

**MINUTES OF THE  
UNIFIED GOVERNMENT WY  
CO/KCK BOARD OF PARK  
COMMISSIONERS**

**Wednesday, January 12th, 2022**

The January 12th, 2022 meeting of the Unified Government WyCo/KCK Board of Park Commissioners was held via ZOOM Online

**CALL TO ORDER:**

The meeting of the Unified Government Board of Park Commissioners was called to order at 6:07 p.m. by Ty Collins, Chairman. Angel Obert, Director stated proper meeting notice had been given.

**ROLL CALL:**

Members present were recorded for the minutes.

**Board Members Present:**

Ty Collins, Chairman

Carolyn Wyatt, Member

Bridget Holton-Deere, Secretary

Micah King, Member

Patricia Gates, Member

Billy Brame, First Vice Chair

Jeff Sachen, Second Vice Chair

**Board Members Absent:**

Faith Rivera, Member

John McTaggart, Member

Tammy Romstad, KCKPS

Administration Present:

Angel Obert, Parks and Recreation, Director

Jack Webb, Parks and Recreation, Assistant Director

James Bain, Unified Government, Counselor

Nichole Marlowe, Parks and Recreation, Administrative Support Supervisor

## **I – PRELIMINARIES**

### **1. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

A motion was made by Jeff Sachen to adopt the January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2022 Agenda, was seconded by Bridget Holton-Deere Carried (Ayes 7, Nays 0)

### **2. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES**

There was no quorum for the December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2021 meeting.

Minutes of the November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2021, regular Board of Park Commissioners meeting are presented for review and consideration for approval.

A motion was made by Pat Gates, seconded by Micah King to approve the minutes of the Wednesday, November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2021, regular meeting. Motion Carried (Ayes 7, Nays 0)

## **II - PRESENTATIONS, HEARINGS, COMMUNICATIONS**

### **1. Visitors**

Visitors may speak to the Board at this time.

As a general rule, the Board will not enter into discussion, but will direct Administration to take under advisement, make necessary response and bring items to a future agenda as may be appropriate.

- No Visitors

## 2. Correspondence

- No Correspondence

### III – OLD BUSINESS

- Nothing to Report

### IV - NEW BUSINESS

- Learn to Swim Presentation – Angel Obert introduced Gary Linn with the YMCA and Edwin Birch with USD 500 to speak on an upcoming pilot program that the Parks & Recreation Department will be partnering on.
  - Garry Linn stated – “Thanks Angel. So good to see everybody this evening and good to be here as part of the meeting and we're excited about implementing this program, that we hope becomes a sustainable program and eventually sometime down the road, gives every child in the KCK Community the opportunity to learn and to take a quality swim lesson. You know, we know that quality swim lesson, not only do they save lives, but quality swim lessons when done at the right age, they also build confidence in kids that, can do things like you know if you can teach a child to swim you can teach a child to read because it's really all about confidence and so that's our goal with this, and so our group has worked really hard over the last gosh I don't know it feels like a year but it's probably been about six months. But we've worked really hard, not only to identify funding, but also to work out the details of how we kick off this pilot program, and so we are going to start with a kickoff event, as well as implementation with the program on February 2nd so next month. And we are working directly with KCK public schools and will be working with their Kids Zone Program, which is their before and after school program. We're starting with two schools Oak Grove and Whittier and we will be transporting them to the Providence location during the after school hours teaching them a learn to swim program on a six week rotation basis. Once we're done with them we'll move on to two other schools that will do a very similar thing with. Then just continue going throughout the entire year until we feel like we have this down well enough to be able to possibly do it in schools, during a time period or look at summertime programming. With the group as well, as you know, continue identify funding so it's going to be an exciting program. We know it's going to be a tremendous opportunity for the kids in the Community that maybe don't have access to quality swim lessons or access to water and some of those things, so I

think it's going to make a huge impact. I want to definitely acknowledge Dennis Williams and Warner Media, they put the resources up to be able to get us kick started on this program and we appreciate their opportunity to be able to do that. Also want to thank the Parks Board, I think you guys have looked in to investing in some resources for the swim caps and some of the supplies and some of those things, so it's really been an all hands on deck. I've enjoyed working with Edwin and Angel and the group, on all of this. We're excited to get the program going, we know that it's probably overdue it's probably overdue in every community. This is an important topic and something that we're trying to identify at the state level as well. But yeah, so look forward to the February 2<sup>nd</sup>, event kicking it off, and then you know, making the true impact happen then.”

