

## **Council Minutes – December 9, 2014**

COUNCIL CHAMBER, Topeka, Kansas, Tuesday, December 9, 2014. The Councilmembers of the City of Topeka met in regular session at 6:00 P.M., with the following Councilmembers present: Councilmembers Hiller, Brown, Ortiz, De La Isla, Manspeaker, Schwartz, Schmidt and Harmon -8. Mayor Larry E. Wolgast presided -1. Absent: Councilmember Everhart -1.

AFTER THE MEETING was called to order, Councilmember De La Isla gave the invocation.

THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE was recited by those present in the chamber.

A PRESENTATION was given by James Brown, Topeka Police Chief, on the Topeka Public Schools 501 School Resource Officer (SRO) Program. He reported while conducting independent audits within the Topeka Police Department it was clear that the contract between the City of Topeka and Topeka Public Schools stipulated that the City was to provide 4 officers instead of the 11 officers currently being provided. He provided a brief overview of the events that have transpired to date and the need to increase Topeka police officers in service operations. He noted he is willing to provide 7 officers for the SRO Program for the remaining 2014-2015 school year.

Councilmember Ortiz asked if Topeka Public Schools have their own officers; are they fully staffed; and do their officers have the same authority as Topeka police officers. She expressed her appreciation to Chief Brown for his detailed review of the issue and stated she would support his decision in the matter.

Chief Brown stated the Topeka Public School officers have the same powers and authorities as Topeka Police officers and he has called upon the Topeka Public School leadership to properly

staff their SRO Program to protect their children. He reported Topeka Public Schools funds 12 full-time officers; however, he is unsure if they are fully staffed at this time.

Councilmember De La Isla asked how Topeka Public Schools have responded to the issue. She reported she has received many telephone calls and emails from parents, children and principals; however, she has not heard from the Topeka Public School Board Administration.

Chief Brown stated he had the opportunity to clarify any misleading information at a press conference earlier in the day. He reported the reorganization of the Topeka Police Department would allow for more officers to be placed on the streets, a concern expressed by the public on many occasions. He noted Dr. Julie Ford, Topeka Public Schools Superintendent, stated she would like to meet with the City Manager to find a solution.

Councilmember Schwartz commended Chief Brown for his service and stated the Community Policing Program is important and needs improvement. She asked how many school districts have a contract with the Topeka Police Department for SROs.

Chief Brown stated the Topeka Public Schools Administration must determine the most efficient way to utilize officers; however, SROs are not part of Community Policing. He noted Community Policing has been increased by adding commanding officers to the unit to further address citizen concerns. He stated he was not aware of any other school districts within Shawnee County using Topeka Police officers; however, he would confirm and report back to the Council.

Councilmember Hiller stated she would prefer to have an officer in close proximity in case there was an incident. She asked if it would be possible for off-duty officers to be used in the Community Policing Program.

Chief Brown stated there are many areas throughout the city that need two (2) officers on duty while working street operations to increase the safety of officers. He reported the Topeka Police Department reorganization will put more officers on the streets as there are only 12 police officers patrolling the streets at any given time, compared to the Topeka Public Schools which have 20 officers on duty at any given time.

Councilmember Manspeaker commended Chief Brown on working to find efficiencies within the department and improving response times. He asked citizens that are concerned with the safety of Topeka Public School students to contact the School Board Administration not the City of Topeka. He stated it is the School Board's responsibility to provide a safe environment for students.

Councilmember Brown spoke in support of the decisions made by Chief Brown to put more officers on the streets which will result in faster response time to incidents. He asked when the intent to reduce the number of SROs to 7 officers would occur. He stated he believes Chief Brown and the City Manager will resolve the situation while maintaining a good relationship with Topeka Public Schools.

Chief Brown reported the Topeka Police Department would maintain 11 officers through the end of the 2014-2015 school year. He stated he has asked the School Administration to find a way to work with 7 officers beginning in the 2015-2016 school year.

Councilmember Ortiz asked if a contract has been signed for the current year.

Chief Brown reported the City would proceed with a contract once an agreement has been reached between City and School Administration. He stated he respects concerns expressed by the community; however, his duty is to protect the entire city of Topeka.

Councilmember Hiller referenced the new bond issue that was just approved for the Topeka Public School District and stated that she believes it would be a good time to review their needs. She suggested discussing with Topeka Public Schools how the City and School could work together to retain a safe environment for students.

THE CONSENT AGENDA was presented as follows:

BOARD APPOINTMENT recommending the appointment of Steve Mohan to the City of Topeka Board of Building and Fire Appeals for a term ending December 31, 2016, was presented.

BOARD APPOINTMENT recommending the appointment of Dan Rowe to the City of Topeka Board of Building and Fire Appeals for a term ending December 31, 2016, was presented.

BOARD APPOINTMENT recommending the appointment of Dave Krug to the City of Topeka Board of Electrical Appeals for a term ending December 31, 2016, was presented.

BOARD APPOINTMENT recommending the appointment of Shawn Smith to the City of Topeka Board of Electrical Appeals for a term ending December 31, 2016, was presented.

DENIAL of Tort Claim Appeal filed by John Boos seeking compensation for damage to his lawnmower in the amount of \$292.78 was presented.

DENIAL of Tort Claim Appeal filed by Angela Newsom seeking compensation for vehicle damage caused by a pothole in the amount of \$2,200 was presented.

DENIAL of Tort Claim Appeal filed by John Wright seeking compensation for property damage caused by the Topeka Police Department during the execution of a search warrant in the amount of \$10,000 was presented.

MINUTES of the regular meeting of December 2, 2014, was presented.

An Open After Midnight License application for American Bar & Grill located at 3251 SW Topeka Boulevard was presented.

Dance Hall License applications were presented for the following:

<u>Business Name</u>	<u>Address</u>
American Legion	3029 NW US Highway 24
Eclipse	4117 SW Huntoon Street
Kansas Expocentre	One Expocentre Drive
Lazy Toad	5331 SW 22 <sup>nd</sup> Place, #2
Los Charros	4111 SW Gage Center Drive
Skinny's Sports Bar & Grill	4016 SW Huntoon Street
Wild Horse	3249 SW Topeka Boulevard

Councilmember De La Isla moved to approve the consent agenda. The motion seconded by Councilmember Harmon carried unanimously. (8-0-0)

ORDINANCE NO.19932 introduced by City Manager Jim Colson, authorizing the issuance of \$45,510,000 aggregate principal amount of Combined Utility Improvement and Refunding Bonds, Series 2014-A, of the City of Topeka, Kansas, under the authority of K.S.A. 10-116a and K.S.A. 10-1201 et seq., and all amendments thereto was presented. (*Contract No. 44023*)

Brandon Kauffman, Chief Fiscal Officer, reported the City experienced a strong turnout with seven competitive bids with the winning bid offering an interest rate of 3.13% for a total bond amount of \$45,510,000 with a savings of 12.2%.

Councilmember Schwartz asked how the bonds would affect the 2015 operating budget.

Brandon Kauffman stated the transaction would provide a savings of approximately \$13 million.

Councilmember Hiller questioned why the City would refinance for 30 years with only six years left to pay on the Combined Utility Improvement and Refunding Bond Series 2006-B; and what would the cost be to refinance the bonds for 15 to 20 years instead of 30 years.

Brandon Kauffman reported the refinancing did not extend the life of any of the bonds included.

Jim Colson, City Manager stated staff would research the figures and report back to Councilmember Hiller on the costs to refinance at 15 to 20 years.

Councilmember De La Isla moved to adopt the ordinance. The motion seconded by Councilmember Brown carried. Mayor Wolgast voted “yes.” Councilmember Hiller voted “no.” (8-1-0)

The ordinance was adopted on roll call vote as follows: Ayes: Brown, Ortiz, De La Isla, Manspeaker, Schwartz, Schmidt, Harmon and Mayor Wolgast -8. Noes: Hiller -1. Absent: Everhart -1.

RESOLUTION NO. 8659 introduced by City Manager Jim Colson, prescribing the form and details of Combined Utility Improvement and Refunding Revenue Bonds, Series 2014-A of the City of Topeka, Kansas, in the aggregate principal amount of \$45,510,000 the issuance of which was authorized by the City pursuant to its ordinance passed and approved December 9, 2014; authorizing the execution of an escrow trust agreement by and between the City and Security Bank of Kansas City, Kansas City, Kansas, and authorizing certain other documents and actions in connection with the issuance of the bonds was presented.

Councilmember De La Isla moved to approve the resolution. The motion seconded by Councilmember Brown carried. Mayor Wolgast voted “yes.” Councilmember Hiller voted “no.” (8-1-0)

#### NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

A PUBLIC HEARING for the purpose of hearing and answering objections of taxpayers relating to the proposed amended use of funds, amending the 2014 City of Topeka Operating Budget.

ORDINANCE NO. 19933 introduced by City Manager Jim Colson, approving and adopting certain amendments to the operating budget for the City of Topeka for the year 2014, and appropriating the amounts for the purpose as set forth therein was presented.

Doug Gerber, Administrative and Financial Services Director, reported approval would increase the adopted 2014 City of Topeka Operating Budget by \$7,249,875 in additional expenditures to be funded by current revenue or fund balances.

Councilmember Schwartz questioned the amount of additional expenditures being added and asked if it was new monies.

Doug Gerber gave an example of the Employee Separation Fund with an amendment of \$1,500,000 to be added to the fund to cover what has already been spent year to date and what is projected to be spent through the end of the year and establish budget authority; the amendment would also allow the City to transfer funds to the capital project fund (Sunflower Soccer Stadium) to cover project costs in the Transient Guest Tax Fund; and the original 2014 budget did not cover the amount needed for debt service for the College Hill district.

Councilmember Hiller stated it was her understanding the Employee Separation Fund would be handled in a similar manner as the Health Care Fund, a temporary fund to handle the proceeds for bonds to cover the deficit in the Retirement Fund. She reported in 2014 they budgeted \$700,000 in expenses for the Retirement Reserve Fund and there have been no funds expended to date. She referenced the request to withdraw \$1.2 million from the Employee Separation Fund for additional expenses in the Retirement Reserve Fund and questioned if things have changed and the City now needs \$2 million instead of \$700,000 in expenses for this year. She referenced the \$5 million of bonds financed last year for the purpose of funding the Employee Separation Fund and questioned why the fund balance was reflecting \$4.47 million.

Doug Gerber stated the Employee Separation Fund was created in 2013 to allow the City to build the Retirement Reserve Fund for the future. He confirmed that \$5 million in bonds was issued for the Employee Separation Fund; however, at this time he would have to research the details surrounding the current fund balance and report back to Councilmember Hiller.

Councilmember Hiller clarified that the intent of staff would be to spend directly from the Employee Separation Fund for the life of the bonds and keep the funds budgeted for expenses in the Retirement Reserve Fund. She stated she understands staff needs to move forward with the 2014 budget amendments; however, she looks forward to staff reporting back to her on fund discrepancies and balances.

Mayor Wolgast moved to open the public hearing and asked if there was anyone present who would like to speak to the matter.

Upon no one appearing, Mayor Wolgast announced the public hearing was closed.

Councilmember Brown moved to adopt the ordinance. The motion seconded by Councilmember De La Isla carried unanimously. Mayor Wolgast voted “yes.” (9-0-0)

The ordinance was adopted on roll call vote as follows: Ayes: Hiller, Brown, Ortiz, De La Isla, Manspeaker, Schwartz, Schmidt, Harmon and Mayor Wolgast -9. Absent: Everhart -1.

ORDINANCE NO. 19934 introduced by City Manager Jim Colson, providing for the renewal of a non-exclusive franchise to American Medical Response to operate an ambulance service within the City of Topeka which replaces the franchise ordinance codified at City Code Appendix B, Article 6 that will expire December 31, 2014, was presented.

