

**NEIGHBORHOOD AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Monday, February 1, 2016**

The meeting of the Neighborhood and Community Development Standing Committee was held on Monday, February 1, 2016, at 5:02 p.m., in the 5th Floor Conference Room of the Municipal Office Building. The following members were present: Commissioner Walker, Chairman; Commissioners McKiernan, Townsend and Murguia. Commissioner Walters was absent. The following officials were also in attendance: Gordon Criswell, Assistant County Administrator; Joe Connor, Assistant County Administrator; Melissa Mundt, Assistant County Administrator; Ken Moore, Chief Legal Counsel; Emerick Cross, Commission Liaison; Maureen Mahoney, Assistant to the Mayor/Chief to Staff; Dennis (“Tib”) Laughlin, Director for General Services; Chris Slaughter, Land Bank Manager; and Rob Richardson, Director of Planning.

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

Approval of standing committee minutes from December 7, 2015. **On motion of Commissioner McKiernan, seconded by Commissioner Townsend, the minutes were approved.** Motion carried unanimously.

Joe Connor, Assistant County Administrator, said I would ask if we could hold on the Measurable Goals, maybe do the Committee Agenda No. 1 first. We’re still setting—**Chairman Walker** said alright. Item No. 1, Mr. Slaughter.

Committee Agenda:

Item No. 1 – 16350...COMMUNICATION: LAND BANK TRANSFERS

Synopsis: Request approval of the following Land Bank transfers, submitted by Chris Slaughter, Land Bank Manager.

Chris Slaughter, Land Bank Manager, said we have some transfer to take care of first and then we'll have a couple of presentations for you. First we have two transfers from the Land Bank. They're going to CHWC, 1124, 1126 Armstrong Ave. They're going to construct a duplex there.

Transfers from Land Bank

1124 Armstrong Ave. to CHWC, for construction of a single-family house

1126 Armstrong Ave. to CHWC, for construction of a single-family house

Action: Commissioner McKiernan made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Townsend, to approve. Roll call was taken and there were four "Ayes," Murguia, Townsend, McKiernan, Walker.

Mr. Slaughter said next we have the next batch of delinquent, Unified Government, city of Kansas City, Kansas properties that will be transferred to the Land Bank and we will have those taxes abated.

Transfers to Land Bank

720 Everett Ave. from the Unified Government of WyCo/KCK

629 Franklin Ave. from the Unified Government of WyCo/KCK

631 Franklin Ave. from the Unified Government of WyCo/KCK

633 Franklin Ave. from the Unified Government of WyCo/KCK

1522 Pacific Ave. from the Unified Government of WyCo/KCK

1524 Pacific Ave. from the Unified Government of WyCo/KCK

642 Parallel Pkwy. from the Unified Government of WyCo/KCK

646 Parallel Pkwy from the Unified Government of WyCo/KCK.

1903 N. Tremont St. from the Unified Government of WyCo/KCK

731 Barnett Ave. from the city of Kansas City, KS

733 Barnett Ave. from the city of Kansas City, KS

735 Barnett Ave. from the city of Kansas City, KS

747 Barnett Ave. from the city of Kansas City, KS

749 Barnett Ave. from the city of Kansas City, KS

751 Barnett Ave. from the city of Kansas City, KS

1972 Glendale Ave. from the city of Kansas City, KS

1009 Nebraska Ave. from the city of Kansas City, KS

1027 Nebraska Ave. from the city of Kansas City, KS

740 Tauromee Ave. from the city of Kansas City, KS
 746 Tauromee Ave. from the city of Kansas City, KS
 748 Tauromee Ave. from the city of Kansas City, KS
 750 Tauromee Ave. from the city of Kansas City, KS
 2942 N. Thompson St. from the city of Kansas City, KS
 418 Walker Ave. from the city of Kansas City, KS
 2920 Washington Ave. from the city of Kansas City, KS
 (Per the Dec. 2014 NCD Standing Committee presentation, property controlled by the UG, city of KCK and Board of County Commissioners that are delinquent will be transferred to the Land Bank to have delinquent property taxes abated.)

Action: **Commissioner McKiernan made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Townsend, to approve.** Roll call was taken and there were four “Ayes,” Murguia, Townsend, McKiernan, Walker.

Item No. 2 – 16351...PRESENTATION: 2015 LAND BANK ACHIEVEMENTS & CONVEYANCE REPORT

Synopsis: Presentation of the 2015 Achievements and the 2015 Wyandotte County Land Bank Conveyance Report, submitted by Chris Slaughter, Land Bank Manager. Per K. S. A. 19-26, 105; "The Land Bank office shall make an annual report to the Land Bank Board of Trustees..." of properties that were conveyed during the previous calendar year. Also, the Land Bank Manager will present some data that reflects the conveyance activity of the Wyandotte County Land Bank from 2009 to the present.



WYANDOTTE COUNTY LAND BANK

2015 Land Bank Achievements &
 Conveyance Report
 Neighborhood & Community
 Development Standing Committee
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2015 Achievements

- OpportunitySpace
 - Launched September 22, 2015
 - Established Public Real Estate Portal
- Customer Service Kiosk
 - Located in lobby of Economic Development Office
 - Allows public to view information & apply for Land Bank property
- Transferred & Abated UG Owned Property
- Land Bank Side-Lot Letter Campaign

Chris Slaughter, Land Bank Manager, said next we're going to present the 2015 achievements and our Annual Conveyance Report. Per the statute we have to report each year the past year's activity and we thought we would add some highlights of some of the achievements we want to brag about. Some of the highlights we want to talk about is, of course we launched our partnership with OpportunitySpace back in September. We established the Public Real Estate Portal. We've had some good feedback on that, a lot of positive notes, easy to navigate, easy to read and much easier to look at than an Excel spreadsheet. We are happy with that. We also created a customer service kiosk. It's located in the lobby area of the Economic Development Office. It gives people from the public to come in and also view the property on OpportunitySpace. If they want to register, they have the opportunity to actually apply for a Land Bank property right at that kiosk.

Of course we just talked about the abatement of the UG owned properties. We'll continue doing that. We feel that's a positive and then back earlier in the year, if you remember, we did the Side-Lot Letter Campaign. We've sent out about 400 letters. We've received about 100-120 back. We ended up approving close to 90 and we felt that was a good thing and we will probably consider doing that again.

2015 Land Bank Conveyance

- Total Property Conveyed in 2015 – 172
- Total Property Conveyed returning to Tax Rolls
– 164
- Total Amount of Revenue generated from
Land Bank Conveyances - \$117,760.00
- Inventory
– (Jan 1st– 2243)
– (Dec 31st– 2191) Net decrease of -52 properties

Some general numbers, we conveyed 172 properties this past year, 164 of those going into the tax rolls, 8 of those going to our non-profit partners. We brought in a total of \$117,760 and we decreased our inventory from 2,243 to 2,192 over the year.

