the community health assessment program, the Health Navigator, the Health Educator, the Health Free Screening, the Health Immunization Program, Healthy Babies and KANSEL. And as far as our partnership with the City of Wichita, we could restore our support for the comp funding plan, historic preservation, MAPD Environmental Scan and the MAT Bicycle and Walking Path. All of that could be done by just doing \$2 million of cash funded roads, rather than \$3.29 million, and we would have enough left over to fund the two extra people that our Election Commissioner has asked for and I am, kind of, of the opinion that we are probably required to fund those. Now, I am going to be picking at a sore. We could fund REAP and NACo. Those are some of the things that we could do. I had to throw those last to in there, to see if the Chairman would say something to me. And he did. Anyway, Mr. Chairman, that's what I would recommend that we consider as we go through the next couple of weeks."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Very well, Commissioner, I will just respond by asking with respect to reducing our expenditures on roads and bridges, I will ask two questions. Which roads and bridges would you allow to deteriorate? Have you spoken with the Public Works Director about the wisdom of your plan?"

Commissioner Unruh said, "I have advised the Public Works Director that I was going to suggest doing less roads. I think that if we go through this exercise again, next year, we will end up prioritizing those roads. The \$2 million that I suggest is on top of a \$40 million project at I-235 and Kellogg, and on top of \$15 million, on top of the \$40 million. So, we are going to do \$55 million, plus \$2 million. That's what we're talking about. The roads, in the \$3.29 million, that has been suggested, are not yet prioritized. We need to go through that process."

Chairman Ranzau said, "I have spoken with our Public Works Director and he advises me that it wouldn't be prudent to take that action. Nevertheless, we will continue to have discussion about that."

Commissioner Unruh said, "Good."

Chairman Ranzau said, "I think Commissioner Peterjohn was next."

Commissioner Peterjohn said, "I think you're correct. If it's okay with Commissioner Norton. I appreciate you starting some dialogue on this and I have been saying, early on, there's easy and straightforward solutions to some of the difficult spending decisions in front of us; raising taxes. This has been done as recently as 2006. Some of the people who are on this Commission were back here, then. I was in the audience then and traditionally, when tough spending decisions come up, that's traditionally, kind of, the direction that people have gone. Now, I was elected on a platform not to raise taxes. I won't support it. In fact, I would go a step further because I don't believe in mob rule. The French Revolution isn't a very good example. I would take the exception and say that the American Revolution is a much better example and in that Revolution, which by the way was over a level of taxation, which is a tiny pittance; a very, very small amount, compared to the level of federal, state and local taxes we have, in this country, today. We had a Revolution. Having said that, I do agree with Commissioner Unruh on one point, things are changing and this is a dynamic, fluid process. I appreciate citizen input. I think when it comes to raising property taxes, the average citizens out there need to have a say, like they do in the surrounding states. The mill levy can't go up without any elected official voting or just a majority of five, seven, or in some counties, three member body. The voters decide whether the taxes should be increased. In more advanced and more competitive neighbors, if you want to see economic growth, let's have more certainty in the tax code. We can't have a tax code where none of the elected officials voted for it, but the mill levy went up. Well, it was only a small amount, but turns out that small amounts come out to be over \$500,000. Not chump change, in my budget. We are in an interesting position, in terms of dialogue and understanding.

"Now, I am going to take it a step further. People have said well there are other options out there. Well, borrow the money. That's working great for Greece, that's working great for Puerto Rico, it's working great for Chicago and we've been transformed by Chicago style politics, where you kick the can down the road and borrow more. We have the capacity to do more borrowing, that's correct. Is it prudent? I have a lot of questions and concerns before we expand our borrowing, at this time. I am interested in trying to be fiscally prudent with the fact that since the great recession of 2008, I keep hearing that recovery is just around the corner. Every time we get around that corner, there's another corner. So, Mr. Chairman, I want to have dialogue with the public, with my colleagues and I think this hearing. I want to thank everyone from the public who is testifying today, those that are hearing my voice, please get on the county's website and provide your input. I am interested in hearing what every Sedgwick County citizen and taxpayer thinks. Thank you, Mr. Chairman."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Commissioner Norton."

