

USD 437 Board Meeting
July 6, 2020
Observer: Mary Galligan (via posted recording)

6 members participating

Meeting open to in-person public attendance and live-streamed; recording available at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCRwJNAoewdg4ZWBf4sYYZ5w>

The USD 437 School Board:

1. Approved the following unanimously:

- Meeting Agenda -- Organization of the Board and other business
- Election of Board officers: Tom Bruno, President; Michael White, Vice President; Katy Lenahan, Clerk of the Board; Bruce Stiles, Treasurer of the Board; and other designations and appointments including the Freedom of Information Officer, Dr. Scott McWilliams (Superintendent), and building principals as custodians of records.
- Establishment of cost for copies of public documents at \$0.10/page, plus postage
- Resolution setting monthly meetings dates, place, and time.
- Business by consent
- Resolutions regarding financial management and adoption of all current, written policies
- Authorization for high school administration to seek admission to another high school league
- Executive Session Motions: 1) To go into Executive Session for 25 minutes, from 7:20 PM until 7:45 PM to discuss students under the KOMA exception relating to actions adversely or favorably affecting a student; personnel matters under the KOMA exception for issues related to non-elected personnel; and the budget under the KOMA exception related to employer-employee negotiations
- Subsequent to Executive Session, approval of student transfer requests; approval of a request to release a teacher from their contract; approval of hiring of a teacher for the high school.

2. Received reports regarding:

- Contingency planning for 2020-2021 school year
- Building permit report

3. Discussed:

- Options for affiliation with a sports league

Meeting adjourned 7:47 PM

USD 437 Board Meeting

July 20, 2020

Observer: Mary Galligan (via live stream)

6 members present (one via phone)

Meeting open to in-person public attendance and live-streamed; recording available at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCRwJNAoewdg4ZWBf4sYYZ5w>

The USD 437 School Board:

1. Approved the following unanimously:

- Meeting Agenda
- Business by consent
- The 2020-2021 school term length of at least 1,116 hours
- Contract for track resurfacing at the high school
- Executive Session Motions: 1) To go into Executive Session for 25 minutes, from 7:36 PM until 8:01 PM to discuss students under the KOMA exception relating to actions adversely or favorably affecting a student; personnel matters under the KOMA exception for issues related to non-elected personnel; and the budget under the KOMA exception related to employer-employee negotiations
- Subsequent to Executive Session motions were made but were not audible outside the meeting room due to technical difficulties.

2. Received reports regarding:

- Contingency planning for 2020-2021 school year

3. Discussed:

- Contract for track resurfacing at the high school

Meeting adjourned approximately 8:14 PM

USD 437 Special Board Meeting

July 27, 2020

Observer: Mary Galligan (via livestream)

7 members present

Meeting open to in-person public attendance and live-streamed; recording available at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCRwJNAoewdg4ZWBf4sYYZ5w>

The USD 437 School Board:

1. Approved the following unanimously:

- Meeting Agenda
- Business by consent
- Resolutions regarding financial management and adoption of all current, written policies
- [Return to school plan](#)
- Phases of Education for SY 2020-2021 -- opening school in phase 2
- Amendment of SY 2020-2021 school calendar -- school to start August 27
- Executive Session Motion: 1) To go into Executive Session for 35 minutes, from 8:25 PM until 9:00 PM to discuss personnel matters under the KOMA exception for issues related to non-elected personnel and the budget under the KOMA exception related to employer-employee negotiations
- Subsequent to Executive Session, approval of a request to release a teacher from their contract; approval of hiring of a teacher for an elementary school.

2. Discussed:

- Return to school plan
- Phases of Education for SY 2020-2021 -- opening school in phase 2
- Amendment of SY 2020-2021 school calendar

Meeting adjourned 9:01 PM

USD 437 Special Board Meeting

August 3, 2020

Observer: Mary Galligan (via livestream)

Six members present. One member absent

Meeting open to in-person public attendance and live-streamed; recording available at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCRwJNAoewdg4ZWBf4sYYZ5w>

The USD 437 School Board:

1. Approved the following unanimously:

- Meeting Agenda
- Business by consent
- Publication of the notice of public hearing for the FY 2020-2021 budget with the Local Option Budget set at 32.0% and a total mill levy of 50.049.
- Executive Session Motion: To go into Executive Session for 30 minutes, from 7:21 PM until 7:51 PM, to discuss:
 - the budget under the KOMA exception related to employer-employee negotiations;

- personnel matters under the KOMA exception for issues related to non-elected personnel; and
- students under the KOMA exception for matters relating to actions adversely or favorably affecting a student.
- Subsequent to Executive Session, motions to approve:
 - a request to release a teacher from their contract;
 - hiring of a coordinator for behavioral services; and
 - student transfer requests.

2. Received administrative reports related to:

- Planning and COVID-19-related expenses for SY 2020-2021

3. Discussed authorization for the 2020-2021 budget

USD 501 Board Meeting

August 6, 2020

Observer: Annie Tietze (via Zoom)

All board members present

- There will be a hearing on the budget August 20, 2020 at 6:00. Taxpayers will be welcome and can ask questions. It will be held at the Burnett Administrative Center.
- A presentation was given called Transforming Topeka Together Reopening Plan.
- Schools will have in-person, on-line or both as a hybrid schedule. Parents will have choices.
- The covid-19 response template was presented - Covid-19 Health Protocols Screening. It will be available in Spanish.
- Housekeeping Excellence Awards were given to McCarter, Robinson, Topeka West and Capital City.

Shawnee County Commission Meeting

July 20, 2020

Observer: Mary Jo Hobbs

Three Commissioners present

In unfinished business, Commissioners authorized an agreement with Railroad Heritage, Inc. for the lease and operation of the Great Overland Station.

Director Linda Ochs of the Health Department announced that they had a candidate for the position of Infectious Disease Division Manager that had leadership experience and

had worked with all the computer systems involved in infectious disease control. The commissioners approved hiring the candidate at a higher step of employment.

Betty Greiner, Director of Administrative Services, announced that the Notice of Budget Hearing, and the total of all department budget requests for 2021 and what the resulting tax rate would be if all budget requests were granted, had appeared in the Topeka Metro News that morning. She said the public hearing on the budget would be Monday, August 3rd at 5:30pm in the Commission Chambers. Following this time for public input on the budget, the Commissioners would begin their discussions at the Commission meeting on August 6th, and every meeting after until the 2021 Budget is adopted.

In Administrative Communications, Jo Ledbetter, with the Parks Advisory Board suggested that the county look into seeing if NOTO or Spector Management Group, which operates the Stormont Vail Event Center, could operate the Great Overland Station. He said Parks and Recreation does not have the \$350,000 necessary to operate the facility. He cautioned the commissioners against having the county self-insure the building and noted that the income from the station had dropped to \$20,000 in 2019. He said revenue had stayed up because of contributions generated by a good board. He lamented the maintenance that would be necessary on the old building and that this would be added to a Parks & Recreation Department that was already behind in maintaining its facilities.

Three people spoke about the mask ordinance. Two who opposed the requirement and one who asked that the commission and Health Department be more collaborative, saying that the way the ordinance was presented promoted disunity in the community. Commissioner Riphahn agreed with the opinion that requiring masks and restrictions on businesses was unnecessary and divisive, while Commissioner Cook defended the science the requirements were based on. Commissioner Mays said that he wished people would stop seeing mask-wearing as a partisan issue. He said he would like to see people being more cordial.

There was no need for an executive session.

**Shawnee County Commission Meeting
July 23, 2020
Observer: Elvera Johnson**

All three commissioners present

Public comments were invited as the first item of business. A few people commented on the problem they have with wearing masks. A couple of bar owners don't like the restrictions on hours and use of the bar.

Public Works reported on the biennial (required) bridge inspection and appraisal. Twenty-three bridges need attention. Public works has engineers who prioritize which

bridges are repaired or replaced first. The ongoing contract for this regular appraisal was renewed. Commissioners approved a bid for the purchase of digital menu board screens for the Stormont Vail Events Center. They approved a contract for an off-site server hosting subscription to keep and store information. They renewed contracts with Heartland Regional Alcohol and Drug Assessment Center, Kansas Children's Service League and Boys and Girls Clubs to provide services to their clients.