Commissioner McKiernan said, Chris, I just want to verify; that \$117,000 was just from the conveyances. That doesn't represent taxes paid or will be paid, correct. **Mr. Slaughter** said correct. That is the amount of revenue we took in from selling property out of the Land Bank. **Commissioner McKiernan** said perfect.

Land Bank Applications - 2015

- Applications received – 233
- Applications awarded – 176 (75.536%)
- Applications rejected – 57 (24.464%)
- Total Property Tax Revenue Produced (2009–present)
- \$166,924.44

Mr. Slaughter said we received a total of 173 applications. As you can see, again, we had about a 75% award rate on that with about 57 of those rejected. Now this, Commissioner McKiernan,

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is along your lines. Since 2009, we're able to through our Technology Department to generate a report that says of all the property we've sold, and we know a majority of those are just side-lots, we've generated almost \$167,000 in tax revenue. Again, it's just another thing that we're proud of, slowing chipping along. One day we hope to have that as maybe a seven figure number, but we're not there yet.

Commissioner McKiernan asked what would be the most common reason for rejecting an application. **Mr. Slaughter** said maybe the property wasn't in the Land Bank, maybe they owed taxes, some of the intended uses. You know I want a property because I want to put some playground equipment for children to play on and we told them no, you're not going to do that.

Commissioner Murguia said so maybe you answered this already. I'm sorry. I apologize to everyone on TV that has to view me eating also. It's been a long day. I just had a question, you might of answered this, but the total property tax revenue produced from to 2009 to present. **Mr. Slaughter** said yes. Remember a lot of these are small lots and the other thing that I found out when we first generated this report last year is if the properties were combined, it really doesn't reflect in this figure. This is really still freestanding parcels that are just not in the Land Bank's name anymore, they are in private hands and this is the amount of tax revenue we've generated.

Commissioner Murguia asked what happens to that money. **Mr. Slaughter** said it goes to pay for services. **Commissioner Murguia** asked does it go back into the General Fund. **Mr. Slaughter** said the money we bring in, yes it goes to the General Fund. We hope to soon have a conversation about capturing some of that money to help us. **Commissioner Murguia** said yes, I would tell you I would completely support all of that money staying in a Land Bank fund, if for no other reason than to hold more tax sales to process more tax delinquent property. I think from our conversations with Commissioner McKiernan, Commissioner Markley and our Administrator, Doug Bach, it's about \$40,000 to contract with an abstractor to do a—I forget the percentage but a larger percentage of tax sale properties to process them. I'd like to see that money go there, but you might have other ideas. **Mr. Slaughter** said that's a great idea. **Commissioner Murguia** said you might have some other ideas, but that's where I would like to see it.

Melissa Mundt, Assistant County Administrator, said Commissioner Murguia and Commissioner McKiernan, I just wanted to let you know that part of the process that we're going through with staff, looking at how we can kind of fight some of these issues, we're having a very holistic approach that we started and one of the issues or areas that we're looking at is exactly that, the number of backlog properties that are up for the tax sale and then looking at our strategic areas and saying what can we do that will be most impactful and then possibly looking at those outside services to help speed the process up in targeted ways so that we're doing it strategically. That's kind of where we're at right now, but we'll be bringing that back to you. Chris is in on that, Tib Laughlin's on that, Marlon's going to be on that, pretty much a lot of our staff is in on a lot of these conversations. We're looking at that kind of whole picture. Joe, Gordon, and I are working with everyone on that, exactly what you're talking about, that kind of thing.

Commissioner Murguia asked do you know just because we're talking about it. I used to have and I think I still do at home, the total number of properties in the Land Bank. Do you know that number in general? I mean you deal with it so—**Mr. Slaughter** said it's been hovering above or below about 2,200. At the end of the year we were just a little bit under 2,200. **Commissioner Murguia** said from year-to-year does that go up, down or stay the same. **Mr. Slaughter** said generally it's gone up. This is really the first year that we've actually decreased the property. Some I'm pretty proud of considering that we've added about 100 UG properties that were delinquent into the—you could really maybe say we've decreased it about 150 some properties this past year.

Commissioner McKiernan said realistically if we went out and we acquired all the vacant land that is tax sale eligible, we can double that couldn't we. **Mr. Slaughter** said easily. **Commissioner McKiernan** said that to me plays with your question, yes we hold 22, but we could if we went and got the tax sale eligible, that is at least three years delinquent vacant lots we could control those and double that number. **Ms. Mundt** said it would be closer to 7,000 I think right. There's about 4,500 tax delinquent. **Commissioner Murguia** said that's my next question. So, Melissa, the total number of tax sale eligible properties right now, do we know that number. **Ms. Mundt** said I think Tib had it, he's sitting back there but maybe Chris has it. **Mr.**

Slaughter said I would say 4,000/4,500 is probably a very strong estimate. **Commissioner McKiernan** asked are those vacant properties not improved or is it that—**Mr. Slaughter** said that number is probably a combination of both. **Ms. Mundt** said probably more improved. **Commissioner McKiernan** said so that includes properties with structures. **Commissioner Murguia** said but that's okay. So 4,500 approximately tax sale eligible properties and over the years, Chris, has that gone up or down? **Ms. Mundt** said Tib's coming forward now. **Commissioner Murguia** said I knew I'd get him to come out of his seat. **Ms. Mundt** said he's here for a reason. **Mr. Slaughter** said Mr. Laughlin will probably have a more knowledgeable answer for that one. **Commissioner Murguia** said okay.

Dennis ("Tib") Laughlin, Director for General Services, said right now we're sitting at about 4,500 tax sale eligible properties. That goes up by roughly 20% while we move out somewhere around 10% to 15% through the redemption and tax sale process. So our net increases every year. **Commissioner Murguia** said okay, that's too fast for me. Currently we have about 4,500 pieces of property that are tax sale eligible. **Mr. Laughlin** said correct. **Commissioner Murguia** said that means they are not paying their taxes for people that don't understand what that means. **Mr. Laughlin** said yes, they are at least three years delinquent. **Commissioner Murguia** said at least three years they have not paid their property tax. Then from year-to-year to date, in the past, I'm looking at historical data, has that number of 4,500 tax sale eligible properties, has that risen to 4,500 or has it been up and down. **Mr. Laughlin** said it's going up. It goes up every year. **Commissioner Murguia** said it goes up every year. Go ahead, I need to think about that.

Mr. Slaughter said the degree of the incline or the amount of going up, I don't want to make it sound like it's sharply rising each year. It just may be a steady increase of maybe 4% or 5% a year, but we haven't gone from 1,000 to 4,500 in two years. **Commissioner Murguia** said right, but I think the important thing for people that don't work for government for a living is that people, especially people that are concerned about how much property tax that they pay, that it's important that they understand every time someone doesn't pay their property taxes, that's a loss of revenue to the government and we have bills to pay just like everybody else does. We have to figure out how to get that money somewhere else or people that are paying end up paying more.