Jim Colson, City Manager, reported approval would extend the current American Medical Response (AMR) franchise agreement for one year to provide ambulance services to city residents.

Chance Lammer questioned the annual cost of the service; and suggested a review of services because he believes the response time could be reduced by changing the dispatching process.

Jim Colson stated the costs are outlined by Shawnee County and AMR; and the 911 service center could identify the protocol used by dispatchers. He suggested Mr. Lammer meet with City staff to discuss options or considerations he may have for more efficient service.

Councilmember Schwartz moved to adopt the ordinance. The motion seconded by Councilmember Schmidt carried. Mayor Wolgast voted “yes.” Councilmember Manspeaker voted “no.” (8-1-0)

The ordinance was adopted on roll call vote as follows: Ayes: Hiller, Brown, Ortiz, De La Isla, Schwartz, Schmidt, Harmon and Mayor Wolgast -8. Noes: Manspeaker -1. Absent: Everhart -1.

CHARTER ORDINANCE NO. 114 introduced by Deputy Mayor Denise Everhart, amending City of Topeka Code Section A2-24 concerning duties of the mayor was presented.

Chad Sublet, City Attorney, reported the Citizen Government Review Committee recommended the mayor be authorized to vote on all matters, except for ordinances in which state law authorizes a mayoral veto. He noted the current ordinance requires a vote by the electorate if there are changes to the duties of the mayor and if the charter ordinance is approved, the Governing Body would adopt another ordinance placing the issue on the April 7, 2015 ballot.

Councilmember Hiller stated the Committee made several recommendations and questioned why the Governing Body is considering duties of the mayor and at-large elections specifically.

Mayor Wolgast distributed a handout providing a brief overview of Council Agenda Items 5E, 5F, 5G and 5H, relating to mayoral duties and at-large elections for council districts. He reported the charter ordinances would be the first step in the process to place the companion ordinances on the April 7, 2015 ballot allowing the electorate to decide whether to change the voting rights of the mayor and council district elections. He noted other recommendations presented by the Committee would be considered in the future.

Jim Reardon, Citizen Government Review Committee Chair, thanked the Council for his appointment to the Committee and allowing the Committee to examine the operation of City government while including the citizens of Topeka in the process. He reported Don Mohler, former Executive Director of the League of Kansas Municipalities Legal Counsel, believes this was a matter of concern because the current charter ordinance provided no clear direction, attributing to misunderstandings and unintended consequences.

Councilmember Harmon thanked the Committee members for their service and acknowledged the inconsistencies reviewed by the Committee. He asked if other cities in Kansas were researched to review how they handle these types of issues.

Jim Reardon stated the Committee Report outlines the charter ordinance adopted by the City of Olathe, Kansas, which provides a good example for review.

Maynard Oliverius, Citizen Government Review Committee, reported the Committee recommended an amendment to the current charter ordinance to clarify the voting rights of the mayor. He thanked the Governing Body for the opportunity to serve on the Committee.

John Nave, Citizen Government Review Committee, stated citizens look to the leadership of the mayor and he believes the community wants a stronger voice from the mayor. He thanked

the Governing Body for allowing him to serve and encouraged the Council to seriously consider the recommendation.

Joseph Ledbetter spoke in support of the charter ordinance. He reported many citizens would like to see Councilmembers make appointments, as well as, the mayor.

Teresa Miller expressed concern with the mayor forming the Committee and the recommendation giving him more power. She stated the public voted for the City Manager Form of Government with the mayor having no authoritative powers.

Mayor Wolgast clarified committee appointments were nominated and approved by members of the Council.

Councilmember Schmidt clarified the Committee's agenda was drafted by the Citizen Government Review Committee.

Councilmember Manspeaker expressed concern with the appointment process, including suggested appointments by the Mayor.

