

August 2011



LEAGUE OF  
WOMEN VOTERS®

## Manhattan/Riley County

PO Box 834, Manhattan, KS 66505; E-mail: [lww.manhattanks@gmail.com](mailto:lww.manhattanks@gmail.com); Website: [lww.manhattanks.org](http://lww.manhattanks.org)

### Message from the Co-Presidents

*Enell Foerster & Jean Lee*

Summer time has arrived and League members are traveling. Your co-presidents were present for the City Commission meeting on the fixed-route bus system, which by now you know was defeated (see statement below). It is a shame after so many years, hours and money put into the effort for it to be defeated at the last moment.

We were also present at the budget work session where the presentations for request for the support of Social Services and other organizations did not fare too

well. We witnessed the City support for the Manhattan/Riley County Health Department being dissolved.

On a happier note we will have our second Meadowlark meeting Thursday, August 18 and just this week we meet with several members and friends who are looking into the possibility of having a League organization on the KSU campus. There were many great ideas and we hope to keep you informed as things develop. Look forward to seeing you at League in August.

### League Statement to the City Commission

*Fixed-Route Public Transit*

My name is Jean Lee. Tonight I am speaking for the League of Women Voters of Manhattan/Riley County.

The League of Women Voters of Manhattan/Riley County supports policies that assure multiple modes of transportation for all persons regardless of age, ability, or income level.

We strongly support implementation of fixed-route public transit in Manhattan. We believe that the city should meet their part of the commitment to this important service for the people of this area. To refuse to do so is to make it more difficult and expensive for people to get to and from the workplace. It means that anyone in the Manhattan area must be able to

afford to own a car, buy gas, and pay for a driver's license and still have enough money to pay for food, housing and be in good health.

The League of Women Voters believes that this public transit will help to promote the growth and development of the Manhattan area. It will be important in assuring quality of life for future generations.

Please vote to implement the fixed-route public transit for all the citizens of Manhattan. Thank you.

# Position Statement

## *Privatization of Public Services*

Each month we highlight one of our location position statements. This month the statement on privatization of public services, created in 2003, is highlighted.

The League understands that approval of the privatization of public services depends on the circumstances of each case and that the historical record is mixed. Therefore, the League believes that, as public bodies decide on individual proposals, the following requirements must be met:

- When proposals for privatization of public services come forward, the decision-making process must be conducted openly with ample opportunity for public participation and input. Timely notice of meetings must be given and necessary background documentation provided.
- Public health and safety are paramount in any community. Therefore, water services, emergency medical services, and fire and police protection must be operated and funded through the responsible public entity - city, township, county, state, etc - and must not be considered for privatization.
- Provision must be made in privatization contracts to ensure that displaced public workers are dealt with equitably and that the provider complies with current public policies for equitable wages, federal employment laws, worker safety, and environmental protection as well as for safeguarding the health and safety of the public.
- Contracts and agreements for privatization must be drawn with sufficient specificity and clarity to define 1) the subject services being privatized, 2) the authority and responsibilities of all parties, 3) the performance standards and criteria that measure outcomes, 4) mechanisms for monitoring and accountability, 5) penalties and sanctions applicable to unsatisfactory performance and non-

performance, 6) the evidence required to fully justify future cost increases, if any, 7) the adequacy of insurance and public liability coverage, 8) mechanisms for dealing with public complaints, including redress where appropriate, and 9) terms for cancellation of such contracts and agreements, including timely notices allowing for continuity of service.

To fulfill its ultimate responsibility, the responsible public body must make provision for establishing and funding the monitoring of performance and for assessing outcomes on a regular basis.

Approval of privatization must depend on the existence of meaningful competition in the field and on evidence that a provider has sufficient capitalization, qualifications, and experience to perform the subject services.

Cost comparisons for private/public sector services must extend over the near and longer term, including direct and indirect expense, and should give clear documentation of relative values to the public. The responsible public body must provide clear justification for privatization of a function or service. Such justification must provide evidence that privatizing a function or service will create a permanent, net advantage to the overall community.

Personal gain and/or conflicts of interest must be identified and disclosed as part of the decision-making process.

# League of Women Voters Public Education Study

## *Common Core Standards*

Students who move from one part of the United States to another during their K-12 school careers are likely to encounter substantial variations in requirements for graduation. The Common Core Standards Initiative (CCSI, 2010) stated: "We need standards to ensure that all students, no matter where they live, are prepared for success in postsecondary education and the workforce. Common standards will help ensure that students are receiving a high quality education consistently, from school to school and state to state. Common standards will provide a greater opportunity to share experiences and best practices within and across states that will improve our ability to best serve the needs of students."

Currently, standards for student performance vary widely by state. The roots of current state-to-state inconsistencies lie in the fact that public education in the United States has traditionally been a local responsibility. However, textbook publishers have created something of a "de facto" national curriculum, based on market needs. Consequently, many textbooks from major publishers have reflected the curricular choices that were made by educational groups in the largest states. Some publishers do create textbooks and other curricula for smaller markets.

Rothman (2009) summarized the efforts of various groups to create common standards across the United States. Initial efforts to foster development of national standards and a related system of assessments in the core subject areas began in the early 1990's through awarding grants to a dozen national organizations.

The National Governors Association (NGA) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) launched the Common Core State Standards initiative in March 2009 after the nation's governors agreed in concept to adopt a uniform set of standards. The final report was issued on June 2, 2010 (NGA, 2010), and, by early 2011, 40 states have adopted the Standards. The adopting states are currently aligning them to their own state standards.

The Fordham Institute (Carmichael, et al. 2010) reported that the Common Core standards received high marks when compared to state standards across the country. The Institute suggests that Common Core Standards represent an opportunity for creating consistency and raising standards in all states.

### *Assessments*

The implementation of the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 has created a 50-state and 50-test environment in public education. As a result state-to-state expectations and performances vary greatly. States publish annual reports of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), which are required by federal law, but the meaning of "proficient" in those reports can vary widely from one state to another (Cronin, et al. 2007).

Larger testing companies market a variety of norm-referenced standardized tests. However, they are designed to rank students, rather than to determine how well students have mastered curricular objectives as criterion-referenced tests would do. The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) publishes results that are technically adequate for state-to-state (and international) comparisons, but that assessment is not designed to produce individual student scores. NAEP requires a large sample of students to produce results. Most school systems are too small to qualify for testing that would produce local NAEP results. The tradition of local governance has led to inconsistent requirements and standards for student performance across the country. Thus, in 2010, the United States does not have a consistent set of academic assessments for grades K-12.

Two coalitions, together representing 44 states and the District of Columbia, won a U.S. Department of Education competition for \$330 million dollars federal aid to design "comprehensive assessment systems" aligned to the Common Core and designed to measure whether students are on track for college and career success. The awards, announced in

## Common Core Standards, cont.

September 2010, were divided between the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC), comprised of 26 states receiving \$170 million, and the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium that comprises 31 states and received \$160 million. At least 12 states participated in both coalitions and are waiting to decide which assessment system will best meet their needs. An advantage of having assessments that are used in more than one state is that results from all participating states could be compared.

### *Why Not National Standards or Assessments?*

The most common arguments against adopting the Common Core Standards for K-12 center on two issues: 1) the cost and difficulty of changing the existing curriculum and assessments and (2) the sovereignty of states in issues related to education and local control. Governor Rick Perry of Texas stated that the Race to the Top funding would only generate a one-time amount of \$75 per student, yet cost Texas taxpayers an additional \$3 million. A third argument is that the individual state standards might be more rigorous. However, states that adopt the Common Core are permitted to add 15 percent more in content.

Another concern is the potential to use scores from the student assessments as a major component of teacher evaluations and merit pay plans, an idea that has popular appeal. (*TIME*, 2010). In August 2010, ten of the nation's premier educational researchers (Baker, Barton, Darling-Hammond, Haertel, Ladd, Linn, Ravitch, Rothstein, Shavelson & Shepard, 2010) co-authored a report that cautioned against relying on student test scores as a major indicator for evaluating teachers, citing the technical problems associated with using scores from standardized student assessments in value-added statistical models.

### *Does the US Need a National Curriculum?*

The U.S. Department of Education presents the view that, since the developers of the Common Core Standards and the proposed assessments have been groups with state representation rather than the federal government, neither program is a federal initiative. (U.S. Department of Education, 2010, March 13). In March 2011, the Albert Shanker Institute issued a call for common curriculum guidelines (Albert Shanker Institute, 2011; Gewertz, C. 2011, March). This document voices the concern that common assessments are being developed from the common standards with no curriculum in between. In May 2011, another group published an article with a different view: "Closing the Door on Innovation: Why One National Curriculum is Bad for America" (2011), discussed by Gewertz, C. (2011, May). The article also cites the prohibition against a federal curriculum contained in the 1965 ESEA.

### *References*

- Albert Shanker Institute. (2011, March 7). A call for common content: Core curriculum must build a bridge from standards to achievement. Retrieved from <http://www.ashankerinst.org/curriculum.html>
- Baker, E.L., Barton, P.E., Darling-Hammond, L., Haertel, E., Ladd, H.F., Linn, R.L., Ravitch, D., Rothstein, R., Richardson, R.J. & Shepard, L.A. (2010, August). EPI briefing paper: Problems with the use of student test scores to evaluate teachers. Retrieved from Economic Policy Institute: [http://epi.3cdn.net/b9667271ee6c154195\\_t9m6iij8k.pdf](http://epi.3cdn.net/b9667271ee6c154195_t9m6iij8k.pdf)
- Carmichael, S. M., Martino, G., Porter-Magee, K. & Wilson, W.S. (2010, July). The state of state standards--and the Common Core--in 2010. Retrieved from [http://www.edexcellencemedia.net/publications/2010/201007\\_state\\_education\\_standards\\_common\\_standards/SOSSandCC2010\\_FullReportFINAL.pdf](http://www.edexcellencemedia.net/publications/2010/201007_state_education_standards_common_standards/SOSSandCC2010_FullReportFINAL.pdf)

## Common Core Standards, cont.

"Closing the Door on Innovation: Why One National Curriculum Is Bad for America." Retrieved from [http://www.k12innovation.com/Manifesto/\\_V2\\_Home.html](http://www.k12innovation.com/Manifesto/_V2_Home.html)

Common Core Standards Initiative. (2010). Common Core Standards Initiative. Retrieved from <http://www.corestandards.org>

Cronin, J., Dahlin, M., Adkins, D. & Kingsbury, G.G. (2007, October). The proficiency illusion. Retrieved from <http://www.edexcellence.net/publications-issues/publications/theproficiencyillusion.html>

Gewertz, C. (March 7, 2011). Leaders call for shared curriculum guidelines. Retrieved from <http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2011/03/09/23curriculum.h30.html?tkn=SONFPm%2FzvbaH31Jupk0%2FYdzDaTb7O0ajGL04&cmp=clp-edweek>

Gewertz, C. (May 9, 2011). Conservative 'Manifesto' Blasts Shared Curriculum, Tests. Retrieved from [http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/curriculum/2011/05/conservative\\_manifesto\\_blasts.html](http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/curriculum/2011/05/conservative_manifesto_blasts.html)

Rothman, R. (2009, December 19). Common Standards: The time is now. Issue Brief. P.5. Retrieved from <http://www.all4ed.org/files/TheTimeIsNow.pdf>

TIME. (2010, September 9). TIME poll results: Americans' views on teacher tenure, merit pay, and other education reforms. Retrieved from <http://www.time.com/time/nation/article/0,8599,2016994,00.html>

U.S. Department of Education. (2010, March 13). Elementary and Secondary Education: ESEA reauthorization: A blueprint for reform. Retrieved from <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/blueprint/index.html>

*Produced by the LWVUS The Education Study: The Role of the Federal Government in Public Education*

© 2011 by the League of Women Voters of the United States

## Observer Reports

### Riley County Law Enforcement Agency (Law Board)

Please note that observer reports are posted regularly at [www.lwvmanhattanks.blogspot.com](http://www.lwvmanhattanks.blogspot.com) and you can find current as well as previous reports at this site.

**June 20, 2011**

**Bob Kruh, Observer**

Present were Butler, Matta, McCulloh (chair), Pepperd, and Sherow.