The rest of the 3+ hour meeting was a revenue and expenses review by Administrative Services and a discussion of a Capital Improvement Plan for the coming five years. Regarding revenue and expenses, both were down, due to Covid-19. The bottom line looks OK at this time.

The Capital Improvement Plan for 2021 and beyond is more problematic. Commissioners had a limited budget to work with and requests that far exceeded this amount. They heard from various department heads who presented urgent, high priority and lower priority projects. Commissioners approved most of the urgent and high-priority requests. Others were cut back in scope or phased over the five years. Some of the discussion was deferred to the July 27 meeting. An executive session was called to discuss non-elected employees.

Shawnee County Commission Meeting

July 27, 2020

Observer: Mary Jo Hobbs

Three Commissioners present

The meeting began with a presentation by Zach Snethen, of HTK Architects on the process they will use to develop a master plan for Family Park. Through pop-up events and surveys with the public, meetings with the Parks and Recreation staff and its Advisory Board, HTK will draft a preliminary plan. Later in the Fall they will elicit community feedback to help refine the plan and have the final park design by December. From July 27th to August 15th the public can take a survey, found at this address: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/familypark> or on the Parks and Recreation homepage.

The bulk of the meeting was spent on finishing the discussion on the Capital Improvement Plan, which had been deferred from July 23rd. Commissioners shifted \$500,000 from the contingency fund to cover capital outlays. Expenses requested by Parks + Recreation, and the Sheriff's Department were the primary areas left to decide.

Parks Director, Tim Laurent had requested \$1.4 million per year for the next 5 years to evaluate and upgrade 5 to 8 parks each year. Commissioner Cook pressed the board to utilize money from the \$10 million bond voted in earlier this year, ostensibly for Family Park and work on the trail system. Betty Greiner, Director of Administrative Services said the county had not issued that debt yet and the commissioners could alter

the designation for those funds if they chose. Commissioners Riphahn and Mays opposed such a move and encouraged Laurent to seek grant money for playground equipment as he had done for 11 parks earlier this year. In addition, commissioners reallocated \$190,000 in leftover funds from a Courthouse project for renovations to the county parks.

Commissioners allocated \$165,000 to the Sheriff's Department for vehicles, and encouraged leasing the vehicles they were proposing to buy. Director Greiner said Enterprise now includes outfitted, pursuit vehicles in their lease options. The Capital Improvement Plan was approved and can be found at the County Audit/Finance homepage under "CIP."

In other business, commissioners approved two part-time positions connected with the Health Department's COVID-19 response and recovery efforts. These include a School Liaison position to meet weekly with school nurses, and an accountant to track and report hours, PPE expenses, testing supplies, and all other response activities, both positions would be funded from CARES Act money. Additionally, commissioners approved a request to submit an agreement through KDHE for salaries, overtime and benefits for COVID-19 response and recovery.

In Administrative Communications, Director Ochs of the Health Department announced that her department would resume immunizations for school-aged children who are uninsured, on Medicaid, are American Indian or Alaska Native. These are by appointment only. The number to call is 251-5700.

There was no need for an executive session

**Shawnee County Commission Meeting
July 30, 2020
Observer: Elvera Johnson**

All three commissioners present
Commissioners approved a request from Corrections, to use some of the funds (which they share with the city of Topeka and with the Sheriff's Department), for ballistic vests and for cameras at the Corrections Annex. They approved renewal of the Regional Public Health Emergency Preparedness grant from KDHE, with Shawnee County acting as fiscal agent. They authorized a contract with Cascade Health Services to provide nurses to assist with Covid-19 response and testing, with a small percentage of time to be used in administering flu vaccinations. They approved a contract to repair a section of west Wanamaker Road. They approved an emergency request to repair 3 passenger elevators in the Corrections Department of the Courthouse. They renewed the ongoing contract agreement allowing the same physical server to run multiple virtual servers.

