



District 4 Citizens Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

July 30, 2024 | 5:30 p.m.
Sedgwick County 6th Floor Large Conference Room
100 N. Broadway, Ste 630, Wichita

Board Members in Attendance: Susanne Haynes, Krister Johnson, Jacob LaMunyon, Ariel Rodriguez, Helen Rolfe, Chris Stingo, Jordan Walker, Andrew Womack

County Representatives: Commissioner Ryan Baty; Lindsay Poe Rousseau, Sedgwick County CFO

1. ORDER OF BUSINESS

- a. Call to Order – Commissioner Ryan Baty
 - i. Commissioner Ryan Baty called the meeting to order at 5:31pm.
- b. Approval of Meeting Minutes – Commissioner Ryan Baty
 - i. Commissioner Baty motioned to approve the minutes, Krister Johnson seconded. Board approved the minutes.

2. PUBLIC AGENDA

- a. The public agenda allows members of the public to address the District 4 Citizens Advisory Board.
 - i. None

3. NEW BUSINESS

- a. 2025 Recommended Budget, Sedgwick County CFO Lindsay Poe Rousseau
 - i. Lindsay Poe Rousseau gave a presentation going over the 2025 Recommended Budget including budget process and goals.
 - ii. Lindsay Poe Rousseau stated in January we had a \$4.9 million structural imbalance in the forecast.
 1. Commissioner Baty expanded, as of January of this year there was no structural imbalance. There was one meeting in January where there was a \$4.9 million imbalance due to the Sheriff Officer pay raise to compete with City of Wichita 13% pay raise. To keep the gap small we gave Sheriff an 8.7% raise to the equivalent of \$5.4 million. The Sheriff alone is 11 mills of the Counties 29 mills and they are only 1 of our 46 departments.
 - iii. Jordan Walker asked, how many buildings do we have for Juvenile Services right now?
 1. Tania Cole answered, goal is to move all the juvenile departments so they are all in the same campus location but not necessarily fewer buildings.
 - iv. Chris Stingo asked, could you talk about the sales tax idea for community services, how has that conversation been received?
 1. Commissioner Baty responded, property tax dollars should be reserved for core services not for community services like the Zoo and Exploration Place. Need to get them off property tax dollars to make them more secure so they are not cut to keep property taxes low. Putting them on a sales tax also makes visitors from outside of Sedgwick County help fund them. This is just a discussion right now.
 - v. Jordan Walker asked, there are other communities that have done this, is there data to show, if we drop this, this is what we can expect?

1. Commissioner Baty responded, they are in the process. We believe the savings in property taxes will offset the sales tax so the citizen will have a net savings. But we have to be careful because a sales tax can be a regressive tax. We should not be funding these things with property taxes but in certain cases there is only so much we can do because of previous agreements.
- vi. Commissioner Baty asked the room, what are your priorities? Or things in this recommended budget you like or don't like?
 1. Krister Johnson stated that he liked the Budget Roundtables.
- vii. Commissioner Baty commented, where you are seeing significant increases are in public safety, are we on the right path?
 1. Jordan Walker stated, that's core government, and if we're going to focus on the core then we need to do it really well. And we also need a plan of how do we also address the root causes of what leads people to those pathways, like the crisis center. I'd much rather make sure we have people are who are not over worked and under paid serving the community.
 2. Commissioner Baty added, for comparison, we have the 2nd lowest mill levy rate out of 105 counties. We're compared to Johnson County but they have 80,000 more citizens. What we get per dollar per citizen in Sedgwick County is a better value than any other county for what we do and what we do is more challenging. We should be holding it up as an example.
- viii. Krister Johnson asked, are other counties are getting close to 30% of their dollars from grants?
 1. Commissioner Baty replied, we do some things here that are unique, like COMCARE that uses more grant dollars.
 2. Lindsay Poe Rousseau answered, proportionally we are up there. Johnson County gets a large chunk as well. But we are a safety net for our community. Johnson County doesn't have that same need.
- ix. Susanne Haynes asked, where does grant money come from?
 1. Lindsay Poe Rousseau answered, various State agencies, Federal Grants, pass-thru grants. Some grants we are prevented from taking.
 2. Commissioner Baty added, I wish we could change the system of the State/Federal government taxing us and then giving it back to distribute. Just let us keep it in the first place.
- x. Susanne Haynes asked, I still see ads for COVID shots, how soon can those go away and be replaced with a different message?
 1. Commissioner Baty replied, the budget has been reduced for those campaigns and they were mostly state campaigns. The 2025 budget doesn't really have funding for that anymore.
- xi. Commissioner Baty spoke to Cultural Arts and the \$1mill reduction.
 1. Plan 1 – 1/8 cent sales tax, voter approved to fund Cultural Arts through the sales tax and no longer fund them through property taxes
 2. Plan 2 – Get all 20 cities to agree to a ¼ or ½ cent sales tax with the obligation that everyone uses for Cultural Arts instead of property taxes. If that happens you'll see about a 2.5 mill decrease from Sedgwick County. Maize would see a 7-10 mill decrease.
- xii. Krister Johnson asked, we'll continue to fund them if we have the money
 1. Commissioner Baty replied, or we'll cut because the places that get cut are cultural arts. These are important assets. EP and the Zoo have an estimated \$60 million output in economic value. I want to get us on a path of self-sustainability and off of property taxes.
- xiii. Susanne Haynes asked, when will we see the date of what could happen with these two plans?

1. Commissioner Baty answered, the hope is to see a County Commissioner lead plan sometime after the initial meeting in August to place this on the ballot in 2025. Will need to have a lot of public education leading up to it.
- xiv. Ariel Rodriguez asked, what is the State's role in allowing us to do a sales tax for this?
 1. Commissioner Baty replied, in order to get a sales tax initiative, it has to be voter approved and that needs the support of the State Legislature.
- xv. Ariel Rodriguez asked, is there a chance for more money to be in this bucket than is currently being allocated? How would that money be dispersed?
 1. Lindsay Poe Rousseau answered, we would ask the State to allow us to create a new fund for the money to go into. Then if all 20 cities are involved, there will likely need to be a board that represents the parties to decide how the funds are spent.
- xvi. Jordan Walker asked, do we know if NW Arkansas has something like this with all of their small communities with their bike trails? Maybe we can get data from examples like that?

4. BOARD AGENDA

- a. Commissioner Baty opened the meeting to comments and questions from the board.

5. ADJOURNMENT

- a. The meeting was adjourned at 7:02 p.m.

*The next Citizens Advisory Board Meeting will be **Tuesday, September 24, 2024, 5:30 p.m.**, at Sedgwick County 6th Floor Large Conference Room - 100 N. Broadway, Ste. 630, Wichita.*