Ms. Mundt said, Commissioner, that's exactly the issue we see that we're trying to come to some sort of targeted solve you know over the years, but the idea is to look at this more strategically and not just go after all of them at one time. Coming back, the plan that you would buy off on as a Commission on how we can move forward to try to get that backlog down instead of letting it continue to creep up on us because we're not abstracting those properties as fast as they're coming in.

Commissioner Murguia asked is there a formula, some sort of statistical or mathematical formula that can demonstrate to us how much in dollars our government is losing every year in our tax base. **Mr. Laughlin** said yes. **Commissioner Murguia** asked do we know that. **Mr. Laughlin** said I don't think we have that number right now, but it's relatively easy to generate. We know how much each of those properties are not paying. There may not be—there's a report, certainly a report we can run. If there's not a column on the spreadsheet for it now, there could be. **Commissioner Murguia** said I would like to know that because I would like to show, even if it's just in my district, I'd like to post that publicly so people can see how much money we are not collecting every year in property taxes. **Mr. Laughlin** said to some extent that'll be a theoretical number because the best number we have on the property taxes owed are from back before some of these houses sat empty for quite some time. **Commissioner Murguia** said okay, but I'm still looking at—**Mr. Laughlin** said we can come up with a number for you Commissioner. **Commissioner Murguia** said we're still seeing an increase which means that every year more and more people, is this an accurate statement, every year more and more people in Wyandotte County do not pay their taxes. **Ms. Mundt** said that would be number of properties. Whether the numerical revenue value is—it's not necessarily equivalent. We've gone after certain types of parcels, some of the ones that had larger back taxes owed. The ones that maybe are still sitting out there and, again, Tib and I are just starting to dig into this as he's transitioned over Delinquent Tax for us here starting at the beginning of the year. Those ones in theory that had the larger amounts owed, we've gone after over the last few years quite strongly. Now it's coming down to maybe ones that aren't as large of an amount of revenue, but the number of parcels is what we're referring to. **Commissioner Murguia** said yes, so I get what you're saying, thinking it through. The dollar amount might be different than the number of parcels. I get that. Can you provide when you dig deeper into this, can you provide both of

those pieces of information? **Mr. Laughlin** said absolutely. **Commissioner Murguia** asked can you divide it by residential and commercial. **Ms. Mundt** said that was the other component I was going to mention. You've got your rate differences on tax between residential and commercial so we can show that kind of too as well. **Commissioner Murguia** said it's just as an elected leader it is so frustrating. It seems so elementary to all of us that up here all the time. It's so frustrating when people line up and ask for more money for stuff and they just don't understand and if you say no it's because you don't care about I don't know starving homeless children. I mean it's all I can think of. Of course we all care about those things, but when you generated \$50,000 just to make up a number five years ago and now today you're only generating \$5,000, I mean how can you increase spending for these service programs. I just don't think it's said enough and until we figure out—the one thing I remember from our former County Administrator, more than anything that he ever said, is that you know to solve all of our problems is to grow our tax base. That means more businesses and more residents and unfortunately we're going the other direction or it appears that we are. I'd like to see parcels as well as dollar amount. I think that needs to be out there all the time, out there for people to see all the time.

Chairman Walker asked can I get a word in edgewise. I want that number too, but the number that interest me in addition to that number, you know we each year add new housing, new commercial, new buildings and so forth which you would expect would have a significant impact on the county's assessed value. Is there a way to show—I mean tax dollars are one thing but the assessed value of these parcels that we lose, I'm concerned about why when we have a good year and the last number I have is dated, but we went from roughly a billion dollars to billion and four tenths, a very small increase, although we had added significant development out west, which suggest to me that we're losing assessed value, probably predominately in the eastern part of the community, but it could be further east or further west than I'm thinking. I'd like to see—we know how many new buildings went up, new homes went up and what the assessed value of existing property was and is. Why is it not increasing more with all that we have added through the various economic development incentives we've had? That number, regardless of what taxes they pay, that number is the number we use to determine the mill levy. That's what the mill levy is applied against in order to generate our budget. I'm not seeing this increase in the counties or

the city part of the county's total assessed value that you would expect with what we've done. To make it long, I'd like that number in addition to the number Commissioner Murguia described. **Commissioner McKiernan** said I think that's a very important add-on to just the number, the value of the back taxes to know the assessed value because what we need is, we need a bigger tax base that pays taxes and I've started adding that second piece to everybody that I've talked to. A larger tax base of properties that pay tax, whether that be properties and some properties don't pay tax because people just don't pay them. Some properties don't pay tax because we use a property tax abatement as an incentive to increase our assessed value, but that property still may not generate taxes for a few years.

I totally agree with Commissioner Walker's point about the total assessed value and to be able to look at that regionally would be real interesting. I took over the weekend and looked at one square block in my district and I totaled the assessed value for 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015 and I found that of all the houses, all of which but one were tax current; even the one that caused this huge drop in assessed value is tax current, but because it had been abandoned for four years, bottom line is out of all of these properties a net loss of value of \$44,000 representing about \$9,000 of property tax that we will never collect because we won't bill because the value has dropped and I think this just puts an exclamation mark on our need to get out there and stabilize and stop properties from sliding off into either demolition and by the way the value of this house, this block will go down further after we tear down the house that burned on this block that caused me to do this assessment.

Four years vacant, four years nobody pays the taxes. How do we let it go four years? I know that's what we're all working on. We can no longer tolerate that sort of delinquency in maintenance or in paying taxes because now that block is creating a figurative black hole and it's going to start pulling in the blocks around it and we're going to start losing assessed value even if the rest of those houses stay occupied and tax current. I think the value of the assessment in addition to the value of the property taxes paid and not paid would be excellent numbers to build some strategies on. **Ms. Mundt** said, Commissioner McKiernan, we're actually kind of working towards what I would call like a heat map for this where we could see—we've seen other communities that have done this so that they can overlay a myriad of different things, but then you can see if your values are going up or going down in the neighborhood over an assessment

period or several years of an assessment period, but then also then look at things like code violations, crime and all those others statistics.

We're working towards that. We've got kind of the first iteration of it demoed to us last Friday or Thursday by DOTS and GIS so we're getting closer to being able to kind of start sharing that. Then what we're going to need to start working with you on is how we're going to start tackling those in different ways and what the prescriptions are may vary from neighborhood to neighborhood. **Commissioner McKiernan** said let's do it.

Commissioner Murguia said there's an old map that I carried around for a long time with me. I'm going to start carrying it around again. It's a white map with red dots on it. It shows everything that is three or more years property tax delinquent. If everybody else wants to be able to see it, that's great but I would like to see that map compared and if you need help finding it to you because I still have it on my computer I can send it to you because I still have it on my computer. I would like for you to take that map from several years ago and then if you can map the same data today. For selfish reasons I'd like to see because I think there's been a massive improvement in my district.

