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District 4 Citizens Advisory Board Meeting  
Minutes

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Monday, June 10, 2019  
6 p.m.

Fairmount Coffee  
3815 E. 17<sup>th</sup> St. N.

**Board members in attendance:** Sara Dixon, Nalini Fraser, Philip Fraser, Stephanie Kohlhoff, Nigel Morton, Hugh Nicks, Madison Shriner

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Chairwoman Kohlhoff called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Before moving on to agenda items, the board members and the other attendees introduced themselves. Commissioner Cruse thanked everyone for coming and for their input.

**1. Review of Advisory Board Bylaws**

Karen Powell, Deputy County Counselor, began the meeting by going over the formal resolution establishing the advisory board. A distinction was made between the advisory board and the City of Wichita's District Advisory Boards (DABs). While the advisory board will serve to educate the public, and provide community outreach, it will not weigh in on zoning matters or capital improvements as the DABs do.

Van Williams, Sedgwick County Director of Communications, described the process for notifying the public about meetings, when it would be necessary for the board to do so, and basic Kansas Open Meetings Act (KOMA) requirements.

A question was raised about subcommittees and how they would be structured to comply with the bylaws. Powell went on to explain the bylaws did not dictate the formation or operation of subcommittees and general best practices should be used. Commissioner Cruse explained subcommittees would be utilized by the board but they would be addressed at a future meeting.

With no further questions, Hugh Nicks made a motion to approve the bylaws with no amendments, with a second from Nigel Morton. The vote passed unanimously.

**2. Conversation with Wendy Hummell and Jen Wilson**

Jen Wilson, the Behavioral Health Community Coordinator with COMCARE, introduced herself and spoke of her background in social work. Wendy Hummell, Substance Abuse Community Coordinator for the Sedgwick County Sheriff's Department, talked

about her years as City of Wichita police officer and how she approaches the issue of substance abuse from a law enforcement perspective. Both agree the community has been putting a “Band-Aid” on mental health instead of addressing the causes and figuring out strategies to treat them.

Wilson said a community-wide strategic plan to address mental health and substance abuse is currently in progress. She went on to say a “coalition” of community stakeholders. The plan aims to use evidence-based methods to treat the issues. Community partners, like the Community Crisis Center, are analyzing their bed-usage rates and formulating projections for future rates.

Hummell, Wilson, and Commissioner Cruse recently traveled to San Antonio, Texas to tour the Restoration Center, a drug treatment and mental health counselling center. Along with treating substance abuse, the center also focuses on homelessness. Many of the people who go through their program end up being hired to work at the facility. Hummell said the facility had originally been built in place of a new, larger jail. The center has operated for several years and offers an effective model they hope to adapt for Wichita. Wilson said the long-term plans include the creation of a mental health nonprofit, guided by a dedicated board of stakeholders, and funded by a variety of public and private means. U.S.D. 259, Ascension Via Christi, United Methodist Open Door, the District Attorney’s office and local law enforcement have already committed to being involved.

Both Wilson and Hummell said the culture surrounding mental health has to change. When asked how the advisory board could help, they said the best strategy is to openly discuss the struggles facing the community, and to tell people about the mental health services already in place. Services, like the 24-hour suicide hotline, are available but people need to raise awareness of them for them to be effective.

### **3. Positive Messaging Options**

Commissioner Cruse said she would like to possibly have inspirational yard signs made up for homes in the Fourth District. The signs could have simple, yet welcoming, and inclusive messages. Having different local artists make multiple signs was considered, which led to the question of funding. Commissioner Cruse mentioned each commissioner has a stipend for their advisory board and those funds could pay for signage. No decisions were made about the signs and the idea of a future sign subcommittee was brought up.

Kohlhoff said she would like the advisory board to have a social media presence, with Sara Dixon suggesting a Facebook group. The group would be open to everyone, and would give out information about District Four, along with providing positive stories about Wichita and Sedgwick County. No decisions were made about the Facebook group but board members said they would continue looking into logistics.

#### **4. What Do We Want to Learn?**

Commissioner Cruse asked the board who they would like to speak with at upcoming meetings. Hugh Nicks suggested Sedgwick County Sheriff Jeff Easter since crime had been mentioned as a component of mental health. Commissioner Cruse said she would reach out to his office and try to schedule him for the next board meeting.

Commissioner Cruse also suggested Susan Erlenwein, Sedgwick County Director of Environmental Resources, speak to the group. Her department has been leading several clean-up projects recently and could provide insight on the environmental issues Sedgwick County is facing. Commissioner Cruse said she would contact Erlenwein's office about scheduling.

#### **5. Opportunities for Tours**

Commissioner Cruse explained that she is invited to tours with different departments and organizations around the community but she cannot do them all. She then offered for board members to begin taking these tours if they are interested. Upcoming tours would include the Kansas Leadership Center and Interfaith Ministries. The board said they would be interested in the tours so Commissioner Cruse said she would reach out whenever a tour became available. She warned there may be short notice with some of the tours.

Commissioner Cruse also asked the board to begin thinking about other tours they would like to go on so she could think about accommodations.

#### **6. Meeting Minutes from May 13**

Board members were given time to review the printed minutes from the May 13 advisory board meetings. Kohlhoff asked if there were any questions or needed amendments. There were none. Madison Shriner made a motion to approve the minutes, which was seconded by Hugh Nicks.

The vote passed unanimously.

#### **7. Other**

Nigel Morton asked about options for child care for people who want to attend public meetings. Commissioner Cruse said there is nothing in place right now, but the Board of County Commissioners does broadcast their meetings on KPTS, and on the Sedgwick County website. YouTube Live is being looked at as a new broadcast platform for meetings.

Hugh Nicks asked about upcoming topics for the Board of County Commissioners. Commissioner Cruse said the annual budget is the top priority right now and it will be

voted on in August. She also mentioned the ongoing discussions about EMS efficiencies, including the consolidation of some positions. The moratorium on new solar panels and wind turbines is still in effect for the County but new regulations will be voted on soon. A request was made for more information about the Metropolitan Area Planning Committee and their role.

Kohlhoff moved to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Nicks. It was unanimously approved.

**Next Meetings**

- July 8 – Park City Senior Center – 6100 N. Hydraulic
- August 12 – McAdams Recreation Center – Club Room – 1329 E. 13th St. N.