

Sedgwick County

525 North Main Street 3rd Floor
Wichita, KS 67203



*Sedgwick County...
working for you*

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, August 4, 2016

6:00 PM

SPECIAL MEETING

BOCC Meeting Room

Board of Sedgwick County Commissioners

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

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

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

ORDER OF BUSINESS

MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

SPECIAL MEETING

August 4, 2016

The Special Meeting of the Board of the County Commissioners of Sedgwick County, Kansas, was called to order at 6:04 p.m. on August 4, 2016 in the County Commission Meeting Room in the Courthouse in Wichita, Kansas, by Chairman James M. Howell, with the following present: Chair Pro-Tem Commissioner Richard Ranzau; Commissioner David Unruh; Commissioner Tim Norton; Commissioner Karl Peterjohn; Mr. Michael Scholes, County Manager; Ms. Lindsay Poe Rousseau, Budget Director; Mr. Eric Yost, County Counselor; Mr. David Spears, Director, Bureau of Public Works; Ms. Kate Flavin, Public Information Officer; Ms. Laura Billups, Deputy County Clerk.

Guests:

*Ms. Laurel Alkire, Executive Director, Senior Services, Wichita
Mr. Chuck Knowles, Director, City Works, Youth For Christ.
Ms. Laura Bernstorf, 681 North Armour Street, Wichita
Mr. Charles Peaster, 9453 North 135th Street West, Wichita
Mr. Lonny Wright, 1721 South Lulu, Wichita*

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

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

NEW BUSINESS

A [16-468](#) PUBLIC HEARING REGARDING THE 2017 SEDGWICK COUNTY BUDGET.

Presented by: Mike Scholes, County Manager.

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

Mr. Michael Scholes, Manager, greeted the Commissioners and said, "Good evening Commissioners, and citizens of Sedgwick County. Welcome to the second Budget Hearing. This is the second, and last, Public Hearing on the 2017 Sedgwick County Budget. The 2017 recommended Budget for Sedgwick County as presented on Wednesday July 13th, totaled: \$406,091,994 which includes a property tax levy of \$133,201,437. With that Commissioners, I recommend that you open the Public Hearing."

Chairman Howell said, "Very good, with that, I will at this time open the Public Hearing, and we hope we have four speakers signed up. Before we get to those four speakers, let me just remind you we do have a second half of this meeting which is

for the Fire District [No. 1]. So if you wish to speak to the Fire District, then we would ask you to let me know that, and when we get to that we'll call your name at that time. But, for right now I'm going to assume everyone that signed up to speak wants to speak at this part of the meeting. So I have now opened up the Public Hearing and I would now like to call up, yes sir."

Mr. Scholes said, "Mr. Chairman, Lindsay [Poe Rousseau] needs to stand up and make her comments first."

Chairman Howell said, "Alright, that's fine. Let's go ahead and hear from Lindsay first then, thank you."

Ms. Lindsay Poe Rousseau, Director, Budget greeted the Commissioners and said, "As of this evening, I just checked my phone and we have three public comments. And so I am going to read those into the record for you. So, please be patient with me and I hope the folks who actually wrote these will be patient with me as I try to pronounce their names.

"The first comment was entered on July 13, 2016 by Ben Blankley, he is in District 1. He says: The budget leans heavily on paying for infrastructure with cash, rather than issuing long term bond debt. The budget also continues the drastic cuts from public services, including public health and healthy babies programs, and defers additional public works maintenance to future generations. The current market rates for municipal bonds are the lowest in an entire generation, with some municipalities demanding negative interest rates from the market.

"This means the municipality receives the positive interest from the bond investors. With that in mind, funding infrastructure improvements with cash in the current bond market environment is fiscally irresponsible, and is a poor plan for a sustainable community that can attract new and grow existing business.

"The second comment was received on July 27, 2016 by DeAnna Woods, and her District is not identified. I'd like today's meeting to discuss how Sedgwick County will increase funding to the mental health community by way of increased financing to places such as breakthrough and for section 8 housing through Sedgwick County home ownership. There is currently no way to own a home through section 8 in Sedgwick County. I would like for more funding to be brought into this arena.