Commissioner Norton said, "Well, certainly, I am for core services, but I want to remind us that if any of us have ever studied in Maslow's Theory in Hierarchy of Needs, knows that the very basic is security and safety and we have an obligation to provide that, absolutely. To make this a place that we want to live, we have to make sure that there is good job development, the people can earn a living, they can send their kids to college, they can buy a home. Past that, the next level, they have to have enjoyment, enjoy their quality of life that they've worked so hard for. I don't know it's our job to provide everything in that triangle, but it's our job to understand it, create a platform and a foundation where everybody can reach the best life that they possibly can. We all know that it's up to each individual to see that out, to understand it, but it's really hard for a lot of people to that, in a community that doesn't have anything, but just the basic foundation of safety and security.

"There has to be good educational and higher learning capabilities, entertainment, culture, creative class, or this is not going to be a place that we are going to want to live. I would hope that we will consider all of these partnerships and programs and things that we are considering cutting, in a different context, than we are only going to do core services, because the things that make Wichita so unique are not the roads; it's the other things that we all described.

"Anyone that I have ever talked to, that knows about Wichita or why they like Wichita, they don't tell me that they like the road going to X. That's not what they talk about. Most of them don't tell me boy the inside of the jail is really nice. That's not what they talk about. It is all of those other ancillary things that we provide as a community. The county shouldn't provide all of them, but we are the foundation, the platform and have the ability to understand the community and make good leadership decisions that provide that for our county and separate us from every other county in Kansas and every other county in the United States. I hope we take that into consideration as we listen to the public, one more time and then have a meeting, to have the decision made. That is all that I have, Mr. Chair."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Commissioner Howell."

Commissioner Howell said, "Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am trying not to talk too long and kind of wrap this up kind of quickly. I have one question for Commissioner Unruh. If we were to go down to \$2 million, are you still planning on borrowing the \$1 million from Transportation, to do that?"

Commissioner Unruh said, "Thank you for asking that question. Right now, in the budget, we aren't planning on any borrowing, other than shifting some money around in our reserves. My suggestion doesn't include any more borrowing, either. It does not include any property tax increases; which none of us are going to support. I am just trying to make adjustments to the recommended budget and just saying let's only cash fund \$2 million worth of roads and the other \$1.29 million and the extra money we have from the mill levy will give us enough money do to those other things, and we're not borrowing anymore money."

Commissioner Howell said, "Let me rephrase my question, I understand we're not bonding out more money, I get that. There's a \$1 million transfer, in this budget. Do you plan on having that transfer, still?"

Commissioner Unruh said, "Yes. That would still have to happen, as is planned, right now."

Commissioner Howell said, "So if we do \$2 million for roads and \$1 million comes from that fund, then we will only do \$1 million cash, from the budget. Is that what you're saying?"

Commissioner Unruh said, "Well, the plan right now, Commissioner, is \$3.29 million. That money is coming from add budgeted transfer for road and bridge CIP projects to be determined, \$1.95 million. Add transfer to road and bridge CIP equal to the debt service of road bond issues, reaching final maturity in 2015, that's \$339,600. The last one is add transfer of cash to road and bridge. Those three things provided \$3.29 million. I am just saying only spend \$2 million."

Commissioner Howell said, "So move \$1.29 back into..."

Commissioner Unruh said, "Back into the General, which would provide for all of these services that our fellow citizens have spoken about."

Commissioner Howell said, "So basically if you subtract out that transfer. We're basically using \$1 million from those other sources that you named, a few minutes ago. The bottom line is \$1 million transfer, is part of what you just talked about, I believe."

Commissioner Unruh said, "I am using the same financing activity as was provided."

Commissioner Howell said, "So we're going from \$3.29 million, down to \$2 million, so it's a \$1.29 million. Normally, we would do \$4 million a year, so we are only going to be doing \$2 million, so only half of what we would do normally. Is that correct?"

Commissioner Unruh said, "That's correct. I am just reducing what was proposed in the recommended budget, by \$1.29 million."

