

# The Record

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## UG Mayor Tyrone Garner Announces Special Committees Seven New Committees Supporting the Administration's Top Priorities Formed

Mayor Tyrone Garner announced the formation of seven committees, to be led by Unified Government Commissioners and including diverse group of leaders representing various industries and interests. These committees have been formed to support the key community driven priorities embraced by Mayor Garner and his administration. This administration is taking an unprecedented approach to addressing the most pressing issues with recommendations intended to bring about solutions driven policy change.

"In light of the number of persistent challenges facing our Community, I want to reassure our residents that we are unwavering in our commitment to make Wyandotte County and Kansas City, KS a great place to live, work and raise a family," said Garner. "We have heard the public's desire for real change. In response, I am focused on fulfilling the commitments that I've made to everyone who calls Wyandotte County and Kansas City, KS home. As I have communicated consistently, collaboration is essential to bring about the change that we all would like to see in our community."

"Therefore, I am proud to say that I have joined with your elected commissioners, as well as several community residents who have agreed to come together to assist the Mayor's office in finding real solutions to the most dire issues affecting our County. The time for talk is over and the time for action is now to bring about the real change our community deserves. These committees are charged with crafting recommendations and solutions identified as key priorities of this administration. I am proud to announce the seven committees that have been developed to further improve your government, your neighborhoods and most importantly, people's lives. Several UG Commissioners have agreed to chair these committees. These leaders bring a wealth of knowledge that we are optimistic will result in positive change by crafting real and actionable recommendations that can be brought forward to the full Commission for policy and ordinance enhancements."

### Mayor Garner's Special Committees

1. Mayor's Committee on Our Neighbors in Need/Unhoused Residents

#### Commissioner Andrew Davis, Chair

The goal of the Neighbors in Need/Unhoused Residents committee is to establish minimum standards for wrap-around, community-based services that address local housing costs, rising homelessness, warming stations and shelters, food insecurity and substandard housing. This committee will also address emergent needs and focus their efforts on moving our unhoused population to housing and the impoverished population to a sustainable level of prosperity.

2. Mayor's Committee on Community Safety and Justice

#### Commissioner Christian Ramirez, Chair

Following an in-depth exploration of 21st Century Community Reform Models, the goal of this committee will be to reimagine and reconstruct our public safety system where needed and build collaboration with our community stakeholders to address relevant community needs and/or challenges. This committee will also craft recommendations focused on reprioritizing public spending to be in alignment with established goals and strategies.

3. Mayor's Committee on Arts, Culture and Equitable Development

#### Commissioner Angela Markley, Chair

The goal of this committee is to mobilize the local arts community and support art and culture throughout Wyandotte County more effectively. This committee will also work to advance the steering of public resources to embed these values into the transformation of neighborhoods. The committee will encourage collaborative agreements that target economic and community development initiatives, creative placemaking models, and the use of arts and culture to support equitable policy change across the county.

4. Mayor's Special Unified Government Charter Reform Committee (UG Commissioners Only)



#### Commissioner Tom Burroughs, Chair

The Charter Reform Committee is comprised solely of UG Commissioners for the purpose of conducting a comprehensive review and study of the existing foundational document, the Unified Government Wyandotte County | Kansas City, Kansas Charter Ordinance. This committee will seek out amendments or revisions that are designed to increase efficiency, effectiveness and shared governance that have a profound impact for all residents and stakeholders.

5. Mayor's Committee on Government Efficiency

#### Commissioner Christian Ramirez, Chair

The Committee on Special Efficiencies in Government is charged with identifying issues that impact residents and stakeholders, while also studying and proposing more efficient methods of organizational reform. Recommendations from this committee will be forwarded to the respective governing boards and/or administrators for consideration.

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# Sue's Sudsy Soapbox



By Sue Reich

What a heckofa 2 or 3 weeks we have had this month already. The TV portion of Google is going out of business so we decided to try another company. It took the guy a couple of days to work on and switch everything and he isn't through yet. We have to learn the remote and the channels all over again. Then if that isn't enough, he is coming back tomorrow to finish up.