My district was never terrible about tax delinquency. It's always been a place of choice to live, though lower income, but I'd be interested to know with the development and the infill housing and stuff that we've done where the property tax delinquency is now. This map is a very big picture. It's like an at-a-glance map. If we can kind of zoom in on it and get more specific data and do comparables, that would be great. **Joe Connor, Assistant County Administrator**, asked how long ago did you have that map done. **Commissioner Murguia** said I didn't have it done. It preceded me so it's been over a decade. **Commissioner McKiernan** said Chris Cooley did it about 2 ½ to 3 years ago. He did one countywide and then he broke it out. Several of us asked for our districts and basically it's the tax sale eligible overlay from UG Maps, but just printed in a format on a 8 ½ x 11 sheet of paper that we could take. He also printed some 3ft. x 4ft. posters that we could put on the wall if we wanted to. **Commissioner Murguia** said no, I know what you're talking about. **Commissioner McKiernan** said it's the same map. It's the same thing. **Commissioner Murguia** said it is. Alright, well then I'll send you mine anyways so you'll know which one I'm talking about because I thought it was way older than that. **Mr. Laughlin** said with a point of reference we can get a comparison to the

current. **Commissioner Murguia** said you might be able to find it. I don't know who made it. It probably was maybe Chris. **Mr. Laughlin** said if we see yours specifically, we have something to work from. **Mr. Slaughter** I think I have a bunch on file so—**Commissioner McKiernan** said because it came to this committee about three years ago. **Ms. Mundt** said we have that data, it's there.

Action: For discussion only.

Item No. 3 – 16352...DISCUSSION: 2015 LAND BANK DONATION REQUEST CRITERIA

Synopsis: Discussion on Land Bank donation request criteria, submitted by Chris Slaughter, Land Bank Manager.

Issue

- Commission asking question:
 - “Why are we taking this property(s)?”
 - “What is the criteria for making a recommendation to Commission?”

Chris Slaughter, Land Bank Manager, said this was after our conversation last month about what is the process when we consider these donations so I thought I'd put a short presentation together. Some of the issues you guys have raised, what is the criteria.

Land Bank Property Acquisition

- Per policy...
 - 5.1 **Sources of Property Inventory.** Sources of real property inventory of the WCLB include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - Transfers from local governments;
 - Acquisitions at tax foreclosure sales;
 - **Donations from private entities;**
 - Market purchases;
 - Conduit transfers contemplating the simultaneous acquisition and disposition of property;
 - Other transactions such as land banking agreements.

Approved (3/26/15)

Per the policy we do have the ability to accept donations from private entities as a source of acquiring property.

Land Bank Property Acquisition

- Process
 - Request received and information verified through Property Donation Application
 - Land Bank requests RE Abstractors to generate and O/E report to show if property has:
 - Mortgage
 - Liens
 - Probate issues
 - If issues are present that would not make it in the Land Bank's best interest, Manager will send letter stating that until issues are resolved, Land Bank will not present request
 - If no issues, Manager presents to Standing Committee
- Land Bank has approved 28 properties since 2011.
 - Tax Delinquency
 - Family Matters
 - Targeted Area

Generally, there's an application that we have filled out. It lists the information of the requestor, information about the property. We then request through our real estate abstractors to generate an ownership incumbrance report. You know we want to see does this property still maybe have a mortgage tied to it, any kind of liens, anything that's maybe probate or family issues that if we took it, are we going to have a hard time selling it or transferring it after the fact and if

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generally there are no issues, I mean that's pretty much what I've used to bring it before you guys for consideration.

We've had 28 properties approved since 2011. Generally, again, tax delinquencies have been the number one reason for the donation request; sometimes it is a family matter. Hey I just realized that I got this property from my grandmother who has died and I didn't even realize it. Maybe now they are getting tax sale notices and stuff or if it's been in some of our targeted areas and we know this is a quick way that we can get the property.

Instead of coming back to you and saying if we do a, b and c and if that equals d, okay we accept it. Here are just some concerns that I think we need to consider before we get to that point, because there are a lot of considerations that we may say yes and the same considerations we want to say no to, I just threw some down.

Criteria Recommendations

- Points for discussion of criteria:
 - Areas of Concern – Are there different criteria for different scenarios?
 - Hold areas vs Non-Hold Areas
 - Improvements vs Vacant Lots
 - Land Bank Initiated vs Partners Initiated
 - Brownfields Areas vs Less Contaminated Areas
 - Taxes Owed Properties vs Current Properties
 - Donations vs Tax Foreclosure Process
 - Property Inhabited vs Abandoned
 - Rehab Property vs Demolition
 - Property Owners Capable of Remediation vs Owners Incapable of Remediation

Is it in a hold area, is it in a target area versus what do we do with the property that's not in those areas. Is it a house versus a vacant lot, is the Land Bank—is the government initiated or is someone coming to us and saying please take my property. Is it a Brownfield area? Is it an area that's maybe not as contaminated or been in some of our old industrial areas? What are the tax issues? Is this easier to take this as a donation versus going through the lengthy process of a foreclosure and adding another property for the abstractors to work who are already inundated with property. Is this something we have the ability to take, rehab and move or move to our partners to rehab or is this something we're going to have to hold and demo? Is there a way that maybe we look in the future to say if you want us to take your property, we know there are

certain things you're going to have—maybe a small cash donation along with that. Just some points I wanted to bring up to spark the conversation, whether we have time for that tonight or not, but the main point I wanted to bring out is from my perspective, you know I'm trying to give you as much information as I can, but just because we say it's in a hold area and it's got an improvement and we think we can rehab it, it may not be the best fit for the Land Bank. That's where I always figure that this setting would always have those conversations to make that decision.

Commissioner McKiernan said let's take vacant lots first, properties without improvements. I think it's a little bit more straight forward. I think one of the concerns that we've had is that people are going to come and dump a vacant lot on us that they owe a bunch of back taxes on and dumping it on us is a way to get out of paying the taxes that have accrued that they haven't been paying on that property. The first thing would be if we were more systematic or aggressive, call it whatever you want, in billing for and collecting those back taxes that problem should start to go away just a little bit. We shouldn't have properties with a bunch of back taxes coming here, but if we take it out to its logical conclusion, most of the folks who aren't paying their taxes I would guess are inclined to simply walk away from that property, abandon it and we're going to get it anyway. At least on the vacant lot side, my first inclination would be to say, they want to donate that lot then we take it and we cut our loses upfront because now we control it and it doesn't stay vacant for another two years, out of our control.

I would also suggest that maybe we think about something along the lines of once you've done that once, you're done. You get a mulligan on your first one and then you can't do that again; which would imply that you've either acquired more properties in the interim or you've let additional properties go in the interim. That would be my suggestion is you get a one-time deal on the vacant property. I'll just throw that out for discussion sake. The improved lots have so many more details, but at least on vacants I'll just throw that out as a starter.

