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CITIZENS ADVISORY BOARD, DISTRICT 5 – MEETING MINUTES

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Friday, August 4<sup>th</sup>, 2023 4:00 PM

2937 E Oaklawn Dr., Wichita

**Board Members in attendance:** David Sowden, Chairman; John Nicholas, Vice-Chairman; Liz Loera, Secretary; Brad Smith; Olivia Hayse, Joseph Elmore; Andrew Le; Denise Meirowsky; Bryan Porter

**Excused:** Amanda Amerine

**Absent:** Christopher Wyant

**County Representatives:** Commissioner Jim Howell; Lindsay Poe Rousseau, CFO

**Attendees:** 3 members of the public were present (no sign-in)

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**ORDER OF BUSINESS**

- 1. Chair David Sowden called the meeting to order at 4:03 PM.**
- 2. Invocation** – Brad Smith
- 3. Flag Salute** – Members stood for the flag salute.
- 4. Roll Call – Determine Quorum**
  - a. David Sowden, John Nicholas, Liz Loera, Brad Smith, Olivia Hayse, Joseph Elmore, Denise Meirowsky, Bryan Porter
  - b. Quorum was present
  - c. Andrew Le arrived later in the meeting but was not present to vote on approval of minutes.
- 5. Approval of Minutes – June 5, 2023**
  - a. Motion to approve by Chair David Sowden
  - b. Seconded by Joseph Elmore
  - c. Approved 8-0
- 6. Public Agenda**
  - a. There were no public comments.
- 7. New business**
  - a. **Sedgwick County Proposed Budget Review: CFO Lindsay Poe Rousseau**

# 2024 Recommended Budget

Tom Stolz, County Manager



## Sedgwick County Budget Team

**Lorien Showalter Arie**  
*Budget Director*

**Tim Kaufman**  
*Deputy County Manager*

**Rusty Leeds**  
*Assistant County Manager/Public Safety*

**Tania Cole**  
*Assistant County Manager/Admin Services*

**Lynn Packer**  
*Sedgwick County Engineer/Public Works Director*

**Lindsay Poe Rousseau**  
*Chief Financial Officer*

**Sheena Schmutz**  
*Chief Human Resources Officer*

**Mike Elpers**  
*Chief Information Officer*

**Brent Shelton**  
*Deputy Chief Financial Officer*

**Carli Sanchez**  
*Principal Budget Analyst*

**Lee McCrea**  
*Principal Budget Analyst*

**Dustin Sigler**  
*Budget Analyst*

**Paul Leeker**  
*Budget Analyst*

**Tom Stolz**  
*County Manager*



## 2024 Overall Budget Goals

- Continues stabilization of county staff by addressing compensation, work environment, and training.
- Strategic staffing additions/modifications/deletions
- Capital Improvement Projects: Infrastructure and properties
- Continued commitment to mental health
- No mill levy increase



## 2024 Budget Process

- **Late 2022:** Division/Department Head reviews
- **February 2023:** BOCC workshop at Exploration Place
- **April:** Manager/Budget Team Initial Reviews
- **May:** BOCC public reviews and comment
- **May/June:** Workshops and further discussions with Commissioners
- **July 11:** Presentation of recommended budget and "last up day"



## 2024 State of Operations

- Post pandemic protocols and business practices complete
- Staffing is improving
- Economy still somewhat volatile though improving
- Supply chain issues better, but costs of everything have gone up



## Recommended Adjustments

- **Employee Compensation**
  - Evergreen Study implementation for general pay plan market adjustment
  - 2% pay scale adjustment plus step increases for Sheriff, EMS, and SCFD#1
  - 3% pay adjustment for all employee groups



## Recommended Adjustment

- **Working Environment**
  - 2024 facility capital improvement plan: \$6.6M
  - Mental Health Contingency: \$1M
- **Strategic Position Additions**
  - 3 FTE's – Elections Office
  - 2 FTE's – Appraisers Office
  - 2 FTE's – Sedgwick County Fire District One
  - 1 FTE – Emergency 911 Communications
  - 1 FTE – RFSC
  - 1 FTE – EMS plus organizational change



