

**MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
SITTING AS THE GOVERNING BODY OF FIRE DISTRICT #1**

REGULAR MEETING

May 23, 2007

The Regular Meeting of the Board of the County Commissioners of Sedgwick County, Kansas, was called to order at 10:55 A.M., on Wednesday, May 23, 2007 in the County Commission Meeting Room in the Courthouse in Wichita, Kansas, by Chairman David M. Unruh; with the following present: Chair Pro Tem Thomas G. Winters; Commissioner Tim R. Norton; Commissioner Kelly Parks; Commissioner Gwen Welshimer; Mr. William P. Buchanan, County Manager; Mr. Bob Lamkey, Director, Public Safety; Chief Gary Curmode, Fire District #1; Jesse Bushell, Firefighter, Fire District #1; Captain Brian Schroeder, Fire District #1; Lieutenant Keith Wilson, Fire District #1; Mr. Rich Euson, County Counselor and Ms. Lisa Davis, Deputy County Clerk.

ROLL CALL

The Clerk reported, after calling roll, that all Commissioners were present.

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES: Regular Meeting, April 25, 2007

The Clerk reported that all commissioners were present at the Regular Meeting of April 25th, 2007.

MOTION

Commissioner Norton moved to approve the Minutes of the meeting of May 2nd, 2007.

Commissioner Winters seconded the motion.

There was no discussion on the motion, the vote was called.

Regular Meeting, Fire District #1, May 23, 2007

VOTE

Commissioner Norton	Aye
Commissioner Winters	Aye
Commissioner Parks	Aye
Commissioner Welshimer	Aye
Chairman Unruh	Aye

Chairman Unruh said, "Next item."

AWARDS

A. RECOGNITION OF SEDGWICK COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT #1 AS A RECIPIENT OF THE EMPLOYER SUPPORT FOR THE GUARD AND RESERVE "ABOVE AND BEYOND AWARD."

Mr. Bob Lamkey, Director, Public Safety, greeted the Commissioners and said, "It gives me great pleasure to be here today to talk a little bit about this award. On April 29th of this year, Sedgwick County Fire District was one of seven organizations across the State of Kansas recognized for their support of employee participation in the Guard and Reserve. Employers are nominated by individual Reserve components. And if I may, the employer support for the Guard and Reserve is a Department of Defense organization and it was established in 1972 to promote cooperation and understanding between the Reserve component members and their civilian employees.

As you may know and understand, the total force structure that's employed by our nation today has about 46% of its member's manpower coming from the Guard and Reserves and consequentially, in the war on terrorism, large numbers of citizens are being activated, removed from their normal lives and employment and sent in harms ways, in support of national objectives and that's happened at a really unprecedented rate in our nation's history.

We are fortunate that the Fire District looks as their employees as more than just people who work for Sedgwick County but as part of a family and make the commitment to stay connected and insure that when folks return from duty, they are welcomed and reinitiated into the services part of that family.

Regular Meeting, Fire District #1, May 23, 2007

The Above and Beyond award is designed to recognize employers who have gone above the basic legal requirements in support of their employees and the Sedgwick County Fire District was nominated by Firefighter Brian Schroeder. Firefighter Schroeder was gone for about 18 months, about 15 months in Iraq and a couple of months of training and getting back and forth in that process and there are currently four members who serve in the reserve, three of whom are here today. There's Captain Steve Rudd, who couldn't be here today, we have Lieutenant Keith Wilson, firefighter Jesse Bushell, but all three are here who have served in southwest Asia and in harms way and again, in support of national objectives. We're very proud to receive this award.

It simply says 'Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve presents this Above and Beyond award to Sedgwick County, Kansas Fire District #1, presented on behalf of the men and women of the National Guard and Reserve forces for outstanding services and continuing to support national defense'. And I think we are all proud. I know the fire district is and I'm going to let Chief Curmode say a couple of words and pass it on to him. Here you go, Chief."

Chief Gary Curmode, Fire District #1, greeted the Commissioners and said, "It was a privilege and an honor to represent the men and women of Sedgwick County Fire District #1 in Pittsburgh, Kansas at the award ceremony on April 29th. Again, I'm going to keep my part short, because we are very proud and privileged that our men went to and back from their tour of duty safely, no injuries and again God Speed them. And again, they've come back and they've done a superb job. After they got back to their stations, we tried to get them back to the stations they were at previously and offer any other type of assistance, as Bob said, to get back, familiar, and get back into the route of things after that tremendous stress.

