



*Sedgwick County...
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District 3 Citizens Advisory Board Meeting
Minutes

Monday, Nov. 2, 2020
7 p.m.

Santa Fe Room, Goddard Schools Administration
315 S. Main, Goddard

Board members: Sharon Ailsieger, Lamont Anderson, Zach Daher, Nancy Hinten, Sherry Livingston, Carl Losey, Janice Manlove, Kevin McWhorter, Glen Shafer, Luke Sponsel, David Wright

County representatives: Commissioner David Dennis, Kate Flavin, Akeam Ashford

ORDER OF BUSINESS

1. Call to Order

Chair Lamont Anderson called the meeting to order at 7 p.m.

2. Approval of Minutes – Oct.5

Janice Manlove moved to approve the minutes of the Oct. 5 meeting without edits; Carl Locey seconded the motion. Minutes were passed unanimously.

PUBLIC AGENDA

No one from the public was in attendance.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Sedgwick County Communications and Legislative Agenda Update – Akeam Ashford, Strategic Communications Director

Akeam Ashford provided a brief biography about himself and overview of the County's communications team. He spoke about the County's PSA campaign related to COVID-19 and CARES funding opportunities. When he asked the advisory board how they receive news, responses included TV and printed media (Wichita Eagle) and the County website.

Nancy Hinten asked if the County has begun using the WSU lab yet. Not yet, details are still being worked out.

Luke Sponsel asked about the accuracy of the PCR test and if the County was sending tests locally. According to Dr. Elizabeth Ablah (KU Med), the PCR tests are about 98 percent accurate. Samples are sent to labs in Lenexa for now.

Zach Daher noted that he had never heard of the County's website (www.sedgwickcounty.org) before.

Ashford continued his presentation with an update about the legislative platform. Many items will probably carryover from last year (nuisance abatement, urban area designation clarification, and COMCARE funding). A new initiative may be for broadband access.

Commissioner David Dennis added that he appreciated the joint statement that said the regional priorities include transportation and the North Junction, behavioral health support, and workforce development.

Manlove asked for more material about how to safely do things (i.e. celebrate holidays).

Kevin McWhorter asked how the County's broadband initiative differs from the State's program. Commissioner Dennis replied that different companies received State funding and he's been in contact with different vendors about services.

BOARD AGENDA

1. Citizens Advisory Board Members

Manlove stated that the County and State mowed recently.

2. Commissioner Dennis

Commissioner Dennis stated that this is his last election as a Commissioner candidate.

He requested if there were any other legislative topics to send them to him. The plan is to have the approved legislative platform on the CAB agenda in December.

Tuesday is Election Day. Staff has put in a lot of hours to make this safe and successful and they are very appreciated. Elections received two grants for Election Day, from Secretary of State's Office (\$400,000) and the Center for Tech and Civic Life (\$800,000). Approximately 70 to 80 percent voter turnout is expected.

CARES funding update: County bought a lot of PPE for kits and still have a few left. Businesses and non-profits can request a \$5,000 safe operating grant through the County. On Mondays, the financial stimulus review team reviews requests from local non-profits. There is no plan to use business interruption grants. WSU's molecular lab is up and running – the County invested \$4 million in the lab.

Commissioner mentioned his recent newsletter message and that he is always proud of staff. All Sedgwick County residents are touched by the work they do every day, especially during this pandemic.

A BUILD grant for the North Junction was approved – it required \$2.5 million from the City of Wichita and \$2.5 million from Sedgwick County. Fortunately this project keeps moving forward.

If you haven't stopped by the zoo recently, the new entrance is coming along nicely in preparation for the Zoo's 50th anniversary celebration in early 2021.

The Commissioner was invited to sit in on Air Force Academy interviews by Congressman Estes. Interviews will be on Nov. 13.

There was a brief discussion of Commissioner Michael O'Donnell's actions. Two weeks ago when the recording first broke, Commissioner Dennis called for Commissioner O'Donnell's resignation. During the special BOCC meeting last week, the Board of County Commissioners voted to censure him and asked for his resignation. That is the most they can do since they do not have authority over one another.

If you want to see a good football game, Northwest plays Heights this Friday. Zach will hopefully be on the field.

Nancy Hinten asked about next steps for Commissioner O'Donnell. Commissioner replied, if he is re-elected, then O'Donnell would be sworn in then resign in January. Then the Republican Party would appoint someone to fill the vacancy.

Sharon Ailsieger noted that if Commissioner O'Donnell loses the General Election the conversation is moot.

Glen Shafer asked how bad the hospital situation is currently. Commissioner Dennis noted that staffing is the biggest issue for hospitals. Bed space can be converted.

Shafer continued, what about the school gating criteria; what is the acceptable positive rate for schools. McWhorter replied, in Goddard, numbers are low, less than one percent. There are no plans to close in-person classrooms or change practices.

McWhorter mentioned, if Commissioner O'Donnell resigns, the person appointed would serve for two years then have to run for election and win to complete the final two years. Commissioner Dennis added that the District Attorney's office is in the process of an ouster investigation.

McWhorter asked Commissioner how the Board sits on the bench without responding or engaging in public agenda speakers. Commissioner replied that he does not engage from the bench and decided early on to not argue from the bench.

Anderson stated that he looks forward to another four years with Dennis. This election has been the most divisive in his memory. He is pleased that the CAB members mesh well and are solution makers and holds each other accountable.

Manlove asked for an update on Amazon. There were about 1,000 jobs coming to the area and Sedgwick County was asked to pave some roads in northern Sedgwick County for the facility.

ADJOURNMENT

Ailslieger moved to adjourn the meeting; Locey seconded. Meeting was adjourned.

The next Citizens Advisory Board Meeting will be Monday, Dec. 7, 2020.