



District 2 Citizens Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, June 13, 2023 | 6 p.m.
Haysville Community Library
210 S. Hays Ave., Haysville, KS 67060

Board Members in Attendance: Dr. William Hammers, Spencer Dean, Martha Pint, Tabitha Lehman, Ashlie Brockleman, Jessica Atherton (on Zoom), Tony Martinez, Gage Hunt, Lupe Montes

County Representatives: Commissioner Sarah Lopez, Assistant County Manager Tania Cole

1. Call to Order:
 - a. Martha Pints called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm.
2. Roll Call Vote:
 - a. Board members identified themselves by saying, "Here."
3. Approval of Minutes:
 - a. Tony Martinez made a motion to approve the April 11 meeting minutes. Dr. Hammer seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.
4. Public Agenda:
 - a. No public comment here.
5. New Business:
 - a. Sedgwick County Legislative Overview Presentation by Tania Cole, Assistant County Manager
 - i. Tania Cole shared handouts on Sedgwick County's 2023 legislative platform at the state and federal levels and showed the report provided by Sedgwick County's lobbyists – Watkins Public Strategies - that tracks all the proposed bills that could affect Sedgwick County.
 - ii. In September, Sedgwick County elected officials begin discussing what they want on the legislative platform for the next session. Lobbyists advise them which new and old issues could emerge.
 - iii. Tania Cole acts as the liaison between the lobbyists and elected officials, briefing them on any developments in the Kansas legislature and setting up testimony by elected officials when needed. In the 2023 session, Sedgwick County provided testimony on nine different bills.
 - iv. Some of the major bills discussed this session:
 - a. HB 2082 – It took two years for Sedgwick County to get this bill passed. The county funds bill allows Sedgwick County to set up a separate fund for money from the national opioid lawsuit settlement to fight addiction, a fund for code inspection and enforcement, and a county equipment reserve fund to include electronic technology. Counties now have greater transparency with taxpayers for the handling of grant money and other funds.
 - b. SB 252 - This bill would have prohibited governments from running businesses that would compete with businesses in the private sector, including child care, health centers, and restaurants. Sedgwick County opposed this legislation, the governor vetoed it, and there were not enough votes for an override.

- i. Gage Hunt asked if this would apply to sponsorships. Tania Cole said she wasn't sure because the bill was written with very vague language. That's one reason Sedgwick County opposed it.
- c. SB 209 – This elections bill would have eliminated the three-day grace period for advance ballots to be returned after an election and would require them to be received by 7 p.m. on Election Day. The governor vetoed the bill, and an override failed.
- d. SB 228 – This bill requires the Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services (KDADS) to reimburse jails \$100/day when inmates are waiting for competency exams and other mental evaluations before going to court. The governor vetoed this bill, but it was overridden.
- e. SB 169 – This bill proposed a flat income tax rate of 5.15% and would also hold the state sales tax on food at 0%. A veto override failed.
- f. HB 2021 – This bill reforms the assessment and provision of services to children in child welfare and juvenile justice system. Commissioner Howell is a strong supporter of this legislation.
- g. SCR 1611 – This bill proposed a constitutional amendment that would cap increases in property valuations to 4% annually. It failed but is expected to come up next session. If passed by the Kansas legislature, the issue would be on the November 2024 ballot.
 - 1. Gage Hunt asked how that 4% cap would affect Sedgwick County. Tania Cole said it would be detrimental and would affect home values. No one likes taxes going up, but you want your home valuation to be accurate.
- v. Sedgwick County received \$40 million in funding to build a new state-run psychiatric hospital in south-central Kansas. \$15 million in state funding, and \$25 million is a SPARK grant.
 - a. Martha Pint asked is the 50-bed capacity is enough? How will that affect the jail? Sarah Lopez said the hospital will be built with the capacity to expand to 100 beds. The jail will benefit because inmates waiting for mental evaluations will move to the psychiatric hospital.
 - b. Gage Hunt asked what the timeline is. Sarah Lopez said most of the construction has to be finished by 2025 because of SPARK requirements. That's why commissioners pushed to get this project moving forward.
- vi. Funding for the WSU/KU Biomedical Campus also came through, allowing the medical workforce needed for mental healthcare to be educated and trained in Sedgwick County. The County plans to expand the COMCARE Crisis Center as part of this campus.
- vii. The federal platform addresses infrastructure and appropriations for Sedgwick County. Jim Davenport is Sedgwick County's lobbyist at the federal level.

- viii. Sedgwick County is applying for a Department of Defense grant to build an Emergency Preparedness Center, combining Emergency Management and the Health Department in case of another pandemic. The facility could offer vaccinations and testing, store supplies and be the headquarters for emergency operations.
 - ix. If approved, the grant would pay 70% of the project's costs, and Sedgwick County would pay 30%.
 - x. Martha Pint asked if Sedgwick County has concerns about interim committees? Tania Cole has not heard anything yet.
 - xi. Lupe Montes asked if the biomedical campus is linked to the new facility in Manhattan, KS? Sarah Lopez said no, that facility deals with bioterrorism.
 - xii. Tony Martinez asked about congressional spending requests? Sarah Lopez said those are funding requests for Sedgwick County, handled primarily by Senator Jerry Moran.
 - xiii. Martha Pint asked about the ARPA money funding the psychiatric hospital - if the money is not used soon enough, does it go back to the government?. Tania Cole wasn't sure. She said there are strict rules how and when the funding is used so that money will be used first in the construction process to meet the required timeline.
 - xiv. Tania Cole offered to come back in the fall to talk about what's going on next session's legislative platform.
6. Discussion of Future Agenda Items by Stephanie Birmingham, Strategic Communications
 - a. Next month's meeting on July 11 will be a tour of the Sedgwick County Regional Forensic Science Center at 5:30, instead of the regular meeting time of 6 p.m. Please be on time because Dr. Steadman has to turn off the security system to allow a large group in.
 - b. The August 8 meeting will be at Sedgwick County Fire District 1 station #32 in Park City where a heavy rescue team will give us a tour at 6 p.m.
 - c. Commissioner Lopez suggested another zoo tour, possibly for September. She also suggested a tour of the COMCARE Crisis Center to talk about the ICT program and 9-8-8 hotline.
 - d. Other suggestions include rescheduling YEEP and inviting the Election Commissioner in December.
7. Other Business
 - a. Dr. Hammers' family donated 30 acres of land to Clearwater for a prairie park with a pond and walking paths. About 150 people showed up for the dedication ceremony.
 - b. Dr. Hammers told Sarah Lopez that farmers are feeling the pinch of property taxes and told her they're upset that Sedgwick County's taxes are higher than neighboring counties. Sarah Lopez said Sedgwick County is mandated to provide certain services that the state no longer funds so Sedgwick County plans to raise that issue in the next legislative session.
 - c. Commissioner Sarah Lopez has ten applications for the open CAB spot. She is also working to fill the Salem Township Trustee position.
8. Adjournment
 - a. The meeting adjourned at 7:04 p.m.