After dispensing of several routine items, including updates of RCPD General Orders (operational policies), the balance of the meeting dealt with the FY2012 budget. Legal advice was offered to the effect that the City and County are statutorily required to fund the approved budget despite revenue shortfalls that might occur. Applicability of monies from tax delinquencies was reviewed at length.

A motion to approve the RCPD's budget proposal for publication was supported by McCulloh and Sherow, but failed on a 2-3 vote.

**June 27, 2011**

**Bob Kruh, Observer**

A special meeting was called to consider the final vote on the budget of the Riley County Police Department for FY2012.

RCPD Director Schoen presented the budget proposal and noted that even though the State has just revised pension costs, the Department would absorb the increase (ca \$150,000) without a budget change.

The motion to adopt the budget was approved on a vote of 4-3. For: Lewis, McCulloh (chair), Sherow, Wilkerson. Against: Butler, Matta, Pepperd.

## USD 383 Board of Education

**June 15, 2011**

**Kathy Dzewaltowski, observer**

The board was presented with information for a development agreement with the city regarding moving and improving a portion of the sewer line for Bluemont Elementary. Part of Bluemont's sewer line is underneath the building and was established at a time when city codes allowed a building to be built on top of the sewer line. The western portion of Bluemont's sewer line does not currently have a building on top of it, but an addition is planned as part of Bluemont's construction project which would cover the western sewer line. Current code doesn't allow this, and so the western portion has to be rerouted. The new line will also be made larger to limit the possibility of backflow and to eliminate the need for an expensive "lift station." Bluemont is sited on a "public square," which means the city owns the land beneath the school. Nancy Knopp and Pete Paukstelis thought the city should waive inspection fees for the sewer line since the city owns the property. Other board members agreed. The board approved 7-0 to make the sewer line improvements and to ask the city to waive inspection fees.

Dave Colburn made the suggestion that board members who are interested in serving as vice president or president for next year should state their interest at the June 29th meeting. Colburn hoped this would make the process of selecting president and vice president more transparent. Other board members thought it was a good idea and should be continued in future years.

**June 29, 2011**

**Kathy Dzewaltowski, observer**

Carol Adams reported that USD 383 had scored well on its application for a JROTC program and had been placed at the top of the list for establishing a program.

Sally Frick, Director of Head Start, reported that the Early Head Start program would no longer be accessing state funds and would cease to exist for the most part on June 30th, necessitating the termination of 15 employees. The Department of Social and Rehabilitative Services had notified all Early Head Start programs that ongoing state funding would cease Dec. 31, and local programs that wished to continue would have to apply for grant funding and develop programs that would implement new state

requirements. Mrs. Frick believed it would be difficult for the local Early Head Start to follow Gov. Brownback's new guidelines, and so the decision was made to not pursue the grant funding and to discontinue the program. Early Head Start will continue to receive federal funds to serve a few families and will work with the Parents as Teachers program to provide services to other families affected by the changes.

In construction news, the board learned that the construction project at Wilson Elementary is 3-4 weeks behind schedule. Board members requested having representatives from First Management (the contractor) attend the next board meeting to discuss the situation.

The board also learned that Roosevelt Elementary may have serious structural issues in the original stone portion of the school. Cracks were discovered in the original concrete flooring that separates the levels. Core samples were taken to assess the situation, and the results were not yet known. If the concrete is in relatively good condition, the cracks can be repaired. If the concrete is in poor condition, it would need to be removed, the building gutted, and new steel framing put in place. The building will undergo a complete structural review to help guide the next steps. The building will not be ready for school to start in August even if only minimal repairs are needed, so the board discussed the possibility of using additional mobile units to temporarily house classrooms.

The board voted 6-0 to approve year-end transfers, totaling \$230,000. Of that amount, \$150,000 was transferred to the textbook rental fund, and the remainder was divided between the capital outlay fund and the contingency fund.

Board members also recognized outgoing board members Susan Marshall and Nancy Knopp and thanked them for their years of service to the community.

**July 6, 2011**

**Kathy Dzewaltowski, observer**

The board began the meeting by welcoming new members Leah Fliter and Darrell Edie and electing a board president and vice president. Doug Messer was elected president, and Dave Colburn was elected vice president.

## *USD 383 Board of Education, cont.*

Board members also approved the annual duty appointments, such as board clerk, treasurer, legal counsel, freedom of information officer, ADA compliance officer, etc.

The board met with representatives of First Management, the contractor working on Wilson Elementary's construction project. The project is behind schedule, and First Management had suggested working longer hours and on Saturdays to make up time. The district's program manager was not confident that the proposed plan would be sufficient to have the school ready by August. Walt Pesaresi said First Management knew what the timeline was when they chose to bid on the project and in not having the project completed, they have essentially lied to Wilson's students by not living up to their claims of being able to complete the project on time. Mr. Pesaresi said First Management needs to develop another proposal that shows how the lost time will be made up.

The board was also presented information regarding the structural condition of the stone portion of Roosevelt Elementary. An engineer is working on a complete study of the stone portion, and the results

will be ready next week. Board members asked for the best and worst case scenarios. The best case would be only one concrete floor is in poor shape and will need to be reinforced. One possible worst case could be all of the concrete floors are in poor shape and would have to be replaced with steel and lightweight concrete. A second worst case included the possibility that the concrete floors, columns, beams, and exterior walls are all in poor shape, and in that case, the board might have to consider demolition. The construction team had not yet considered the financial implications, but it was suggested it could be as much as \$3-4 million. District administration has been working on possible options for classroom space since the stone portion won't be ready by August. Board members planned a special meeting for July 14th to discuss Roosevelt's construction project.

The board was provided with mill levy and property valuation information to help plan the 2011-12 budget. The district's current total mill levy is 49.3 mills. Dr. Bob Shannon, Superintendent, said that administration needs the board to make preliminary decisions about budget reductions and the use of reserves in order to develop options for the budget.

---

## *Manhattan-Riley County Board of Health*

**June 29, 2011**

**Sue Cohen, observer**

A quorum of six member were present. Lauren Palmer, representing the City, ex officio was also present.