"Secondly, I would like the enforcement of more availability of federal jobs available to disabled persons living in Sedgwick County. I'm not sure how you can help with this but with the Federal sector of employing disabled persons is available however with the private sector of companies hiring disabled workers is not forced due to ambiguity of hiring people with disabilities and impairments. This topic must be addressed as to how companies can be persuaded to challenge their hiring critiquing. Thank you for addressing these concerns.

"The third and final comment was entered on August 1, 2016, by Paul Yncera in District two. I had every intention on attending the August 4th meeting with the Commission to voice my concerns over the maintenance of 103rd Street West. In short, the Ohio Township cannot keep up with the maintenance on this road as required due to the high volume of traffic. The township has admitted this to me on the phone. Add to that, the effects of weather and you'll have rough driving conditions at best.

"In short I'm moving to request 103rd Street West be paved from 71st Street South to 103rd Street South. The website lists mentioning 3-5 reasons so here are mine:

Safety, there have been several accidents on this road since I have lived here. The majority being roll-overs. Township cannot keep up on the maintenance required. More homes recently built in the area, with more land being sold to build additional homes. Tax structures in other states with similar situations support improvements. If you took away my requirement to pay Township taxes I would not have much to complain about, but we do pay with little in return.

"Bring back the tax dollars to the Townships where they are paid. Nearly impassible during inclement weather, see pics [pictures], which I did not see any attached on the website. Add snow and you're done. Trees leaning out into the road. Guaranteed to come down one day. All bridges in this stretch of road have been recently replaced. Township used to have this in the budget. Pave a mile a year. That's how Tyler and Hoover were addressed.

"That is the conclusion of the remarks."

Chairman Howell said, "Thank you Lindsay, for that. Any comments from Commissioners before we move onto the audience? Okay. Seeing none, I am going to call up the first speaker that signed up to speak this evening. That's Laurel Alkire. Please go ahead and state your name and address for the record."

Ms. Laurel Alkire, 806 Porter, Wichita greeted the Commissioners and said, "I just want to say thank you for supporting the seniors in Wichita, I was out of town last week but I heard there wasn't much activity, many speakers, and I'm not here to complain, I'm just here to say thank you. I'm the Executive Director for Senior Services with Meals on Wheels people in town, and we receive mill and levy funding for several of our programs. And I just want to say thank you they help us deliver Meals on Wheels, they help us deliver groceries through Roving Pantry, and they help us find jobs for our older job seekers in our senior employment program.

"As well as keep 3 – 4,000 people busy in our senior centers. We are preparing for the tsunami of baby boomers that are headed our way. And we know we are going to have a bigger demand. And I think there maybe a few of us, I'm actually one of those now. So we just want to say how fortunate we are to have the mill levy in Sedgwick County that has been supporting these services. And that, last year we served over 9,000 seniors and we just want to say thank you and the seniors thank you because with that we're able to keep them at home, we're able to keep them healthier, and we're able to keep them connected. So, thank you."

Chairman Howell said, "Ms. Alkire, thank you for your comments. Commissioners, any questions or comments. Commissioner Norton."

Commissioner Norton said, "Before you leave Laurel, I've been able to proctor several of their Senior Services meetings. They had some futures group talking about just what Laurel talked about. I think there is going to be a time that we are going to have to really dig deep into the Department of Aging, the services we provide all the Senior Centers, not just the Downtown Center and the ones you manage in the City of Wichita.

"But we are going to have some real troubles delivering. When you talk about Meals on Wheels and some of those very important programs for seniors, those have been jettisoned off from some non-profits and ended up in other places. I'm afraid if we don't really get engaged as a county and make sure we are having really rich and robust conversations about aging, then we're going to be caught short of really delivering good services.