- Angel Obert stated – “I will just take this moment to say how important aquatic programs are to our Community, and you know, every year we go looking for lifeguards and it's always been a challenge to get enough guards and then, so I just kind of want to shed a little bit of light and I know that I said this last night, to the school board USD 500, when we kind of spoke with them. What we found and experienced whenever our staff goes to recruit at the high schools, is that we get a pretty healthy list of names of youth that want to be lifeguards. Well, when the day comes, when the time comes to show up for conditioning and show up for that pre training, it's very little turnout. We go to the high schools during lunch, we're pretty successful and get probably a list of anywhere from 20 to 40 kids sometimes, and so what we've really found over the past few years is that, unfortunately, our youth in the Community don't have the ability, or the skill of swimming, and you know that's really been lost in our Community and that's something that we've been working on at least in 2018 since pre COVID. Sitting down with our County Administrator and Assistant County Administrators and USD 500 leadership back at the time and everybody discussing how important it is to bring this back, either in the curriculum at USD 500 or the Community. So to be able to say that we're launching this pilot program is so exciting. And, while it is just a pilot program you know it's the beginning, and this is way overdue and so we're excited to get this off and going, and hopefully we can continue to plan for some resources so this can be a sustainable Program.”
- Edwin Birch stated – “I just want to say, as well as a resident. And a native of Wyandotte County, I am really excited about this personally as well. Working with, and at the UG and working closely with Parks and Rec when I was there, I just feel like this is just something that is just natural. Working with Angel and working with Jack and their team it's just a natural relationship that has already been established and since I've gotten here with the USD 500. You know in talking with Emerick and talking with Angel you know and the conversations that we have had this is a long time in the making, and I just think it's very important for two of the largest taxing entities to start thinking outside the box and working together. You know if you think about it, your residence are our residence. Our students and

our parents are your students and parents and when we can come together, like this and create high quality programming, that impacts, the quality of life of our youth and our residents here. I mean it's a win, win all around. So, Garry did a good job and the presentation last night with Angel, and you know there were a lot of questions and very good questions that were asked, and I just think that these partnerships that we're talking about now. We can work together to help not only maintain but sustain a program where we eventually don't have to worry about lifeguards in the future. Now, this is not a quick fix overnight, but this is an awesome start, and you know we're going to hear these questions from our board, had questions on "Are we going to move this up to the other grade levels?" Yes, that's the plan, but we want to see how this works out with the young students first and see how that works out so that there are any kinks, then we can get those out of the way before we move on. So again, I would love to have the support of the Parks Board, which I know you all understand about you know, some of the issues and the things that we have talked about in the past and making sure that we have programs for our kids and often hear, 'There's not enough programming for our kids in Wyandotte County and KCK.' Well hopefully we can create this, and start with this, and expand that's all I have, thank you for your time."

- Garry Linn stated - "If I can add one more thing and then definitely open up to any questions or anything. I think you know this is going to be an incredibly impactful program and we're excited to get it off the ground. We're also excited to see what becomes of it two, three, four years down the road. But, we've already seen a byproduct of our organizations talking together, and it is all these other types of things that we think that we can do together. So, I think that's going to be a great thing that's coming out of it, what Angel described around the area of a struggle of finding lifeguards that's not an anomaly just in KCK or in Kansas City or the state of Missouri that's going on with Wise and other outside aquatics industry's all across the country, and whether it's pay, whether it's people not interested, whether it's swim team members being in the water too often, and not having time. There're all these hurdles, we are facing in order to continue keeping our pools open and keeping them open in a safe manner. So, our organizations working together from a staffing component from a workforce development component, and being able to put these types of programs in place we're only going to see additional benefits outside of just what I think is going to be an awesome program."
- Bridget Holton-Deere inquired – "Are the kids asked? I mean, how are the kids selected."
- Garry Linn responded – "So, we're working directly with the school district on the kids that are enrolled in their Kids Zone Program, and so they definitely have the opportunity to opt out. But, we're doing everything we can to educate, not only the kids but the families on the quality of the program the type of lesson that they're going to get. We have some marketing materials we have some past videos that we're trying to show them because there's going to be a level of Uneasiness, especially if there's a parent or guardian that may not know how to swim and have a fear of water that transcends down to their kiddos. And, so we're doing

everything we can to work directly with the school district staff and the Kids Zone staff who they already have a lot of trust in. And, being able to communicate and market effectively, and you know we hope there's 100% participation. We're not going to let anything get in the way in terms of swim attire and some of those other types of things. But, I think it's realistic to think there's gonna be some that are just too nervous and maybe not want to be a part of the pilot program and maybe they'll wait and see how some of their other friends are doing.”