A few weeks ago I mailed back a broken cell phone and got another one in exchange. Then the company claimed they didn't get it and was

going to charge me \$400 for the one they didn't get. Boy, that was going to raise the roof. Guess what? They got it, but someone didn't mark it down. Where they get these people that can't read or write, I don't know. I realize this pandemic is driving everyone crazy, but for crying out loud, can't they still take care of business in the proper manner? Looks like the left hand doesn't know what the right hand is doing anymore.

My wonderful daughter-in-law has really been great helping us out. Mr. Ed isn't feeling too well and she comes all the way from Raytown and has been a real Angel. I probably would have paid for that phone if she hadn't come over and made some phone calls. She even takes Mr. Ed home with her to Raytown to give me a break. My RN son takes care of him so D-I-L can home school her three kids and get the laundry done and cook for her family. My son sure lucked out when he married that wonderful gal.

How about those Chiefs and Jayhawks? Bill Self is a very brave man to go ahead and work with his team after losing his dad so suddenly! Wow. What stamina. He said that is what his dad would want him to do. We have a couple of good teams in Kansas and Missouri, don't we? I am not a football fan but turned it on the last minute and watch the Chiefs win. Those Jayhawks always get their steam the second half of the game.

So Sauer Castle is in the news again. Why doesn't the city or state or whatever have a big festival to raise money to save it. I remember going by it when I was a kid and it was always so amazing to me. Hope they don't tear it down. Why don't they put that whoever he is in jail and take it away from him? They saved the Grinter House and property and look how nice it is.

Well my dear people of our little towns of Argentine, Turner, Armourdale and Rosedale., please take care, get your shots and wear your masks. Ivya all, really.

Your little ol' gal  
from Argentine, Sue.



I had to take a picture of the VERY FIRST DOZEN OF RED ROSES that I have ever received in my life, Ever! Mr. Ed bought them for me and it isn't even a holiday yet. They are so beautiful.



This is the place that used to be Reich's. It started to open when the pandemic hit. They were tearing out a ceiling that day, now it looks closed again.



There was an emergency at 42nd and Metropolitan in Argentine. Don't know details but the person was laying on the ground.



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By Sharon Hoover

# Comin' & Goin' Turner Style

different recordings including some interviews with survivors. One of those was Eva Kor who passed away recently. She was one of the twins that Dr. Mengele did experiments on at Auschwitz. She established a non-profit and built a museum in Terre Haute, Indiana. We visited it several years ago when on vacation.

The exhibit runs through March 20, 2022. Reservations must be made online and are time specific. However, you may enter the exhibit up to 30 minutes prior to your reserved time. Weekends are completely booked, and several weekday ticket dates are sold out. The cost is \$25 per ticket. Union Station follows Kansas City, Mo Mask Mandate policy and face masks are encouraged.

This exhibit is not recommended

for children under the age of 12. When coming to the exhibit, parking is available in the multi-level West Yards Parking Garage (just to the west of Union Station). Enter through the lower level. However, if you can find free street parking do it. It cost us \$10 in the parking garage which we weren't expecting.

More things to know: No purses, backpacks, or bags of any kind are allowed inside the exhibit. If items do not fit in your pockets, plan to leave them at home or concealed carefully in your locked car. No food or drink allowed in the exhibit, and you will be required to pass through a metal detector. No strollers permitted past the security checkpoint. No guns or knives (including small pocketknives). Other medical exemptions are allowed.

While wheelchairs are not provided, you are welcome to bring your own. Limited benches are available within the exhibition to allow for periodic rests. I took my wheelchair and was glad I did. For the full audio-guided experience, plan to spend at least 2.5 hours. Calvin and I were there for over 4 hours. The exhibit closes at 6:00 pm and I would recommend buying tickets with an early afternoon time.

I am sharing this information with you before you purchase tickets because it was printed out after we had already purchased our tickets and I'm not one for surprises. I hope this information is of value. It truly is a great exhibit, over 310,000 have visited it at Union Station.

Until next time, stay safe, and be kind to those around you.

If you haven't taken the opportunity to visit the "Auschwitz, Not long ago. Not far away." exhibit at Union Station you should make a reservation to do so soon. Calvin and I went last Monday. We liked this exhibit better than the museum in Washington, DC. It was an audio-guided tour with 60



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# SENATE NEWS



By Sen. Pat Pettey

On Monday, the statehouse was closed to commemorate Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The Kansas African American Affairs Commission hosted a virtual celebration on Facebook to highlight organizations in Kansas that continue to demonstrate Dr. King's commitment to the community. You can watch the program here.

Due to the holiday and lighter-than-usual attendance by legis-

lators this week, floor action was limited, with the bulk of the work happening in committee meetings.

This year, I serve on the following committees

- JJOC Juvenile Justice Oversight Committee
- Confirmation Oversight
- Education
- Public Health and Welfare
- Ways and Means

You can click on the hyperlinked committee names to access the upcoming agendas.

Committee Updates  
Public Health & Welfare

Last week the Committee had a presentation on the State of Health of Kansas and first opportunity to

meet Janet Stanek, Acting Secretary of KDHE. Some members were much more interested in bringing up un-truths about COVID than discussing health behaviors in Kansas. We rank #27 in Nutrition & Physical Activity and #33 in Smoking. Health issues created by smoking costs each household \$940.00 per year.

Ways & Means

We had a presentation on Legislative Post Audits and one that was done on the effects of COVID on deaths for the last two years; COVID has caused the largest number of deaths in Kansas. This is determined by what the patient doctors or the coroner puts on the Death Notice and not by anyone else.

Education

We had a presentation on Post Audit on School Districts online security and their need for improvement. The hardest issue is having qualified staff. We are working SB340 which is the Promise Scholarship bill that was passed last session. This program has been highly successful already and I very much want it to continue because it is a path to assist many of the KCK students afford a path to higher education at our community college or Technical programs.

Committee hearings and legislative proceedings are live-streamed from the Kansas Legislature's website and YouTube channel.

You can also track bills on the Legislature's website by clicking on the Bills & Laws link. You are welcome to testify before a committee – in person or remotely via WebEx – on any issue important to you. A written copy of your testimony is required at least 24 hours prior to the committee hearing.

I welcome your input on any of these issues. Please feel free to contact me at 785-296-7375 or pat.pettey@senate.ks.gov. I am also happy to set up a Zoom to discuss any questions or concerns.

General Orders

On Thursday, the Senate took up two critical bills that will provide much-needed relief to Kansans.

The first, HB 2477, codifies the

executive orders issued by Governor Kelly earlier this month to help assist our hospitals and healthcare facilities facing staffing shortages due to skyrocketing COVID cases. There was a long debate over this bill, primarily ignited by a small faction of senators who are anti-mask, anti-vaccine, and consistently spread misinformation about COVID. Ultimately, the bill passed by a vote of 36-2. The House convened Thursday evening to concur with the technical amendments made in our chamber, and Governor Kelly signed the bill Friday afternoon.

The second bill, SB 318, provides relief to farmers and ranchers affected by the wildfires experienced earlier this winter and includes provisions that will ensure this relief is available to them in the event of future wildfires. This bill provides a sales tax exemption for purchases to reconstruct, repair, or replace certain fencing damaged or destroyed by wildfires, floods, tornadoes, and other natural disasters. It includes an amendment that allows counties to abate property tax for non-residential structures destroyed by natural disasters. The Senate passed the bill unanimously, and it now awaits action by the House.

Congressional Redistricting Ad Astra Map

Every ten years, states are constitutionally mandated to redraw their state legislative and congressional district lines using US Census data. The Legislature is responsible for proposing and approving these maps, which the governor can then sign, veto, or allow to become law without her signature.