Commissioner Howell said, "Thank you for the idea and I will think about that, but I would just like to provide a couple, quick comments and I'll be done. Our manager, Bill Buchanan, did propose a budget on June the 9th, that he said for all intents and purposes, was balanced, but there was a \$400,000 deficit. In that budget, he proposed a plan for \$0 for roads and bridges, in that budget proposal. I don't think that's acceptable. It did not address the Law Enforcement Training Center, of which, in this budget we have \$2.65 million, in this budget that goes towards that project. If you add that in there, it's a little more than \$3 million of a budget shortfall that was presented by Bill Buchanan. We could bond out as much as we can; I suppose that would be one option. One of my problems with bonding out roads and bridges, specifically, is the fact that there's an endless supply. If you bond out at the Arena or National Center for Aviation Training, or the City Library, or something that has a starting and ending point and a fairly large dollar figure to it and takes a number of years to pay it off; bonding, in those instances, makes some sense.

"To bond out something that is, simply, never ending and you can never pay off, my opinion is that is not good policy. I think that we need to move in the direction of just trying to pay for roads and bridges to the extent that we possibly can, with this budget. We do need to substantially lower our spending, however, because if we don't do that, if you look at the forecasted budget, I think things are not better down the road. Our ending balances go down and I think that it may be optimistic on our revenue increases. It's not a conservative budget, by any means. We need to change our behavior, otherwise we will have much more difficult decisions ahead of us. I appreciate the suggestion. I think there are possible compromises we could talk about, but I think we need to be very careful about going back to spending exactly everything that we are, in the 2015 budget. It is an unsustainable budget without some type of tax increase. That is the reality of this budget. Mr. Chairman, that is all I have, thank you."

Chairman Ranzau said, "I will just have a few comments. I agree with some of the comments of some of my colleagues. First of all, I share the concern that Commissioner Peterjohn has about the proposed tax increase that will be put into this budget. I also agree with Commissioner Norton about the people when they think of Wichita, they don't think about having great roads; that's because they're full of pot holes. Because, as they have admitted, for the last few decades, they've neglected to take care of the roads. Now they're saying they need to have more money to do it. However, I have had lots of people comment on the roads out in the county and how great of a job we do, to take care of them. When it comes for snow removal, ours are cleared and we do a good job. I want to maintain that quality of service. We need to think long term about those sort of things before we start to just willy nilly start cutting an important thing like roads and bridges. As David Spears says, Public Works or what is it, Dave?"

Mr. David Spears, Director, Public Works, greeted the Commissioners and said, "Mother's milk."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Mother's milk of economic development and we all care about economic development. That being said, I want to say I appreciate everyone who came here today and gave their opinions and are very passionate. The difficulty, I've alluded to it before, is you have people in the community who are passionate on both sides of the issue. I've been through four elections in two different cycles and I've heard from thousands of people. One of the biggest things that I have heard is that people want their property taxes to not go up, they want to be controlled. They want us to control spending and make the tough decisions that we have to do, because they just feel like they get a tax increase here, they get a tax increase there and it makes it hard for them to make ends meet. We just had the greatest and largest tax increase in the history of Kansas and you know, all of those voices, all of the people that I heard from in those elections, I have to remember those voices as well. I have to remember their concerns and their struggles echo in my mind as we have these discussions. None of us like making some of these decisions and not all of these will stay the same, I am sure there will be changes, but the challenge is that all of us care about our community and we want to move it ahead, but there are very different opinions on how to do that. I think that we've had a respectful discussion here and I think that we will continue to have that as we go along. Mr. Manager, there's no one else signed up, is that correct?"

Mr. Holt said "That is correct."

Chairman Ranzau said, "Our next meeting is August 6th, at 6 p.m. That's our next public hearing, on this. I will reiterate, again, I've gotten a lot of emails from people saying they can't be at the meeting, so this is what I would like to say and I encourage people to do that, if you can't be at the meetings. We all read them and they all do have an impact on the decisions that we, ultimately, make. I think at this point, I will close the public hearing."

MOTION

Chairman Ranzau moved to receive and file all public comments.

Commissioner Peterjohn seconded the motion.

There was no discussion on the motion, the vote was called.

VOTE

Commissioner Unruh	Aye
Commissioner Norton	Aye
Commissioner Howell	Aye
Commissioner Peterjohn	Aye
Chairman Ranzau	Aye

Chairman Ranzau said, "There is no Consent Agenda, Legislative Issues or Executive Session, but we do need to adjourn the Special Meeting of the Sedgwick County Board of County Commissioners, which I will do."

ADJOURNMENT

There being no other business to come before the Board, the Meeting was adjourned at 1:59 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:
