

## MINUTES OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chairperson Marian K. Reynolds at 9:07 a.m. on January 16, 1996, in Room 531-N of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Committee staff present: Mike Heim, Legislative Research Department  
Emalene Correll, Legislative Research Department  
Theresa Kiernan, Revisor of Statutes  
Shirley Higgins, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee: Mayor Carol Marinovich, Kansas City, Kansas  
Richard Kaminske, Wyandotte County Commissioner  
Mayor John McTaggart, City of Edwardsville  
Mayor Ted Stolfus, City of Bonner Springs  
Verdis Robinson, Wyandotte County Commission  
Nancy Burns, Wyandotte County Commission  
Mike Jacobi, Kansas City, Kansas  
John Feedback, Board of Public Utilities  
Julius Novak, Wyandotte County

Others attending: See attached list

Senator Parkinson told the Committee that he was pleased to announce that an agreement had been reached between the three mayors of Kansas City, Kansas, Bonner Springs, Edwardsville and the three county commissioners of Wyandotte County regarding the consolidation issue which was discussed at the January 11 meeting of the Local Government Committee. Therefore, testimony from those persons scheduled to testify in opposition to consolidation would not heard. He noted that consolidation had been an issue in Wyandotte County for approximately thirty years and that the consolidation of services which had occurred during that period had been too slow in coming. He felt that if nothing was done this session to solve the problems involved, the consolidation issue would be in trouble if not dead. Therefore, he had worked with the mayors and commissioners to prepare a draft for a bill which was acceptable to all involved. (Attachment 1)

A copy of the proposed legislation had been distributed to Committee members, and Sen. Parkinson briefly outlined the plan. Section 1 defines "city" as Kansas City, Kansas, and "county" as Wyandotte County to insure that the two cities which do not want to be a part of it are excluded. Section 3 provides that the Governor appoint a five-member consolidation study commission to include persons with experience in accounting, business management, municipal finance, law, education, political science or public administration and that no member shall be an elected or appointed official or employee of the city or county. The five members would be volunteers, and the Governor would appoint an executive director of the commission. Section 4 provides that the commission study the operation of city and county offices and functions to determine what offices and services should be combined. The commission must present a preliminary plan for consolidation by November 29, 1996. The commission must develop a specific ballot question to go to the county for a vote unless the legislature negates it within thirty days. Senator Parkinson stressed that the bill must be adopted by February 15, 1996, in order for the question to be placed on the ballot during the presidential primary on April 2, 1996. He announced that the Committee would meet January 18 to act on the proposed bill and **SB 218**.

Mayor Carol Marinovich of Kansas City, Kansas, expressed her support of the proposed legislation presented by Sen. Parkinson. Richard Kaminski, Wyandotte County Commissioner, followed with his support, adding that the legislation provides an opportunity to inform citizens of Wyandotte County what will be included in the proposed consolidation. Mayor John McTaggart of Edwardsville expressed his appreciation for Senator Parkinson's involvement in working for cooperation and agreement. Ted Stolfus of Bonner Springs echoed Mayor McTaggart's comments and added that he felt the proposed bill would be an excellent means for voters

## CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT, Room 531-N Statehouse, at 9:00 a.m. on January 18, 1995.

to get proper information before voting on the issue. Verdis Robinson, Wyandotte County Commissioner, followed with further support of the proposed bill and expressed her appreciation for Senator Parkinson's efforts to bring about an agreement. Nancy Burns, Wyandotte County Commissioner, stood to briefly state her support of the plan. Mike Jacobi of Kansas City, Kansas, expressed his pleasure at witnessing an unprecedented agreement on a consolidation plan between the mayors. John Feeback, Board of Public Utilities, noted that the consolidation plan was a great step forward for his community. Julius Novak, who served on the consolidation task force, said he felt the line of communication between city and county officials had been harmonious. Senator Ramirez said he was happy to see the unified effort and cooperation of the community.

Senator Parkinson informed the Committee that the Governor supports the bill. Also, he estimated the cost to the state for funding the commission to be between \$100,000 and \$150,000. Senator Ranson felt the funding for the commission should be a part of the ballot question because state funding would be used for funding a local issue. Senator Feleciano agreed with Senator Ranson and felt the cost would prove to be an important issue. Senator Parkinson compared the consolidation commission with the hospital closure commission of 1995 in that the consolidation commission would be professionally done with objective findings, unlike other groups which have done similar studies; and it also would have the authority to develop a ballot question. Staff suggested that a paragraph be added to the bill indicating the source of funding.

Ms. Kiernan pointed out further provisions of the proposed bill:

1. The consolidation commission would have subpoena powers which would insure the cooperation of those agencies which oppose consolidation.
2. The preliminary plan would be open for public inspection at request with the county election officer, city clerk and each public library within the county.
3. The commission would be required to submit its final plan to be submitted the first day of the 1997 legislation session, January 13, 1997.
4. If total consolidation is passed, the city and county would be subject to the provisions of Section 6.