The Senate and House Committees on Redistricting met several times during the 2021 interim to receive input from communities across Kansas about their desired redistricting process and outcomes. The in-person and virtual town halls were poorly advertised, and Kansans had little notice and no guidelines to help frame their testimony.

Just before the holiday weekend,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5

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## Petty... ...from page 4

the Senate Redistricting chair asked committee members to introduce congressional maps. All submitted maps must undergo a technical review by nonpartisan legislative staff to ensure they meet the approved guidelines. A technical review takes approximately 3 days to complete. On Tuesday, Senate President Ty Masterson introduced his map, Ad Astra. Senate Democratic Leader Dinah Sykes introduced her map, United, as well as the Bluestem map she sponsored on behalf of the League of Women Voters.

The public was given less than 24 hours to submit testimony on these maps, which determine the political future of our state for the next decade. At Thursday's hearings, Senate leadership was combative and defensive in response to legal and community concerns shared by members of the committee, activists, and everyday Kansans. Late Thursday evening, the committee rejected the United map and approved the Ad Astra map for consideration by the full Senate.

The bulk of the Senate's work on Friday involved debate on these maps. The Ad Astra 2 map (which was amended in committee to account for the Kickapoo reservation, which had been split across two congressional districts in its original form) makes significant changes to the configuration of our congressional districts, when only minimal changes were needed. It splits the city of Kansas City into two congressional districts along the I-70 corridor – which is neither a natural nor recognized community boundary – and plucks the city of Lawrence out of the same congressional district as the rest of Douglas County by placing it in the Big First.

Senator Sykes introduced the United map as an amendment, which received bipartisan support, but ultimately failed by a vote of 11-23. Senator Pyle also introduced a map that received bipartisan support, but it also failed, by a vote

of 13-20. All other maps that were proposed as amendments were similarly struck down.

The Ad Astra 2 map passed the Senate by a vote of 26-9. I voted NO. The process that led us to this map has been questionable at best, and the Senate is brazenly disregarding hundreds of Kansans' written and oral testimony that asks the Legislature explicitly not to draw our maps this way. The Ad Astra 2 map very clearly dilutes the voting power of a majority-minority county, and accounts for an influx of Democratic votes in the 2nd District by shifting its most diverse city – Lawrence – to a primarily rural county. This is partisan gerrymandering, plain and simple, and the impact on the minority vote in our state is likely unconstitutional.

**Governor Kelly Deploys Kansas National Guard to Assist With COVID-19 Response**

Governor Laura Kelly announced additional efforts the State is taking to combat COVID-19. Governor Kelly deployed 80 nonmedical Soldiers and Airmen from the Kansas National Guard to support the Kansas Department of Health and Environment's (KDHE) testing sites across the state and assist with the shipment and delivery of personal protective equipment (PPE).

Additionally, Governor Kelly engaged the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), and the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) to provide limited acute care and Intensive Care Unit (ICU) beds for temporary medical treatment of non-eligible VA individuals to help reduce the strain on Kansas hospitals.

Military medical professionals in the Kansas Guard, already filling positions at medical facilities in their communities, will stay in their respective communities. The nonmedical Soldiers and Airmen will be on federal orders for 31 days to assist the additional efforts.

The Veterans Health Administration facilities are limited and available based on bed availability

at time of need and on a case-by-case basis until February 17, 2022

**Free At-Home COVID-19 Tests**  
You can order free at home COVID-19 tests from the U. S. Government at [COVIDTests.gov](https://www.covidtests.gov). Four tests per household will be sent by mail to your address. You can also order by phone at 1-800-232-0233 from 8 AM to Midnight ET.

**Follow Our Work**

In addition to watching legislative proceedings live, you can always stay up to date with legislative matters by following our caucus's social media accounts. Our staff live-tweets Senate session daily, provides updates on legislation regularly on Facebook, and shares resources to help you advocate for your issues on Instagram.

