

July 2022 Observer Reports

USD 345 School Board Evaluation Retreat

June 11, 2022

Observer: Chris Huntsman

The Seaman BOE Evaluation Retreat was held Saturday, June 11, from 8:30-11:30 at KASB headquarters. All seven board members and the new superintendent, Brad Willson, attended as well as 3 community members observing. Doug Mackel of KASB facilitated the morning.

Before the meeting 6 of the 7 board members answered a self-evaluation survey and KASB collated the results. In general, “scores” varied between low, average and high for each question. On this seven- member board, two have over 10 years of service, one had 3 years and the other 4 are in their first year. Of those 4, two were appointed as two vacancies occurred, and two were elected and took office in January 2022. The facilitator reminded the 7 that only 3 of the seven were serving when a lot of the “questions” were asked, such as the development of the five- year strategic plan.

The 8 attendees were seated in two groups of 4, and worked each topic, reported out a summary to the whole. The goal of the meeting was in theory to move to a high functioning board.

A little history: Most BOEs have a policy for self-evaluation, some yearly, as an option. For about the last 10 years, KASB has done an online questionnaire with results tabulated electronically. BOE members could add additional comments if they wished. The questions and discussion reflected on action in the past, action in the present so this board can move future action as a whole. As Peter Senge said “Teams not individuals move organizations” (paraphrased).

One topic discussed was confidentiality: State statute is in place to hold closed meetings for specific reasons, most personnel, legal, and student. Patrons may feel the board is working behind closed doors. To work effectively, board members need to convey this message to the public. There was a gap in BOE answers.

Another topic was board actions; there were lots of gaps in board answers so how can this gap be closed? Main issue is new board members come in with a blank slate, and experienced board members assume or wonder why new ones are surprised.

Storming, norming, conforming and performing – There needs to be a play book for educating new members and the community also. The board needs continual professional development. The main mission is to serve ALL the kids!

Board meeting procedures was also discussed. How to get items on the agenda had lower scores. BOEs usually make decisions over 2-3 meetings. Some boards have the president and the superintendent make the agenda. Others have an “agenda committee”. Having input into the agenda seemed to be an issue. New members said they learned more from past superintendent than from any KASB meeting. (They have also questioned a lot of KASB things). School Boards have had more things to address in the past two years than ever. COVID, BAN BOOKS, RENAME for us, and increased parent “questions.”

One role of KASB is making sure board policy meets state and federal mandates, and these can change, so in January and July, the board considers recommended changes and votes maybe the next month. Also, handbooks and policy need to align. Does policy match to practice?

On Financial Planning, a disparity was evident on meeting the needs of students. Good gap in the 6 responses. Also discussed was “do businesses in our community have priority in the bidding process?” Do they always have to take the low bid especially if from out-of-state? The example was a load of fuel a local vendor lost to an Iowa company over \$50. “If a bond issue passes, this tells you the board is doing this right!”

The last topic was Board/Superintendent Relationships. This is built on trust and respect. The “outgoing” superintendent did not fare well in this section. There are many gaps in scoring. But all agree an annual evaluation of the superintendent should occur. The board is not one person. Need 4 votes to pass anything but 7 sends a message. They spent a lot of time on the district chain of command. Problem arises, go to the immediate source (student go to teacher), then principal, then supt., then board. Parents like to skip the administration and go directly to the board because the board members are trusted because they are neighbors, etc. Generally, board members are problem solvers, not fixers. The Board is not the experts, so go to the expert. Patrons may say the superintendent is “unapproachable” and Mr. Wilson said if he seems unapproachable, please let him know. The Board who hires the superintendent may change next year or two, so how to maintain trust as new members is an issue.

The day ended with two Jon Gordon quotes: “We, before me, serve each other not ourselves.” “Small ego, large mission.” Quotes are taken from athletics; Seaman boys BB was 7-7 this year so how /what changed to get them to the state championship? Not me one player but us as a team was the answer the kids gave.

For Vision Planning, board members need to engage with the community. Some of the biggest gaps in scores were involving the community. Strategic Planning gets all board members on the same page, until the next election. Should the board use may, shall, or should? Listening to students was also mentioned.

Mackel stated, “the education of students is based not on our past, but their future.” Mackel had a great Power Point for this evaluation session.

In summary, there were many discrepancies in the individual board member's answers to the survey questions. However, only 3 members are not in their first year. This is typical with a time with so many new members. Every election there could be 2-3 new members, one of the elected every four years is the at-large position.

USD 437 School Board Meeting

June 6, 2022

Observer: Mary Galligan (via livestream)

6 members present

Meeting open to in-person public attendance and live-streamed. Recording available on the District's YouTube [channel](#).

The USD 437 School Board:

- Held the hearing on the amended budget for the current year. No conferees presented comments to the Board.
- Received an administrator report regarding progress on the 2022 bond-funded projects. Preliminary work has begun on the Middle School, High School, and Pauline Central projects because they will take the longest to complete. Bond sale may occur in mid-late summer. Construction may begin in late spring-early summer 2023.
- Discussed changes and updates to the Elementary handbook for 2022-2023
- Approved unanimously:
 - Meeting agenda
 - Consent agenda items
 - The amended budget as published
 - Administrator contracts as presented on May 16
 - ECE, WRMS, WRHS, and Tallgrass/Pathways handbooks as presented on May 16
 - Motions to go into Executive Session at 6:45 PM for 45 minutes, until 7:30 PM, and at 7:30 for 30 minutes, until 8:00 PM, to discuss students pursuant to the KOMA exception for discussion of matters related to actions adversely or favorably affecting a student, personnel matters pursuant to the KOMA exception for discussion of non-elected personnel, and the budget pursuant to the KOMA exception for discussion of matters related to employer-employee negotiations.
 - Subsequent to executive session, a motion to approve out of district students for the 2022-2023 school year.