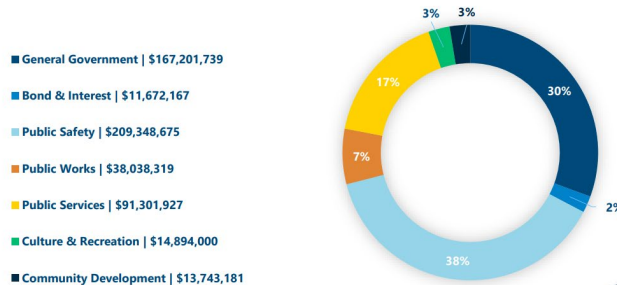
## 2024 Recommended Budget

Sedgwick County	Fire District 1
\$518,464,784	\$27,735,225
<b>Total: \$546,200,009</b>	

Property tax rates are estimated to be 29.370 mills for Sedgwick County and 17.889 for Fire District 1

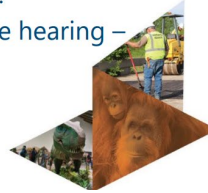


## Recommended Budget by Function



## Next Step in the Budget Process

- On line public review of budget at [sedgwickcounty.org](https://sedgwickcounty.org)
- On line public forum at [sedgwickcounty.org](https://sedgwickcounty.org)
- First Public Hearing – August 2 at 6:00 p.m.
- Second Public Hearing/revenue neutral rate hearing – August 23 at 9:00 a.m.
- Budget Adoption – August 23 at 9:00 a.m.



1. Brad Smith asked how much the total budget increased this year
  - a. Lindsay Poe Rousseau responded that there was actually a significant decrease because of ARPA funds in the 2023 budget
  - b. Spending for 2022 was \$447.3 million; 2023 was \$546.2 million
  - c. The budget is a spending limit/plan; County rarely spends all of the funds in the adopted budget
2. Bryan Porter asked how employee compensation at the County compares to other organizations
  - a. Lindsay said that this year's is low comparatively
  - b. Last year, Sedgwick County did an 8% increase; while Johnson County and the City of Wichita did more
  - c. Governments are all trying to catch up in different ways and with different increases each year
3. Brad Smith asked if Revenue Neutral Rate is based on the mill levy rate
  - a. Lindsay answered that the County must look at how many dollars are brought in by the mill levy in a year
    - i. Then, they determine what mill levy would bring in that same amount of dollars for the following year
    - ii. If the mill levy is above the amount needed to bring in the same amount of dollars, RNR is exceeded
    - iii. In order not to exceed RNR for 2024, the County would have had to cut 2.5 mills out of the budget
4. Brad Smith asked how much of the circle graph (see slide 9) is funded by property tax
  - a. Lindsay said that all property tax (\$158.6 million) goes into the general fund
  - b. About \$152.6 million of that goes to public safety (\$202.7 million if Fire District 1 taxes are included)
5. Chair David Sowden asked Lindsay to explain what a mill is
  - a. Lindsay provided an example:
    - i. Based on a \$200,000 home: 11.5% of the home's assessed value taxed at \$1 for every \$1,000 of value (one mill)
    - ii. In Sedgwick County, the mill levy rate is 29.4 mills
    - iii. To calculate for \$200,00 home:
      1.  $\$200,000 \times .115 = \$23,000$  taxed value

- 2.  $\$23,000 \times .0294 = \$676.20$  paid in property tax**
- b. For most homeowners, Sedgwick County's mill levy makes up about a quarter of property taxes paid; remainder is from City, township, school district, and/or fire
  - c. Mill levy rates are different for commercial properties
6. Commissioner Jim Howell explained that there is a proposal at the state level to change the percentage of assessed value taxed from 11.5% to 9%; currently, about 70% of Sedgwick County's property tax comes from residential properties
  7. Andrew Le asked a clarifying question about what the mill levy is
    - a. Lindsay explained that if there is \$6.5 billion in assessed value within the County, one mill will bring in \$6.5 million
  8. Andrew Le asked how the mill levy rate is calculated
    - a. Lindsay explained that the County looks at expenses and other revenues in the budget, then determines how many mills are needed from there
  9. Brad Smith asked what the most-asked budget question is
    - a. Lindsay said that there is not one in particular; she has heard many different perspectives
    - b. Many people ask about property tax and/or why everything is so expensive
  10. Commissioner Howell noted that the City of Wichita has referred to a surplus in 2023; he then asked Lindsay how the county quantifies a surplus
    - a. Lindsay answered that the City's surplus is due to ARPA funds used to shore up budget for operational costs through next year—governments are able to use ARPA money for things typically funded by property tax
    - b. Difficult because one-time money being used for long-term costs
    - c. For the County: funds in contingency are not from property tax
    - d. The goal is to always have a balanced budget and forecast; any use of cash in the bank is done very strategically
  11. Commissioner Howell asked Lindsay about Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)
    - a. Lindsay shared that there is one significant project that is new to CIP that has not been discussed in a prior year; this is rare because it usually takes a couple of years for a capital improvement project to get funded
    - b. CIP committee looks at projects—Lindsay is the chair
    - c. CIP covers some small things: roofs, parking lots, sirens, etc.
    - d. Major project is the Juvenile Services Community-Based Building
      - i. Currently, juvenile services are scattered throughout different places; this project would bring everything together (Juvenile Detention Facility, Juvenile Residential Facility, Juvenile Intake and Assessment Center, other community-based services)

