

Draft Lawrence Association of Neighborhoods Minutes
Lawrence Public Library, Meeting Room C
March 21st, 2018 7:00 p.m.

Announcements: Introductions.

Becky Pepper, City of Lawrence Planning and Development Services; Bob Tryanski, Douglas County Administration; Bonnie Uffman, Barker neighborhood resident; Candice Davis, Oread Residents Association representative; Cindy Suenram, East Lawrence Neighborhood Association representative; Courtney Shipley, Dad Perry Park/Kasold; Dustin Stumblingbear, Pinckney Neighborhood Association representative; Eric Kirkendall, Old West Lawrence Association; Gary Webber, Sunset Hill Neighborhood Association co-representative; Jane Gibson, Barker Neighborhood Association representative; Jim Carpenter, Planning Commission Member; Joanna Harader, Jail No; Ken McGovern, Dg. County Sheriff; Kyle Thompson, Oread Neighborhood Association; Lisa Larsen, Lawrence City Commission / West Hills neighborhood resident; Melinda Henderson, Brook Creek Neighborhood Association representative; Patrick Schmitz, Bert Nash; Patrick Wilbur, Jail No; Phil Collison, East Lawrence Neighborhood Association; Steve Lopes, Citizens for a Better Douglas County; Suzanne Mills, Hills West Homes Neighborhood Association representative; Travis Harrod, Springwood Heights representative; We Houk, Douglas County

- The cities affordable housing study is online, please complete it.
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/LawrenceHsg2018>
- Jail tours are available on Saturdays, possible to register online,
http://www.dgso.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=165:safe-disposal-of-medication-program&catid=1:latest .

Approve: February, October LAN minutes – February minutes changes; four neighborhoods involved in 19th street coalition, as listed. Courtney seconded to adjourn in February. Gary misattributed a request for information in neighborhood reports, deleted the reference. No changes to October minutes. Dustin moved to approve both monthly minutes, Cindy seconded, passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report: Cindy Suenram – Four new neighborhood members and one individual. \$2645.11 balance in LAN account.

Update from City Planning Department: Becky Pepper, city planner - See neighborhood updates at <https://lawrenceks.org/pds/lan17/>.

Updates:

Sidewalks – Gary reported that after good commission discussion and numerous public comments, each commissioner provided feedback to the Sidewalk Hazard Repair Policy. The City Manager promised to clarify questions posed by commission and return the policy at a later date. Courtney asked about questions she believed the commissioners had expressed, and whether there would be changes. Lisa understood that changes would require a vote, and since no vote was taken, no changes were forthcoming. Bonnie stated that many problems were discussed that were not addressed. Melinda suggested that

citizens could initiate a referendum to increase sales tax to pay for sidewalk repair.

19th street – A 19th street study session is scheduled for a special session of the Transportation Commission, 6:00 pm, March 29, 2018. Lisa clarified that the MPO board voted to include the 19th street project in 2018 street redo projects. The design will be determined later. The project must still be discussed by the transportation commission and by the commission.

Speakers: will be addressing the Douglas County sales tax ballot initiative. 10 minutes for each group.

Bob Tryanski, Douglas County Director of Behavioral Health Projects (<https://www.douglascountyks.org/>) – some years ago, discussion began on improving and expanding jail facilities. At about the same time, discussion began on mental health services in the jail and diversion possibilities. Bob suggests that the initiatives required are much larger than just a crisis intervention center, including but not limited to more data about who is in jail and why, support at all phases of arrest and incarceration, support for diverted individuals, intervention, recovery, prevention, extension of WRAP program into county, and a detox facility. Also, the county needs to make supportive housing a priority. The suggested plan now includes crisis center and three tiers of supportive housing.

Wes Houk, Captain, Douglas County Sheriff's Office (<http://www.dgso.org/>) – County inmate population has increased due to an increase in violent crime. Judges have large caseloads; speedy trial has gone from 30 to 120 days. The recidivism rate has increased. The county has tried a number of strategies to reduce the population, including pretrial release, house arrest, behavioral health court, diversions, AID program screening. The rate of incarceration is well below the average in the state and nation. The sheriff's office started including Bert Nash personnel in jail in 2001. A reentry program began in 2007 to reduce recidivism. The jail is experiencing staffing and space challenges.

Patrick Wilbur, Joanna Harader, Jail No (<https://jailno.org/>) – JN believes we have done much, but can do more to reduce jail population. The county is incarcerating minorities at a higher rate than demographics. We should make every effort to reduce our jail population before determining the nature and scope of any facility renovations needed at the jail. We should address racial disparity and problems in incarceration before we expand the jail. Property tax mill levy has been rising since 2009; the county should have been more cognizant of the mill levy increases before proposing a sales tax increase. JN believes the budget should be reduced before sales taxes are increased. They believe that the jail and crisis center should be voted on separately. \$164 M estimated cost for the jail over the next 20 years. Sales tax is regressive, not the best funding mechanism.

Steve Lopes, Citizens for a Better Douglas County (<http://www.betterdouglascounty.com/>) – Steve works with people at Headquarters who need mental health services and face a long waiting list. Steve is working to develop a company to provide woodworking jobs for

convicted persons. CFBDC are advocating for passage of the sales tax. This discussion is about our neighbors and how we treat them. The lack of empathy in those opposed to the sales tax is appalling. CFBDC prefers that LAN not take a vote for or against.

Discussion:

- Candice stated that information was helpful, and that health services and county jail have worked well together. Prevention comes from resources, which the sales tax provides.
- Travis commented that he has a long history in prosecution. One major choke point has not been addressed; those accused of high level felonies and other offences spend far too long in jail prior to trial. However, there seems to be no planned increase in prosecutorial or defense staff, or in judicial positions. Also, chemical dependency and mental health issues are endemic in this population.
- Melinda asked speakers about a process to decouple the two sales tax questions. She believes it is not possible at this late date. Also, 0.25 percent tax would not be enough to cover the cost of either the jail expansion or the crisis center.
- Erik asked this question of the county. Why is the explanation for African Americans jailed at 18% compared to 4% of population? Sherriff McGovern stated that out-of-town detainees are affecting this. They are currently studying this disparity and trying to find ways to correct it.
- Dustin stated that this is a national problem, not just a county problem. The city has implemented programs on non-biased policing, and other initiatives to address this.
- Steve L. stated that racial bias has nothing to do with the sales tax referendum. Expansion of the jail has nothing to do with this issue. Erik disagreed. Dustin asked what efforts JN has made at city and state levels to correct the racial disparity. Joanna responded that she has made no such contacts. Dustin asked if we do not have the responsibility to care for those accused of crimes and to help them return to the community. Joanna replied that she would like as few people as possible to be incarcerated, and that incarcerating them is not compassionate. Dustin stated that a majority of the funds will go towards mental health services, and that if we do not fund them, we are not able to provide the support we should.
- Bob stated that there are no beds in jail for mental health patients. The planned crisis center and jail have facilities that are much more conducive to recovering from mental health issues. The current facilities do not meet the needs of 50-70 detainees per day who must be relocated outside of the county. These are the best behaved. We can do better for those incarcerated, and we owe it to them to do so.
- Rob asked questions about our current facility. The current facility opened in 1999 with the expectancy that facility would be maxed by 2010. New facility may have expectancy of 10 years. Rob asked about improvements to current facility. A number of improvements will be made. It is really an expansion and remodel.

Neighborhood reports:

Deferred until April meeting

Cindy moved to adjourn, Gary seconded, motion passed.

DRAFT