Adjourned at 8 PM.

USD 501 School Board Meeting

May 19, 2022

Observer: Annie Tietze

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Gabe Reyes-Gonzalez who has been awarded approximately \$500,000 in scholarships. Gabe is from the School for the Blind.

Recognition was given of Sean Allen Little of Topeka West HS for his volunteerism and service to the 2022 graduation ceremonies.

The Governor's Scholars were announced. They are:

Highland Park High School - Celeste Gonzalez and Lyzveht Terrones-Martinez

Topeka High School - Njaree Canady, Adrianne Caracioni, Owen Deines, Emily Locke

Topeka West High School - Anna Newcombe, Anna Phelps, Patience Wagner

May was proclaimed Better Speech and Education Month. This proclamation allows for recognition of all staff members who work in the speech department.

Board Membership dues to KASB (Kansas Association of School Boards), NSBA (National School Boards Association), the CUBE (Council of Urban Boards of Education) and NBC (National Black Council) were accepted to be paid.

Agreements for the 2023 5A Girls Soccer State Championship Tournament, the 2022 5A Boys Soccer State Championship Tournament and the 2023 Girls Swimming and Diving State Championships were accepted.

The Board will continue their discussion into the possibility of adopting the International Baccalaureate Program in the district.

USD 501 School Board Meeting

June 2, 2022

Observer: Annie Tietze

- There was an executive session to discuss confidential student matters and to discuss confidential employee matters.
- Absent was Dr. Bonebrake.

USD 501 School Board Meeting

June 16, 2022

Observer: Janet Cathcart

Board members absent- Ms. Bolley and Dr. Bonebrake

School Highlights

The repeating Topeka High School Championship Softball team was recognized.

Dr. Anderson showed highlights for the extended school year programs.

Public comments-Mr. Jeremy Gibson spoke to the board about not making the emergency standards for substitute teachers be a new permanent standard. Desperate times called for desperate measures during the Omicron surge but those emergency standards should now not be the normal standards. The Kansas State School Board has extended the emergency standards until December. He asked the board that they say no to those practices of desperate times being the new normal.

Business by Consent

Melanie Stuart Campbell made a motion to adopt the business by consent.

Lisa Schmitt seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Superintendent's Report

Superintendent's Report--Legislative Changes 2022 Jennifer Crow 501 board lobbyist presented the board all the legislative changes impacting schools.

SB 563, state House, Senate and SBOE redistricting was signed in to law and approved by the Supreme Court.

K-12 mega budget bill. This bill packages the bulk of education-related bills proposed this session. Amends the Kansas Promise Scholarship Act (Sections 28-33) This will allow any Kansas high school graduate to attend an accredited Kansas Community college for two years at no cost. There were several bills but these were the ones that would have the most impact. More information is available linked to the on-line agenda this date regarding 2022 legislative wrap up as it impacts USD 501.

Thirty Minute Board Work Session-This is a new section of the board meeting that will allow the board to discuss topics that are important to the community.

Board Member Comments/Committee Reports

Dr. Schumacher discussed the personnel committee report. They are looking at upcoming vacancies and how to fill those. The district is holding a job fair in July. They are working at rightsizing the classrooms. He participated in the United Way Day of Giving.

Mr. Tatum discussed the Budget Finance Committee.

Ms. Schmitt discussed the board retreat.

Meeting adjourned to executive session at 7:15 for 20minutes.

Adjourned public session at 7:35pm

Topeka City Council Meeting

May 17, 2022

Observer: Vicki Arnett

All council members, including the mayor, were present either in chambers or on zoom.

There were three proclamations read. Recognition of Washburn Rural High School Girls' Varsity Basketball team, recognition of Brown v. Board of Education 68th anniversary presented to league member Marty Patterson and recognition of city employees during National Public Works week.

The council appointed Angela Broxterman to the Downtown Business Improvement District Advisory Board.

The council heard a presentation of the 2022 City of Topeka Quarterly report. Revenue is up due primarily to reissuance of bond debt. Concern was expressed for inflation and the impact on the budget. The city has applied for many grant opportunities to assist with funding. The council expressed how happy they were with efforts at diversity in vendors.

The council approved land donations to the state for KDOT Hwy I-70 improvements for the Polk-Quincy viaduct work. After much discussion, the council approved rezoning of property at 117 NE Hwy 24 for the development of moderate to low-income housing. The council amended the proposal of the rezoning commission to require one parking space for each apt. designed in the complex. The council approved a conditional use permit to allow Lamar advertising to update and move a sign on the North side of 29th and Gage. The council approved a resolution authorizing revenue bonds to repair the water, water pollution and stormwater utility systems. There was one public comment on the revenue bonds.

The council announced a special meeting on Sat. June 4 from 9 to 11 a.m. to review the downtown-parking plan. After this special meeting, the council will vote on a proposal to resume downtown metered parking.

There was one public commenter who spoke on notifying the NIAs and residents when development is planned in the neighborhoods in order to allow for comments and input.

Announcements included no meeting next week, city still has computers to give away for those 60 and older, Habitat has a program to help the elderly with housing repair, kids ride for free this summer on Topeka Metro, city has several employees receiving MPA degrees from KU this spring, many thanks to public works, had a great graduation weekend, national celiac disease awareness week, Topeka Public Schools are out on May 24, thanks to retiring teachers, the DREAMS 2 and 3 are on-boarding volunteers, USS Frank Peterson, a native of Topeka, was commissioned, volunteer mowers are needed, happy birthday wishes to family members, recognition of Black trauma from the shooting in Buffalo and students at French Middle School are holding a Save the City meeting.

There was an executive session to discuss matters of attorney client privilege.