- Edwin Birch responded – “So, that's what I was going to add, as you know, word of mouth when other kids are having a good time and hopefully sharing those conversations with their friends, we will get more interest that way as well.”
- Ty Allan Collins stated – “I don't have a question. I just want to say that I’m excited about the program and the partnerships that you guys mentioned that are developing. You know we've always talked about being in my role as an athletic director, I know that both of our organizations, or all of our organizations, face different funding battles, staffing battles all those kinds of things and so, to be able to have a partner that you can draw on, to kind of help make some of these things happen and utilize our facilities to the fullest. When it comes to our pools not being used to during swimming season or maybe not being used after swim practice is done, you know that that pool gets heated in than that pool sits there you know empty for a while, so maximizing its value is important to our taxpayers and residence. So, I’m very excited and, whatever we can do you know, kind of on behalf of Sumner Athletics, Washington Athletics and Wyandotte Athletics, are the three that run the swim team here in the district, whatever we can do to help support that we're absolutely, I'm excited and then, on behalf of the parks board, you know you guys have our full support we're excited to hear about this continuing to develop.”
- Edwin Birch responded – “Ty, I’m glad you mentioned that, because Garry can tell you, a couple of our board members wanted to make sure that we tap in with you guys and work with you all to try to get some of these older students, the teenagers in high school, to get them to participate, so that we could have some lifeguards and they can give back in their community by working there at our pool.”
- Ty Allan Collins replied – “I think we just have some central office Members come down like suit up for the day you guys can swim with the kids do a low recruitment event like sounds like a plan I’m sure Angel and Jack will come to like we'll just get everybody on board so.”
- Billy Brame asked – “I also had a school district related question and I know that we do have pools in the buildings, you said Wyandotte has a pool and Washington has a pool and Sumner also has a pool. So, if this were to build to scale would it then be four locations, instead of just Providence Y, is that the idea going forward? We'd have enough staffing and locations if we use the district pools, and the Y is that what the plan is?”
- Edwin Birch responded – “Yes, Billy those are options that we would have. Garry did you want to add anything on that. I mean, as a program grows, yes, those are pools that are available, that we can tap into.”

- Garry Linn responded – “Yeah absolutely. In fact we toured all them pools, and those pools, we can teach swim lessons in those pools, we absolutely can. It just kind of boils down to, transportation, time that we can get in the pool that doesn't interfere with either athletic high school time or in school time and some of those things. But, I think those are all things that we want to work out. Our hope is somewhere down the road that we're utilizing the schools that are in and around the school districts the pools that are there and stuff like that, and so. That is definitely what our vision is and where we want to be able to go to. We just know that right now we have. We have a pool that it's guarded, that we have swim lesson instructors and so that's sort of rare right now, and so let's utilize them at the Providence Y and we will continue to figure out how we can continue to expand, but that is definitely the intent and good question.”
- Jeff Sachen stated – “I think, just to throw in and echo Ty. I think it's a great idea. I lifeguarded at the YMCA throughout high school until I was about 21 years old, going through college, and this is how I did it through program, where they partnered with the local area school so yeah I think this is a great idea and just no negatives about it. Just trying to get more kids in the pool, and you know, giving back to the Community by going and working at the pools that they grew up at.”
- Carolyn Wyatt stated – “Hello. Yeah, I think this is an excellent idea. That the students are at the school, so utilizing the students in the swim lessons and I think it's a great partnership.”
- Pat Gates stated – “I think it's a fabulous idea and congratulations for all these entities working together.”
- Angel Obert stated – “I just want to say to I'll send out some information on the ribbon cutting, of course we would like to extend an invite to the Park Board Members, so we'll get that out to you once we finalize details.”

Ty Allan Collins Jr. asked if there were any more questions or comments from either members or guest panelist.

- Edwin Birch responded – “I just want to say thank you to all of you, thank you for your time this evening, and thank you for all you do for our Parks and Rec and what you do for Wyandotte County and KCK, Thank you.”
  - Garry Linn responded – “Thank you for the support of this program as well.”
- Officer Elections – Ty Allan Collins stated – “First Vice Chair currently that is Billy Brame if you if I'm not mistaken, this is your first term as the First Vice Chair correct and so I don't know if James is on here, or if staff, remember, but I think it is a two-year term limit. To, two consecutive years is the term limit. So, Billy would be eligible to serve again. We have Second Vice Chair. I think Jeff this is your current position, and you were our First Vice Chair previously, so I think this is your first year as the Second Vice Chair if I'm not mistaken. Okay, and then same thing with Bridget who is our current Secretary so she would have one more year of one more year of eligibility for that so.

Hopefully this will be a pretty quick process, but I would just open the floor for nominations for First Vice Chair that someone will need to make a nomination for someone that nomination will need to be seconded and then I believe we have to have the vote. And again, this is where I always kind of mess this up think we have to have the vote of six individuals. In order for that to be in order for that to pass, and so, since that is the case I'm showing me at 7 in attendance, so we could have a six one vote it doesn't have to be unanimous, but somebody must have at least six votes in order to obtain a position so. Would anyone like to nominate anyone for first vice chair.”