Commissioner Townsend said what I want to say refers to as Mr. McKiernan's already mentioned, the vacant lots, and in those situations where we've had individuals come before us. Just in the last couple of years since I've been here, it was helpful to know to have those persons

who seek to return these pieces of property to the Land Bank to come before us and tell us exactly why.

I don't recall that any of the ones that have come, and there has only been a couple I think, no more than three; in that situation had delinquent taxes but there was some other problem with it. I wouldn't want anybody to think that you're automatically if you come to us going to get a one. It should be dependent upon the circumstance. I don't know if you meant to suggest that. If someone may listen and think okay well I'm already going to get, I've got one shot, I haven't had my one. I don't know if you contemplated it to be that kind of situation because a lot of these other than these considerations I think will depend on what the circumstances are.

Commissioner Murguia said so I'm just curious and we don't need to belabor this tonight, but since we do have a little extra time, I'm just curious from Commissioner McKiernan and Commissioner Townsend's perspective, why would we just allow a person one opportunity to do this. Why would we also not accept houses? I mean what's the thinking behind limiting the number of pieces of ground or structures that someone could turnover? **Commissioner McKiernan** said I have no problem with more. We'll take all the ones that are going to be abandoned anyway so that we control them and we can be more proactive. One of the things that always comes up is, well yes, but then we have to pay to cut the lots. I would argue we're paying to cut those lots anyway because the people who aren't paying the taxes on those vacant lots probably aren't cutting the grass. We're probably abating it and I would guess putting a lien somewhere that doesn't get paid along with the taxes not getting paid, so I have no problem.

What I don't want someone to do though is come and donate one, then go out and get another one and then let it go. I don't want this to be like a revolving door where they go out and get more and then give those to us. I don't know. That's my first thought but no, I have no problem because we ultimately end up having to deal with the vacant lots, vacant properties and vacant structures anyway so we might as well own them and control them if we're going to have to deal with them.

That's kind of where I'm thinking right now, but then I'll go back to something you said earlier. Then I think we do need to take some of the revenue that we're making off of the sale of some of these properties out of the Land Bank and pull it back, especially if we start taking

structures. Now we've got a more complicated and more costly overhead that goes along with managing, maintaining, minimizing our risk and our liability in those structures and also a little bit maybe more in the way of marketing, possibly in the way of rehab. If we were to start routinely taking structures, which so far we're only taking a couple as a test, then I would absolutely agree that we need to pull back some of that revenue and use it to better fund Land Bank for the purpose of managing that portfolio that we could get.

Commissioner Murguia said since everybody's giving their two cents, I think we should take everything, structure and vacant lot that people want to give us that are tax delinquent. I don't think we should save people. Like if someone is only two years tax delinquent and it hasn't harmed their credit at all or their ability to buy things at all, then no. I'm not into bailing somebody out but if somebody is three years tax delinquent and they're already in trouble and already not paying their taxes, I think we should take every structure, every piece of ground and every anything because no matter whether we like it or not, we're going to deal with it and it makes it more cumbersome to deal with when it's not in our name.

For example, if a structure is abandoned, it boarded up and it gets graffiti on it, even though it's abandoned and boarded up, our people has to go get permission to remove that graffiti or they can't do it. They at least have to show effort to have reached someone to abate that graffiti. It's just ridiculous. Just from the development that I've seen and done, if you really want to redevelop an area, you've got to own the property, you've got to control it and you've got to—now I will add this piece of it, if we do that we need to move some money around and put a huge amount of money in demolition, bigger than we already have in demolition and mowing expenses. You know I think we need to lead by example as the Unified Government and not allow properties to look terrible, overgrown and buildings falling down. **Commissioner McKiernan** said and I'm going to pile on with that one. No one that we ever write up for a code violation, like for not cutting their grass; nobody should ever be able to say I'll cut mine if you cut yours. **Commissioner Murguia** said yes. **Commissioner McKiernan** said we should always be setting the bar for proper upkeep of properties both vacant and improved, my opinion. **Commissioner Murguia** said yes.

Chairman Walker asked are you looking for an outcome here tonight. **Mr. Slaughter** said no. **Chairman Walker** said I don't think you're going to get one. **Mr. Slaughter** said just getting the conversation started. **Commissioner McKiernan** said actually I think he did, take everything. **Chairman Walker** said I think that certainly I agree that all the vacant property and I don't want someone who is taking property for development and then once it comes back, but if you own multiple properties and one gets taken for taxes and another one shows up, I mean we should be able to grab any property, in my opinion, that becomes vacant. **Mr. Slaughter** said as I believe with the Delinquent Real Estate Department is they probably increase their ability to add numbers to tax sales. The need for donation is probably not going to be as high as it can be because we can just say we don't have a spot for you now, but we can get you in an upcoming tax sale and we'll probably get it anyway. There should be a tool when we strategically really need to get a hold of a property and this is the quickest way as long as some of those other pitfalls aren't in there.

Commissioner Murguia said so the only thing I'd argue about that is Brian's story. It doesn't seem like anybody heard that. It's that you know you got a boarded up house, even if it it's boarded up correctly, if it's next door to your house; it's hurting your property values. **Mr. Slaughter** said correct. **Commissioner Murguia** said I mean it's hurting the good people that are mowing their grass and painting their house and doing what they're supposed to be doing. You may not want to take responsibility for it, but part of taking responsibility for it is protecting the good tax paying law abiding citizen that is painting their house and mowing their grass. It's not just about whether to take property or not, it's about doing what's best for everybody on the block.

I mean when we talk about these vacant lots or these abandoned buildings you make it seem like they are out in a cornfield somewhere. I mean not you personally. I'm not picking on you, but people talk about it like, yeah that blighted abandoned building way over there. It's just because they don't live there but there are good people that live in these neighborhoods that are forced to live next to burnt up houses just like what Brian is talking about. That's why I think I disagree a little bit Chris. I don't think it needs to be strategic. If there's a dumping piece of property and it's tax delinquent, we need to own it, we need to clear it, we need to mow it and we need to get it cleaned up for the sake of the other people that live around it. **Mr. Slaughter** said

I agree and maybe I should have expanded on what I said, there are going to be some situations we're accepting it as a donation even though it would be quicker is probably not the best course of action where the tax sale, the judicial foreclosure process would be, that's what I meant by that. **Commissioner Murguia** asked why do you say that. Why is it a better process? **Mr. Slaughter** said well, maybe there are some complicated liens that would be best to go through. Maybe the house has recently been demoed and they haven't cleared off the mortgage. I don't want to have to be taking the money that you possibly are going to be granting me and then say I have a mortgage payment on a vacant lot. I don't want to have to come back to you guys to do that. **Commissioner Murguia** said no, that's good. I really didn't understand why we wouldn't. Now that makes sense to me. That would be a reason to not take a piece of property. **Mr. Slaughter** said delinquent real estate, I mean I used to get over 300 properties a tax sale so and I'm not speaking for them, they do a great with what they have now. Maybe we would get to that point. We'll just have to identify each property as it comes in and then come with the best course of action, which I think; hopefully this discussion will help me to come back to you with those suggestions. **Commissioner McKiernan** said but I'm going to cast a hopeful vision. **Commissioner Murguia** said see you guys are outnumbered tonight, Commissioner Townsend and Commissioner Walker, go ahead Brian. **Commissioner McKiernan** said but I'm going to cast a hopeful vision and the hopeful vision is this, that we intervene on those code violations before it gets to the need that it needs to be torn down, that we intervene on the delinquent taxes before it gets to the point where we have to put it in that sale; that we develop our strategies and our processes for intervening on tax payments and on code violations so that we arrest the progress and stabilize things before they are four years tax delinquent, abandoned for four years, burned down and now we're going to have to pay to demo it.