## State Representative Shows Dislike for Redistricting Process

By Murrel Bland

The way Tom Burroughs sees it, the Congressional redistricting map, approved by the Kansas Senate Friday, Jan. 21, soon will sail through the Republican-dominated House of Representatives.

Burroughs, is the Democratic State Representative from the 33rd District which includes Southwestern Wyandotte County. He is upset that the map splits Wyandotte County into two Congressional Districts along I-70. The area south of I-70 would be in the Third District; the area north would be in the Second District.

Such a map would make it very difficult, if not impossible, for a Democrat to be elected to Congress from Kansas. It could mean that U.S. Rep. Sharice Davids would lose her seat. In an interview with MSNBC, Davids said of the Republican efforts "If you can't beat them, cheat them."

Burroughs attended 14 hearings on redistricting throughout Kansas last summer. He said that overwhelmingly, most people at the hearings favored keeping Wyandotte County in one Congressional District.

Burroughs predicted that Gov. Laura Kelly, a Democrat, would veto map legislation. That would probably mean the lines then would be drawn by a Federal judge as it was in 2012. That would mean that an unelected person would be doing the job that the Kansas Legislature should have done.

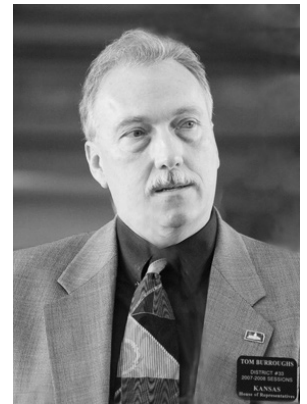
Dinah Sykes, the Minority Leader in the Kansas Senate, said the redistricting bill violated several redistricting guidelines agreed to by legislative leadership.

In the 1970s and 1980s, Wyandotte County was split into two Congressional Districts. Republican Larry Winn was from the Third District; Dr. Bill Roy and Martha Keys, were both Democrats from the Second District. The advantage was having two people, one Republican and one Democrat, serving the same county.

There was an "alternative map" in the Kansas Senate proposed by Dennis Pyle, a Senator from the First District which is in far Northeast Kansas. Pyle proposed keeping Wyandotte County whole in the Second Congressional District which also includes Douglas, Shawnee and Riley counties.

Kansas State Senator David Haley, who represents Northeast and Central Wyandotte County, said he voted for the Pyle map. He said Pyle, although a Republican, tends to be an independent thinker.

*Murrel Bland is a former editor of The Wyandotte West and The Piper Press. He is an advisory director of Business West.*





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# Mayor...

...from page 1

6. Mayor’s Committee on Business and Economic Development  
**Commissioner Harold Johnson, Chair**

The work of this committee shall serve as a support to businesses that, in accordance with the purpose and intent of the County comprehensive plan, are seeking to locate, grow, and prosper within our community. By streamlining processes, curtailing bureaucracy and facilitating responsible and equitable redevelopment, the hope is that equitable opportunity can be realized throughout Wyandotte County.

7. Mayor’s Committee on Community Health and Recreation  
**Commissioner Melissa Bynum, Chair (Invited)**

**Commissioner Gayle Townsend, Co-Chair (Invited)**

This committee will conduct an assessment of health and recreation assets and needs in Wyandotte County. In addition, the Committee will create recommendations for policies ensuring that everyone in our community has access to these spaces, programs and services. The Mayor’s administration recognizes that these spaces and services are vitally important to advancing health equity, improving individual and community-level health outcomes, and enhancing quality of life for everyone living in Wyandotte County. Another key objective for this committee is to ensure that our youth and our seniors have access to health and recreation services critical to their quality-of-life needs.

**Get Engaged**

All of the Mayor’s Special Committees invite public comment, ideas and involvement. Anyone wishing to be involved in any of the Mayor’s Special Committees should reach out to their respective Unified Government Commissioner for more information. If you are interested in volunteering for any of these committees, please complete this short form and we will be in touch!

# Why you should have your tax refund direct deposited

As the 2022 filing season begins, the IRS encourages taxpayers to file electronically when they are ready and choose direct deposit to get their refund. Direct deposit is the safest and most convenient way to receive a tax refund.