But at this point, I'm going to turn it over to them. They're in their . . . I'm going to introduce them in the order of deployment from Sedgwick County to the Armed Services. The first one is Firefighter Jesse Bushell, then Lieutenant Keith Wilson and then Firefighter Brian Schroeder. At this time I'll step aside. I think they'd like to make a few comments."

Chairman Unruh said, "Very good."

Firefighter Jesse Bushell, Fire District #1, greeted the Commissioners and said, "I just wanted to real quickly and briefly state the Fire District did an outstanding job for me as an individual. I was obviously the first one to go overseas and our chain of command did a great job of doing everything they could possibly do to make my life as easy as possible for not only myself, but they took good care of my family, and along with the fire district, our fire association and our union, they really stepped up and made life a lot easier and made my worried a lot less here at home. Thank you."

Regular Meeting, Fire District #1, May 23, 2007

Lieutenant Keith Wilson, Fire District #1, greeted the Commissioners and said, “I would just like to . . . excuse my voice, I just got over a cold. I would like to reiterate what Jesse said, I’d like to thank the men and women of Sedgwick County Fire District #1 for their love and support, thoughts and prayers. They did take care of us while we were gone, and I really appreciate it. I’d also like to thank my family for having my back while I was gone, you know, because some of them really didn’t want me to go, but you know that was out of my control, as far as whether I went to not, so I do appreciate them being there for me while I was gone and the guys taking care of us and keeping in contact with us and taking care of what we needed while we were gone. Thank you.”

Firefighter Brian Schroeder, Fire District #1, greeted the Commissioners and said, “One of the biggest reasons why I put this organization in for the award, having seen the two firefighters who had deployed previous to me, and the experience I had, just showed me that we had the kind of leadership that was foremost, as these gentlemen said. They took care of our needs back home, made sure that we were able to reintegrate back into the system once we were back and took care of everything that we needed.

Again, I think the fire department, Chief Curmode in particular, who made the opportunity . . . I mean, he e-mailed us, we were all talking about this prior to coming in here, he kept in touch with us the whole time. You know, we had individuals and family that did that as well, but just the commitment from that level of leadership just speaks volumes. So again, we thank you for this opportunity to address you and thank you for your efforts.”

Chairman Unruh said, “Well thank you all for being here today. We want to express our appreciation for the work you do in fire protection for the citizens of Sedgwick County, first of all, fundamentally that’s our relationship to you and we know that you all do a very professional and outstanding job there and we’re aware of it and thank you. We want to thank Chief Curmode for his leadership in the fire district and how you have made, as you describe it, family out of this district and everybody watches each others back, as you said.

But beyond that, we want to say thank you for your service to our country, as you provide for our national security in the way that you have and all these things are significant contributions and we’re aware of it and we certainly do appreciate it. And we do have a comment from Commissioner Norton.”

Regular Meeting, Fire District #1, May 23, 2007

Commissioner Norton said, “Well we know that the citizen soldier has taken on a whole new meaning in the last few years. I mean, we always thought of the National Guard and Reserve as kind of something you did on the weekends to keep your service up and to keep your knowledge of the military up but today it’s changed. You get a chance to be on the ground and serving your country in a foreign war. You know, just recently, you think about the National Guard in the context of Greensburg, because that’s also part of the mission, so we do honor you for your hard work, not only in your daily work here locally, you know, as a fire responder and what you do here, but also statewide and internationally, because you’ve served all of those different components and I honor you for that, because I’ve seen up close what National Guard can do locally, and we certainly understand by the news accounts every day what putting yourself in harms way is all about in this world today, so we really appreciate that.”

Chairman Unruh said, “Thank you. Commissioner Parks.”

Commissioner Parks said, “Well I think these gentlemen deserve the respect and the honor that they’re getting here today and it takes the public service part of being a public servant to a whole new level. It’s paramount to what they’ve done and the dedication that they’ve had and we need to remember them in all facets of our county government. Thank you.”

Chairman Unruh said, “Well I just would add to what the other commissioners have said, but I’m certainly very proud of you three gentlemen and I’m very proud of every Sedgwick County employee who served in the Guard and I’m proud to be part of an organization that honors that service. Thank you.”

Chairman Unruh said, “Thank you. Commissioner Welshimer.”

Commissioner Welshimer said, “Well I’m proud of you too and I’m very glad you made it back safely.”

Chairman Unruh said, “Very good. Well commissioners?”

Mr. Lamkey said, “The recommended action sir is to receive and file.”

MOTION

Commissioner Norton moved to receive and file.