The presentation about the functions of the Health Department for this month were by the two ARNP's who provide the care in the clinic. Bonnie McKinsey discussed the challenges of the clients of the clinic who essentially present "span of life" conditions. She spoke of the many chronically ill clients who are cared for through the clinic and the fact that the supporting staff was excellent. She stated that Dr. Herl, who is the medical Doctor affiliated with the clinic, is easily contacted when needed. The free lab work provided by Lab Corp is especially helpful for quick diagnosis and treatment .

Nursing supervisor Dawn Searles 'report indicated that 162 pregnant and postnatal women were in the Maternal and Infant program during the month of

May and that there were sixteen new enrollments and seven discharges. There were only three communicable diseases reported in May, one Salmonellosis, one Shigellosis, and one Hepatitis C.

The WIC program report by Lisa Ross RD.LD.CBE noted total participating in Riley County to be 3,177 with 129 new applications from Riley County and 283 from Fort Riley. The WIC staff monitors six local grocery stores who accept WIC checks. The combined value of the redeemed WIC checks for May was \$66,389.86

The report from Mindy Robbins concerned the Smart Start/Early Childhood Block grant and the provision for a representative from each participating child care center to attend an on-site professional development event on Preventing Child Abuse and Neglect. The staff also attended the training in terms of "training the trainer" and in the continuing support for the Kansas Strengthening Families Plan.

## Manhattan-Riley County Board of Health, cont.

The major item on the agenda was the discussion of the City Commission’s decision to withdraw from the interlocal agreement regarding the Health Department the evening before the Board meeting and turning the Health Department from a City-County to a County Health Department. Charles Murphy, Department Administrator, indicated that a meeting with the County was scheduled for Thursday. The Board commented on the fact that they had requested at the March 30, 2011 meeting to table the issue until February 2012 when a new administrator would be in place and that little study had yet been done on the issue. Karen McCulloh noted that it was a ”done deal” and the County would cope. Discussion commenced on whether this board should be the one to hire the new administrator. Doug Finney suggested that appointing the present Assistant Administrator as an interim administrator might be the best plan since the Board was literally a ”lame duck” Board. Charles Murphy wondered how the Health Officer aspect of the Department should be continued and noted that at times sanitation problems had been reported to him requiring his immediate action. Lauren Palmer,

Assistant City Manager felt that was a nonissue for the city and would be handled by the expected charter ordinance action.

Debbie Nuss reported there were seven applicants at this time for the Administrator position. It was decided to allow the advertising for the position to continue for the time being.

Mr. Murphy presented the revised budget and the Board approved it as presented.

Mr. Murphy reported on the progress of the Kansas Health Information Network. The Hospital will head up this initiative. He indicated there might be problems relating to choosing software that each member can use and access and that the Department would wait until there was more clarity on the issue.

Ms. Kufahl included a report of the Public Health Advisory Committee Planning Meeting. Goals were drafted including ways to educate and encourage people to make healthy choices in nutrition and physical activity.

## Riley County Commission

**June 16, 2011**

**Joan Strickler, observer**

All Commissioners present, McCulloh presiding.

Commissioner Lewis said the juvenile detention center will be raising the rates it charges to serve inmates sent from non-participating counties. A video is being made in the hope it will convince additional counties to agree to join as sponsoring participants. Lewis is voicing the video.

Commissioners agreed to sign a letter to support a request for public transportation assistance from KDOT for Big Lakes Developmental Center, Inc.

Register of Deeds Debbie Register reported she has contracted to obtain backup storage of computer information with a Montana company. Such safeguards are important to guard against loss of records in disaster events.

It was agreed to amend the existing “pledge” resolution on the countywide ½ cent sales tax to remove mention of the South Manhattan Avenue project. Apparently both the township and the landowners are against the road work as proposed.

County Extension Director Jennifer Wilson announced “farmer’s market cooking classes” will be held July 22 and 23 for children in grades 3 through 5. Students will shop for food items at the farmer’s market and learn to cook them. Interested persons may sign up for the classes at the Extension office. The Riley County Fair will be held July 21-25.

Riley County Police Department Director Brad Schoen said crime is down somewhat in the area and particularly in Ogden. He expressed concern about possible plans by the City to under budget funds to deal with tax delinquencies. Typically budgets are developed on a projected 3% delinquency, however rates are running currently at about 6%. There is some question as to who is responsible for covering the costs running in excess of those budgeted by the City and County. Reportedly the City Commission has suggested that RCPD reserve funds could be used. The law, however, appears clearly to place funding responsibilities with the City and County. The RCPD reserve fund is to be used for emergencies only, not to cover day-to-day expenses.

**June 20, 2011**

**Julie Merklin, observer**

Commissioners McCulloh and Johnson present

## Riley County Commission, cont.

Commissioner McCulloh read the statement that she will present at the Manhattan City Commission meeting on Tues, June 21. The statement is in support of the fixed-route bus system proposed by the Flint Hills Area Transportation Agency. The City is being asked to contribute \$15,000 as a match toward federal funds that will allow the Agency to begin implementing the system. She will also send a letter to this effect to the City Commissioners. The BOCC approved her actions in behalf of the County.

Laurie Harrison, Emergency Management coordinator asked the Commission for permission to take the Mobile Command Post to Wamego for the July 4<sup>th</sup> festivities. The City of Wamego is concerned that their communications command and control may not be adequate for the event which is larger every year. Harrison said that the Mobile Command Post was received through Homeland Security grant funds and this would be a very effective way to use its regional communications capability. The understanding is that in the event Riley County needed it for an incident in our county it would be returned. The BOCC agreed to this request.

Linda Teener of UFM presented a proposal to use "FEMA buyout land" which is located on Hunters Island for expanding the Community Garden program. The current Garden site does not have room for expansion and there is a waiting list of gardeners. The request is to lease the land from the county. The BOCC thought this was a good idea. UFM will be back with a final proposal

Lyle Butler from the Manhattan Chamber of Commerce presented a budget request of \$85,000 which is \$35,000 higher than the previous year. The majority of the additional funds would support the Community Military liaison which the Chamber has paid for with City appropriations and private funds since its beginning in July 2006. The motivation is to encourage Ft. Riley and other military personnel to enjoy activities and spend additional money in Riley County. Funds will also be used to promote the "Manhattan 24/7" campaign. The result should be to bring new sales tax and property tax into Riley County. The request will be considered when the county budget is determined.