The demo cost for this house that burned down a week and a half ago could have paid for a whole bunch of proactive abatement, could have paid for boarding the house plus 12 other houses. I think we're paying too much money on the backside because we're not being proactive enough and spending what resources we have to save down the road.

Mr. Slaughter said I have one more presentation or just because of time I can bring that back next month because I know we still have goals that you guys have to do. I'll let you decide. **Chairman Walker** asked how long is your presentation? **Mr. Slaughter** said it could be very

short. **Commissioner Murguia** said if Commissioner Murguia and Commissioner McKiernan would stop talking. I think that's what's he's saying. **Commissioner McKiernan** said yes that pretty much works. **Mr. Slaughter** said it's just an update on Opportunityspace that we kind of touched on. **Chairman Walker** said let's proceed.

Action: For discussion only.

Item No. 4 – 16353...UPDATE: LAND BANK AND OPPORTUNITYSPACE

Synopsis: Update on the Land Bank and OpportunitySpace, submitted by Chris Slaughter, Land Bank Manager.



WYANDOTTE COUNTY LAND BANK

OpportunitySpace Update

Neighborhood & Community
Development Standing Committee

February 1, 2016

February 1, 2016

Past Marketing

- UG Website
- Direct Mailings
- Word-of-Mouth
- Neighborhoods Leaders
- 2015 Numbers
 - 407 site views (Land Bank page on wycokck.org)
 - 187 apps
 - 85 sales

Chris Slaughter, Land Bank Manager, said I just wanted to point out here some of the past ways that we marketed our property through website, direct mailing, a lot of it's been word of mouth and neighborhood leaders. From the Land Bank page on www.wycokck.org for the year 2015, this was some stats generated through Irene Mansfield. 407 site views, again, we generated about 187 apps, 85 sales.

Partnership

- OpportunitySpace
 - Launched September 22, 2015
 - Established Public Real Estate Portal
- Numbers since launch
 - 6568 page views
 - 239 inquiries
 - 20 apps

We launched September 22nd with the OpportunitySpace in the public real estate portal. These are some of the page views on their site, almost 6,600 page views; we've had almost 240 inquiries, which have generated about 20 applications that we've brought before you. The views

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have picked up. I will say there are views all over the world. I noticed one was from New Zealand which I thought was interesting considering we may not want them to be an out of the country owner. Going forward, what they have approached back to me is that we'll keep providing the website, host the properties on there, continue to have the mapping function of it. They want to move to a more marketing plan. They want to either have it be a one-time subscription or an annual subscription or there would be a cost per property sold. We're kind of analyzing that right now. We'll probably come back to you sometime this year with our thoughts and recommendations on that, but I believe that was the last slide. That was that. It's working good. Again, anything better than a PDF of an Excel spreadsheet has got to be better than what we were doing.

Commissioner McKiernan said he didn't even want to look to his left here, he knew my hand would be up. In my opinion, we go back to investing versus cleaning up. I think paying a fee whether it is a subscription or a per transfer fee could be a money saver if it allows us to move properties more quickly and more efficiently. If we move more, we make more money not only from this transfer but from the ultimate improvement and the taxes paid on that property. I think if we did a simple what if we could calculate that paying a small fee upfront could generate profit on the back side. I think even though we always get stopped by how are we going to pay for it. We've got to look at the long game here and see clear to the end. I'd love to see some sort of estimate of if we were able to—if we had to pay this much per year, per fee, transaction whatever; and if we move this many properties how would that play out in terms of payment versus revenue from conveyance, versus revenue from taxes after three years and I'm guessing it would show a profit even with an upfront cost. If we could speculate and put something like that, a what if like that. **Mr. Slaughter** said I'll put something together and see what we come up with. **Commissioner McKiernan** said that would be great. Thank you.

Action: For discussion only.

Measurable Goals:

Item No. 1 – 16361...MEASURABLE GOALS: URBAN PLANNING AND LAND USE

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Synopsis: Presentation and discussion of 2016 goals for Urban Planning and Land Use, submitted by Rob Richardson, Director of Planning.

Melissa Mundt, Assistant County Administrator, said Rob was very gracious and is helping me by coming back after there was a miscommunication about tonight's agenda so I'm glad to have him. Thank you.

Small Business and Development

Help small businesses succeed in the development process

- Devote additional staff time to assisting small business.
 - Be sure to show small/family businesses how to get their desired result.
 - Advise them if they should seek a development representative.
 - Make DRC available to small business issues.
- Identify gaps that create issues for small businesses.
- Identify the potential need for an ombudsman.
- Staff members will be assigned to identify contacts with small businesses.
 - Each contact will be assessed and tracked regarding items 1 a-c. This data will be used to assess items 2 and 3 for a six month report.
- The six month report will be used with County Administration to implement strategies to better assist small businesses in the future as well as develop performance standards for small business assistance.

Rob Richardson, Director of Planning, said I'll just update you on the goals that we have for 2015. The first goal that we had was small business and development related, helping them succeed in the development process. As you're reading the goals up there, I'll just say that one of the biggest inhibitors that we had to this issue was just a simple lack of staffing. The ability to return phone calls and return emails in a timely fashion is a significant issue for us given the fact that on the Planning side basically, Byron and Jamie, handle almost all of those calls and inquiries. We did attempt to do a SharePoint file that we would use within the department to help track small business inquiries. We actually found quite a few difficulties with that in just defining what a small business was or wasn't because I think we all have—if I asked everybody in the room, we'd have a different idea. We've changed strategy on that and we're going to work with IT and use the customer relations software that 311 uses so that we will put all of our inquiries into that and then we'll be able to sort them and analyze them from that point of view. That way if somebody has a different idea of what a small business might be or something like that, we'll be able to make those inquiries. We did do some additional staff time on that and

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additionally my comments to my staff about making sure the small guys are getting as much attention as a big corporation would. I think that they've made progress in that area.