Commissioner Winters seconded the motion.

There was no discussion on the motion, the vote was called.

Regular Meeting, Fire District #1, May 23, 2007

VOTE

Commissioner Norton	Aye
Commissioner Winters	Aye
Commissioner Parks	Aye
Commissioner Welshimer	Aye
Chairman Unruh	Aye

Chairman Unruh said, “Thank you all. Once again, congratulations to Chief Curmode and Fire District #1.

Well commissioners, we have come to the conclusion of our Fire District meeting, so now is the appropriate time to talk about other issues or items of interest. Commissioner Norton.”

B. OTHER

Commissioner Norton said, “Well, I have several. A couple of nights ago, I attended the WATC graduation and there was a wonderful turnout. The keynote speaker was Ron Holt, Assistant County Manager and he did a fine job articulating to the WATC graduates the idea that lifelong learning is important and that it can make change in your life that is so very positive by getting your education and being able to apply it in the workforce for your family and for your own self esteem. And Ray Fredrick was . . . who is one of the board members, was also there and kind of did the welcome, so it was a wonderful evening, plenty of graduates and for the first time ever, I was proud to say, they had a big reception afterwards and there was a huge, huge turnout from family and friends, so I think we’re taking WATC and what we’re trying to accomplish there to all new levels. They’ve had graduations before, but they haven’t had cake and punch and a big reception and that was just honoring the families for all their hard work too, so it was a great, great evening of celebration.

The other day also I attended an Aero-structure scholarship announcement from the five aviation companies. Chairman Unruh may want to comment on that, but he was one the keynote speakers and I think it’s a great movement ahead for WATC and tech education and aerospace and employment, because they need 1,000 people to go through this program and they’re supplying the scholarships to pay for that training for these individuals. It’s a great partnership and you know, along the way we’ve heard ‘well, we’re doing all this stuff and all it’s doing is subsidizing the aircraft industries’ but in this case you can’t say that because they’re putting money out there to get people through the training, to get them in the workforce, to supply great jobs for individuals in our community and it’s going to be done through WATC. I’m hoping this aero-structures program will incubate to a pretty large program and drop right into the Jabara Center as an ongoing way to fill a pipeline that’s not going to go away any time soon.

Regular Meeting, Fire District #1, May 23, 2007

I did want to comment that later today I'm going to be at an older Americans celebration. I think this is Older Americans Month and real soon I think I qualify for that. I'll turn 60 this July, so I think I'm officially an older American then."

Chairman Unruh said, "You're young."

Commissioner Norton said, "Thank you, that's what I wanted to hear. I need that verification every day.

I attended some River Festival events Friday and Saturday. The weather was beautiful, the crowds were huge, it was spectacular weather for the River Festival and it was a great celebration. Being ever mindful, we talked yesterday about how we get involved in events and quality of life issues in our community. We had a great debate on that, as we talk about budget. But when you look at, what, 152,000 people downtown is what they estimated to celebrate what is good about our community, our \$15,000 that we threw into that probably was money well spent for our community, for the quality of life.

At noon today I'm going to be participating in a group that is working on the residential programs through K.U. Med. It's an advocacy group. We find out more and more that the residency and the doctors that they produce at K.U. Med not only benefit Wichita, but probably 70 counties in western Kansas. That's where the doctors come from in this part of the state and we believe that it's very important to advocate for K.U. and to keep the residents programs alive and well because it is so critical to our part of the community.

The household hazardous waste in Haysville was a success. I've already kind of reported on that and then finally, remember the Health Summit on June 7th. It is important to our community to understand health access and how we solve that issue. That's all I have Mr. Chair."

Chairman Unruh said, "Okay, thank you. I think Commissioner Parks was next."

Commissioner Parks said, "Thank you. I was honored to represent the county commission at the preview of the penguin exhibit and Commissioner Winters will be at the zoo soon to do a ribbon cutting on that also. But that is quite a feature to the zoo, it's an addition to the zoo. It's a great venue out there for family entertainment. I'd like to thank Cessna for partnership in that and I'd like to remind all the county commissioners and citizens to renew their membership to the zoo. Season pass is the best value and you can certainly provide for that by renewing your membership.

Regular Meeting, Fire District #1, May 23, 2007

I also attended 80 Speedway this weekend. They had a great show and they're having another one coming up this weekend and I will close out with saying I don't qualify for the Older Americans Week, although I do support it, being the youngest county commissioner sitting, so thank you."

Chairman Unruh said, "Thank you for that reminder, commissioner. Commissioner Winters."

