



Sedgwick County...
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District 1 Citizens Advisory Board Meeting
Meeting Minutes

Monday, March 21, 2021
5:30 p.m.

Bel Aire City Hall
7651 E. Central Park Ave., Bel Aire, KS 67226

Board Members in Attendance: Daniel Bateman, Judah Craig, Joseph Dozier, Diane Gjerstad, Kendall Hershberger, Jacqueline Kelly, Dr. Stephanie Kuhlmann, Jim Reid, Drake Robinson

County Representatives in Attendance: Commissioner Pete Meitzner, County Manager Tom Stolz

1. Call to Order

- a. Chair Judah Craig called the meeting to order at 5:34 p.m.

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes

- a. A motion was made by Daniel Bateman to approve the minutes for the Feb. 28, 2021, District 1 Citizens Advisory Board (CAB) meeting. Kendal Hershberger seconded this motion. **The CAB approved the motion with a vote of 7-0.** (Jacqueline Kelly and Jim Reid had not joined the meeting yet)

3. New Business

- a. General Functions of County Government
 - i. County Manager Tom Stolz reviewed the Sedgwick County Organizational Chart.
 - ii. Mr. Stolz then proceeded to explain the role of county government and how it is a conduit for the State of Kansas. He also shared the entertainment pieces of the county including the Sedgwick County Zoo, Exploration Place, Intrust Bank Arena, parks and other Museums.
 - iii. Sedgwick County is fully into 2023 budget planning. The goal for staff is to propose a budget that is balanced with no tax increase. Mr. Stolz explained that it was important to leadership to keep government as small as it can, but give the best services possible.
 - iv. The 2023 Budget process is already underway. It started in November 2021 and two budget workshops have been held since. Public hearings will take place in July and August 2022 with budget ratification planned for the third week of August.
 - v. One focus of the current state of county operations is how under the market wages and salaries are and now even worse because of the pandemic. The county has not been keeping up with wages and salaries. The plan was developed to fix this discrepancy in four to seven years. The number one issue facing Sedgwick County Government for 2023 is staffing and workforce.
 - 1. Kendall Hershberger asked what the percentage difference was in salaries.
 - a. Mr. Stolz shared that the average percentage was between 14-16% below standard. After increases, the goal is to become within 5-6 of private industry standard. The County service opportunities are a great sales tool that helps recruit and keep people in the workforce.
 - 2. Diane Gjerstad asked if the 988 hotline had been given to counties to fund.
 - a. Mr. Stolz shared that the funding comes through taxes that are routed to the state.

- b. Commissioner Meitzner shared that the revenue is a phone tax of \$.20 per phone per month.
 - c. Mr. Stolz shared that there is a \$3 billion excess in funds in this year's state budget and that the 988 hotline is a national initiative.
 - vi. The County is still in a healthy financial condition with an AAA budget rating. The March 23 BOCC meeting will decide the future of the remaining ARPA funds.
 - vii. Framework for the 2023 budget includes listening to the BOCC, maintaining minimum fund balances and emergency fund, thoughtfully considering critical department needs and no increase in mill levy. For services, questions have been around what are the core ones that will continue to be provided, what ones are hopes and dreams and what can be cut.
 - viii. Key areas of the 2023 budget are public services with an emphasis on behavioral/mental health, public safety, public works (roads, weather, etc.), general government and infrastructure support, culture and recreation, economic development and debt service. The top focus of Commissioners is mental and behavioral health.
 - ix. The significant challenges are workforce shortage, public safety costs, escalating behavioral health issues, effective consolidations and maintaining the right balance of government with a focus on the true core services.
 - 1. Kendal Hershberger asked about at what point does the City of Wichita outgrow the county and if that happens, how do elected officials transition.
 - a. Mr. Stolz shared an example of how the City and County merge codes and the success it has been. As the continual look at functional mergers, it almost has to go to the county. He also shared about Wyandotte County and explained that the citizens drive the move towards consolidation. He also gave Nashville, TN as an example of this consolidation.
 - 2. Jacqueline Kelly commented about the merging of functions and asked if the cultures of the two government entities would be able to merge.
 - a. Mr. Stolz commented how there's always been a cultural difference between the County and the City and how Commissioners and City Council drive the culture. Many dwell on what we do differently, but the focus needs to be on what we do the same. It's also important to have elected that respect each other and try to work together.
 - x. Daniel Bateman asked as more funds come in and ticket prices go up if there is a time when the County cuts off funding to its entertainment entities.
 - 1. Commissioner Meitzner compared Botanica and Cowtown and the leadership examples of each entity.
 - 2. Mr. Stolz commented on the work Exploration Place has been doing. The important next step for all entertainment entities is to focus on what's going on in 30 years.
 - xi. Tex Dozier asked about an update on the row office discussion from a previous BOCC meeting.
 - 1. Mr. Stolz said that it is going to be looked at it again and this conversation is not about politics but efficiencies. It's also not a BOCC decision but a voter. The Commission gives the green light for it to become a vote.
 - 2. Commissioner Meitzner shared that he is supportive of letting citizens vote. What the BOCC controls is the budget authority over those offices.
 - xii. Daniel Bateman asked what messages the CAB can share with neighbors to continue to support local government.
 - 1. Mr. Stolz shared that people can be kinder to each other and sympathetic. The heart of many in the business is to serve.
- b. Discussion of Future Meeting Dates & Agenda Items

- i. Judah Craig confirmed that the Election Commissioner will be at the April meeting and asked to continue scheduling COMCARE, ICT-1, Airport Authority and Jabara Master Plan discussions for future meetings.
 - ii.
4. Adjournment
 - a. The District 1 Citizen's Advisory Board adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

*The next Citizens Advisory Board Meeting will be **Monday, April 18, 2022, 5:30 p.m.**
at Bel Aire City Hall, 7651 E. Central Park Ave., Bel Aire, KS.*

If you are unable to attend, meetings will be streamed via Zoom:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89672613144?pwd=SVJKeGJobmx1dG1HZGtLYU8vbmxDZz09>

Meeting ID: 896 7261 3144

Passcode: 776132