One of the biggest gaps for small businesses is just knowing what the process is or having the time to follow through. I'm working with KC Bowl at 82nd & State right now on an issue with their sign and they came in, it's been quite awhile ago because the staff member they spoke to is two or three staff members removed at this point. They got an answer that they didn't like and they were discouraged, but they didn't pursue it and so five years later they've come back and have sit down, met with me and we've gone through the process and what they can do and what their different alternatives are to achieve their end goal and so they're moving forward with an application now to do that either this month or next.

I think one of the issues is simply is coming into City Hall, having time to pursue the process, understanding what's going on and we're going to do some electronic things in the near future I think that will help that. The six month report of strategy to the county administration was the system that we tried with SharePoint really didn't work. It wasn't effective and we needed a different way to do that because I would say why didn't you put this in there, well I didn't think that was a small business or those kind of issues. We'll be moving to a system where we can put all of our inquiries in.

The nice thing about that is that the Technology Department has said that they can develop a system that will also take those comments and inquiries and put them into our geographic information system so that I can—when someone pulls up a parcel either in MAUWI or the GIS, they will see that somebody's had an inquiry there. That will help me and the staff members to be consistent in how we work with the public on different issues. It has been a struggle and largely it's just been a matter of staffing and being able to devote enough time to it, especially with vacations. You know we had a staff member who had new babies and he was out the last three weeks.

I've already had today four phone calls about people not returning phone calls and emails in the last two weeks and I know exactly why, because the list is long. We need to work on the staffing issue in the department on the planning side and I think that will help and then working with IT to develop our own version of 311 that allows us to input the critical data on all of our inquires. That way when they take the voicemail and put it in or they talk to someone on the

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phone, they put that in the system then I'll be able to track how fast they're returning their phone calls, emails and taking care of things like that. I think that accountability factor will help significantly. Does anyone have any question or comments on this side?

Commissioner Murguia said so, Rob, it's your lucky day. Your presentation happens to be at a time where I've done an enormous amount of work in regard to our budget in our departments. I just got to—I don't know if my other fellow commissioners know this or not, but your department is one of the worst funded departments within the Unified Government. It is absolutely shocking. From my perspective, and maybe I don't have this right, but I'm going to continue to make a big deal about this.

Your budget is approximately \$800,000 a year so to put that into perspective for everybody, we expect every multi-million dollar deal that we do, NASCAR, every deal that's ever been done out west, for this department to review the material that they use on whatever building that they build, the Cerner development, whatever the issue is. We expect them to do multi-million dollar deals then we expect them to educate some of the least educated people on Planning & Zoning laws and ordinances who have had no experience or education in that arena which takes an enormous amount of time just to hand hold people to get them through a process and they're dealing with things from everything from I want three dogs to however many millions of dollars the Hollywood Casino was.

The range of what they deal with is just unbelievable and then to add more to it we expect them to get in the middle of neighbor disputes about whether or not it's okay to have a particular business in a neighborhood or not and they're supposed to mediate those disputes to try to stop putting us in the middle of them. All while I will keep in mind we all sit up here and we say repeatedly over and over and over again that growing our tax base is the most important thing that we can do. We just said that. We just had that conversation with Chris and Tib just a minute ago that we're supposed to be cleaning up the blight and growing our tax base, but we're only spending \$800,000 on the department that reviews all residential and commercial development that occurs in our city.

Just to give you all a point of reference because some people might think they don't have a point of reference, we have a \$250M budget and if that isn't profound to you, I just happen to know that we spend \$540,000 on mental health in Wyandotte County and I think mental health is

important to spend money on, but when you look at the percentage of people that are seeking mental health versus the millions of dollars of deals and the number one priority with the county, it is absolutely appalling and shocking to me that we fund this department at the \$800,000 level. I don't know that I would want to come to work every day. **Mr. Richardson** said one of the things I've done some analysis on is our caseload and if our caseload is X, we would proceed and we would have about 80% of the projects approved per the schedule that we publish. Some of them have issues that have to be resolved, engineering issues or whatever, they get delayed for some reason but I think that's a pretty good number. I would just off the top of my head say that would probably sound about right, but if the caseload goes to X+1, that number drops by 30 days and it takes everything longer. I'm kind of working on a lot of statistics right now for the budget process to show those things but it is increasingly difficult. I've lost one staff member because the workload was too high and you know the economic situation for the last years and he decided to go to a different city; great employee but you know, he'd had enough. I think it's a good point that we are—I mean we're pretty efficient in how we operate this and you know we've kept pace, but when we have periods like we've had this month it's difficult. I'm sorry I didn't act surprised but I very much appreciate your comments. **Commissioner Murguia** said sure. I hope nobody else gets the wrong idea. We have other departments that I feel like are underfunded but this just stuck out glaringly to me. What I also have seen is that our budget doesn't necessarily fit our priorities which I can't understand why we can't get our arms around that. We say we want one thing but then budget rolls around and we end up spend more money on stuff that no one has brought up and less stuff on stuff that we've harped on repeatedly. It's just very frustrating. **Ms. Mundt** said I will share with the Commission that we just recently received approval to purchase something called Encode and Rob will be probably coming back—**Mr. Richardson** said it's on the next slide. **Ms. Mundt** said, Rob, why don't you go to the next slide because I think you'll find this interesting. We are investing some of our dollars for our innovations into his area.

Customer Service

Become more customer friendly by making greater utilization of electronic resources/capacity

- Implement Encode 360 or similar software to have a web portal for entrepreneurs to be able to locate sites for their future business if funding is available.
- Make full use of the electronic submission and review process.
 - Hold one review meeting inviting regular clients of the process to comment on making the process more effective
 - Identify methods to allow online electronic payment along with electronic submission. Implement if funding is available.
 - Move the electronic submission process into an automated MAUWI function so that the online application automatically populates the MAUWI database. This would also include the electronic payment function if funding is available.

Mr. Richardson said another item on customer service is making great utilization of electronic resources and capacity because in the long-run it's cheaper than people. If we can do things electronically that we don't have to have a staff person for then it's better for the government as a whole.

One of these is called Encode 360 and basically, the one minute version of this is that it says that if you're a citizen in Wyandotte County and you want to open a bakery, you type I want to open a bakery in the text field and it says you can have a bakery in these zoning districts, here's a map of those zoning districts and here are the for sale and for lease properties with contact information and building information about those properties that you might want to open that business in and Land Bank properties and we're going to work with the tied OpportunitySpace as part of this. We will either direct them right into the OpportunitySpace website or do something similar so we're not duplicating Chris' work, but it also gives you all of the zoning code criteria.