"And that going to be devastating to many of the seniors, not only in the small towns, but in the core area of Wichita. Where they need those services, it's good for them to have a place to go and be with others, and to stay active. It's just a cautionary tale. As I listen to some very knowledgeable people at Laurel's meetings. We are going to have some problems in the future. It's better to start really engaging that, maybe have some kind of symposium that talks about that in our community."

"Because no different than some of the other segments, like homelessness or veteran's affairs. This population of seniors in our catchment area is going to explode. And we need to be sure their taken care of, the services at least we're supposed to provide. That's all I have."

Ms. Alkire said, "Thank you."

Chairman Howell said, "Thank you. Commissioner Unruh."

Commissioner Unruh thanked the Chairman and said, "Laurel, I just want to say you thanked us, but I just want express our appreciation for the work that you do. You provide a lot of services through your organization. You work with a lot of volunteers, and I think it's really critical for that age group, those folks who need to stay at home, need to stay healthy and you all do a great job. I know if you had more resources you'd do more. In the meantime, thank you for what you do."

Ms. Alkire said, "Thank you and I have to say I have a very forward looking board, who has a vision and has us looking forward and has us trying to prepare for this next wave of seniors. So I'm very, I don't do it alone. I have a whole team of staff and board, and wonderful volunteers that help us get the job done, but thank you."

Chairman Howell said, "I'll go on to the next speaker in just a moment. I just want to say thank you for coming out tonight and giving us a thank you. I appreciate that very much. Next speaker this evening is Chuck Knowles. Please state your name and address for the record."

Mr. Chuck Knowles, 1945 North Meridian, Wichita, greeted the Commissioners and said, "Director of Youth for Christ programs. Most of you are familiar with the City Works Café. And I found out that our two programs, which is McAdams Academy and the City Works program would be effected by the cuts. To the degree that City Works would be de-funded totally and the McAdams Academy would be de-funded to a point I really couldn't exist."

"If you're not familiar with the City Works program, it used to be a café, but we lost a lease when I became a Director a few years ago, and so we partnered with community leaders, stakeholders and I have our youth go through a job readiness training. And we have them actually work at the companies. It gives them an opportunity to add something on their resume. And then it just gives them real life experience. And then we've been able to subsidize their pay, and that's an incentive for employers to consider them."

"The McAdams Academy was a school a few years ago, the county came and ask, they knew I was trying to work on a day reporting center. I had a facility. They asked if I would start a school for kids who'd been expelled in Sedgwick County area. And so the past couple of years we've had 77 kids enrolled. We're a little unique, we're not part of the school system. We don't kick kids out of school, in fact out of the 77 that were enrolled. I've had three I've asked to come back."

"The kids, we will work through the problem. We involve the class, we sit down

around a table and by the end of that time they get up and shake hands, and ready to go back to school. What I do want to say is, a consideration. If the funds I think they were going to give McAdams, I think was \$95,000. Instead of de-funding both programs, maybe focus on the City Works program. I think what I do at McAdams is very important. Thirty percent of the kids that are expelled from school in up in the Judicial system.

"So anyway, I'm just here to offer a consideration, and thank you for the years that you've supported our kids. Thank you."

Chairman Howell said, "Thank you Mr. Knowles. Any comments or questions from Commissioners. Alright seeing, none, thank you, sir. The next speaker tonight is Laura Bernstorf."

Ms. Laura Bernstorf, 681 N. Armour, Wichita, greeted the Commissioners and said, "Some things I read in the paper concerned me because I spent a lot of time here last year, getting ready to explain the potential cuts and the impact to what it does for young professionals in Wichita. And for all of the representation that our community brought last year there were no significant changes to the Budget.

"To address the concerns that we had, and as I listen here, third generation Wichitan we're all here. I'm going to be the one that's paying the taxes for my grandparents and my parents. For the senior services that they're going to require. And there's a net migration outward, of Wichita, from your peak earning years, 35 to 44 year olds. And there are some Wichitan's that can't wait to get out of here because people do not listen and change the behavior.

