

March 2023 Observer Reports

USD 437 Board Meeting

Observer: Mary Galligan (via livestream)

January 17, 2023

6 members present

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

Concerns about the location of the new middle school were presented during the open forum at the start of the Board meeting.

The USD 437 School Board unanimously approved:

- The meeting agenda
- Items on the consent agenda
- A motion to approve new resources for HS government teachers as discussed at prior meeting
- A motion to approve proceeding with a capital outlay project for the HS science classroom as discussed at this meeting
- A motion to go into executive session at 7:36 PM for 40 minutes, until 8:16 PM, to discuss personnel matters pursuant to the KOMA exception for discussion of matters related to non-elected personnel and the budget pursuant to the KOMA exception for discussion of employer-employee negotiations
- After executive session, a motion approving release of a teacher from their contract

The Board received:

- An Owner's Representative report regarding the design of the new middle school and a traffic study related to school construction at 29th and Auburn Rd

The Board discussed:

- A capital outlay project for the HS science classroom
- A request for a Registered Behavior Technician to add to the district's Special Education staffing cohort

The meeting adjourned at 8:17 PM.

USD 437 Board Meeting

February 6, 2023

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 unanimously approved:

- The meeting agenda
- Items on the consent agenda
- The Habitat for Humanity MOU discussed at this meeting
- Guaranteed maximum price amendment for construction at Pauline Central including alternates as presented at this meeting
- Give Pauline Central master budget authority to facility committee as discussed at this meeting
- Guaranteed maximum price amendment for construction at WR Middle School including alternates as presented at this meeting
- A motion to go into executive session at 6:55 PM for 60 minutes, until 7:55 PM, to discuss personnel matters pursuant to the KOMA exception for discussion of matters related to non-elected personnel and the budget pursuant to the KOMA exception for discussion of employer-employee negotiations
- A motion to go into executive session at 7:56 PM for 15 minutes, until 8:11 PM, to discuss personnel matters pursuant to the KOMA exception for discussion of matters related to non-elected personnel
- After the second executive session, a motion to release a teacher from their contract and waive associated fees

The Board received:

- An Owner's Representative report regarding the new middle school in response to concerns raised previously about storm water drainage at the school site.

The Board discussed:

- A Habitat for Humanity MOU for HS students to build cabinetry
- Guaranteed maximum price amendment for construction at Pauline Central
- The Pauline Central master budget decision making authority for facility committee
- Guaranteed maximum price amendment for construction at WR Middle School
- Selected board policy updates including technical updates and amendments necessary to conform with current state law

The meeting adjourned at 8:13 PM.

USD 501 Board Meeting

January 19, 2023

Observer: Janet Cathcart

All board members present.

Nominations are Open for President of the Board

Sue Bolley was nominated for President of the board.

Motion by Lisa Schmitt, second by Melanie Stuart Campbell. Motion Carried

Nominations are Open for Vice President of the board

Melanie Stuart Campbell was nominated for Vice President of the board. Motion by Lisa Schmitt, second by Richard Bonebrake.

Motion Carried

Adoption of the Agenda

Motion by Melanie Stuart-Campbell, second by Keith Tatum. Motion Carried

School Highlights

Acknowledgment of the staff members who gave aid to Dr. New during her health emergency. She is resting at home and doing well thanks to the quick acting staff at the Burnett Administration Center.

School Board Recognition Month-Dr. Anderson read the Proclamation for School Board Recognition Month

Law Enforcement Appreciation Day- Board President Sue Bolley read the Proclamation for National Law Enforcement Appreciation Day.

Public Comment

Curtis Pitts requested the board please open facilities for students on the weekends so that students have something to do on the weekends and work with community partners to also help keeps kids busy to help keep them out of trouble.

Jeremy Gibson discussion of the International Baccalaureate program and cost.