Johnny Jackson stated he believes each Councilmember should have been given the opportunity to appoint a member to the Committee and noted there was not a representative from Council District No. 2 on the Committee.

Councilmember Hiller expressed her appreciation to the Committee for their work and spoke in support of the charter ordinance. She noted the proposal would assign policy responsibility to the elected officials and work in conjunction with state law in terms of veto powers for the mayor.

Councilmember De La Isla expressed her appreciation to the Committee for their service. She referenced Roberts Rules of Order and stated the mayor would serve as the president of the

governing body and be allowed to vote; however, she cautioned how to define the role of the mayor.

Councilmember Schmidt stated the government review process was outlined over ten years ago and noted approval of the charter ordinance would allow the issue to be decided upon by the voters in the April 7, 2015 election.

Councilmember De La Isla moved to adopt the charter ordinance. The motion seconded by Councilmember Schmidt carried. Mayor Wolgast voted “yes.” Councilmembers Manspeaker and Harmon voted “no.” (7-2-0)

The charter ordinance was adopted on roll call vote as follows: Ayes: Hiller, Brown, Ortiz, De La Isla, Schwartz, Schmidt, and Mayor Wolgast -7. Noes: Manspeaker and Harmon -2. Absent: Everhart -1.

ORDINANCE NO. 19935 introduced by Deputy Mayor Denise Everhart, calling an election to be held on April 7, 2015, for the purpose of voting on Charter Ordinance No. 114 was presented.

Chad Sublet, City Attorney, reported approval would call an election on Charter Ordinance No. 114 regarding mayoral voting rights.

Councilmember Hiller moved to adopt the ordinance. The motion seconded by Councilmember Schmidt carried unanimously. Mayor Wolgast voted “yes.” (9-0-0)

The ordinance was adopted on roll call vote as follows: Ayes: Hiller, Brown, Ortiz, De La Isla, Manspeaker, Schwartz, Schmidt, Harmon and Mayor Wolgast -9. Absent: Everhart -1.

A CHARTER ORDINANCE introduced by Councilmember Nathan Schmidt, amending City of Topeka Code Section A2-21 and A2-22 concerning election of councilmembers was presented.

Councilmember Schmidt reported the consensus was to implement an at-large election with nine (9) members of the council residing in nine separate districts, with the top two candidates proceeding to an at-large election.

Councilmember De La Isla spoke in support of at-large elections and noted Topeka's population has not grown in many years; therefore, she would suggest reducing the number of Council Districts to seven; divide the city into four (4) districts with three (3) members elected at-large; and give the mayor the same voting powers of the council and elect the mayor on a pro-term basis. She stated it was her understanding there could not be more than one question on a ballot relating to the same subject matter as outlined by the City's charter ordinance. She asked the City Attorney to comment on the ballot process.

Mary Feighny, Assistant City Attorney, stated Councilmember De La Isla was correct and clarified a ballot question must result in a “yes” or “no” vote on a particular charter ordinance; more than one option or question would not be allowed.

Councilmember De La Isla asked Councilmember Schmidt if he would consider an amendment to the charter ordinance that would state the City would revise the charter ordinance to divide the city into four (4) districts having three (3) members elected at-large.

Councilmember Schmidt moved to adopt the charter ordinance. The motion was seconded by Councilmember De La Isla.

Jim Reardon, Citizen Government Review Committee Chair, reported there are many positives in the current form of government and much insight was provided by the public and community leaders on the need for at-large representation. He stated the Committee recommended keeping the 9 council districts, with 7 representatives elected by district, and 2

elected at-large using the Topeka Public School Board method of election. He congratulated the Council for opening the discussion for debate.

Maynard Oliverius, Citizen Government Review Committee, stated there is no perfect form of government; however, the Committee considered many scenarios. He reported there was strong interest expressed by the public and community leaders to have some council districts elected at-large; keep the current 9 districts; use the Topeka Public School Board election process; and allow the public to vote on the issue.