During the press conference Larry Couchman, Director of Emergency Medical Services, explained

preparations for the Stampede and cautioned attendees to have adequate sun protection, wear adequate shoes and keep hydrated. He also said people should have a plan in case of emergency.

Laurie Harrison said that Small Business Administration disaster assistance is available in the form of low interest loans for homeowners, renters and businesses of all sizes who were affected by the flash flooding of June 1&2.

The Manhattan Emergency Shelter Inc. submitted an appropriation request of \$11,000 for the 2012 budget to support their efforts in fight homelessness.

Clancy Holeman, addressing the Manhattan City Commission's concerns in funding the RCPD, investigated the statutes and said that KS law says that tax levy should be "sufficient to fund" - in this case the RCPD. It was noted that in several years Riley County has had to dip in to the General Fund when unexpected costs arose for the RCPD. Often these were unexpected medical expenses of inmates that could not be foreseen or budgeted for. The feeling seemed to be that the City might just have to do the same.

Grant Bannister, Indigent Defense Panel Attorney talked about the Panel's contract request. There may be a need to consider a couple of options, one that eliminates covering high level juvenile felonies. These take more time and expertise than the typical cases such as 'child in need of care' cases. There will be more discussion of this.

### June 23, 2011

#### Julie Merklin, observer

All Commissioners present, McCulloh presiding. Johnette Shepek, Budget and Finance Officer, presented the 2012 CIP budget for a work session. To provide background information, she said that the beginning cash balance in 2011 was \$3,536,253. In January a budgeted transfer of \$620,000 was processed; in July a payment of \$250,000 plus interest will be received from Mercy Regional Health Center (for the sale of the Memorial Hospital facility) which means in 2011 total resources available is approximately \$4,406,253. Expenditures and Lease/Debt payments are estimated to total \$2,500,000, leaving a cash balance of \$1,906,253. Bridge projects totaling \$970,000 are expected to carry over

## Riley County Commission, cont.

into 2012. The final payment for Memorial Hospital will be in July of 2012. With this revenue, total resources available in 2012 are \$2,556,253. Expenditures that are budgeted will leave an estimated cash balance in CIP for 2012 of \$1,074,891.

Shepek then explained in great detail the many items in the budget development worksheet. She said that budget work sessions should be finished by mid-July, the budget published in the newspaper in August, then hearings held and adoption of the budget August 25.

Bob Isaac, Planner, presented a request from Richard Brit for a plat and rezoning for 3.10 acres of property. The re-alignment of K-18 requires Britt's Farm Market to abandon the current location and Brit wants to relocate to the proposed area with a new structure and rezone to allow a mixture of different but associated uses. After discussion the BOCC approved the request.

### June 27, 2011

#### Lyndal Nyberg, observer

All Commissioners present., McCulloh presiding. Rod Meredith, Asst Dir Public Works, presented a revision of his department's budget request. He mentioned that if the sales tax is not renewed, they will have trouble keeping to the road maintenance schedule.

Ralph DeZago requested that the Commission extend the permission granted for hot dog sales in Courthouse Plaza three months. In light of the City's action to grant him permission to buy a permit (\$300 per year, not pro-rated), undergo background check, prove he has insurance and join business organization, and sell hot dogs on Saturdays, Commissioners found no objections to the extension. Motion passed 3-0. McCulloh suggested they must hold a work session (when pressure of Budget work is finished) to formulate a policy on such activity.

Doug Messer, Asst County Fire Chief, presented suggestions for fireworks safety in July 4 celebrations. He encouraged everyone to attend public fireworks displays. Riley County sales begin July 1, for those who have applied for a permit by June 27 (today).

Tim Hegarty, RCPD, said arrests at Stampede were down this year; RCPD had only three DUI arrests (Highway Patrol numbers are separate). Hegarty said crime is down slightly this summer so far. Almost all serious crime is committed by permanent residents of Riley County; student influx increases "nuisance" crimes.

Cheryl Collins, Riley County Historical Museum Director, introduced Melissa Kirkwood, Development Officer of Flint Hills Discovery Center, who encouraged County residents to find and contribute interesting items for a 50-year Time Capsule which will be incorporated into the Discovery Center building. Items might include photographs, tools and objects, household/business items, cultural objects, toys or music for children, etc. Contributions may be taken to Manhattan Convention & Visitors Bureau or Riley County Historical Museum by July 8.

Collins also noted that Barbara Poresky was elected Treasurer of Kansas Preservation Alliance Board of Directors. Rheba Howard was elected Director, and Linda Glasgow was elected President.

Rod Meredith said June 27-July 1, an asphalt seal will be applied to RC 376, Fancy Creek Rd/Winkler Mills Rd and RC 875N Winkler Rd. Drivers should try to find alternative routes. The oil will stick and is hard to clean off. Delays of up to 15-min are expected.

Larry Couchman, Emergency Services Director, said in 16 years of Country Stampede, this year was the "best ever" from his perspective. Their contract with Mercy covered their direct personnel expenses. They had only nine ambulance transports. Patient count for all days was 425, most of which were first aid calls. There were 23 primary alcohol problems and 34 heat-related problems.

Johnette Shepek, Budget and Finance Officer, said budget deadline is July 14. The Consumer Price Index for May was 3.8%. This will be used for cost of living adjustments (COLA). All department heads have submitted their requests. 80-90% of most department budgets are personnel costs.

Chuck Murphy, Director, Manhattan-Riley County Health Department, discussed possible repercussions of the City's proposed withdrawal from contributing

## *Riley County Commission, cont.*

to Health Dept. They would lose \$50,000 off the top in State matching funds. Total from County is \$380,330. Lost from City would be \$311,000. Over the last three years the Health Department has lost \$617,000 in funding. The County would appreciate as long a transition period as possible, at least until January 1, 2013.

Johnette Shepek summarized CIP requests for 2012. \$1.9 million in imperative expenditures are unfunded in the budget. There are many more possible projects not imperative. 2012 is the last year in which Mercy will make a payment for the purchase of Memorial Hospital: \$650,000.

Commissioners agreed tentatively to finance the payment to the City on the Konza Water project in order to have a better ending balance.