A public budget hearing will occur Monday evening.

The public is urged to get rid of standing water that attracts mosquitoes.

We are reminded not to drive through flooded streets and highways.

No executive session was called.

Shawnee County Commission Meeting

Aug. 3, 2020

Observer: Mary Jo Hobbs

Three Commissioners present

Not much business in the commission chambers today. Other than the standard review of voucher payments and correction orders, the commissioners approved a request to solicit bids to refurbish the Hillcrest Community Center gymnasium floor. In addition to funding from the Parks + Recreation Operating Fund, Kansas State University, Stormont Vail Health, Kansas Health Foundation, and Blue Cross Blue Shield partnered to provide \$38,308.44.

Commissioner Cook asked Betty Greiner, Director of Administrative Services, to report on any fluctuations in the sales tax collected during this time of pandemic. She said that there is a two- month lag from the time of collection to the time the county receives the taxes so she only had information from March, which showed a decrease collected over March last year, and April, which showed an increase collected in 2020.

The commissioners will be canvassing votes on Monday, August 17th so there will be no commission meeting on that day. Commissioners all encouraged everyone to vote, noting that there was still time to advance vote until noon that day. Commissioner Cook suggested, when you go to vote tomorrow, to ask the poll workers how to get a mail-in ballot for the general election.

In Administrative Communications, Betty Greiner reminded everyone that there will be a public hearing tonight on the 2021 budget at 5:30pm in the commission chambers.

There was no need for an Executive Session.

Shawnee County Commission Meeting

Aug. 6, 2020

Observer: Vicki Arnett

All Commissioners were present.

The business agenda was routine and included hiring a new media coordinator in the information technology department. The Shawnee County Health Department received permission to hire an infectious disease administrative assistant and an infectious disease health services team leader. The salaries will be paid by a two- year grant. The positions are planned to become permanent. Director Linda Ochs discussed the loss of medical services to Grace Med and the separation from public health created a loss of capacity including nursing staff. The CARES Act positions will restore much of that previously lost capacity.

The Commission also approved a contract with Emcon to extend on call emergency wastewater collection system repair services.

The Commission began discussion of the 2021 budget. Commissioners asked questions about areas of proposed increase. The decisions about the budget reflect the need to either raise mill levy or fund increased budgets by spending down reserve funds by 1,601,000. Budget discussions will continue Mon. Aug. 10.

Administrative communications included information that SE 29th reconstruction is progressing allowing intersections to reopen. Swimming pools will close this weekend with the exception of Shawnee North Community Center and Rossville pool. Betty Greiner announced that information will be available on Aug. 15 regarding CARES Act funding requests to government and schools. Following that phase of funding, non-profits and small businesses will receive funding.

No executive session was needed.

**Shawnee County Commission Meeting
August 10, 2020
Observer: Mary Jo Hobbs**

Three Commissioners present

Commissioners approved a request from the Health Department to apply for a KDHE Care Resource Coordination and Expanded Testing Cooperative Agreement grant for \$780,000.00. Director Linda Ochs said the grant would not need to be matched and the funds would be used for testing and for paying a community organization to do resource coordination.

Betty Greiner, Director of Administrative Services, assisted the commissioners in their 2021 Budget discussions. They opted to take \$2.5 million out of reserves to augment the budget. This amount would be between the 20-25% fund balance policy window the county has. With the additional funds they voted to fund or supplement the following: Community Corrections, the SAVE and Human Trafficking programs, the Valeo budget, Elections, and Parks + Recreation for the Great Overland Station.

In Administrative Communications, Frankie Saiya, a representative of the local bar owners, addressed the board requesting that restrictions on operating hours be lifted. He pointed to the decreasing numbers of cases in the county over the past 5 weeks, the disparity between our county and others in the state, which were also experiencing decreases without the restrictions, and economic hardship on locally owned businesses. Health Officer, Dr. Pezzino, responded that, while numbers were down, there was still too much community spread. He said he would have to see new cases come down to between 50-75 new cases per week before he would want to lift any restrictions (last week's numbers were 100+.) With higher numbers, contact tracing becomes impossible. Another parameter he considers is the percentage of tests that come back positive. The county is at about 8 to 8.5% right now, Dr. Pezzino said he would prefer no higher than 7%.