Senator Feleciano raised the question as to what method would be used for notification of a public hearing to obtain citizen views concerning the commission's preliminary plan and the publication of the final plan (Section 4). It was the consensus that a newspaper with a general circulation be used.

Senator Ramirez moved to introduce the proposed consolidation bill with the suggested amendments, Senator Langworthy seconded the motion. The motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned by the Chairman at 10:05 a.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for January 18, 1996.

# LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE GUEST LIST

DATE: January 16, 1996

NAME	REPRESENTING
Richard J. Kaminski	WV Co. Commission
John Seebach	B.P.U.
Verdis J. Robinson	WV Co. Comm.
Mary E. Ladese	WV Co. Treas.
Mary Bunn	County Commission
Cherise W. Smith	BS-C Chamber of Commerce
Ed Dawson	City of Edwardsville
Tom Cooley	" " Bourner Springs
Dr. Ted Storkus	" " " "
Al M. Matagora	City of Edwardsville
Stanley Folter	Lyon County Commission
M. J. Jacobson	PRIVATE CITIZEN
Kevin Kelley	SPH
Best Cantwell	KCKAOC
Robert L. Thea	Wyanolka UWSA
Julius Kovach	K.C. Ks
Edward J. Mayfield	KCK,
Mary Johnson	Livable Neighborhood Task Force
Stacy Wolfe	K.C. Ks Mayor's Office

# LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE GUEST LIST

DATE: Jan. 14, 1996

NAME	REPRESENTING
Shirley Mingen	Citizen Wg. Co.
Gay Holt	UWSA PRO Consolidated
Chris Steineger	KCK
Chris McKenzie	League of Ks. Municipalities
Whitney Dawson	City of Ke, FS
LON MER	League of Ks Municipalities
Anne Spiess	Peterson Public Affairs Group

MARK PARKINSON  
 SENATOR, 23RD DISTRICT  
 REPRESENTING GARDNER, OLATHE,  
 OVERLAND PARK, SPRING HILL  
 15587 S. GREENWOOD  
 OLATHE, KANSAS 66062  
 913-829-5044



TOPEKA

SENATE CHAMBER

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS  
 CHAIRMAN: LOCAL GOVERNMENT  
 VICE CHAIRMAN: JUDICIARY  
 VICE CHAIRMAN: JOINT COMMITTEE ON  
 SPECIAL CLAIMS  
 AGAINST THE STATE  
 MEMBER: FEDERAL AND STATE AFFAIRS  
 ELECTIONS

January 16, 1996

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FOR INFORMATION CONTACT STATE SENATOR  
 MARK PARKINSON AT 829-5044 296-7358

This is a good day for the State of Kansas and a great day for Wyandotte County. I am pleased to announce that a major breakthrough has been made on the consolidation issue. For the first time we have an agreement in principle by the three mayors of Kansas City, Kansas, Bonner Springs, Edwardsville, and the three county commissioners of Wyandotte County.

This is a major accomplishment on this issue and means that for the first time, a consolidation is a real possibility. Consolidation of services in Kansas City, Kansas and Wyandotte County has been a difficult issue for two reasons. First, the Cities of Bonner Springs and Edwardsville have been unable to feel comfortable and come to any kind of agreement with Kansas City, Kansas. Second, and perhaps even more significant, the City of Kansas City, Kansas has been unable to come to an agreement with the county. While all responsible leaders have supported the concept of the consolidation, these two problems have prevented this issue from moving forward.

We now have a breakthrough that is agreed to by all six of these leaders. Specifically, the proposal calls for a public vote to be held at the time of the presidential primary on April 2nd, 1996. At that vote, the residents of Wyandotte County would be asked whether they want the governor to appoint a commission that will be empowered to study the consolidation issue and make a specific proposal relating to consolidation. This commission would be somewhat similar to the very successful hospital commission that recently completed its work.

The commission would be charged with making its recommendations by the first week of the 1997 legislative session. Specifically, if it held that consolidation of services or function was viable, it would be required to draft a ballot question. If the legislature did not change the ballot question within thirty

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 Attachment 1

days, the plan would be put to a public vote in Wyandotte County at the school district general election which will be held on April 1, 1997.

In short, this is not simply another study of the situation. This will be a very substantive study, that if it leads to the conclusion that consolidation is necessary, will lead to a public vote on the matter.

This major step forward would not have been possible without the leadership of the six officials from Wyandotte County. Mayors Marinovich, McTaggart, and Stolfus, and Commissioners Burns, Kaminsky, and Robinson, have put aside whatever differences may exist between them in order to act for the community as a whole. This unified approach to this problem is refreshing and, hopefully, will be the forebearer of many good things for Wyandotte County.