Topeka City Council Meeting

June 7, 2022

Observer: Vicki Arnett

All council members were present, including the mayor, either in person or virtually, except Christina Valdivia Alcalá and Sylvia Ortiz.

The council approved the appointment of Carmen Romero-Nichols to the Topeka Human Relations Commission.

The council heard a presentation from consultants on the employee survey. Staff expressed a general need for professional development, recognition and communication feedback. The council also heard a presentation by American Medical Response (AMR) to update the council on the status of emergency response in Topeka. AMR is contracted by Shawnee County although the city provides \$300,000 in the budget. AMR mentioned that in the past year, they have provided over 1 million in uncompensated care in Topeka. This is one reason they are launching a tiered 911 system. The new system will allow for a triage by dispatch and will not automatically result in an ambulance and fire truck being dispatched to all medical 911 calls.

Action Items

Council held two public hearing on a special assessment-sanitary sewer improvement in Horseshoe Bend subdivision No. 5. There were no public comments.

Council held a public hearing on a special assessment for street improvement in Sherwood Village. There were no public comments.

Council held a public hearing on a special assessment for a street improvement project at Misty Harbor Estates. There were no public comments.

Council held a public hearing on proposed amendments to the Consolidated Action Plan. There were no public comments.

The council adopted a resolution amending the Local Stormwater Improvement Project Policy. The change will address localized flooding which requires using storm water utility funds. The change will assist homeowners in addressing flooding issues.

Non-action Items

The council heard a report from Deputy Mayor Duncan as chair of the Policy and Finance Committee. The committee is proposing a draft application packet for social service requests using ARPA funds. The application period is proposed to be June 27-July 30, 2022. The Policy and Finance Committee will review the applications, approve the applications to move forward and make recommendations for funding in Oct.

Public comments included students from French Middle School advocating for a teen center costing 10 million at White Lakes Mall. Center for Safety and Empowerment advocated for increases to emergency housing options for victims of domestic violence. Shelter space is more limited in Topeka than in Lawrence. There were several people who spoke up about the elimination of the homeless encampment.

During council announcements, council mentioned a need for mental health funding as a result of gun violence, reminded to check voter registration and a visit to Camp Courageous, the Fire Dept. special camp for young women.

An executive session was held to discuss matters of attorney/client privilege.

Topeka City Council Meeting

June 14, 2022

Observer: Vicki Arnett

All city council members, including the mayor, were present either virtually or in person, except Council member Emerson and Council member Lesser.

The mayor read a proclamation in recognition of Juneteenth National Freedom Day. He also introduced Miss Juneteenth Topeka.

The council appointed Michaela Saunders to the Topeka Sustainability Advisory Board and Kenneth Scott to the Downtown Business Improvement District Advisory Board.

The council heard the 2021 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report, consisting mostly of the audit report. The council also heard a presentation of the use of General Fund Reserves. General fund reserves are required to be 20% of the budget in order to maintain credit and bond rating. It is currently at 27% of the budget, about 27 million. The council heard a

presentation of a report from the consultant to the Changing our Culture of Property Maintenance committee. The consultant will be in Topeka for a few more days to meet with the public, Wed. evening and additional department heads. The mayor introduced the Topeka Police Department summer interns.

Action Items

Council approved a resolution for street improvement in Sherwood Park subdivision. The council approved amending the Consolidated Action Plan to include additional HOME-ARP funding. The council approved a resolution allowing Midland Care Connection to sell a portion of its property that is subject to lease with the city. The council also approved the ARPA application form and process guidelines. Application information will be available later this week including an upcoming webinar.

There was one public comment from a home owner who received a code violation for lawn being uncut.

Council announcements included information about the free computers program application, remembrance of the TPD helicopter which crashed anniversary, a caution about the heat and checking on your neighbors, thanking Topeka and Greater Topeka Partnership for assistance with the code compliance work, remembering Juneteenth celebrations and Happy Father's Day.

There was an executive session to discuss individual employee performance.

Shawnee County Commission Meeting

May 9, 2022

Observer: Susan Quinn

All Commissioners were present today.

Today's meeting included a lot of usual business, but also these highlights:

The county clerk, Cynthia Beck, asked to change an Office Assistant II position to an Office Assistant III position in the county clerk's real estate division. Commissioner Cook seemed displeased. He noted that there had been several people coming before the Commissioners asking for promotions or wage increases of some sort here and there. At the end, her request was granted with a 3-0 vote in favor of the request, but she did mention that the reason for the increase was two-fold: 1) the position is going to require more duties due to Senate bill 13 that was recently passed and signed into law. 2) the person who was currently fulfilling the role of Office Assistant II has been operating at an Office Assistant III level due to the duties in the office.

As you will be able to read in the final version of [Senate Bill 13](#), it is an eight-page document that establishes notice and public hearing requirements prior to the approval of a governing body to exceed its revenue neutral rate for property tax purposes. It discontinues the city and county tax lid. Prohibits valuation increases of real property solely as the result of normal repair, replacement or maintenance of an existing structure. It establishes a payment plan for the payment of delinquent or non- delinquent property taxes. Finally, it establishes the taxpayer notification costs fund. As a result, there are increased duties in the real estate division of the county clerk office as well as numerous more mailings. The county clerk, Cynthia Beck, noted that while there may be some funding for this available from the state, ultimately those funds will dry up and it will be up to the counties to pay the bills of this legislation.

District Attorney, Michael Kagay, requested approval for the appointment of Dan Dunbar as special counsel to the Shawnee County district attorney's office to work on specifically, two cold cases. The request was granted without questions or comments by the Commission.

Curt Niehaus, Director for Public Works, asked for approval of a project budget for work on the loading area at Landon arena at the Expo Center. This was approved with very little commentary or question.

Brian Cole, Department of Corrections, asked for authorization and execution of a contract for the second phase of a roof replacement. The American rescue plan act funds are funding this roof replacement. The request was approved.