- ii. All of these services operated by Department of Corrections; consolidation will help address staffing issues
  - iii. Hope is for this project to make services better for children and families with everything in one place
  - iv. Time pressure on the project due to an expiring lease
  - v. Project will be a policy decision for Commissioners
12. Commissioner Howell noted that the County is in good shape with debt; has dropped from 14% to 8.5% of what state allows in Commissioner Howell's time on the Commission
- a. Lindsay stated that the state policy dictates that debt should be only 3% of full market valuation in debt
  - b. Sedgwick County only has about 8.5% of the 3% allowed
  - c. Sedgwick County has more restrictive debt policy than state
    - i. Policy includes five measures: four clumped together—County has to be below three of the four; must always stay below fifth measure
      - 1. County's debt per person must be under \$500 (currently at \$127)
      - 2. Total debt of every taxing jurisdiction in the community per person must be under \$3,000 (currently at about \$3,800—only measure that County exceeds)
      - 3. County's debt compared to fair market value must be 1.5% or less (currently at 0.13%)
      - 4. Total debt of jurisdictions compared to total fair market value must be 6% or below (currently at 4.3%)
      - 5. Annual amount of debt service being paid cannot reach 10% or more of general fund + bonds and interest funds (currently at 4%)
13. Commissioner Howell stated that the administration building will be about \$15-\$50 million based on which option the Commission chooses; costs for election office, COMCARE expansion, and Regional Forensic Science Center are already baked in; emergency management building will be \$7-\$8 million with grant or \$10-\$15 million without grant
14. Chair David Sowden asked about a travel expenditure policy for Commissioners
- a. Lindsay said that there has not been discussion of changing policy
  - b. Chair Sowden indicated interest in seeing the numbers; Lindsay said that she could provide them
  - c. Lindsay also shared that the BoCC budget has remained flat; Commissioners have stayed within the budget and have contingency to cover costs if necessary
  - d. Chair Sowden then asked what the BoCC budget is; Lindsay answered that it totals \$1.034 million, with \$909,000 of that going to personnel costs

15. Chair David Sowden asked how much the manager can spend without BoCC approval
- a. Lindsay answered that the manager can spend up to \$250,000 with required notification; she noted that the current manager does not exercise this ability unless there is an emergency
  - b. Lindsay said that if the board is interested in learning more about purchasing, Joe Thomas can come to a meeting to discuss the process. Lindsay said that the County's charter is the most restrictive in the state of Kansas.
  - c. Chair Sowden asked if there is any limit to the number of times the manager can spend up to \$250,000 without approval
    - i. Lindsay said there is no limit, but it must be reported to the BoCC each time—so it would probably stop if manager was abusing it
    - ii. Chair Sowden clarified that the county manager works for the BoCC, while the rest of the County staff works for the manager—Lindsay confirmed that this is true, but some staff also work for County appraiser or other elected officials such as the Register of Deeds or Treasurer
      1. Andrew Le noted that this is similar to the City's structure
      2. Lindsay agreed and added that the City has seven elected officials and 15 departments, whereas the County has 46 departments and five commissioners plus the Sheriff, District Attorney, Register of Deeds, Treasurer, and Clerk
      3. Election Commissioner is appointed by Secretary of State but funded by BoCC
16. Commissioner Howell asked how much of property and sales tax is used for nondiscretionary responsibilities to the state
- a. Lindsay answered \$16 million is clearly discretionary; could probably get another \$5-\$10 million from optional services from mandated departments
17. John Nicholas asked if an employee is paid \$10/hr, what percentage is used for overhead costs
- a. Lindsay answered that it depends on if the employee receives KPERS or Fire/EMS/etc.
    - i. KPERS: 25%
    - ii. Fire/EMS/etc.: 35-40% depending on selected benefits
  - b. Commissioner Howell noted that health insurance is the same cost to the County regardless of the employee's salary
  - c. Lindsay shared that the County is very generous with health insurance; pays 85% of premium
18. Chair David Sowden said that there was a public hearing on Wednesday (August 2<sup>nd</sup>); second hearing is on the same day as budget adoption. Chair Sowden voiced concern that this second public hearing is not a true public



hearing because it is nearly impossible for changes to be made at that point. Chair Sowden believes County should hold two budget hearings prior to the adoption date; knows that existing hearings are not well-attended