**June 30, 2011**

**Lyndal Nyberg, observer**

All Commissioners present, McCulloh presiding. Clancy Holeman, County Counselor, led an administrative work session. Main subjects were questions from Judge Miller about the Law Library and possible expansion of Courthouse hours.

Bob Isaac, Planner, conducted a public hearing concerning platting and rezoning of property owned by Robert and Linda Demmie on the west side of Tuttle Creek Lake from G-1 Agricultural to A-5 Residential. The request was consistent with Riley County Land Use Plan, and had been approved by the Planning Board. The County Commission approved the request 3-0.

Leon Hobson gave an update on three projects. 1) White Canyon Road was inspected at a certain tube crossing at request of residents. Washouts had not affected the road itself, but had left a sharp drop-off. Since the road is private, it is not the responsibility of either the County or the Township. The County fixed it once for safety reasons, but further work is the responsibility of residents. A letter will be sent stating that the County will assist in the process of making it County or Township road if they wish. 2) Front Street in Randolph. The city feels the County fire trucks turning on this street have caused deterioration. Unfortunately, the cost of materials has risen significantly. Randolph has only \$19,000 in their budget, and complete overlay, which would be needed, would cost \$50,000. They will continue discussions with

Randolph officials about other alternatives. 3) The RCPD firing range has apparently experienced ricochets even after County removed all loose materials and built an 8-foot berm of soil. All inexpensive options have been tried. Further study is needed.

Johnette Shepek, Budget and Finance Officer, presented the latest version of the Budget Development Worksheet. Rich Vargo said that this morning they received notice from the State that the KPERS contribution for the County will increase .6% and that the State Health Insurance employer contribution will increase 15% (3-5% increase in employee contribution) as of July 1, 2011. This requires adjustments of numerous accounts. County officials and department heads continue to search for ways to reduce expenditures. Because of the City's sudden refusal to pay its share for the Health Department, the County must somehow find additional funds. Consensus was reached on 1) figuring what would be the cost of a 1% COLA, to be put in a footnote; 2) including \$500,000 transfer to CIP (capital improvement projects); 3) not including ANY new employees; and 4) maintaining increase of 3% in funds for Indigent Attorney services, including high level felonies, although a higher rate had been requested. Also discussed was whether the City should pay for the incarceration of their prisoners. Inmate health costs are now over all limits (primarily one inmate with multiple health issues).

**July 11, 2011**

**Lyndal Nyberg, observer**

All Commissioners present, McCulloh presiding.

After routine business, Rich Vargo, County Clerk, gave the YTD budget and expenditure reports. As in previous months, the RCPD inmate health costs are a concern. The very ill inmate is still there, still needing much expensive care. Building maintenance at the LEC is also high, including the discovery that the skylights all leak. Vargo has been working with Susanne Kufahl, Health Department, on personnel, insurance, and other matters connected with the transfer of the Health Department to sole County jurisdiction.

Eileen King, Treasurer, gave the monthly financial reports. Investment earnings, after transfers, were \$99,261.15. King said the interest rate on the active checking account has been raised from 0.04% to

## Riley County Commission, cont.

0.05%. Sales tax receipts for June (April sales) were \$243,000. Total collections this year are at 64.10% of budget.

Jennifer Wilson, Extension, spoke about the Riley County Fair, which will be at CICO Park on July 21-25. Extension offices will move to Pottorff Hall on July 18, and return to Courthouse Plaza on July 26.

Greg McClure, Extension, gave an update on Riley County crops. Wheat is all in and is of better quality than most of Kansas. Corn, soybeans, etc all need rain. The Town & Country Garden Club presented day lilies to Commissioners and to Cheryl Collins of the Historical Museum in celebration of their 60th anniversary. They take care of the County gardens, including the courthouse, museum, zoo, etc.

Cheryl Collins will give a KS-150 lecture on Tuesday July 12, at noon, at the Historical Museum, 2309 Claflin, on "Society Cream: the Purcells." The public is invited to come and bring brown bag lunch. Collins will take a look at the lives and influence of E.B. and Elizabeth Hoyt Purcell in Manhattan Society from 1870 to 1924. Collins also noted that the Goodnow House, with its interior extensively rehabilitated, is now re-open to the public. Hours are Sat. and Sun. 1:00-5:00 p.m. and Tues.-Fri. 9:00 a.m.—5:00 p.m. when staff are available. Call 785-565-6490 for information. No admission charge, donations gratefully accepted.

Ginny Barnard, Extension, was awarded a \$3,000 scholarship from the Heartland Centers to help with tuition at St. Louis University for training program at the Kansas Public Health Leadership Institute.

Rich Vargo announced that bullfrog season began July 1. A fishing license is required.

Leon Hobson, Public Works Director and County Engineer, gave a projects update. They hope to complete Wildcat Creek Road by year's end. Clearance and debris disposal is almost complete on roads affected by recent heavy rains. All roads have been bladed. Per-load for the transfer station has been raised by \$3.00 (to \$45).

Commissioners agreed by consensus for Clancy Holeman to send a letter to the Washington County Commission regarding closing of a road between the counties. Riley County will remove a bridge on the

road and install signage indicating Dead End at appropriate points on both sides. The Road and Bridge Committee will meet at 11:30 tomorrow.

Clancy Holeman, County Counselor, distributed copies of the by-laws of the Park Board as a model for consideration for the by-laws of the new Health Board (yet to be constituted). Copies will be sent to members of the present Health Board for their suggestions and comments. Some present members were appointed by the City. The County will appoint all members in future.

Craig Cox, Assistant County Counselor, said that one owner of many parcels of land set for the delinquent tax sale had paid his taxes in the amount of \$243,033 as of today. The County will receive 25% of that amount. The next sale will include approximately 40-50 parcels, all vacant lots. The County works with homeowners to prevent people being evicted from their homes

Cheryl Collins said the Museum will have a KS-150 display at Manhattan Town Center. She commended County staff, who are always ready to help other departments. She especially wanted to thank Jerry Howard, who fixed their bird problem and their flagpole problem. She said the Discovery Center will have a table at the Riley County Fair. Though the deadline for submissions to the Time Capsule has passed, she thought they might make room for additional contributions. Each County in the Flint Hills area will have its own archival box.