They're going to take the zoning code and they're going to put hyperlinks to all the definitions. It will have calculators for sign areas, landscaping and parking requirements. We think it will help folks. It will tell them if they need a special use permit for this or not which is a huge deal right now with the way we just changed the used car ordinances. I have angry people about used cars, multiple times every week. I think it's a great thing we're doing but it's a surprise to some folks now and this type of website will help that. We think it will cut down on our call volume significantly to a lot of the planners to have more time to work on their reports

or to answer instead of a general question that is a rabbit chase, which some of them are, will be a specific question about something they've learned from Encode that we can actually help them identify a real answer to. **Ms. Mundt** said the beautiful thing about this system is it actually integrates with our current Municipal Code online so it's seamless in that aspect and it will be pulling in all of our GIS data to layer into it. It has a very neat user interface. Once we get that up and running, we're going to come demo that to the Commission back here at this committee. It's going to be a really nice tool, especially like what Rob was saying, just on the sign issue this business was having they could have easily put their stuff into the system and had it tell them what they could and couldn't do. We're going to be using our new sign code to actually set the system up as we get that approved this year. **Mr. Richardson** said I should have the contracts this week on this for Doug to sign and then it's a 60 to 90 bill process so Mayish we should have this up and running. We'll be able to put links on the UG homepage, the Planning homepage, Economic Development, anybody else's page that wants it, they can link to it to help folks figure out where they can build a new business and what properties are available. **Commissioner Murguia** said nice.

Commissioner McKiernan said my suggestion, same suggestion I've had every time we've looked at Measurable Goals is put something up there you can measure. So if average time to completion of the process is too long in our estimation, let's set a goal that we're going to decrease the average time to the completion of the process by X amount of time, then did we make it or not. What we're talking about again, we're talking about means to an end as much as we're talking about the end. If we've been averaging X number of new businesses per year over the last five years, we set a goal that's going to be X+2 because our new system. I mean that's what we want is more businesses that are getting business licenses; that if they're the right kind of businesses are generating sales tax revenue. So we want to facilitate an increased number of businesses who get up and running faster. I would just encourage us to think about if there's one step in this process that's taking a really long time right now, it's the black hole step of this process, set a goal for improving that step of the process and then throw all of your resources at it and come back and say we made it and our new resources helped us get there. **Mr. Richardson** said I think that one of the hard things for me in this particular area is the things we measure right now, because we're still doing the measurable resources we started eight years ago, I mean

we still do those every quarter and when we look at are we processing things on time, we're looking at 99% on time. I mean we very rarely are behind on getting a staff report out on time, getting an engineering review back on time and so we're knocking it out of the park on those things, now it's requiring a lot of overtime and a lot of extra hours and when someone's gone then it really piles on. Those things are really going very well and to figure out how to measure, I mean what you asked about are they getting open faster are they—that's a Meama to measure.

I don't know what their start point is and I'll never know what their start point is on when they started, and be able to track that. I guess if you have ideas on how to—what part of that to track because when we went through and we did the whole tracking system before, we thought the review times were the critical thing and we really focused for years on review time and my staff doesn't like me very much because I talk about review time so much. I don't necessarily care about that but that's easy to measure. I can say we did you know 80% of first reviews within two weeks and we're really at—and we did 90% of second reviews within one week. We're getting all of that done but when somebody has a business idea and how fast that gets opened, I'm not sure how to track that. I would love to be able to do that, but I'm not sure exactly how I would do that. **Commissioner McKiernan** said as far as I'm concerned you figure out what needs to be measured; you're the professional in that area, but I see up here implement Encode 360. My question to you would be why, why do you need that. What will it help you do better, faster, bigger, why? It's going to cost some money to implement Encode 360. It has to be there. I'm guessing it's going to solve one or more problems. **Mr. Richardson** said right. **Commissioner McKiernan** asked can you quantify those problems and then you can come back and say we implemented Encode 360 and we solved these problems, we improved these measurements. Whatever it is and I don't know any better than you. You're the professional in this area but I see a strategy up there that's not necessarily tied to some sort of end game. That's my only observation. **Mr. Richardson** said I think part of the Encode is more of a little bit of public relations that this is available and it's on the internet and it puts a better public face out than we have now on the website which is somewhat difficult to measure. That was one of the strategies that I had. One of them of it was purely answering questions, how many phone calls do we get and how many inquiries do we get. I'll work on making a goal for next year once this is up and running about measuring what we got out of it compared to what we were getting before. I think that's a great idea.

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Part of it is just promotion of hey; it's easy to do business here. We make it easy. We put it all online and my big dream, our whole development process except for a pre-application meeting which we could probably do on Skype would be fully online, you could find out where you want to build your bakery, you could find out how to talk to George about Economic Development incentives, you could find out how to do the Planning process and you'd be able to make all those applications online. If you needed to meet with us and you were in New Zealand then we could do that by Skype and you could have your architect submit all their plans and fees and everything online. We could go through the whole process until I had to come to a public meeting and it would all be online and we would be able to facilitate that. That's much more efficient.

You know we're all paperless now so for instance, the casino would have saved \$26,000 in paper printing cost if we had been electronic then so we're saving folks big money that way. We're really trying to focus on making it easier on the private side to do business with us on the electronic side. That's part of this. Once again, I will think about I would better measure that.

Commissioner Murguia said just a final comment from me, a question about this, Rob, do you view this as more helpful to the big business like casino, Village West area or do you view it as helpful to the mom and pop that want to put a bakery in off Central Avenue. **Mr. Richardson** said I think it will probably help both equally and maybe more so the mom and pops because they can—they don't have to be able to talk to me during business hours. They can sit at home and do this and all of our contact information is there and they can send us an email and they can do it when they are not necessarily having to be at work and taking care of customers. From that perspective it might be more helpful for them but I think it will help everyone. **Commissioner Murguia** said I think this is great. I mean you have to just try stuff and when there are only what a handful of you and you have no money, I'll just keep harping on that. I mean you have to do stuff, so you're trying to be creative and innovative in ways to address the needs of our constituents. My concern would only be, and this is not belittling at all, I think this is great; I would just tell you what I've learned over the years is that planning and zoning is very complicated. It's like law. It's like a form of law because you're governed by statutes. You know a lot of the delay and moving things forward is governed by statute. You need 30 day notices, which is all the law telling you, you have to do that. It's not Rob saying, no I don't like

you, you have to wait 30 days. Now, I'm the biggest complainer about that, it's nothing personal. **Mr. Richardson** said I know. **Commissioner Murguia** said it's just I don't like it. I think it slows it down, but I would tell you that my concern is that it's such a complicated system. I mean even just to get a permit for chickens is very complicated. I've personally filled out the paperwork, you have to go to a hearing, you have to keep track of the date, you have to pay a fee, you know if you're not at all—maybe you don't speak the language or you're not accustomed to living in a city, I can see how it could be very cumbersome and computers are still overwhelming for some of our people that live in our community so hats off to you for trying. I will again during budget time try to say if we really want to grow our community, we need to grow our Economic Development Department as well as our Planning and Zoning Department. **Mr. Richardson** said thank you.

Action: For information only.

Adjourn

Chairman Walker adjourned the meeting at 6:10 p.m.

tpl