Disposition of Business by Consent

Superintendent's Report

Cultures and Language- Cultural Offerings in TPS-Dual Language Program PK-12 World Languages-Spanish, French, German, ASL, and Native American Studies. TPS has some Ukraine families now.

Board Members Work Session - 30 Minutes - Cultures and Languages

IB Philosophy-THE INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect. McClure and Scott Dual Language are the proposed schools to start this program. The IB program compliments the Gomez & Gomez Model. IB draws families and teachers.

The board agreed to move forward with further research into the IB program.

Discussion Items- IB program was the discussion.

Action Items-None

Board Member Comments Discussed their committee meetings

Meeting adjourned at 8:12pm

Shawnee County Commission Meeting

January 19, 2023

Observer: Vicki Arnett

All three commissioners were present.

Parks and Rec requested approval of a contract between Shawnee County, KDHE and Larsen Associates to investigate, test, remediate and monitor environmental impact of formerly buried petroleum tanks in Gage Park. The mitigation measures have been going on for 12 years. Apparently, the mitigation is to monitor the toxicity on a periodic basis until it dissipates. The commission approved.

The commission approved a bid to purchase new windows and siding at Lake Shawnee Shelter House #6.

The commission approved the renaming of Carver Road to Greening Street in Soldier Township.

The commission approved offering a candidate the position of Health Services Team Leader in the Maternal Child Health clinic at a higher range.

John Bell was introduced to commissioners. He is a new employee in Parks + Rec.

The commission discussed the proposed change of format for Mon. meetings. It was announced they will live stream the meetings when they are held in chambers. Chair Riphahn announced this was a way for the commissioners to have a conversation and still follow KOMA. It was also announced that Franklin County Commission has one meeting per week and one of the meetings is a work session. They live stream all the meetings to comply with KOMA.

There was no need for an executive session.

Shawnee County Commission Meeting

January 23, 2023

Observer: Susan Quinn

All three commissioners were present for today's meeting. They began by talking about the rules that they would follow for work session meetings.

First, they invited Shawnee County attorney Jim Crowl to speak about what is required per KOMA, Kansas Open Meetings Act.

Crowl said that currently, the commission exceeds requirements. No agenda is required per KOMA. No recording or streaming of the meeting live is required. And no public comment opportunities are required per KOMA.

The two things that are required according to Crowl:

1. Give notice of commission meetings to the public, especially those parties that have requested meeting notice.
2. Open their meetings to the public physically.

Commissioner Cook acknowledged this but said that he would like to see us continue to publish an agenda. Also, to stream or record the meeting whenever practicable which, he noted, would be largely when they are in the commission room only. He suggested that public comments be allowed if they are germane to the topic being discussed and held to a 5-minute time limit. Commissioner Mays said that he believes that public comments should not have a 5-minute time limit but that should be at the chair's discretion. For example, if no one else is wishing to speak and the chair would like to hear more from someone, they could allow a 10-minute time instead. Commissioner Riphahn asked about the process of requiring public commenters to sign in so that there is a record of them. They will determine these rules and decide on them in an upcoming business meeting or "action meeting" as they are calling them, on a future Thursday.

The other topic on the agenda this morning was an update from Bill Sutton about recycling in Shawnee County. He started out with a few light-hearted remarks that may have gotten chuckles in the room but if so, was not audible on the video recording.

After that, his slide deck started in earnest. He reminded us that Shawnee County Refuge is completely user fee-based and not reliant on any tax dollars for its operations. He also reminded us that there were four options on the table back in December when discussing what to do about the financial changes facing Shawnee County for recycling.

1. Stop recycling all together
2. Keep the status quo by keeping rates the same regardless of the additional expenses incurred
3. Raise prices for all customers in light of the new recycling contract with Waste Management
4. Raise prices for those who wish to participate in recycling and allow those who do not wish to participate to opt out of recycling

The Shawnee County Commissioners decided that they would pursue option 4 which would allow customers to opt out of recycling and would only raise recycling rates for those who decided that they would remain.