John Nave, Citizen Government Review Committee, reported there was a lot of time spent discussing the matter with citizens and community leaders. He thanked the Governing Body for having the courage to debate the issue and encouraged them to allow voters to make the decision.

Joseph Ledbetter, Hi-Crest Neighborhood Improvement Association, reported the citizens in the Hi-Crest neighborhood are opposed to at-large elections and want personal representation. He asked Governing Body members to have the courage to leave things the same because it works. He expressed concern with members of the Greater Topeka Chamber of Commerce lobbying for the change; the need for countywide elections for Shawnee County Commissioners; significant increases to the cost of campaigns; the issue was not well publicized; and the current economic development model is not working.

Theresa Miller, North Topeka Neighborhood Improvement Association, spoke in opposition of the charter ordinance. She reported citizens in her district will not trust representatives from other areas of the city; and voting at-large would not fix the culture of Topeka and the feeling of separation between neighborhoods.

Johnny Jackson spoke in opposition of the charter ordinance. He stated that he believes the Topeka Public School Board election method would not be a fair process.

Councilmember Schmidt stated at-large elections would provide for a good check and balance system by making representatives accountable to the entire city of Topeka.

Councilmember Ortiz stated she believes the current system allows members of the Council to represent the entire city. She suggested Councilmembers visit other parts of the city to help close the gap between neighborhoods and get familiar with other districts in the city.

Councilmember Brown thanked the Committee for their work. He stated that he believes this should be a time for discussion not action. He referenced comments made by the public in the Citizen Government Review Committee Report, regarding the level of trust where service and policy are being delivered equally with at-large representation. He expressed the importance of district representation in Council District No. 2. He questioned what problem was trying to be solved and because there is weighted advocacy in neighborhoods he would not support the charter ordinance at this time.

Councilmember Schmidt stated he believes all objections expressed have been fair and valid; however, the problem they are trying to solve is the separation of neighborhoods and how to protect them from facing the same problem in the future. He noted people will have a voice on the matter when they vote.

Councilmember De La Isla stated the Councilmembers always work well together and are respectful when solving problems in all districts.

Councilmember Hiller stated the discussion that has taken place raises more concern for her. She expressed concern with at-large representation being one of many issues addressed by the Committee; the issue needs more time to be vetted by the public and members of the Council; the current form of government has progressively gotten better as it typically takes 5 years for a new form of government to work; therefore, the progress should not be disrupted; do

not see an advantage to changing to at-large elections because she believes the current system works; City-County consolidation would be a more productive use of time because in effect it is an election issue; and the need to consider the Parks & Recreation Plan and the Topeka-Shawnee County Comprehensive Land Plan. She stated she would not support placing this issue on a ballot anytime soon because she believes it is not ready and as a Governing Body they should commit to improving the current form of government.

Councilmember Schwartz referenced the vast difference in the way cities in Kansas are being run. She expressed concern with the lack of candidates due to the cost of a city-wide campaign.

Councilmember Schwartz moved to refer the charter ordinance to the Policy and Finance Committee for further discussion. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Manspeaker.

Chad Sublet, City Attorney, noted if the charter ordinance is referred to Committee it will miss the deadline to be placed on the ballot in April 2015.

The motion to refer the charter ordinance to the Policy and Finance Committee for further discussion carried. Councilmembers Ortiz and Schmidt voted “no.” (6-2-0)

RESOLUTION NO. 8660 introduced by City Manager Jim Colson, relating to the City of Topeka’s legislative agenda for the 2015 legislative session was presented.

Jim Colson, City Manager, reported approval would outline the City’s legislative priorities to be addressed or monitored during the 2015 Legislative Session. He stated the resolution being considered reflects discussion from the December 2, 2014, Council meeting and includes all suggested priorities by the Governing Body.

Mayor Wolgast commented on the first seven original items listed and stated the next six items listed in the resolution are from specific recommendations by Councilmembers.

Councilmember Harmon moved to approve the resolution. The motion was seconded by Councilmember De La Isla.

Councilmember Hiller spoke in support of the resolution and asked if there was an update from the City Manager regarding the presentation made to the Shawnee County delegation on December 8, 2014.