Teresa Fisher with the Health Department asked for authorization and execution of a contract with KDHE to provide outreach prevention and early intervention services with grant funding. The request was approved.

Then Derik Flerlage, Infectious Disease Division Manager of the Health Department, asked for authorization and execution of a contract with Clinical Reference Laboratory Incorporated, an Overland Park laboratory, to provide COVID-19 PCR testing kits. Funding for the kits is provided by the COVID-19 grant funds. PCR tests are about \$75 per test. This sparked a lively set of questions including:

- From Commissioner Riphahn: “How many tests have they done?” Mr. Flerlage volunteered to find the answer for Commissioner Riphahn
- “What is the turnaround time on the test results?” Three days or so. The tests are overnighted to the laboratory via FedEx and results are available within one to two days after receipt of the test.
- “And just how much funding do we have?” Will we exceed the funding that we have? Derik Flerlage stated that we are doing an excellent job tracking the Federal COVID dollars and have lots of different funds for specific purposes.
- Commissioner Mays asked “Why not antigen test? PCR tests are expensive. Can't we use antigen tests instead?” Mr. Flerlage explained that the PCR tests are easy for partner

organizations to deploy. PCR testing does not require special waivers or audits or specially trained medical personnel.

At the end of questioning, the Commission approved the request. COVID-19 continues to be a topic of division for our community.

Solid Waste asked for a resolution to be adopted for the 2022 annual update of the Shawnee County Solid Waste Management Plan.

We ended the meeting talking about Parks & Rec. They had a portable restroom contract for execution. But also, they had a presentation for the Commissioners on the Gage Park mini-train replacement. The funding comes from the American Rescue Plan for the train replacement.

The train they wish to purchase comes from Chance Manufacturing Company, a Kansas company. It has been around since 1961. The new train will be an electric train run on lithium-ion batteries called the C.P. Huntington train. It's in a similar style as our current Iron Horse train, which is 55 years old. It has passenger vehicles just like our train with more comfortable seating that is taller and wider. It has lights and speakers in the roof of the passenger cars. Because it is electric, it is ten times more efficient than diesel and there are fewer parts to break in the electric system. It was noted that getting parts for our old diesel train is difficult. It was also noted that the maintenance dollars for our current train is quite a lot more expensive than the maintenance dollars will be on the new electric train. One example was the cost of wheels. There are 40 wheels on our train today. Wheels cost about \$650 each to replace on our train. The cost of replacing wheels on the new train will be \$300 per wheel instead. The new train, passenger cars, the value package that includes spare parts, the two-year warranty, and the charging stations were all included for consideration by the commissioners. There will be an ADA car and four regular passenger coaches. The train should be here in spring of 2023 ready for our use. They will train our operators and our mechanics on how to use and maintain the train. Commissioner Cook began the questions:

1. "Will the new train be on the same gauge? So as not to require any track replacement?"
Yes
2. "What happens to the old train?" We have not completely decided yet, but we will memorialize it somehow.
3. "Will we be scrapping the existing cars?" There are no thoughts about scrapping the current cars yet but that can be done potentially.
4. "What about the sound of the train? Will we not hear the sound of the diesel any longer?" That is true, the sound is different, however there is a sound, and it is not overbearing. There is a whistle, there is a bell.
5. "And will there be steam?" No, no steam.
6. Commissioner Riphahn asked, "Will the colors be the same as today's colors?" As much as possible. However, currently our cars are painted in red, purple, yellow, blue, and teal. Teal may not be possible, and we may have to go with green instead.

7. Commissioner Mays asked, “don't they manufacture a diesel or gas model any longer?” No, they do not manufacture diesel and gasoline any longer. There is a problem getting engines for diesels.
8. “The 2-year warranty is awfully short. Is there an option to extend the warranty?” No.

The Commissioners approved the awarding of the bid to purchase the train.

No public comments today. Administrative announcements were light. There was an update on the weed department. They have repainted the weed office and installed a new sign. The parking lot has also been updated, all but the gravel portion, which may be done later. There is a new deputy director for Parks & Recreation named Jess Rakeshaw. She has been with Parks & Rec for 12 years.

There was executive session today for five hours to evaluate personnel which sounded routine. The meeting was adjourned.

Shawnee County Commission Meeting

May 19, 2022

Observer: Elvera Johnson

All Commissioners Present (Commissioner Mays participated remotely)

For Public Works, Commissioners amended a construction contract for rehab of the collections system and pump station in the Sherwood Sewer Sanitary System. Engineering Services needed to be added. They renewed a contract for monitoring and inspection at the Shawnee County Landfill. They acknowledged the completion of the pavement repair project at Croco Road K-4 ramps, at a lower cost than anticipated. They authorized a contract with BNSF Railway to upgrade traffic signals on South Topeka Blvd.

For Parks and Recreation, they approved a request to lay asphalt and finish the improvements at Fool's Landing.

For Stormont Vail Events Center, they approved a contract to install new roofs on Landon Arena, Exhibition Hall and Agriculture Hall. These projects were not included in the large renovation, because at the time that was begun in 2010, the roofs were in good condition.

For the Health Department, they authorized a contract with KDHE for mosquito surveillance. They authorized a contract with K-State to provide applied practical experience for a master student in their public health program.

For Emergency Management, they authorized a contract to maintain communication capabilities.

For Human Resources, they approved a contract with Teamsters Local Union for 2022-2024, adjusting wages and holidays.

No public comment was offered. Emergency management advised everyone to watch for increased traffic and possible weather warnings on Memorial Day weekend. Administrative Services announced that the remodeling project in the “new” building is ahead of schedule.

No Executive Session was called.