"And so what I'm saying is, that's why this room is probably empty. Because every time people have brought up these concerns and said we need to take care of our community for the forward looking people who are going to be the ones in positions that are taking care of others. They're asking you to give them quality of life so they can continue to give their children opportunities in Wichita so they don't want to leave.

"And we make decisions based on what is fiscally responsible in one person's mind. When there are multiple people saying otherwise. So what do I do when people don't listen? I go away, and I put my efforts and I put my time and I put my money someplace else. And we're seeing that happen in Wichita. We're seeing that happen in Sedgwick County. The data is there, and if we continue to do this there is going to be no one to pay for you guys, or my parents or my grandparents, when we need those senior services. When we need the fire, and we need the roads taken care of and heaven forbid when we go through the next recession when cash isn't there.

"So all I'm saying is, unless we make some big changes we're going to continue to be fiscally responsible and penny wise and pound foolish. And so all I'm saying is, either start listening to the youth, the young people that are starting to pay taxes. And you know what, their busy doing things in Wichita. Their busy creating Wichita pride. Their busy creating great opportunities for women who code and Dove ICT, and open Wichita, and all of these groups that are trying to help educate young professionals because the school's can't do it.

"You get one semester of government, and it focusses on federal government. And we all understand how far away they are, and how not impactful you can be in that. We are trying to get them educated and understanding what it means to be involved in the community but when they try when they're not listened to, that's why they're not here this year."

Chairman Howell said, "Alright thank you, Ms. Bernstorf, any comments or questions from Commissioners? Commissioner Unruh."

Commissioner Unruh thanked the Chairman and said, "Laura thank you for taking the time to be here this evening. I appreciate your comments and I agree that we need to pay attention to those quality of life issues and that are particularly important to the millennial population. And we need to engage in millennial's in the whole process."

"I understand and I think many of our leadership groups in downtown Wichita, and in this area understand how important the millennial age group is to our future. Both as a good place to live, but both as a well-run, well organized, productive community. So I thank you for being here and reminding us of that."

Chairman Howell said, "Alright, thank you. Commissioner Norton."

Commissioner Norton said, "Laura, thanks for being here. We run into each other at two or three or four of five events recently. I think the Chung Report was the last one. And it tells a pretty important story about where Wichita and Sedgwick County is, and our catchment area is going and what little changes we need to do, and things we need to impact and think about."

"And certainly, I believe what you're saying. That the future of our, Sedgwick County and our economy and the quality of life we have here rests in your generation. But, my very first speech I made as a County Commissioner when I got sworn in, was pretty simple, and I said every decision I make will be made for my grandkids. Not for my generation, not even for my kids generation that lives here, but for the next generation."

"And I don't even know what their called. I have granddaughter that is getting ready to be a senior in high school, I don't even know, I don't think she is a millennial. She's a gen-z maybe. But it's important to make sure that she has a place to come back to where she can earn a great living, and have a quality of life and find affordable housing. That will suit her life style. And that is very different than the lifestyle I grew up in, in the '50's in Arkansas."

"We need to realize that, we need to make decisions today that puts us in a great position for the future. So thanks for being here, weighing in on that, giving us something to think about that's not just a line item in the budget. But an overall thought process that we need to have in protecting and moving our community forward. I appreciate it. Thank you."

Ms. Bernstorf said, "Thank you."

Chairman Howell said, "Okay thank you, I don't see any other comments on the board, but I would like to make just a couple quick comments and that is, it seems, if you don't mind may I ask you a questions. Please come back to the podium if you don't mind. So again, I'm sorry I don't remember you personally during the Budget Hearing's last year. But, can you please remind me, what were some of the topics that you raised last year, that you were interested in."

Ms. Bernstorf said, "It was a group that I was a part of. I'm still currently a part of them, I prefer not to name them because there are other, some of the funding that comes to our group, there are certain companies in town that don't want that name used. And I think that is kind of a sad state of affairs when we have companies who want to keep dissenting opinions from being able to come out because an

organization that stands for quality of life for young professionals doesn't have the opportunity to make those statements without potential risk to their viability as being an organization.