Commissioner Winters said, "Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Monday of this week I did start out at Kingman County, visited the Kingman County Commissioners during their meeting to encourage them to consider joining the REAP organization and talked about the regionalism that is happening in our community and with surrounding counties so I had a good visit with the Kingman County Commissioners.

Last week, Visioneering held their annual meeting. Commissioner Norton and I were at that. Visioneering I think continues to move on. I know some people become frustrated because they can't see it as visibly as someone might hope, but there are still hundreds of people volunteering and working on committees to move objectives and strategies forward.

Tomorrow, Thursday May 24th, the DeVore Foundation will celebrate the Excellence in Public Service Award at the Art Museum. The DeVore's do a wonderful job in recognizing an employee from Sedgwick County, the City of Wichita and the school district for going above and beyond, not only in their careers, but also in their personal lives and in the community. Our person that was awarded from Sedgwick County this year is Brent Shelton, who works in the County Clerk's Office.

Then Friday, the 25th of May, is the grand opening of the penguin exhibit, 10:00 at the zoo, so if folks are anxious to see the penguins, they're going to be open this coming Friday."

Chairman Unruh said, "Okay, very good. Commissioner Welshimer."

Commissioner Welshimer said, "Well much of my time is spent down in Derby and I enjoy it, this Saturday morning, breakfast with the seniors, this past Saturday and I office down there on Fridays and meet with the good people of Derby and also the city officials there. And then tomorrow I'll be attending the Greater Downtown Wichita breakfast and board meeting I believe it is in the morning, so that's it for me."

Chairman Unruh said, "Okay, thank you. Well I'll just reiterate a couple of things that have already been said and I would underscore what Commissioner Parks said about buying season passes for the zoo, because our zoo is so big and so wonderful that you can't see it in one day, so a season pass really is the best bargain. And I'm sorry that I'll miss that opening of the penguin exhibit, but got to see them the other night and we do truly want to express appreciating

Regular Meeting, Fire District #1, May 23, 2007

to Cessna Aircraft Corporation and for their support in bringing about the Cessna Penguin Cove out there, but an exciting exhibit.

And I will be also at the Older Americans Month celebration this afternoon. They'll be honoring Dr. Mary Corrigan, whose going to be receiving the second Irene Hart award for her contributions in the field of aging.

And then later this afternoon in kind of a regular meeting, I think folks would be interested to know that Chair and Vice Chair are making regular visits to speak with the Mayor and Vice Mayor, just to keep communication going and develop relationships so that we can go forward together and where we disagree, we can disagree on the basis on fact and idea and not on the basis of personality, but can maintain that relationship, so we're working at that.

And then the last thing I'd want to mention is later this week I get to go hear my grandson give the graduation speech at his high school, pretty outstanding young man, we're looking forward to celebrating with him his high school graduation. And with that, Commissioner Norton."

Commissioner Norton said, "Well, I forgot one thing. Exploration Place, I've kind of laid off of that for a little while, but real soon the Atlantic's Codex of Leonardo DaVinci will be opening up. I think that's the first week of June. It's the first time it's been in America. It's a huge traveling exhibit. You'll be able to take all the inventions of Leonardo DaVinci and through computer animation and everything fly the planes that he designed, worked the machinery that he did. It's an incredible display and that's coming to Exploration Place. It's going to be here for several months and I would encourage people, much like the zoo, you know buy a family membership, go often because we continue to have great exhibits. I mean, we've had T-Rex Named Sue, we've had Titanic, we just finished When Crocodiles Rule. Backyard Monsters is there now for the kids, which is all those creepy-crawly things that are in the backyard that kids like to pick up and bring and show you and then Leonardo DaVinci is coming, so we've got some wonderful things happening at Exploration Place and I'd urge you to stop by and enjoy that."

Chairman Unruh said, "Okay, very good. Well, I don't see any other requests to speak and we have completed our agendas, so commissioners, we are adjourned."

C. ADJOURNMENT

Regular Meeting, Fire District #1, May 23, 2007

There being no other business to come before the Board, the Meeting was adjourned at 11:15 a.m.

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF
SEDGWICK COUNTY, KANSAS**

DAVID M. UNRUH, Chairman
First District

TIM R. NORTON, Commissioner
Second District

THOMAS G. WINTERS, Commissioner
Third District

KELLY PARKS, Commissioner
Fourth District

GWEN WELSHIMER, Commissioner,
Fifth District

ATTEST:

Don Brace, County Clerk

APPROVED:

_____, 2007