- First Vice Chairman – Billy Brame was nominated by Jeff Sachen, Seconded by Pat Gates, Motion Carried (Ayes 7, Nays 0)
- Second Vice Chairman – Jeff Sachen was nominated by Bridget Holton-Deere, Seconded by Micah King, Motion Carried (Ayes 7, Nays 0)
- Secretary – Bridget Holton-Deere was nominated by Jeff Sachen, Seconded by Pat Gates, Motion Carried (Ayes 7, Nays 0)

## V - OTHER BUSINESS

### 1. Staff Agenda

Jack Webb –

- a. Spring Contract’s Going Out for RFP & Mowing Contracts up for 2022 – There are three contracts that are up this year, they involve the cemeteries and Water Pollution Pump Stations. The Department is in the process of reviewing and interviewing contractors for these. They should be awarded within the next week.
- b. Update Project –
  - Klamm Park Walking Trail is going out to bid this month.
  - Clifton Park phase one is the sidewalk, work will begin in the spring for the concrete, phase two will be with the engineering design and it is in DRC for review once it is cleared it will go out to bid.
  - Spillway Inspection is on hold until the weather allows.
  - Davis Hall Kitchen Renovations are on schedule to be completed, it should be open by the end of the month.
  - Creek Dredge for the Amphitheater going through Public Works and it will hopefully be completed before the spring.



Angel Obert – Stated the importance of the Park Board Members communicating with their Commissioners and continuing to advocate for the projects and funds for the Parks & Recreation Department.

- a. Aquatics – Excited for The Learn to Swim Program that was discussed. All intentions for the Parkwood Pool to be open this season, the last 2 seasons the department has been unable to open due to COVID restrictions and guidelines. There is an RFP out now to help with staffing of the facility and we will still be sourcing guards inhouse, now we are just waiting on the guidance.
- b. Recreation - Exciting things happening in Recreation. Last year there were Subcommittees formed with other Unified Government Departments and the Commissioners and the former Mayor, Parks & Recreation was placed on the Infrastructure Committee, one of the interests has been the Recreation Centers and through these discussions the Parks & Recreation Department is looking at doing a study on the Recreation Centers and Halls, we will be working with Clark & Anderson, they are on call for the Unified Government who will also be doing some subcontract work with Ballard and Kings. Ballard and Kings do studies across the United States and they are the best, and have a lot of experience. They will be doing a full analysis on the spaces and the functions of all of the Community Centers and Halls. This will help us with future programing. We are not looking to close any center, we want to improve our infrastructure and know where we're at and what needs to be done, moving forward. This will help us continue to provide for the needs of the community we are really looking forward to hopefully getting that project going it is an exciting time for us.
- c. Working on a New Mission and Vision Statement for the Department – This will consist of setting goals for the entire Parks & Recreation Department. There will be consultants working with the department, the Park Board, elected officials and the community to help redefine and shape the future of our Parks & Recreation Department.
- d. Grant Projects – KABOOM (last project was at Bill Clemm Park) is wanting to do another project in KCK, they asked us for recommendations, after reviewing the maintenance plan the department decided to suggest Edgerton Park, after their review Edgerton Park did meet those requirements, this is in the preliminary stage. The last project at Bill Clemm was 90% grant funded and other 10% was taken on by the Parks & Recreation Department.
- e. Holiday Lighting in the Park - This project has wrapped up, they recently met with Jolt Lighting, and they stated their expected numbers were lower than expected but it was still a great turnout, and believe they sold 8539 tickets. Their Donation to the Wyandotte County Parks Foundation will roughly be \$13,617.00.

- **BOARD MEMBER'S QUESTIONS OR COMMENT**

- Ty Collins stated that he is excited about the new vision and mission for the department.

- Billy Brame stated that he would like to see Performing Arts/Theatre Programing and Theatre Space for the community centers added to the infrastructure plan. He stated that there are grant opportunities for this through performing arts organizations and he has community partners that would possibly get involved.
- Jeff Sachen asked if Jolt Lighting and the Holliday Light Show at the Wyandotte County Park would be planning on returning in the future in spite of lower-than-expected participation numbers. He also reminded everyone of the weekends upcoming Eagle Days event at the Wyandotte County Lake Park.
  - Angel Obert stated that Jolt Lighting did plan to return.
  - Jack Webb spoke on the upcoming Eagle Days event and stated that the WYCO Lake did have quite a few eagles and swans and thousands of snow geese and a lot of mallard ducks, all great for birdwatching.
- Carolyn Wyatt stated she was excited about the possible KABOOM project at Edgerton Park and that it would be great for the community.

## **VI – ADJOURNMENT**

Ty Collins requested a motion to adjourn, Jeff Sachen made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Micah King, Meeting adjourned at 7:03PM

Motion Carried (Ayes 7, Nays 0)

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Ty Collins, Chairman