Shawnee County Commission Meeting

May 23, 2022

Observer: Susan Quinn

All Commissioners were present today. Today's meeting started with the pledge of allegiance and the consent agenda. Beyond the voucher payments and correction orders the next new business item was a public hearing to consider the approval for exempting from taxes, a new Hills Pet Nutrition facility for small dog research. The new facility has created six new full-time jobs for the Topeka area. There is a space at the facility that will host international veterinary students for the purposes of studying pet nutrition. The public hearing was opened and closed without any opposing comment. The Commissioners passed the resolution 3-0.

Next item of business was the authorization and execution of the Sertoma Great Topeka Duck race activities contract with Shawnee County Parks and recreation. It was mentioned that the Sertoma duck race has been in existence since 1998 and will cost \$1,040 for a deposit in the Parks and Recreation building maintenance fund.

The health department asked for an agreement with the City of Topeka to receive an additional \$565,000 from the community development block grants for COVID-19 mitigation. They mentioned more vaccines for younger children as well as additional testing as we get into the school year.

Two additional applications for tax exemption were brought before the Commissioners, both related to pet food. Beginning with Fairview Corn this exemption request is for property located at 5035 Northwest Highway 24. This is a remodel of an existing warehouse into a pet food manufacturing and packaging facility. The administrative review committee unanimously voted to recommend a 100% 10-year tax extension on the improvement portion of this property only. The committee voted to request that the applicant make an annual payment in lieu of taxes that would account for the value that was in place and the taxes that were collected prior to this remodel to account for the existing structure. The Commissioners acknowledged receipt of the application and set a public hearing for June 9, 2022 to review this matter.

The second tax exemption application is for property on a parcel just to the southwest of the property of the Fairview Corn property above. The applicant on this exemption is called Fairview Grain LLC. The property is a new construction for a warehouse storage facility for pet food ingredient storage. The administrative review committee recommended a 10-year 100%

tax exemption for new construction. Commissioners acknowledged the receipt of the application and set a public hearing for June 9, 2022 to review this matter.

There was executive session today for 45 minutes to evaluate personnel matters. The meeting was adjourned.

Shawnee County Commission Meeting

May 26, 2022

Observer: Elvera Johnson

All commissioners present

The meeting began with a presentation of a check to Parks and Recreation from Capitol Federal Foundation to pay for the fireworks display on July 4.

The commission approved resolutions to issue Shawnee County Kansas Taxable Industrial Revenue Bonds for the Whispering Pines Project and the Cascade Apartment Project. This was preceded by announcing a public hearing. No comment was offered.

Commissioners approved use of SPARKS funds by the Department of Corrections for replacing boilers and for a full body scanner to reduce the introduction of contraband while allowing staff to maintain a safe distance from offenders.

They approved purchase of 2 Skid Steer Loaders by Parks and Recreation to replace 2 that are over 20 years old.

For Public Works, they approved installation of two large fans in the North Annex garage to improve air circulation in this tall building and keep employees more comfortable in hot or cold weather.

For the Election office, they approved use of contingency funds to replace equipment damaged due to a roof/guttering leak May 17/18. The roof/gutter is being repaired as well. They are working with the insurance adjuster.

No public comment was offered.

Solid waste announced that collection times are changed next week due to Memorial Day. Parks and Recreation announced that aquatic facilities will open this weekend with a couple of exceptions. Oakland has no power right now and Blaisdale deep end will be closed for lifeguard training. Election Commissioner Howell announced that the filing deadline is June 1. Commissioner Riphahn said that Bill Kinkaid, a long-time park employee died recently.

Commissioners will not meet Monday, May 30 due to Memorial Day.

An executive session was called to discuss non-elected personnel matters and consult with an attorney regarding employee benefits.

Shawnee County Commission Meeting

June 2, 2022

Observer: Vicki Arnett

All commissioners were present.

Human Resources requested the adoption of recommendations of the Human Resources Committee to establish a high deductible health insurance plan and a health savings account benefit in plan year 2023. The committee requested the commission "seed" the health savings accounts with 500.00. The savings accounts are only available to those who select the high deductible plan. The deductible range is 3,000 to 6,000 per year. The committee estimates that 10% of employees will enroll. The commission approved.

Human Resources also requested a change to the HR policy manual to enable employees who serve on juries to keep the jury duty pay. The commission approved.

The Weed Dept. requested approval to go outside the purchasing policy for the chemical purchase of Glyphosate, 24-D and Triclopyr. The chemical manufacturers are experiencing supply chain problems leading to price variability. The commission approved.

The commission approved a change order to the final contract for mill and overlay on from southbound Topeka Blvd. from Airport Drive to Gary Ormsby Drive. The change order is from "as bid" to "as construction". There is no change in the unit price.

Also approved was a contract for the Shawnee County Dept. of Corrections to lease four ice machines rather than repair or replace the ones they currently have.

Information Technology requested and was approved to dispose of a 2006 Ford E-150 through auction.

There was no public comment. Administrative communications included a reminder that the household hazardous waste collection is Sat. This will be the only one until Aug. The photo winners were announced for publication in the employee benefit handbook. The I-70 and Croco Rd. bridge repair has started. Shawnee County Dept. of Corrections has been fully re-accredited by ACA. A long-term employee of the adult detention center died recently. The June Connection newsletter is posted on the Commission website. There is no commission meeting on Mon. June 20, 2022. Commissioner Riphahn attended the Sheriff Office promotion.

There was a need for an executive session to discuss employer/employee relations.