Jim Colson reported the language is consistent with the City's stance on issues and is the best platform to move forward in 2015.

The motion to approve the resolution carried unanimously. (8-0-0)

Cereal Malt Beverage License applications were presented for the following:

<u>Business Name</u>	<u>Address</u>
Dickey's Barbecue Pit	609 NW US Highway 24
Glory Days Pizza	1033 SW Gage Boulevard
Lake Shawnee Golf	2533 SW Urish Road
New China	201 SW 29 <sup>th</sup> Street
North Topeka Golf Center	350 NE US Highway 24
Pizza Parlor	1919 NE Seward Avenue
Porubsky's	508 NE Sardou Avenue

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE CITY MANAGER, MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL;

Brenda Younger, City Clerk, provided an overview of the December 16, 2014, Council agenda.

Jim Colson, City Manager, stated in response to the request made by Councilmember Ortiz to all members of the Council, staff would create a challenge to Governing Body members and staff to learn more about all areas of the city. He stated the meeting on December 8, 2014, to discuss Heartland Park STAR Bond District generated good discussion and represented the City's commitment to doing what is in the best interest of the city.

Mayor Wolgast announced the Joint Economic Development Organization meeting is scheduled for December 10, 2014, at 6:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers located at 214 SE 8<sup>th</sup> Street. He stated discussion would include the 2015 organizational budget and goals.

Councilmember De La Isla stated she is excited for the Topeka community and the great dialog resulting from recent public issues. She thanked the City Manager, Chief of Police and City staff for their prompt replies to the community. She stated her thoughts and prayers are with the Quinn family during this difficult time and she is very appreciative of the Silver Sundays Program created by Jennifer Quinn.

Councilmember Manspeaker commented on the Silverbackks organization and how it has grown from the efforts of the Quinn family. He encouraged the community to reach out and support the Quinn family during this difficult time. He referenced the charter ordinance concerning changing council district elections. He stated that he believes people get the level of government they deserve at the level of engagement they work for and in his opinion; they must examine government on a theoretical level. He stated a citywide campaign is very expensive compared to district campaigns and he believes the voice of candidates would be minimized by changing to at-large elections.

Councilmember Schwartz congratulated Safe Streets on receiving a National Award for their Night Out Against Crime events. She encouraged the community to shop locally, donate to the Topeka Zoo and contribute to The Salvation Army.

Councilmember Schmidt stated his thoughts and prayers are with the Quinn family and thanked them for helping make the community a better place. He commented on at-large elections and concurs with Councilmember Manspeaker that it would be harder to run a city-wide campaign and raise money; however, he does not believe those points are a valid reason not

to allow the citizens to decide how council representatives should be elected. He stated the intent of the proposal from the Citizen Government Review Committee was never to target any one person; however, it was about the future of City of Topeka Government. He noted he hopes the discussion between the Policy and Finance Committee regarding at-large elections is fair because he believes what is being proposed is a better form than what is presently being used. He encouraged citizens to voice their opinions on the issue.

Councilmember Hiller complimented the City Manager on the good decisions made this past week. She reported she attended the American Heart Association's GO Red annual fundraising luncheon and congratulated the organizers on the great event. She announced S. Kansas Avenue is open, streetlights are installed and looking great and landscaping areas are beginning to take shape. She encouraged everyone to shop locally and increase involvement in the community.

Councilmember Brown expressed his appreciation of the dialog during the Council meeting and thanked his fellow Councilmembers for sharing their thoughts on important issues.

Councilmember Ortiz thanked the City Manager for accepting the challenge of getting to know each Council district. She commented on the positive impact the Silverbackks organization has had on the community and she will continue to keep the Quinn family in her prayers.

Joseph Ledbetter, Jennifer Church and Andy Fry appeared to speak under public comment.

NO FURTHER BUSINESS appearing the meeting was adjourned at 9:12 p.m.

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Brenda Younger  
City Clerk