Grant Bannister, Indigent Defense Counsel, discussed budget allocation for the Panel. They have asked for a 3% increase, which the Commission is finding it difficult to grant. Attorneys find it onerous to be called upon in off-grid and 1st and 2nd level felonies for juveniles, and request that the present contract cover only 3rd and 4th level felonies. Further discussion is planned.

Johnette Shepek presented a further revision of 2012 budget with cuts and additions recently requested. Leon Hobson said he had been hearing polite murmurings about the 1% COLA allowed to County employees, when RCPD received a 2% COLA. Comparative step raises and COLA were discussed at length. Ms. McCulloh proposed that consideration be given to eliminating the \$500,000 CIP funds recently added into the budget and financing projects by bonding. Commissioners agreed that with interest

## *Riley County Commission, cont.*

rates so low, it might be a good time to borrow for these projects, which must be kept up to date. Riley County has 130 bridges; at the average rate of deterioration, two (2) must be replaced every year. Ms Shepek said our debt limit is \$16.4 million. At present, we have \$6 million in bonded debt. Facility improvements and repairs might be included. With certain adjustments and the exclusion of the CIP \$500,000 and a County building fund of \$50,000, Commissioners could provide a mill levy increase of only 2.6 mills. Commissioners agreed by consensus to have Shepek prepare a budget proposal including these changes for approval on Thursday.

### **July 14, 2011**

#### **Lyndal Nyberg, observer**

All Commissioners present, McCulloh presiding.

Monty Wedel, Planning/Special Projects Director, requested action on approval of a plat for Richard Britt. (No public hearing had been deemed necessary.) Approved 3-0.

Lyle Butler, Manhattan Area Chamber of Commerce, updated Commissioners on economic development matters. The airline serving Manhattan airport is doing well. Flights to Dallas and Chicago are basically 80% full. The second daily flight to Chicago begins Nov 17. Customers should be made aware that when work begins on that strip of K-18, there may be traffic delays on the way to the airport. Butler said they are very proud of the #1 rating of Manhattan for cities under 250,000 population in Forbes Magazine. He reminded the Commission that the status did not grow in only the last few years, but is the result of work begun 10-15 years ago. Many entities and individuals deserve credit, including the city and county, school district, KSU, and RCPD. Ms. McCulloh asked Butler to explain what is going on with NBAF and KBA (KS Bioscience Authority). Butler explained that KBA was set up by Gov Sebelius by Statute. The present Governor has decided to reconstitute an NBAF committee, and Butler thought it would include the mayor, KSU President, our congressional representatives, and others. Butler discussed the non-formal regional economic development partnership developing among Manhattan, Lawrence and Topeka. It is partly an "attention-getting" entity to attract new research. Butler said Dick's Sporting Goods is set to open July 29. Red Lobster is still talking and planning to locate in Manhattan. Ms.

McCulloh expressed regret that the 2012 budget would not allow an increase over the Chamber's last year's \$50,000, but said the County would contribute \$5,000 to the Advantage Manhattan campaign.

Shelly Williams, Director of Community Corrections, said they have a slightly lower than average daily population presently in both the adult and juvenile divisions. They have conducted 2,784 drug tests on 308 adults, with 10% positive. The 16% no-show rate is expected to go down with planned enforcement methods. The juvenile division is feeling the effect of absent parents in deployment: more juvenile offenders and child in need of care cases. They have installed additional safety measures such as audio on cameras and hooks outside interview rooms for purses, packs and coats. Two staff received training in Washington, DC in safety measures and have in turn trained all personnel. Ms Williams said that the 4% increase in juvenile funds will cover the additional cost of KPERS. They received both grants they applied for, and adult services received only a 1.01% cut in funding, which they can accommodate by rearranging personnel duties.

Clancy Holeman, Counselor/Director of Administrative Services, said he has been in correspondence with the Indigent Defense Panel, with offers and counter-offers still in progress.

### **July 18, 2011**

#### **Julie Merklin, observer**

All Commissioners present, McCulloh presiding.

Clancy Holeman, Counselor, discussed the upcoming shift of responsibility for the City/County Health Department to Riley County alone. The question was posed as to how the City will transfer their Health Board funds to Riley County. The city charter ordinance states that there are several ways possible to do this. (It is actually even possible that they could retain the funds although it wasn't clear how they could justify this.) The BOCC agreed that they need to know how much money is held by the city and what will go to the County citing the need for time to plan for the transfer which is scheduled for the beginning of January. Ms. McCulloh opined that the shift to the county was not necessarily bad, but there are many complicated issues to deal with and time is short. The topic will

## Riley County Commission, cont.

be discussed at the next city/county meeting.

The press conference included the announcement of a salsa contest, the relish, not the dance, sponsored by the Kaw Valley chapter of Our Local Foods Kansas. The recipe must include at least two fresh ingredients grown locally in Kansas.

Leon Hobson announced three roads where liquid dust control will be applied. The Riley County Fair starts this week. Extensive information on the events was in a special section of the The Manhattan Mercury.

**July 21, 2011**

**Joan Strickler, observer**

All Commissioners present, McCulloh presiding.

The meeting began with the Riley County 4-H King and Queen bringing their cookie jar to share with the Commission.

Commissioners engaged in an informal discussion on several topics. Commissioner Lewis noted Geary County charges Junction City \$30,000 a month to house prisoners in the jail and also suggested Commissioners should check into what their Health Department is doing in contracted services.

Commissioner McCulloh said the City staff is interested in seeing the County help fund a building inspector position. The City has a one-half time inspector and would like to see that made full time. Lewis said he talked to a builder who is concerned about the cost to house owners if building safety standards are required for construction in rural areas. He is concerned that Riley County could be put at a disadvantage with Pottawatomie County. Commissioner McCulloh expressed the opinion that the assurance of safety in the quality of the house would matter more to owners. Emergency Management Director Pat Collins was present and said some houses in rural areas are very sub-standard and subject to fires.

Collins handed out brochures on the Kansas Vulnerable Needs Planning System. Persons with special needs, such as oxygen dependency, are asked to provide information on their needs to be used by emergency personnel to plan for assisting the vulnerable population.