Shawnee County Planning Commission Meeting
June 6, 2022
Observer: Susan Quinn

Today's meeting started with a presentation from an audit company on ADA compliance for our Parks and recreation Department. It was a very interesting presentation. I encourage you to [watch it](#), but here are the highlights:

- We have a transition plan that is a 12-year plan as an output of the audit.
- This plan has about 900 things on it.
- The plan includes the severity of the barrier, how easy the item is to implement, whether it is a high use site and whether it is a public or employee space.
 - We had problems in our parking lots with stalls being too steep and paint being faded.
 - We had problems with pavers that were in disrepair on walking surfaces.
 - We had problems with picnic facilities being stranded in the middle of a grassy space that is not considered accessible by those who might be in a wheelchair.
 - Some of our play areas have surfaces that are in disrepair or platforms that are too high for children who have disabilities.
 - There were restroom issues with grab bars and sink rims being too high to be accessible.
 - There were some issues at Great Overland Station with restroom door clearances and overhead clearances.
- The transition plan includes phases:
 - Phase one includes things that are low hanging fruit or were recently constructed and done wrong with a total dollar amount of about 5 million.
 - Phase two includes new things to the standards amounting to 1.8 million.
 - Things that are not yet subject to a final standard are a little over a million more.
 - An option to correct deficits at sites, but not required because another site is accessible is about 3 million of work.
 - Smart practices were about 4 million dollars of work.
 - The total is a little over 15 and 1/2 million.

Also considered today on the agenda was the request to reclassify a vacant health services liaison position in the department of corrections with an increase of \$25,000 for salary and benefits. They have a candidate who is qualified for the position but the salary is too low for that candidate to accept the position. Because this position is so needed, Commissioner Cook immediately moved to approve the request and Commissioner Riphahn seconded and it was passed 3-0.

The commission then canceled the October 17th meeting because they will be busy at another meeting.

There was one gentleman there for public comment over a number of things including loud fireworks coming up near his home.

There was executive session today. The meeting was adjourned.

Shawnee County Commission Meeting

June 9, 2022

Observer: Elvera Johnson

All Commissioners present.

Commissioners approved a 10-year 100% tax exemption for Fairview Grain, a new pet food manufacturing and storage facility. The company will pay just over \$32000 yearly to offset the taxes that were paid by a warehouse facility that occupied the land previously. A required public hearing was held. The only public comment was by a representative of the company. Little time was allowed for negative comment.

Commissioners approved disposal of a 2006 Ford that is no longer needed to an auto and truck parts company. They approved renovation of the men's restroom at a softball complex to bring it to ADA compliance. They approved renewal of an annual agreement between the County Health Department and Kansas Children's Service League to operate the Healthy Families projects. They acknowledged the purchase of the wiring needed for lights and sirens on Sheriff's Department vehicles. There was only one bid, and the department was happy with it.

No public comment was offered. In administrative communications, Dr. Erin Locke announced that tomorrow (June 10) marks the one-year anniversary of the Mobile Access Partnership, which provides services to unhoused individuals and others. A celebration will be held in the Stormont Vail Events Center parking lot between 8 and 10 a.m. Commissioner Riphahn said that he enjoyed guiding a group of kids through Old Prairie Town. Commissioner Cook announced that the Oakland Pool will open this weekend after a delay. Commissioner Mays announced that a beer festival and street party will happen this Saturday in downtown Topeka.

No Executive Session was called.

Shawnee County Commission Meeting

June 16, 2022

Observer: Vicki Arnett

All three commissioners were present.

The commission approved renewal of an annual agreement with KDHE and the Shawnee County Health Department for the surveillance of TB.

Parks and Recreation received approval for construction and installation of park shelters at Hillsdale Park and Boswell Park with Kiwanis and College Hill Association sponsorships. The commission also approved the contract for design build renovation at the Lake Shawnee campgrounds.

The Election Office received approval of the renovation work due to water damage May 17/18.

There were no public comments.

Administrative comments included, no refuse pick up Mon., Sunflower Girl's State visitors will tour Shawnee County government sites Fri. and Commissioner Riphahn has a new granddaughter.

There was a need for executive session to discuss employer/employee relations regarding FOP upcoming contracts.

Intergovernmental Cooperation Council

May 9, 2022

Observer: Susan Quinn

Present from ICC:

Jim Edwards, Topeka & Shawnee County Public Library, Board of Trustees
Marie Pyko, Topeka & Shawnee County Public Library, Chief Executive Officer
Sue Bolley, USD 501, Board of Education
Larry Robbins, USD 501, Deputy Superintendent of Operations
Aaron Kipp, USD 501, General Director of Assessment and Demographics
Tim Hallacy, USD 450, Shawnee Heights Superintendent
Brad Womack, USD 372, Silver Lake Superintendent
Dr. Scott McWilliams, USD 437, Auburn Washburn Superintendent
Amanda Tituana-Feijoo, USD 437, Secretary to Superintendent
Freddy Mawyin, Senior Economic Advisor at Greater Topeka Partnership

Observing:

Vicki Arnett and Susan Quinn, LWVTSC

Today's meeting had one agenda: to review the demographic changes for Shawnee County over the recent past 10 years. Freddy Mawyin led the presentation.

Attached are the handouts from the presentation. Salient points include a slight decrease in population, driven mainly by births. In Shawnee County, births have decreased from about 2,500 in 2011 to 2,000 in 2020. That is a decrease of about 20%. Deaths have not changed significantly, and immigration is up slightly. Mr. Mawyin suggested that migration to our community might be a solution to our population decline. He asked a question, "How to attract people to Shawnee County and Topeka?"

Aaron Kipp started the questions and discussion. What are the ages of the people migrating? What is their family composition? Mr. Mawyin answered that the data does not break down by family composition however we can infer from the population changes who we might be losing. Specifically, ages 30 to 35 are up, Mr. Mawyin explained. Also, ages 65 plus are up. However, we are losing people in the 45 to 50 age range.

Larry Robbins asked, "Why are people leaving Shawnee County?" Mr. Mawyin replied that people are commuting here to work but they are leaving to live elsewhere. We need parks, greenspaces, and walkability. We need to invest in housing to attract and retain people in our community.