The way they did this was to offer an opt out only choice. Which means customers with recycling will have their fee increased if they don't tell Shawnee County Refuse that they want to opt out. As of the end of the year, Shawnee County Refuse has 48,793 customers. As of this morning, January 23, 2023, only 1,949 of those customers have opted out, which is roughly 3.99% of customers.

All the community-based "single stream" containers for recycling have been removed from Shawnee County. Those were the baby blue containers that would adorn the parking lots of Dillons, Walmart, and other such venues. They were named single stream because you could put all recycling into them whether that was cardboard, plastics, mixed paper, aluminum or tin. The main reason for removing those bins is due to cross-contamination which creates a lot of problems for the recycling process. Cross-contamination very simply is putting things that are not recyclable in with recyclables. Largely this was done because people lack the information that they need to understand what is recyclable and what is not. There may have been some trash dumping as well, Sutton agreed.

The issue of education and training on recycling for Shawnee County customers was a big topic of conversation in the December discussions at the Shawnee County commission meetings. In response, Sutton said that new flyers and updated links are available on their [website](#). He said that they plan to pass out these flyers whenever possible but gave no specifics as to where that would be. He also said that they planned to use social media and to "lean on our friends in the media" to get the word out about what is recyclable and what is not. Later in the meeting Commissioner Cook admonished Sutton that relying on social media and our friends in the media alone is not enough of a communications plan. Commissioner Cook noted that recycling changes over time and additional education is going to be needed on a regular and routine basis to properly educate all of us on how to best to recycle. For example, the stickers that are on the recycle bins today still say no pizza boxes however recent upgrades in technology allow us to now recycle pizza boxes. Unless you watched the December discussions at the Shawnee County commission meeting or today's meeting, you might not realize that pizza boxes are fine recycling material now.

Speaking of change, Sutton noted that they are going to be putting new yellow bins in strategic locations throughout Shawnee County. These new yellow bins are for recycling cardboard only. And by cardboard what they mean is corrugated cardboard boxes that have been broken down or made to be flat. Nothing but the cardboard is to go in the bin. No packing peanuts, no Styrofoam of any kind. No packaging tape. Cereal boxes are not considered cardboard. Cereal boxes are considered mixed paper and can only be recycled in the single stream recycle bins available to residents who recycle. Cardboard can still be placed in your single stream recycle bin at curbside. The new yellow bins will be for the broader community to use for recycling their corrugated cardboard boxes.

As the meeting came to an end, the commissioners talked about how future work sessions might be used. They talked about more in-depth conversations which each of

the different departments. They talked about field trips that they might take to see progress on different construction projects. And they also discussed having updates from advisory boards.

During administrative comments, Theresa Fisher with the Shawnee County Health Department commented that K-State was here today to hold community conversations throughout Shawnee County. More information on the conversations can be found on this [website](#).

No public comment was made today and the meeting was adjourned.

Shawnee County Commission Meeting

January 26, 2023

Observer: Elvera Johnson

All 3 Commissioners present

The first half hour of the meeting was a quarterly report from Valeo and Family Service & Guidance Center. Persinger from Valeo spoke about addiction treatment and crisis services. He said there are some staffing issues. About 14% of positions are open, and most of these are in crisis services. Persinger said during the very cold time during the holiday season more than 50 individuals came to a “warming center” provided by Rescue Mission and some were taken to motel rooms. The Family Services representative said that their crisis house is always full. The building is in poor shape and is being repaired. They are reaching out to schools to make sure students in need of services can access their help. They have hired more staff. They will soon be licensed as a treatment center for alcohol and drug treatment.

The Extension Office reported that a new county horticulture agent was hired this month. The position had been vacant. He is completing his masters in horticulture at K-State.

In a single vote, commissioners approved extension of tax exemption-incentive for a list of 11 corporations.

They approved extending Sewer District No. 8 to include 2 additional lots. There were no objections. They approved a resolution to create Timber Ridge Subdivision Street Benefit District.

For Parks and Recreation, they extended the contract with The Yacht Club to lease and use the area at Lake Shawnee this year. They approved replacement of ties and other train track improvements to get ready for the new train at Gage Park. They approved a request to write a proposal/application to the Kansas Forest Service for a grant. Some of the funds for this would come from the Federal Inflation Reduction Act. It would require a 50/50 match, some of which could be in kind. They approved reclassification of 2 vacant positions. No additional funds would be needed.

For Corrections, they approved a design and build process to create a Mental Health living unit within the Adult Detention Center. A public hearing will be set up.

They approved a one- year extension of a contract to provide a website for SNCO employees to purchase apparel from February 1 this year until January 31, 2024.

No public comment was offered. In administrative communications, Brian Cole announced that Basic Officers Academy is beginning soon and 15 people are enrolled. He is encouraged that he will be able to fill some open positions. Parks & Rec announced that a basketball camp for 3 to 5 year olds is beginning soon. On First Friday events, a pop-up coffee shop will open at Great Overland Station. Jobs are open, waiting for applicants.

Commissioner Riphahn announced that Monday's work session will be discussing with Public Works the need for repairing parking lots. No executive session was called.

Following the meeting I contacted my commissioner, Mays, to find out where the Monday work session would take place. He said it would be in their regular chamber and would be live-streamed. I told him I had trouble finding the link to the old videos on the website. He said he would talk to the webmaster.

**Shawnee County Commission Meeting
January 30, 2023
Observer: Susan Quinn**

All three commissioners were present for today's meeting. Curt Neihaus with Public works gave an update of the parking lot audit he was asked to complete. He covered 3 projects as a priority for this year.

The first priority for parking lots is the north parking lot at the Adult Detention Center. This lot is an asphalt parking lot. The south parking lots were done last year and Neihaus believes the north parking lot is a very good candidate for completing this year and should last for several years to come once completed. This will run about \$160,000.

The second priority is for the North annex South parking lot which is concrete and not asphalt like the first priority project. The lot's project will run right at \$140,000.

The final project is at the election office. This will be a much easier project because the condition of the election office parking lot is much better than the other two lots discussed. However, this project still needs to be done. This project should be done by the end of June so that it is ready for the election office to have heavier traffic starting in July. This project will be \$80,000.

The final discussion for today was modifications to how work sessions would be handled. They talked about work sessions being held at 9 a.m. on Mondays generally in the 707 SE Quincy Chambers and recorded when in that location so that the public can

view the meetings. Otherwise if it is a field trip type of meeting, no recording will be available however the public is always welcome to come to those meetings.

No public comment was made today and the meeting was adjourned.

Shawnee County Commission Meeting

February 2, 2023

Observer: Vicki Arnett

All three commissioners were present.

The Public Works Dept. requested awarding a bid for the purchase of dump truck, sander and snowplow. Delivery of items are not expected until 2024 due to supply chain issues. Facilities Management requested approval to contract for on-call painting at various county buildings. Both requests were approved.

The commission approved a contract to replace videorecorders and expand the camera network for the video security system at the Department of Corrections. The commission approved a contract for a memorandum of understand for Safe Routes to School planning with the City of Topeka, USD 501, Heartland Healthy Neighborhoods and Shawnee County Health Department.

The commission gave final approval to the resolution creating the Monday Work Sessions. At the discretion of the chair, they may have administrative communications and/or public comment. Public comment will be limited to 4 minutes and a vote will be taken to extend the time. The commission also approved the resolution revising the terms of service for the Stormont Vail Events Center Advisory Board. The commission approved the appointment of Trey Burton to the Civil Service Board by Commissioner Mays.

There was one public comment from a resident concerned with the homeless camp at 23rd and Bellview.

Administrative communications included Sat. Feb. 4 is the monthly Sat. Household Hazardous Waste collection. Shawnee County Solid Waste is a sponsor of the KTWU Mr. Rogers sweater drive. The February Shawnee County newsletter is posted. The nominations for Public Health awards 2022 will open soon. Commissioner Mays attended the Ks. Association of Counties and League of Municipalities meeting. The discussion was about property tax relief. Feb. 9 is County Day at the Capitol. Commissioner Riphahn announced he attended the Sunflower showdown. The next work session will be about the Stormont Vail Event Center.

There was no executive session.

**Shawnee County Commission Meeting
February 9, 2023
Observer: Elvera Johnson**

All Commissioners present

Facilities Management received authorization to create a pool of available consultants relating to architectural planning and engineering services on an on-call basis.

Corrections was authorized to renew the contract for maintenance services for the fingerprint machine. They also received approval to reject the bids they received for the Juvenile Detention Center ceiling repair, as the ones they received were not acceptable. They think perhaps the specifications of the problems and needs were not clear.

Solid Waste received authorization for extension of a contract for household hazardous waste disposal and the contract for disposal of used tires.

The Health Department received authorization for a care coordination agreement between Valeo Behavioral Health Care and the Health Department.

Noxious Weeds received approval to solicit bids for purchase of herbicides.

Emergency Management received approval for replacement of an out of service siren encoder and for purchase of 2 Motorola Consolettes.

Commissioners voted to cancel the February 13 Work Session. Commissioner Mays will be in Washington, D.C. at the Association of Counties and there is no urgent agenda.

There was no public comment.

Human Resources announced that many positions are available to fill. They are looking for summer employees as well as others. There will be a Career Fair on March 16 at the Shawnee County Health Department from 9-3.

An Executive Session was called to consult with an attorney regarding security measures at the courthouse.

**Shawnee County Commission Meeting
February 16, 2023
Observer: Elvera Johnson**

All 3 Commissioners present

Commissioner Cook requested a public proclamation of an item on the Consent Agenda. He recognized Randy Haus in honor of many years of janitorial services and in recognition of Black History Month. He introduced Haus and thanked him for the ongoing janitorial services to Shawnee County and the many ways he serves the community in other ways.

For Corrections, Commissioners opened and closed a public hearing regarding the construction of a mental health unit within the Adult Detention Center. The notice was posted publicly in January with the announcement of a public hearing today. No comment was offered. The County Counselor was involved in the appropriate procedure to use the “design and build” process. Commissioners also approved renewal of a 6-year contract with Halley Counseling Services in the Juvenile Detention Center for the Family Peace Initiative program. It is primarily an anger management program that has been observed to reduce aggressive behavior among youth.

For Facilities Management, they approved a change order for asbestos abatement and cost savings in the offender register office. They also approved reclassification of a Building Supervisor position from range 14 to 15, to attract applicants for a position that has been open for more than a year.

For Human Resources, they approved advertising with KQRB-FM 96-9, encouraging folks to come to the Shawnee County Career Expo on March 16 to apply for County positions.

For Parks and Recreation, they approved a special event fee to authorize Special Olympics Kansas to use Crestview Park and Community Center. They also approved the Design-Build method for possible improvements to Family Park on SW 21st and Urish Road. The plan will be publicly posted and the public hearing will be March 9.

For Solid Waste, they approved a request for bids to purchase commercial and industrial containers. They also approved application for a grant to educate consumers about recycling. The grant will be awarded in October.

For Public Works, they approved a contract to provide Design and Construction Engineering services for a road project on Nottingham Rd between SW 33rd and SW 37th streets.

For the Health Department, they approved offering a well-qualified applicant the position of Health Protection Manager. The previous manager retired.

For Information Technology they approved emergency purchase of a system that went down recently.

For the Commission, they acknowledged the resignation of Menoken Township Clerk Brenda Fund and encouraged interested applicants to apply by March 9.

No Public Comment was offered. In Administrative Communications, Parks and Rec announced that softball and basketball events are happening. Trout Stocking at Lake Shawnee will happen on Feb 24 on Beach Drive off of 29th St. The Mini train will be delivered soon and will be readied for a ribbon cutting over spring break. Brian Cole from Corrections announced that he will be talking to legislators this evening regarding mental health needs in jail. Public Works announced that there are some parts of the county where trash collectors will not be able to pick up trash today. They will make it up

tomorrow. Commissioners Mays acknowledged that many public works employees are out working the streets today. He also said he had been in Washington, D.C. last week and learned about federal funding available. Commissioner Cook said Haus Janitorial will be recognized, and also other small businesses will be recognized for their contribution to our community.

No Executive Session was called.

Topeka City Council Meeting
January 17, 2023
Observer: Vicki Arnett

All council members, including the mayor, were present either on zoom or at the Cyrus K. Holiday building.

The council appointed John Gaches to the Topeka Tourism Business Improvement District Advisory Board and Rehan Reza to the Civil Service Commission.

The council approved the 2023 Consolidated Action Plan and Budget. The budget allows for filling a second case manager for the Equity Access Shelter. Council woman Hiller recommended the city develop a master plan for neighborhood revitalization. Submission of the plan to HUD will help secure federal funding for housing and neighborhood improvements.

The council approved an amendment to the Topeka Municipal Code ordinances related to contracts and purchases. The amendment raises the level at which competitive bids are required from 5,000. to 10,000. This is intended to increase minority small businesses' ability to contract with the city. Council member Emerson abstained.

The council approved the labor agreement with AFT Kansas.

The council approved the nomination of Council members Naeger and Emerson as voting members in 2023 to JEDO. It has been announced that voting members must be present in the meeting for the vote to count per JEDO rules.

The council rejected the recommendation of the planning commission to rezone property at 3300 SW Van Buren for the development of a community living facility to be licensed as an addiction treatment facility. It was generally thought the use was incongruent with the area.

The council heard presentations regarding adoption of the 2021 International Building Code and the 2021 International Fire Code.

There was one public comment regarding concerns for homeless damage to a property owner.

Announcements included there are no meetings for two weeks. Next meeting is Feb. 7. There is a workshop upcoming for potential city vendors, the homeless Point In-Time count is Jan. 25, the city manager newsletter is now available via email, Captain Forshee is out of the hospital, promotion of high school bowling leagues, comments on the Living the Dream activities and challenges to Topeka Police Department.

There was a need for Executive Session to discuss employer/employee relations involving multiple unions.

Topeka City Council Meeting
February 7, 2023
Observer: Vicki Arnett

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

The council appointed Zachary Surritt and Sean McGimpsey to the Topeka Human Relations Commission. Mary Monzyk was appointed to the Topeka Sustainability Advisory Board.

The council approved the adoption of the 2021 International Fire Code and the International Building Code.

The council approved the FIRM program as a public infrastructure project. The approval authorizes emergency repairs and change orders needed to current projects. The council approved a revision to the project budget and CIB NW Tyler/Beverly/Paramore project due to increased drainage needs in the area.

After much discussion, the council approved the design of a contract with Sylver Consulting LLC to design a plan to address homelessness in Topeka with the Path to Innovation methodology. The council is looking for how to more broadly implement the Equity Access Service of the city and the Every Name a Home program of the Topeka Rescue Mission. Council members Kell and Ortiz opposed the resolution. The discussion expressed concern for the difficulty presented by the high barrier TRM programs, the need to form a partnership with the county and general concern for hiring a consultant rather than the public health and safety committee moving forward. There was one person who made public comments about the need to run homeless camps like military bases such as at the empty buildings at Forbes Field and concern for gun fire in east Topeka. The individual requested more police presence. The conferee also supports a system of airport, bus and train transportation in Topeka.

The city has hired a new Chief Financial Officer. Administrative comments included celebrating Black History Month, education about the Topeka Fire Dept. free smoke alarm program, funds are available to begin planning a community garden, the opening of the Daniel Tiger exhibit at Children's Discovery Center, concerns for fireworks since it

is so dry, Topeka United Mosaic Partner pairs are taking applications, an interesting podcast on Black history in Topeka, mayor recommends everyone take the poverty simulation available through the library and this week is National Gun Violence Survivors Week.

There was a need for executive session to consult with the city attorney on matters of privilege.

Topeka City Council Meeting
February 14, 2023
Observer: Vicki Arnett

Council member Valdivia Alcala was absent. All other council members were present either in person or on zoom.

The mayor read a proclamation in honor of Haus Janitorial Services Day honoring long time Black business owner Randy Weeks.

Council member Dobler abstained in the consent agenda vote.

The council approved two ordinances to annex land and approve zoning ordinance changes to allow for the building of a new middle school at 29th and Auburn Rd.

The council approved zoning ordinance change at 400 and 500 SW Washburn for the development of multiple family dwellings to be known as Potwin Lofts II.

There were no public comments.

Announcements included Feb. 15 from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. at the LE Center the council will hold a work session to update strategic planning. Concerns were expressed for winter weather approaching, reminders of youth sports baseball beginning, Black history month, the Giraffe exhibit opens soon in March, Topeka has more presence in the legislature as the capital city than in the past and congratulations to the Chiefs. Chief Wheelles was recognized because he plans a new police academy at Avondale East Center.

There was a need for executive session to discuss personnel matters concerning an individual employee.

Topeka City Planning Public Hearing
January 11, 2023
Observer: Gretchen Glue

Last night the City of Topeka Planning Dept. had a public meeting at TSCPL. In the published description of the meeting they stated it was to seek public input on African American historic locations in Topeka. (Yes, they used African American, not the US. Census category 'black.')

Attendance - approx.40-45 (with five under 50) in person, difficult to tell how many online from my seat but at least 4.

The City hired Impact7G to collect data. Their employee in attendance mentioned several cities in the South where she's conducted several surveys in the past. After a broad explanation of her previous work, she asked the attendees to share sites of historical importance. Audience took 10-15 minutes before the group engaged. Mr. Perkins asked what the City planned to do with the information, expressing distrust based on previous City actions. The City planning employee decided to distribute the handout explains 'history resource survey', National Register of Historic Place (NHRP), etc. [attached] During the meeting she mentioned locations that Impact7G added to those listed yesterday based on her Topeka tour.

As the attendees started talking about various locations, the consultant mentioned Mt. Auburn Cemetery is one of the locations being submitted for addition to NHRP with another yet to be determined 'based on the research and input' ...that's what we are asking for your help.

Attendees asked what was going to be done with the data after it was collected. We're they publishing a book? No. We're they asking and writing then filing it away? No. Explained how it is used for NRHP (consultant) but City added it is public information and someone added that doesn't prevent someone from using the data to write a book or publish in some manner.

I commented that the City needs to document where all historical sites. The Civil Rights Act requires any government entity that receives federal funding to document project/plan impact on those sites. Because our predecessors didn't do this in the 1960s areas like the Bottoms was wiped out and businesses/families relocated as you've been describing tonight. Now the City realization they don't have a complete record so they need your help with your history.

The consultant shared her contact with individuals who asked at the end so they could share details.

As a side bar, a library staffer asked different people about adding their oral history to their records. As we waited for the meeting to start, a long-time friend shared a map showing the land her great grandfather owned, adjacent to Carnahan and I-70. His farm

was bought as part of Urban Renewal to build public housing for some families displaced by the Bottoms clearing.

There were additional details but the attendees started talking over each other especially when one mentioned something they'd forgotten about or enjoyed. Attendees were not offered Title VI data collection sheets.

*The Bottoms - based on discussions last night, was generally bounded by 4th to the Kansas River, from Kansas Ave to Monroe. It was a black residential and business district, including a theater, hotel, swimming pool, YWCA, fire department, pubs/eateries.

Intergovernmental Cooperation Council Meeting January 17, 2023

Observer: Susan Quinn

Meeting held at the City of Topeka Police Department building at 320 S Kansas Avenue.

Present:

- Tim Hallacy, Shawnee Heights Schools Superintendent
- Tiffany Anderson, Topeka Public Schools Superintendent
- Carleen Lister, Topeka Public Schools Assistant to Superintendent
- Larry Robbins, Topeka Public Schools Deputy Superintendent of Operations
- Aarion Gray, Topeka Public Schools Director of Instructional Services & Communications
- Brad Willson, Seaman Schools Superintendent
- Scott McWilliams, Auburn Washburn Schools Superintendent
- Brad Womack, Silver Lake Schools Superintendent
- Cynthia Holthaus, Washburn University Special Assistant to the President
- Marie Pyko, TSCPL
- Steven Wade, City of Topeka City Manager
- Mike Padilla, City of Topeka Mayor
- Melissa Masoner, American Citizenship Project

Today's program was given by Stephen Wade, Topeka City manager. He covered three topics:

1. Topeka Youth Project
2. Water rates
3. DEI position

Wade commented that he is a product of the Topeka Youth Project from many years ago. He said that the city wants to resurrect it, but there would be resources needed to accomplish that. He asked that the superintendents in the room be able to contribute nominations of bright young leaders so that they have the chance to see what others are doing around Topeka. Wade would like the program to help build the next generation of city leaders.

On water rates, he said that the rates were set to the end of 2023 however changes would happen, and likely would be an increase of more than 8% for all people within Shawnee County not just within the city of Topeka. The rural water districts he said would go up because they get their water from the city of Topeka.

He cited several reasons for the increase in rates: first he noted that there is an increase in the number of water main breaks. Wade said these breaks are due to aging infrastructure. Right now, we are on a 170- year replacement cycle whereas the industry standard is 100- year replacement cycle. Wade said that the city is working to get to a 150- year replacement cycle.

An another reason for the increase in rates is because of inflation. Chemicals cost more to treat the water. Also there has been an increase in labor costs.

He went on to say that they are currently completing an inventory for all their lines to identify lead lines. Not only lead lines that the city maintains but also any lines that go from the city service to a home need to be inventoried as well, even though, those “service lines” are the responsibility of the homeowner to replace. The deadline for the inventory is October of 2024 as required by the EPA.

There was quite a lot of discussion about making the cost of the water infrastructure upgrades “equitable”. This cost is not a small one. Wade said that replacing “one mile of water line costs two million dollars” and likely cannot be financed through additions of special taxes on properties. They will have to find another way of financing the needed infrastructure.

Lastly Wade said that Ernesto De La Rosa begins today in the new DEI position. De La Rosa is a Wichita State graduate coming to us from Dodge City, Kansas. He immigrated to the United States. His first order of business will be to work on internal DEI concerns so that the employees of the city have DEI concerns resolved. The Mayor weighed in on this position as well saying that this is going to be an active working position to infuse different approaches to solving problems for the city. The Mayor talked about getting more voices into the problem- solving mix.

Toward the end of the meeting, Dr. Anderson asked about the facility that we were sitting in. Wade commented that it is an old Montgomery Ward building; jointly occupied by the city of Topeka Police Department and the Shawnee County Sheriff's office. They have a joint dispatching center that would be interesting to view but otherwise it was just cubicles and office space. They commented about the shortage of dispatchers for the

police department. Anderson made a note that we might incorporate dispatching into the programs that are offered at TCALC.

Next meeting will be held at Vogel Room in Washburn University Memorial Union on February 21, 2023 at 7:30 am. The program is currently planned to have Governor Kelly via Zoom. But if Governor Kelly is unable to attend, the membership wanted to hear from lobbyist(s) regarding the current session of the legislature.