"And so, it's some of those mind sets of its okay unless that it's this conservative way that we want you to think. But, the items are essentially quality of life. It's a downtown, vibrant downtown that's art's, it's culture, it's creating the community where there exciting things for people who are young, who are single, who have small children that they can go and they can interact with their fellow community. It is having support for those programs, in making them accessible, for some young professionals aren't making a lot of money when they first come to town.

"And what they experience with our county is being able to go out to Sedgwick County Park, and it's being able to have mobility and walkability area's so they can have the healthy lifestyle that they want. And the thing is their making choices of what the community looks like before they decide on a job in a lot of cases. The chicken and egg of I go someplace because I have a job and then I hope I really like that community, that's changing because mobility with jobs. Because of the choices millennials are starting to have. Because that whole baby boomer group, their retiring. Their moving on."

Chairman Howell said, "I wanted just to see whether or not you have, if you remember the news about the actual Budget Adoption, because we had two Budget Hearings last year, and I think a Budget Adoption. It was a pretty long meeting last year, and there was a lot of debate about how to move forward. Again, I don't have a list in front of me I'm just using my own memory, and that could be wrong by this, but hopefully I'm not wrong in saying this, but let me just say, and I see one of our [Sedgwick County] Zoo Board members in the back in this room.

"I just want to say number one, we've got, we're the best Zoo. I think we all agree it's a wonderful Zoo. But the Zoo's experiencing record level attendance this year. Which is fantastic, we're very pleased with that. With that comes record level revenue that they are generating that through the gate.

"We also added \$150,000 of Budget above our proposed Budget last year to make sure we covered all of salaries, including the zookeepers, for the elephant zookeepers that they needed to add. We're adding some money back into Exploration Place. We added money back to WATC (Wichita Area Technical College). We added \$100,000 back to Project Access. We added \$60,000 back to SCED (School Courses for the Exchange of Data), you mentioned Sedgwick County Park a minute ago. I remember seeing some stats on that just in the last little while, there is about a million visitors per year visiting Sedgwick County Park now.

"So we have some things we are, doing, I think I guess I want to make sure you're aware that the Zoo is doing very well, and Sedgwick County Park is doing really well and we actually did respond I think with the number of changes to the Budget based on the folks that came out and spoke to us last year at the Budget Hearing. So I wanted to make sure you're aware of those changes."

Ms. Bernstorf said, "I'm aware of the changes, but there wasn't an overall increase from the previous years. And the thing is if we don't continue to do more in additional, and just putting it back to, we are trying to come out of this recession and if we don't continue to do more, if we have alternate ways of funding the infrastructure pieces so we can use the excess cash to put into these things that will create additional revenue, we're not using our money smartly."

Chairman Howell said, "Okay, I understand your point. Alright, anything else? Commissioner Ranzau."

Commissioner Ranzau thanked the Chairman and said, "I'll address this because I know that issue comes up and I think there's a misunderstanding there. Okay? We're using some excess cash to fund some projects. Some one time projects and things like this. If you put it into operations after while it's gone and you can't sustain that."

"Now, what we're doing with roads and bridges, just so you know. We had been borrowing habitually, for roads and bridges. To the point that we were paying 5.6 to 5.8 million dollars in principle and interest. But we were borrowing, \$4 million hoping, you borrow \$4 million but you're paying 5.6 or 5.8, okay?"

"In addition to that because we take principle and interest out of that money we borrow, we're actually only getting \$2.4 million in projects on a yearly basis, but paying 5.6, 5.8 million dollars in principle and interest. Because over time if you borrow you can dig yourself in a hole, okay? If we had been paying cash all along, we could have paid the \$4 million worth of road and bridge projects with cash and had an extra \$1.6 or \$1.8 million for all of these things that you're talking about."