Mr. Robbins described his experience when moving to a new community in South Carolina where many from the community came to his home to make sure he knew about the amenities and supports available if he or his family needed them. They welcomed him personally.

Marie Pyko noted that the Inter-City visit to Arkansas last month was timely and could help us as we attempt to solve this problem. Also, it was noted that enrollment at KSU and at KU is down. Mr. Mawyin noted that when two communities are vying for business, both will lose. However, investing in the living part too and the marketing part is important to retaining and growing our population. Mr. Mawyin suggested that we do not have natural amenities like mountains and beaches, so we must make them ourselves. We must invest in things that attract people to live in Shawnee County. Mr. Mawyin said we need to define the targets we want to achieve and then develop the plan to get there. Mr. Mawyin also asked us if anyone knows how to get people here to Topeka, to let him know.

Marie Pyko asked how do we keep or grow the international growth in migration that we have seen? What are strategies to help us keep that or grow it? Brad Womack said that Topeka is safe, but not exactly exciting. He suggested that communicating our events could be improved like music venues and the park and other activities that young people enjoy, specifically those aged 18 to 25.

Dr. McWilliams described his daughter's experience with Burns and Mac summer internship in engineering. It is a 9-week event where his daughter gets to room with others from across the country. And when she is done with school, she is excited to be able to be a full-time employee with Burns and Mac. She can go anywhere: Kansas City, Dallas, Los Angeles, international cities. They have really invested in reaching out to young engineers while they are in school so that they are ready to work for them permanently.

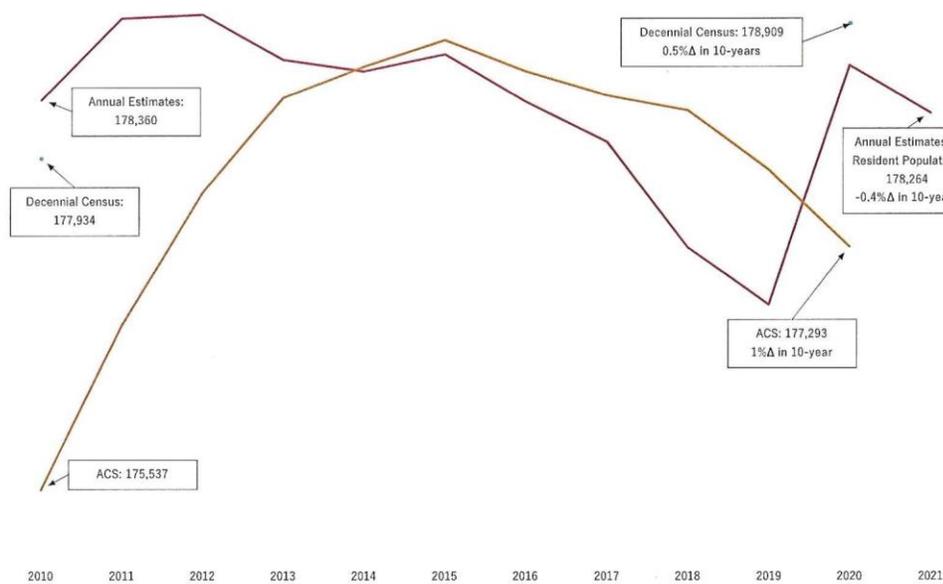
Larry Robbins said that this is a statewide issue. The projected enrollment is down in our schools statewide.

Tim Hallacy turned the conversation to our former governor, Sam Brownback. It was lamented that the tax plan that Sam Brownback tried to make work unfortunately has not worked. The word "disaster" was used.

On a brighter note, Brad Womack suggested that sports can help because young people like sports. Tim Hallacy asked if housing has slowed down the growth of Shawnee County. Aaron Kipp asked about the quality of life and whether crime has anything to do with our issues. Larry Robbins brought them back around to the notion that this is a statewide issue, and our local committee work should be a statewide committee, investing in Kansas.

Overall, the discussion was thoughtful, and I was glad to be there. I encourage you all to learn more and to reach out to Greater Topeka with any ideas that you might have for Mr. Mawyin. Also, inform yourself when you vote please. If you can, come to a [Reframing Topeka Deliberative Conversation event](#) this summer at the Topeka Shawnee County Public Library.

Shawnee County Population Estimates



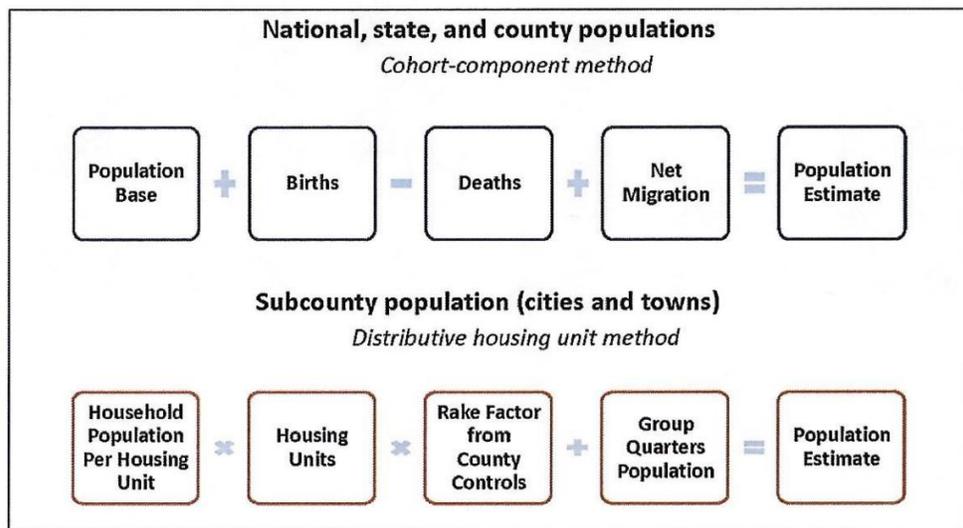
The U.S. Census produces various population estimates, for example:

1. Decennial Population Census:
 - * Every 10 years
 - * The largest population survey conducted in the U.S.
2. American Community Survey:
 - * Yearly population estimates for large and small geographies
 - * It is a survey, so sampling is needed
 - * Margin of error are calculated at the 90% interval
3. Annual Estimate of the Resident Population:
 - * Yearly population estimates for large geographies
 - * It is not a survey
 - * No margin of error is needed

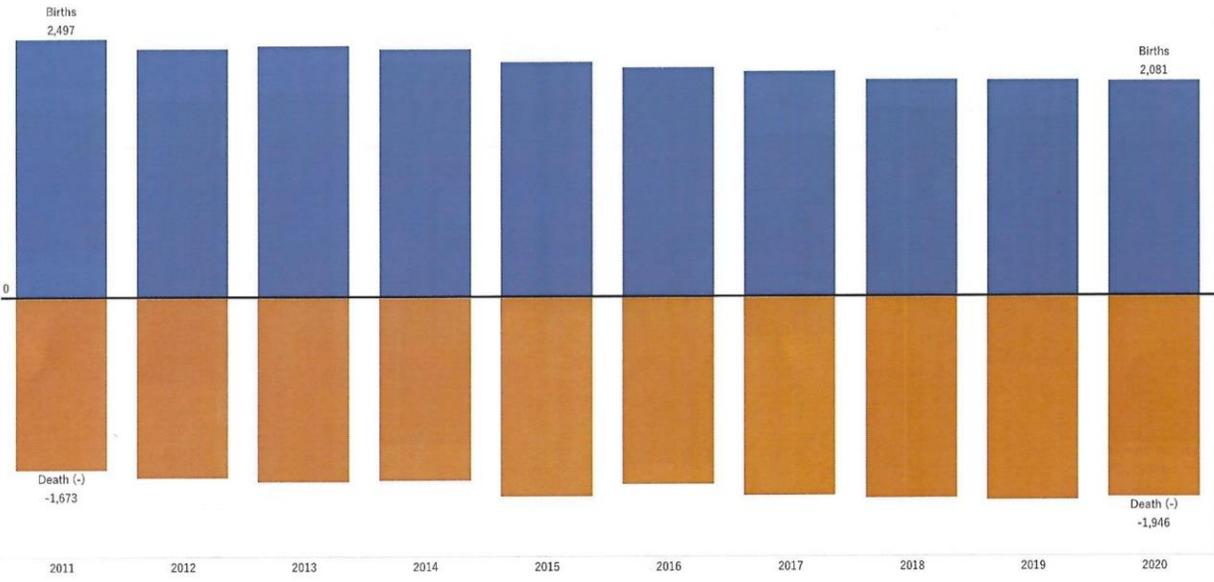
10-Y Change in Population

Region	ACS 1-Year %	ACS 5-Year %	Annual Estimates of Resident Population %	Decennial Census %
Kansas	1.9%	3.7%	2.3%	3.0%
Shawnee County	-0.8%	1.0%	-0.4%	0.5%

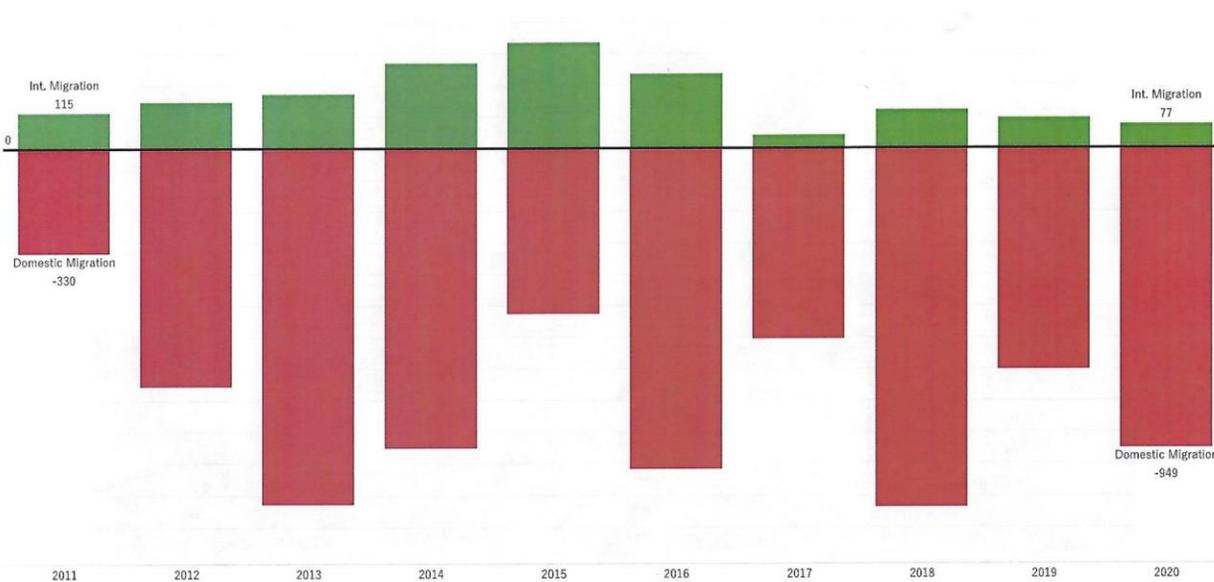
Population and Housing Unit Estimates Methodology



Births & Deaths in Shawnee County



Domestic & International Migration in Shawnee County



10-Y Numerical Change in Population