Register of Deeds Debbie Register reported revenue figures are ahead of last year's figures. Total

Mortgage Amount in 2010 was \$167,677,161 while the amount for 2011 is \$173,560,301.

Commissioner McCulloh said she has talked with KSU officials exploring the possibility of having KSU fund bus service from the Manhattan Town Center to the campus. Apparently, Ft. Riley is encouraging soldiers and spouses to further their education. Bus transportation from the Fort to the Town Center is available, but transportation is needed to get persons to the campus. Such cooperation would also make it possible to save three busses that may have to be returned to the Kansas Dept. of Transportation if not utilized.

County Counselor Clancy Holeman said he has reviewed the \$500,000 loan agreement to construct the new aTa bus facility. Commissioners agreed to take the funds from the economic development fund. Holeman said it was important to get some specific understanding on the City's suggestion to transfer some unspent Health Department funds to the County. He would like to get an agreement specifying actions in writing.

Commissioners agreed to a water rate increase for Hunters Island and Moehlman Bottoms.

Riley County Police Director Brad Schoen said the consolidated dispatch effort is on hold until the City and County Commissions come to an agreement. He hopes to see this accomplished soon. The RCPD will have a booth set up at the Fair and will have several police officers patrolling on bikes. Alcohol is allowed at the Fair for the first time this year.

The Commission held a special event honoring County Treasurer Eileen King for being named the National Outstanding Treasurer of the Year.

**July 25, 2011**

**Joan Strickler, observer**

All Commissioners present, McCulloh presiding.

During public comment, a request was made to record meetings and make copies available to the public. Commissioner Lewis said the Commission is in the process of installing an improved communication system to assist with hearing but that the approved minutes of meetings stand for the public record.

Jennifer Hancock with the SMH Company reported on the results of her drainage study of the

## Riley County Commission, cont.

Valleywood development. Apparently water is not draining from the housing area and mosquitoes are a big problem. Hancock presented two alternatives for dealing with the drainage. She recommended yard drains which would be lower cost and less intrusive on property. Costs would fall on the township residents, not the County. A public meeting will be scheduled in September.

At the press conference it was reported that the County Fair is going well despite the heat. No problems were seen as a result of allowing beer at the rodeo.

County Counselor Clancy Holeman suggested some dates in October to try to schedule a conference with local legislators. He will check with them and get back to the Commission. He suggested a possible concern would be any move to change the RCPD funding formula. Commissioner McCulloh noted the Governor's proposal to gradually eliminate income taxes could result in shifting more costs to local government.

Recently the Court of Tax Appeals has proposed a large increase in court fees. Charges currently in the

\$100's would increase to the \$1000's. While the County has no control over the Court's proposals, Holeman said Commissioners might receive some complaints.

A public meeting has been scheduled to hear a resolution to vacate Pleasant Hill Road. No properties will be denied access in the process. The Commission voted to approve the resolution. A second resolution would repeal County daycare requirements due to the passage of a new State law now making the County regulations redundant. Commissioners approved the resolution. According to Susanne Kufahl, with the Riley County Health Department, currently there are 22 registered daycare operations in the County.

Kufahl provided a map of the interior of Wharton Manor which now houses the Family and Child Resource Center. The facility is fully utilized except for one room. The Commission will tour the building on August 11. By consensus the Commissioners agreed to some working hour changes at the facility which are intended to provide access to families on an evening and, perhaps, on Saturday.

---

## League Statement on Redistricting

*Wednesday, July 27, Fiedler Hall, Kansas State University*

Good afternoon. I am Jean Lee and I am speaking on behalf of the League of Women Voters of Kansas.

For decades, the League of Women Voters has advocated for transparent and accountable redistricting. However, the drawing of Legislative district boundaries and creating new districts continues to be among the least transparent process in American Democracy.

Based on data from the 2010 Census, the number of Kansas Representatives to the U.S. House did not change. However, population growth and shifts have occurred within Kansas, thereby necessitating the drawing of new district boundaries for our four Congressional Districts, State Senate, and State Representative districts.

Advances in technology make it possible for members of the public to map out districts themselves. Kansans should be encouraged to use tools, currently available on the Internet, to create redistricting maps. These citizen generated maps should be compared to the redistricting map generated by this committee. There is much to be gained by involving the public

and coalescing behind one plan. Confidence in this process is enhanced. When voters believe they, the voters, freely choose their elected officials, participation in elections happens. However, when officials choose their voters, self-interest and preservation of incumbency take over. Gerrymandering, a consequence of political polarization, should also be avoided. The League of Women Voters believes representative democracy thrives when voters are involved.

The League of Women Voters has advocated for transparent and accountable redistricting processes for decades. Holding public hearings throughout the state gives Kansans an opportunity to express their expectations. We urge that disclosure of committee timelines and other important details be made known and include time for public input. The proposed maps must be available for public comment prior to completion by the Legislative Redistricting Committee.

To reiterate, representative democracy depends on preserving the principle that voters freely choose their elected officials.

MANHATTAN/RILEY COUNTY  
LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS  
PO Box 835  
Manhattan KS 66505

Email: [lww.manhattanks@gmail.com](mailto:lww.manhattanks@gmail.com)  
Website: <http://lww.manhattanks.org>

## LEAGUE CALENDAR

### *Keeping up with the League*

#### **August League Board Meeting — Date TBD**

**Thursday, August 18 at 4 p.m.**—Monthly discussion group at Meadowlark Hills Living Room. Topic is the same as that of June 18: Federal role in pre-k through grade 12 public education: equity, funding, and standards/assessment. This is part of the current National League study. For members at Meadowlark, Jean Lee put together a notebook with the background information. You may get it from League member Judy Cattell (785-320-5470, 2140 Meadowlark Rd.) or Donovan Roy will also have a copy on his desk. His office is in the Hospitality Area.

**August 26-27**— LWVUS Membership Recruitment Initiative training for Kansas Leagues will be held in Manhattan. Ann Smith, Enell Foerster and Jean Lee will attend.

**Thursday, September 1 at 7 p.m.**—League Board Meeting—Location TBA.

**Wednesday, September 14 at 7 p.m.**—Federal Role in Education Study at Manhattan Public Library. Watch your email for details!

**October:** Role of the Federal Government in Public Education consensus meetings