Here are some other benefits of choosing IRS direct deposit:

- It’s fast. The fastest way for taxpayers to get their refund is to electronically file and choose direct deposit. Visit IRS.gov for details about IRS Free File, Free File Fillable Forms, free tax return preparation and more. Taxpayers who file a paper return can also choose direct deposit, but it will take longer to process the return and get a refund.
- It’s secure. Since refunds are electronically deposited, there’s no risk of having a paper check stolen or lost in the mail.
- It’s easy. Taxpayers can simply follow the instructions when selecting direct deposit as a refund method and enter their account information as directed. They must

enter the correct account and routing numbers when they file.

• It provides options. Taxpayers can split a refund into several financial accounts. These include checking, savings, health, education and certain retirement accounts. They should use IRS Form 8888, Allocation of Refund, Including Savings Bond Purchases to deposit a refund in up to three accounts. However, this form cannot be used to designate part of a refund to pay tax preparers.

Taxpayers should deposit refunds into U.S. bank accounts in their own name, their spouse’s name or both. They should avoid making a deposit into accounts owned by others. Some banks require both spouses’ names on the account to deposit a tax refund from a joint return. Taxpayers should check with their bank for direct deposit rules.

**Get banked**

Taxpayers who don’t have a bank account can visit the FDIC website for information on banks

that allow them to open an account online and how to choose the right account. Veterans can use the Veterans Benefits Banking Program for access to financial services at participating banks. Tax preparers may also offer electronic payment options.

Mobile apps may be an option.

Some mobile apps and prepaid debit cards allow for direct deposit of tax refunds. They must have routing and account numbers associated with them that can be entered on a tax return. Taxpayers should check with the mobile app provider or financial institution to confirm which numbers to use.

Taxpayers must have their routing and account numbers for direct deposit available when they are ready to file. The IRS can’t accept this information after a return is filed.

There is a limit of three direct deposit refunds made into a single financial account or prepaid debit card.

## Consumer Alert: Update to insurance coverage of COVID-19 testing

Topeka, Kan. –The Kansas Insurance Department, today, issued a consumer alert to provide updated information to Kansans regarding insurance coverage of COVID-19 testing.

Over-the-counter COVID-19 tests should be covered by health insurance plans at no direct cost to the consumer. The process by which an insurer covers the cost of tests will vary. Kansans will either receive their tests at no out-of-pocket cost at the point of sale or will need to submit an insurance claim for reimbursement. Insured Kansans are encouraged to be on the lookout for guidance from their insurance provider for how to obtain their over-the-counter COVID-19 tests.

As a reminder, insurers should cover the cost of other diagnostic COVID-19 tests as well, without cost sharing requirements (i.e.

deductibles, copayments, and coinsurance). In most cases, you should not receive any bill, including for a provider/facility fee. Kansans are encouraged to contact the Department if they receive a bill for COVID-19 testing and have questions if it was appropriately billed.

The Kansas Insurance Department’s consumer assistance division stands ready to assist Kansans with their questions or concerns related to insurance and can be contacted toll free at 1-800-432-2484 or via web at insurance.kansas.gov.

LEGAL PUBLICATION

LEGAL PUBLICATION

## INVITATION TO BID

The Board of Education, Unified School District No. 500, Kansas City, KS will accept sealed bids for: RFP 22-004 Internet Access Services – E-Rate. Sealed bids should be addressed to: Purchasing Department, Board of Education, 2010 N. 59th Street, Room 370, Kansas City, KS 66104 - “RFP 22-004 – Internet Access Services”. Bids will be opened 02/25/22 @ 3:00 PM in the Purchasing Office. Bid Documents are available at the Purchasing Department Office, at the above-address between 8 AM and 5 PM, M-F. Bid Documents are posted at <https://vrapp.vendorregistry.com/Bids/Manager/BidsList?MenuItem=Solicitations>.

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