Commissioner Riphahn's motion to restore the business hours for bars to pre-COVID-19 time died for lack of a second. Commissioner Mays proposed having a mid-night closing time every night. This was seconded by Commissioner Riphahn but Counselor Crowl suggested that they wait until his office could check new statutes regulating county health boards and draft a resolution which could be voted on at the Thursday commission meeting. Dr. Pezzino indicated that he would not change any health orders presently in place. Comm. Cook cautioned strongly against ignoring the Health Officer's expertise.

One member of the public spoke against relaxing restrictions on bars. She said there were many more people who feel as she does, and she hopes they were contacting the commissioners. She objected to commissioners voting on an issue that was not on their published agenda. She said people do not feel safe coming to the commission chambers because of crowding. Dr. Pezzino also criticized the lack of distancing in the meeting room, saying he did not feel safe there. Comm. Riphahn said he didn't know where else they could meet and still be able to live-stream the meeting.

There was no need for an executive session.

Topeka City Council Meeting

July 21, 2020

Observer: Vicki Arnett

All members were present.

Two appointments were made to the Board of Plumbing Appeals. The consent agenda passed unanimously.

Action items included, removal of property from the Dynamic Core Redevelopment District. The ATT building requested removal. The council approved conversion of capital improvement projects from temporary note status to permanent financing through general obligations bonds due to low interest rate. Council also approved

directed the sale and delivery of aggregate principal amount of general obligations bonds of the City to finance two neighborhood improvement projects, seven street and trafficway projects, one quality of life project, one facilities project and one special assessment project. The council approved authorizing and directing the issuance sale and delivery in the aggregate principal amount of general obligation temporary renewal and improvement notes of the city of Topeka to fund one facilities project, two street and trafficway projects and 6 utility projects. All action items passed unanimously.

The council defeated a recommendation to relocate city council meetings throughout the city, on a rotating basis due to Covid-19 precautions and expenses needed.

The council approved establishment of a special committee on public infrastructure review with members selected by the deputy mayor, Councilman Emerson.

After much discussion and public comment, the council adopted a no knock warrant ban in Topeka. The council also adopted the Topeka Citywide Housing Market Study and Strategy unanimously. The study is located on the city website. Councilman Dobler requested a task force be formed to expand internet access.

Non-action items included discussion of the 2021 operating budget with a report on utilities, water fund, storm and waste water fund. Additional information was provided on the consolidated action plan for 2021-2025 community development block grant funds and HUD funds.

Public comment included Black Lives Matter members.

City Manager Brent Trout announced a special public hearing on the budget will be held July 28. Councilwoman Valdivia Alcala requested a special session on Policing. The session is scheduled Aug. 25.

Deputy Mayor Tony Emerson spoke about his recovery from Covid-19.

Topeka City Council Meeting

August 11, 2020

Observer: Vicki Arnett

All council members were present.

Most business was routine. The council approved a temporary exemption to ordinances pertaining to alcohol consumption to allow for a Kansas Chamber of Commerce event to take place on the top level of Crosby Garage on Sept. 1, 2020.

Council approved intent to issue revenue bonds for Midland Connection, Inc.

The council passed, after much discussion and amendment, the 2021 operating budget which maintains funding without a mill levy increase. The council discussed the proposal to form an ombudsperson office within the city manager's office, community

engagement. Public comment on the budget included input regarding funding the housing trust fund recently enacted.

Additional public comment included an individual who complained about the lack of uniformity of enforcement of the mask mandate in city offices.

Announcements included discussion of the activities of the Topeka Complete Count committee to increase census 2020 participation.

Councilwoman Valdivia Alcala requested an executive session to discuss non-elected personnel, specifically to address the municipal judge who made racist posts on Facebook. The motion died for lack of a second. Councilwoman Valdivia Alcala is concerned the matter won't be appropriately dealt with by the city manager's office.