19. Olivia Hayse asked if there is a recess after the public hearing portion before adoption
  - a. Lindsay responded that Commissioners could call for a break during the meeting, but this usually does not happen
20. Commissioner Howell shared a few comments on the public hearing process:
  - a. Faith Martin's public comments started a good conversation on Wednesday
  - b. RNR notifications have not yet gone out
  - c. Technically, the BoCC could not pass the budget on August 23<sup>rd</sup>, but they need to pass it before August 31<sup>st</sup> and provide 10-day notice of the meeting
  - d. Online portal for public comments on budget is open; currently only one comment has been submitted

## **2. Commissioner Howell Report**

- a. Bullet Points: August 14th, 4:00 PM, Range 54
  - b. Coffee with the Commish: August 15<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 AM, The Grill
  - c. Tax Talk: August 7th, 2:30 PM, Oaklawn Community Center
  - d. Veterans Expo: August 5<sup>th</sup>, 10:00 AM-3:00 PM, Mid-America All Indian Museum (parking at Exploration Place)
  - e. Purple Heart County Proclamation and Reception: August 7<sup>th</sup>, 1:30 PM, Ruffin Building Auditorium
  - f. Industrial Revenue Bond approved by both City and County for new Spirit Aerosystems (City providing bond, County has to agree)
  - g. Exploration Place beginning \$25 million CIP project; County contributing \$2.5 million for amphitheater
  - h. Commissioner Howell is serving on Exploited Missing Children's Unit (EMCU) Board—work dovetails with Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC)
  - i. Senate Concurrent Resolution 1611: caps assessed value growth to 4% per year; new valuation if property is sold
  - j. Commissioner Howell brought up his suggestion to pass a resolution tying sales tax directly to quality of life services at this week's BoCC meeting
- ## **3. Board Member Andrew Le's last meeting**
- a. Chair David Sowden thanked Andrew Le for his attendance and active participation on the CAB
  - b. Andrew will be attending Kansas State University this fall.
- ## **4. Meeting adjourned by Chair David Sowden at 6:01 PM.**

### **BOARD ACTION ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS:**

Review of future subject matter – determine priority and interests.

- ICT-1 Follow Up

- County fines versus State Allowance Resolutions
- Driver's License Suspensions etc
- SGCO HR
- LAVTR – Local Ad Valorem Tax Reduction Status
- Blake Carpenter – Bill Presentation
- K15 Corridor
- SGCO EMS

**ADJOURNMENT**

*The next Citizens Advisory Board Meeting will be Friday, September 1<sup>st</sup> at 4:00 PM.*

County Upcoming Events (Tentative):

- Tuesday, August 8<sup>th</sup>: BoCC Staff Meeting
- Wednesday, August 9<sup>th</sup>: BoCC Meeting
- Tuesday, August 15<sup>th</sup>: BoCC Staff Meeting
- Wednesday, August 16<sup>th</sup>: BoCC Meeting
- Wednesday, August 23<sup>rd</sup>: BoCC Meeting (Final Budget hearing and budget adoption)

County Closed:

- Labor Day – Monday, September 4, 2023
- Veterans' Day – Friday, November 11, 202 (Observed)
- Thanksgiving – Thursday, November 23, 2023 – Friday, November 24, 2023
- Christmas – Monday, December 25, 2023

Commissioner Howell Events:

- 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of each Month – Bullet Points @ Range 54 (5725 E Kellogg Dr S., Wichita) 4p-5:30p
- Last Friday of each Month – Cuppa Jo with Jim @ Calvary Baptist Church Gymnasium (1636 E. Patriot, Derby – enter through the glass doors on the East side of the Building) 7a-9a.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each Month 7a – 9a – Coffee with the Commish; The Grill, 222 N. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave., Mulvane