"That's the problem, after a certain number of years, we will dig ourselves out of the hole, we'll have more money to spend on everything. There are times when it's appropriate to borrow money, like in our personal lives, we borrow money for a house. But we don't go to the bank and borrow money for our food and our clothes and all that sort of stuff because if we did, we, so, the very, it may be kind of confusing, I'm not sure if I'm making sense to you."

Ms. Bernstorf said, "It makes very much sense to me."

Commissioner Ranzau said, "What I'm saying, okay, is that, so actually by in certain area's by borrowing less money and working our way out and coming up with a plan over time to pay cash you end up with more money for everything. Because you're spending, you're not spending money on interest, you're spending money on whatever you want to spend it on. All of these quality of life projects you can either give a large portion of that money to the bank for interest, or you can keep it here and put it to work in our community."

"And I think that's in the long run when we're thinking about our children and grandchildren I think that is a better long term approach for all of us. We can certainly agree to disagree, but I appreciate you coming here today and I wanted to explain that and that rational, behind everything, at least that one aspect."

Ms. Bernstorf said, "I appreciate the explanation, I was fully aware of that and I appreciate you needing to speak your peace."

Commissioner Ranzau said, "Thank you."

Chairman Howell said, "Well, Ms. Bernstorf thank you so much for your comments tonight. Next up this evening is Charlie Peaster."

Mr. Charles Peaster, 9453 N. 135th Street West, Wichita greeted the Commissioners and said, "I'm in the Third District, I came here tonight because number one I've been involved, I saw when you put the Budget together to begin with, the staff did what you asked them to do and they presented you a Budget. The County Manager went through and he presented you with a final one."

"The thing that kind of amazes me tonight, I see Marcey Gregory is here, but I notice that the other person that ran for the Third District and won, isn't here. So he evidently don't care about the Budget. Or he thinks he knows so much about it that he don't need to be here to see what the people's responses are.

"Part of the problem I had, and you finally changed it, right now I have money in CD's (Cash Deposits) it pays 1.2 percent. If I borrow money the cheapest I can borrow money is 8 percent. Most of it if I borrow is 23 percent, and my credit rating is 807, which is in the extreme, to where they want to loan you money cause they don't worry about you not paying it back.

"So I came here tonight to see number one how many people would show up, number two if the man that won the Third District nomination for the Republican party would show up to a Budget meeting, which he evidently doesn't care what the Budget is. He isn't here. Thank you."

Chairman Howell said, "Alright, thank you Mr. Peaster. I see no comments or questions. I'm at the end of the signup sheet, so I'll ask the audience is there anybody that's here that would like to speak to the Budget this evening? Please state your name and address for the record."

Mr. Lonnie Wright, 1721 South Lulu, Wichita, greeted the Commissioners and said, "I'd address Dave Dennis is Vice Chairman of the Planning Commission. That meeting was still going on, they had a very long meeting this afternoon, and I left it at a quarter to six to come over here and they were still at the meeting. So I just want to specifically address Charlie's statements. Thank you."

Chairman Howell said, "Alright, seeing no comments or questions for you. Anybody else from the audience like to speak to the Commission this evening on the Budget? Last call, alright, at this time I'm going to go ahead and close the Public Hearing for the Fiscal 2017 Budget."

MOTION

*Chairman Howell made a motion to receive and fill all comments.
Commissioner Unruh seconded the motion.
There was no further discussion and a vote was called.*

VOTE

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

Chairman Howell said, "Thank you very much, and at this time I will now adjourn the Special Meeting of the Board of Sedgwick County Commissioners."

Received and Filed

ADJOURNMENT

There being no other business to come before the Board, the Meeting was adjourned at 6:35 p.m.

*BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF
SEDGWICK COUNTY, KANSAS*

*JAMES M. HOWELL, Chairman
Fifth District*

*RICHARD RANZAU, Chair Pro Tem
Fourth District*

*DAVID M. UNRUH, Commissioner
First District*

*TIM R. NORTON, Commissioner
Second District*

*KARL PETERJOHN, Commissioner
Third District*

ATTEST:

Kelly B. Arnold, County Clerk

APPROVED:
