

**PUBLIC WORKS AND SAFETY
STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Monday, March 16, 2015**

The meeting of the Public Works and Safety Standing Committee was held on Monday, March 16, 2015, at 5:00 p.m., in the 5th Floor Conference Room of the Municipal Office Building. The following members were present: Commissioner Walker, Co-Chairman; Commissioners Maddox, Markley, Philbrook, McKiernan; and BPU Board Member Jeff Bryant. Commissioner Kane was absent. The following officials were also in attendance: Joe Connor, Interim Assistant County Administrator; Kate Lynch, Judge; Ken Moore, Deputy Chief Counsel; Terry Ziegler; Chief of Police; and Chris Slaughter, Land Bank Manager.

Co-Chairman Walker called the meeting to order. Roll call was taken and all members were present as shown above.

Approval of standing committee minutes for January 20, 2015. **On motion of Commissioner Markley, seconded by Commissioner Philbrook, the minutes were approved.** Motion carried unanimously.

Committee Agenda:

Item No. 1 – 150062...RESOLUTION: JMHCP GRANT

Synopsis: A resolution approving submission of a \$200,000 grant application for the FFY15 Justice and Mental Health Collaboration Program (JMHCP) through the US Department of Justice, submitted by Lisa Stimetz, PSBO. Funds will be used to expand the already established law enforcement and mental health collaboration plan. The \$50,000 in-kind match will be a percentage of salary and benefits of KCK Police Department and Wyandot Center staff.

Chairman Walker said rather than me introduce each of you, would you please state your name for the record and your title. Lisa Stimetz, Fiscal Officer, Public Safety Business Office; Chief Terry Ziegler; Judge Kate Lynch; Mark Wiebe, Wyandot Inc.; Colonel Jeff Fewell, Warden; and Major Solomon Young.

Ms. Stimetz said we are here on behalf of the Police Department and we are requesting approval to submit a grant application for the FFY15 Justice and Mental Health Collaboration Program. This would be a continuation or expansion of an already existing law enforcement and mental health collaboration plan. Again, the grant is for \$200,000. There is a \$50,000 match, which will be an in-kind match. This match will not affect the General Fund of the Unified Government. It will be a percentage of certain salaries within the Police Department, I believe a major and a captain and then some salaries and benefits of some employees with Wyandot Center.

Co-Chairman Walker asked is this a one-time grant. **Ms. Stimetz** said, well, this would—we currently have a grant which is the Justice and Mental Health Collaborative Grant for 2013 fiscal year. This will be a new grant. It will be a one-time grant unless there comes an opportunity to apply again next year or year 2017 possibly, but this is for, I believe, a 24-month period.

Co-Chairman Walker said at the end of this grant, Chief, the benefits and salary—I'm a little confused. Maybe I didn't hear it correctly. Is this going to take the place of existing salaries and benefits for those two officers or our match is the benefits and salaries? **Chief Ziegler** said we're using the salaries as our match, our \$50,000 match. Part of it is it's a program that expands our current crisis intervention team. We want to add another co-responder. We currently have a co-responder that goes out with our officers to deal with people who are in mental crisis. We would also—one of the goals that we have for the Police Department is to increase the number of officers that are CIT certified. Currently we've got about 95 officers that are certified and we've got about 360 that need to be certified. This gives us funding to be able to put on those classes, up to three classes per year. I believe by the end of this two-year period, I think, that hopefully we'll have 75-100% of our officers crisis intervention trained certified.

The main thing this does is it enables us to be able to—when we run across an individual who's experiencing a mental crisis, rather than booking them in the county jail, the officers talk to them, evaluate where they are at, take them to KU, take them to RSI and it eliminates us from booking the individuals which that was the only tool that we've had in the past. There are some other programs with the courts that this also helps pay for. I'll let Judge Lynch speak to that.

Judge Kate Lynch said one of the problems that we have in the district court system is if somebody is a chronic substance abuse individual and they're in and out of the jail because of that substance abuse, that costs us all as taxpayer's lots and lots of money. Part of the problem is there is not—because we're not a Medicaid expansion state at this point, we don't have the funds for substance abuse beds. This grant would give us about \$25,000 to put towards substance abuse beds so that when we call those folks who serve us in the substance abuse community, they know that we're going to be paying for that bed and that frankly moves us up the list.

Co-Chairman Walker asked and how does this tie to the jail and the Sheriff's Department. **Judge Lynch** said well, I would like to take all the credit for everything that's been done recently to reduce the census in the jail, but I'm not going to do that since I'm sitting with my community partners. Since RSI came online, since the officers have been crisis intervention trained and I made some changes in my involuntary commitment docket, we have reduced the number of admissions to the state hospital by about 50% since RSI and the changes came online. We've also, Warden can speak to the exact numbers, but we've reduced the number of folks that are in the jail suffering mental illness issues which is you know—the average prisoner is \$92 a day. Those folks are somewhere around \$115 - \$135 a day and we've reduced those costs to the jail.

Colonel Jeff Fewell, Warden; said, Commissioner, it's the old way of thinking was disorderly conduct, send them to the jail. Now there are options and it's more of a trauma informed care approach than a disciplinary, security, segregation type sending them to the jail. It's a different approach that just so happens saves a lot of money. What happens many times, they'll come to the jail on a municipal charge and they're mentally ill and as you know they can act out in those types of high stress situations, and striking or spitting at one of our deputies is a felony. It's a level five felony. Immediately instead of treating this individual as a municipal charge or in Judge Lynch's court, they now become a party to the criminal justice system at great expense to your government.

Chairman Walker asked is this program open to—I mean do the Sheriff's deputies participate in this program. **Judge Lynch** asked the Crisis Intervention Training Program, absolutely.

Commissioner Philbrook said yeah, I appreciate you elaborating a little bit on how it's affected the jail. How do you feel—has it helped with the men and women that work in the jail? Has it helped them a lot to cut down on the stress and take off less time, all that sort of thing. **Mr. Fewell** said yes, Commissioner. It's again, it's a different approach to how we manage inmate population. Before it was the old school technique of using force and now you're talking about using force against the mentally ill, lowering functioning persons or suffering a medical crisis. The tools in the corrections officers, the detention deputy's tool belt usually were using force. As we know, using force has a cost, both workman's comp on the deputy side and potential litigation on the inmate side.

This CIT approach is, again, a trauma informed approach that educates and trains the deputies to look at things in a different way. Maybe take into account and explain things in such a way that maybe we should use a different, you know—if the person is deaf, if the person is suffering from Alzheimer's maybe we should take these into account instead of immediately going to the use of force scenario. Again, it's all about—the CIT is all about training our deputies and educating them on the symptoms and signs of mental illness so that they can use different forms.

Commissioner Philbrook said so in other words there are people who never make it to intake, they would be going to other locations first before they ended up acting out. **Mr. Fewell** said even if they do go to intake, and they're municipals which we have, because they've committed a crime and now they're municipally charged, the deputies can use IPC skills and de-escalation techniques taught in the crisis intervention team training so that, again, it's a different approach instead of going straight to using force. With deputies it's a light and dark, it's black and white so that we have to teach them, okay, and show them that there—there are reasons, there could be reasons for this type of behavior and this is why. That gives them, you know, a different—okay, they understand that, they get it and so they have the signs and symptoms and then they might give this a second look or use a much toned down approach than going straight to using force.

Commissioner Philbrook said thanks. I would like to know if there's anybody else sitting there is in the crew that has anything that they want to say that we haven't really heard yet from anybody here. **Judge Lynch** said twenty-one years ago I was a Municipal Court prosecutor right down on the second floor. Commissioner Walker was my boss and there was nothing more

frustrating for the officers or for myself than seeing the same person charged with the same crime, sometimes with the same victim, the same storeowner where they were loitering or they may have shoplifted and not being able to do anything about it. With the programs that we have in place now, with the CIT officers, the co-responder, RSI, my courtroom changes, we can now treat the issue, the core of the problem and not just the symptom. I think it's one of the few times we save taxpayer dollars and we do what's right by the human also.

Action: Commissioner Markley made a motion, seconded by BPU Board Member Bryant, to approve the grant and forward to full commission. Roll call was taken and there were six "Ayes," Bryant, Philbrook, Markley, Maddox, McKiernan, Walker.

Measurable Goals:

Item No. 1 – 150054...PRESENTATION: 2015 MOWING PROGRAM UPDATE

Synopsis: Presentation on Public Works 2015 Mowing Program update, by Mike Tobin, Interim Public Works Director.

Mike Tobin, Interim Public Works Director, said as you directed us during the budget process last year and again during strategic planning, you wanted changes in the mowing program specifically how we maintained our own UG park property. To accomplish these changes, you increased our funding. I have with me Jeremy Rogers, the new Parks Director; his assistant, Jack Webb; and of course Tim Nick that you know from Public Works' staff. Jack and Tim have been working on this. I will now turn it over to them to tell you about it. When they finish, I'll discuss a conversation I had with our HR Director and how we would go about hiring the summer help part of this operation.

Concerns of 2014

- Need for better overall maintenance of our parks
- Lack of trimming and cleanup in Parks
- Emphasis on UG Properties
- Median detail work

Tim Nick, Public Works, said as Mr. Tobin said, last year the main concerns at budget time with our mowing program that the commission came back to us was first of all a need for a better overall maintenance of our parks, mainly our UG properties, a lack of trimming and cleanup in the parks, our fields and that area; again, an emphasis on the UG properties only. Also, with the contractor that does the medians along State Avenue and Parallel, the detail there as far as the cleanup and the trimming in that area.

Changes for 2015

- Commission Directive
- \$55,000 Additional Funding
 - 12 Summer Positions for Parks and Streets
 - Additional Trimming & Cleanup Equipment
- Changed Scope of Services for Median and Park's Contractors to include trimming and cleanup
- Dedicated one staff person to oversee contractors
- Implement 3 Year Median Spray Program for Spring of 2015

What we've done, like Mike said at your directive, we were given an extra \$55,000 funding this year. We talked about it and went over what the best scenario would be and we believe we'll be able to hire 12 summer kids. Those kids will be able to work 12 weeks for us. Most of them are

going to start out with the Park Department, probably all of them to start with. They'll be able to be moved back and forth between Parks and Streets, but since the emphasis is on parks, we're going to start mostly with them. That's also going to allow us to buy some additional trimming and cleanup equipment needed.

We also, Jack and Jeremy when they went out for bid this year, they changed the scope of services for the median and the parks' contractors as far as what they're required to do as far as their trimming and cleanup compared to in the years past. Another big change with the Park Department is that they're going to have one dedicated staff person. His responsibility is to check upon all the contractors to make sure that they're doing what is expected of them.

Finally, starting this spring, the Park Department is implementing a three-year spray program for the medians along Parallel, State Avenue and those areas.

Mowing Requirements	Responsible Party	Mowing Area	Frequency
Right of Way	Street Department	250 acres	Bi-Monthly
Code Violation Lots	Street Department	600-800 lots	As needed
UG Buildings	Contractor	25-30 locations	Once a week
Parks Facilities	Contractor & Parks	54 locations 2700 Acres	Bi-Monthly
Cemeteries	Contractor & Parks	14 locations 105 Acres	Bi-Monthly
Ball Fields	Contractor	23 fields 40 acres	(13) 2 times a week (10) 1 time a week
Medians	Contractor	26 miles	Every 7-9 days
UG Owned Lots	Contractor & Parks	4550 lots	3 times a year
Land Bank Lots	Unfunded	2100 lots	As needed

Finally, this is an updated chart. This is the same chart that we had last year but updated with the numbers that tells about all the areas that we have between parks, streets and our various contractors and the number of lots that are mowed within the area.

Commissioner Philbrook said you're going to talk at the end about how they're going to be hired. That's great because I know that one of the other commissioners present really wants to know about that.

Now, so you said you changed some things about the contractors for the medians this year. What kind of changes are you talking about? **Jeremy Rogers, Parks Director**, said the things we changed were the frequency of the mowings. The trimming, we have a lot of problems

even the Parks' staff itself where our mowers can move faster than the trimmers, so we've emphasized that. More edging, that was a big concern last year. **Commissioner Philbrook** asked how many contractors do we have right now. **Jack Webb, Parks Department**, said we had six last year; we dropped to five this year. **Commissioner Philbrook** said it remains to be seen what happens, right, by the end of the season. I'm not going to prejudge because I don't have a clue how it's going to work. **Mr. Webb** said ultimately we're trying—the Parks Department, we were on a 14-17 day turnaround. We think we'll get down to 10-12 days now and the contractors are on a 7-9 day turnaround. **Commissioner Philbrook** said those medians should look really nice.

Are they responsible for watering too on the ones that still have to be watered? **Mr. Webb** said no, just mowing. **Commissioner Philbrook** asked so you guys do the watering then. **Mr. Webb** said Park staff. **Commissioner Philbrook** asked on the ones that have to be; the ones that have the median water already included. **Mr. Webb** said yes. **Commissioner Philbrook** said and the updates further west will be automatic. **Mr. Webb** said hopefully.

Commissioner Maddox said I wanted to know who will be monitoring the grass cutting during the summertime. Is it a certain person? **Mr. Webb** said yes, we have a Park staff. That's his full-time job is to monitor all the contractors. **Commissioner Maddox** said and then my other question was are there stipulations we're putting this year on grass mowing in vacant lots where there may be trash, debris because often and I've spoke up about this two years out now where people just run the mowers in, run over the trash, tear up a bunch of stuff. The grass will be cut but there's a lot of debris left in the open vacant lot. **Mr. Webb** said Park staff, we currently have one person on mowing the lots. With the addition from the summer kids we going to up that to two full-time Park staff on lots and the contractor that does our other half of the lots, he has six guys. **Commissioner Maddox** said I'm saying what will we do different this summer that will stop us from just mowing grass and leaving debris and trash in vacant lots. **Mr. Webb** said we have more people that can do that. **Commissioner Maddox** asked so you're saying that we will probably go through the fields and pick up the trash first before mowing. **Mr. Webb** said yes. **Commissioner Maddox** said okay. **Mr. Tobin** said the addition of the summer help, Commissioner, will allow regular Park staff to assist in that part of the lot mowing while the summer help is working on the actual UG park property. We took the emphasis from your direction to be that. This additional money was to help with the trimming, the edging and the

cleanup in our parks, specifically the ones that our citizens use on a day-to-day basis, walking, walking their dogs, playing, whatever. That was the concentration that we gave this. Putting those kids in there, I shouldn't say kids, putting younger workers in there should allow the Park people to go ahead and do that. **Commissioner Maddox** asked are we still doing what we call eco mowing or have we come up with something where we can grasp cutting mainly the Jersey Creek area—**Mr. Webb** said we stopped eco mowing two years ago. **Commissioner Maddox** said okay. **Mr. Webb** said I'm not a big fan of that. **Commissioner Maddox** said me neither.

Mr. Tobin said if there are no other questions, I spoke with Renee Ramirez, our HR Director, today and we will hire these additional workers as part-time summer workers and it will post on the last Thursday of the month which I believe is the 26th for two weeks. After that, then the applications will come to the Park Department and the Street Department. We will conduct interviews and proceed from there.

Commissioner Maddox asked is there something you're looking for when you do the interviews. **Mr. Tobin** said I'm sorry, Commissioner. **Commissioner Maddox** said when conducting the interviews, is it something you're looking for specific you're looking for from teenagers during the interview. **Mr. Tobin** said yes. I took the direction of the commission, especially from several of the commissioners, to put some of our younger citizens to work like we used to do when we had a full-blown summer program. **Commissioner Maddox** said and I was one of the ones who mentioned that—**Mr. Tobin** said yes, you were. **Commissioner Maddox** said but I just wanted to know when you say interview, I mean, what exactly is the process in that for a teenager who shows up and just says he wants to cut grass. **Mr. Tobin** said well, you still like to bring them in and talk to them, get a look at them and say—and again, we don't know how the response will be either, Commissioner. In the past having conducted interviews for the summer program, sometimes they walk in and you think they're coming in to mow but that's not what they're coming in. You have to make sure they know what's going on. It won't be the typical process that we use on regular employees or anything like that. Still, you have to bring them in and talk to them.

Commissioner Maddox asked do we have a rough estimate of how many teenagers we'll be hiring. **Mr. Tobin** said twelve. **Co-Chairman Walker** asked minimum wage. **Mr. Tobin** said

somewhere, that or more, Commissioner, I don't know exactly where the salary will be. That's something that Renee and I discussed today but that would ultimately be up to Doug.

Co-Chairman Walker said it doesn't appear that there needs to be any action taken. It'd be nice not to have any complaints from our constituents this summer about grass. **Mr. Tobin** said well, if I could say one thing, Commissioner, I don't think it would be possible for our crews to have to mow as much grass as they did last year. Jack, we were still mowing in December weren't we? **Co-Chairman Walker** asked has the idea ever been raised on some of this vacant lot property about herbicide use of like seven, or not seven but—you know instead of cutting it three or four times, you know, taking a quart of, you know, that kills everything green on there and not having to do it again. It seems like that issue has come up. I don't recall why there was a problem. Is it EPA related or—**Mr. Tobin** said well, there are actually three problems with it, Commissioner. One is the regulations and the EPA. Two, is the expense of the chemicals to do that because none of the...**Co-Chairman Walker** said cheaper to cut it than to kill it. **Mr. Tobin** said well, it used to be and none of the departments, actually Parks or Streets, had budgeted for it. The third thing is in some of the areas if you go in there and spray it and remove all the foliage, you're creating drainage problems. **Co-Chairman Walker** said that makes sense.

BPU Board Member Bryant said dovetailing off of his conversation, what about if neighbors want to like use it for like garden areas? **Mr. Tobin** said there's a process for that, Commissioner, that we have. A lot of times with the Land Bank properties that happens. With the ones that are still in the UG title, they can come before the commission and ask to do that. We have several neighborhood groups that do that.

Action: **For information only.**

Adjourn

Co-Chairman Walker adjourned the meeting at 5:26 p.m.

tpl