

Special Call Meeting
2011 Legislative Dinner - 5:30 pm-November 29, 2011
Neosho County Community College-Auditorium, 900 E Logan St, Ottawa, Kansas
City of Ottawa-Franklin County-USD 290

Those in attendance are as follows:

State Senators

Pat Apple, 12th District
Jeff King, 15th District

Ottawa City Commission and Staff

Gene Ramsey, Mayor
Blake Jorgensen, Mayor Pro-Tem
Sara Caylor, Commissioner
Jeffrey O. Richards, Commissioner
Richard U. Nienstedt, City Manager
Scott Bird, Director of Finance
Wynndee Lee, Director of Planning/Codes
Carolyn Snethen, City Clerk
Leslie Quillen, Asst. to the City Manager

Franklin County Commission and Staff

Don Stottlemire, Vice Chair, 5th District
Steve Harris, Commissioner, 4th District
David Hood, Commissioner, 3rd District
Colton Waymire, Commissioner, 1st District
Lisa Johnson, County
Administrator/Counselor
Shari Perry, County Clerk

Media

Doug Carder, Ottawa Herald
Mat Simonson, City Media Specialist

Franklin County School District Superintendents

Jim White, Superintendent, USD 288
Tom Heiman, Superintendent, USD 289
Susan Rader, Board of Education, USD 289
Juanita Peckham, Board of Education, USD 289

State Reps

Bill Feuerborn, 5th District Rep
Bill Otto, 9th District Rep

USD 290 Board of Education and Staff

Brandon Jones, Board President
Dennis George, Board Member
Marge Stevens, Board Member
Brian Kane, Board Member
David White, Board Member
Dean Katt, Superintendent

Special Guests

Bob Bezek, City Attorney, City of Ottawa
Almeda Edwards, Chamber of Commerce
Legislative Action Committee
Dale Ernst, Dean – Ottawa Campus, NCCC
Terri Chartier, Interim Director,
Ottawa Library
Tom Weigand, President/CEO Ottawa Area
Chamber of Commerce
Cierra Gardner, Youth in Government Rep
Jordan Gray, Youth in Government Rep
Abagael Pruitt, Youth in Government Rep
Alex Reed, Youth in Government Rep
Brooke Sage, Youth in Government Rep
Danon Taylor, Youth in Government Rep

November 29, 2011

City of Ottawa 2012 Legislative Priorities

1. The City of Ottawa believes that there should not be any further legislative changes which place further restrictions on the ability of a City to annex contiguous property in accordance with existing statutes.
2. The City supports the continuation of a comprehensive funding program that addresses local and state transportation needs throughout the State. The City also supports the State continuing to share fuel tax receipts with local units of government and empowerment to local units for the establishment of a local fuel tax with approval by public vote. Furthermore, the Legislative authorization of sweeping transportation funds into the State General Fund should be discontinued in order to protect the integrity of the existing transportation program.
3. The City encourages the legislature to undertake a thorough study of existing sales tax exemptions with the intent of restoring the revenue base for both local and state governments by repealing exemptions on non-essential items.
4. The City strongly opposes changes to how E-911 funds are administered and distributed.
5. The City strongly suggests that when consideration is being given to changing and/or eliminating state revenue sources (state income, property and fuel taxes), the effects upon local units of government be considered, especially those social programs traditionally funded at the state level. We also ask for a voice in the discussion as these issues are addressed.
6. The City encourages the 2012 Legislature to continue to fund domestic violence prevention programs and maintain levels that permit the Kansas Attorney General's Office to maintain existing partnerships with local governments.

Franklin County 2012 Legislative Priorities

1. Franklin County recognizes the State as primarily responsible for the care of mentally ill citizens. The State must provide access to state psychiatric hospital beds to all clients of the mental health system requiring hospitalization, or assume fiscal responsibility for treatment of these clients if all state hospital beds are filled. We support full funding in state grants for community mental health services who annually serve 60,000 uninsured and underinsured county residents not eligible for Medicaid. State licensing requirements dictate that CMHCs provide services to anyone regardless of their ability to pay, resulting in an unfunded mandate from the State to counties to provide community mental health treatment. In addition, individuals with mental illness who cannot be treated in their communities because of no insurance or no state grant funds may end up in contact with law enforcement, jails, hospital emergency rooms, state psychiatric hospitals or dead, all of which impact county governments.
2. Historically, felons served their sentences with the Kansas Department of Corrections; however, state laws have been modified in recent years to move convicted felons to county jails. Franklin County supports state funding to reimburse counties for the entire cost of housing convicted felons. Further, the state should keep accurate records of the number of felons in county jails and make such information available to the public.
3. Franklin County supports continued funding of the Local Environmental Protection Program by the Kansas Water Office to continue local public health and county water quality programs. We oppose the transfer of LEPP funding from the State Water Office to the KDHE General Fund Budget.
4. There is great stress on the property tax as a means of financing county services. There is also tremendous diversity among counties' economic bases, which makes a uniform approach to funding local services infeasible. As such, Franklin County supports legislation to provide a statutory menu of taxing and revenue options to finance county services which could be exercised by boards of county commissioners on a county by county basis.
5. Franklin County opposes any new unfunded mandates by the State. In addition, unfunded mandates now in existence should be funded by the State in recognition of the state/local partnership.

6. Franklin County opposes any further exemptions to the ad valorem property tax base or the state/local sales tax base. We support a thorough and comprehensive review of all exemptions and repeal of those exemptions that would not merit a state appropriation. Exemptions only shift the burden of financing vital services to an increasingly narrow tax base. We oppose any legislation that sweeps fees intended for distribution to local government into the state general fund for use by the state.

Franklin County Schools 2012 Legislative Priorities

The four school districts in Franklin County had a combined total of **60** Standard of Excellence Awards on the 2011 Kansas State Assessments—up from 42 in 2010.

Wellsville received **18** Standard of Excellence Awards

West Franklin received **13** Standard of Excellence Awards

Central Heights received **7** Standard of Excellence Awards

Ottawa received **22** Standard of Excellence Awards

1. Franklin County Schools Oppose Changing the School Finance Formula
 - Fund the Current Formula
 - Add the additional \$25 million needed to maintain the current level of funding
 - A \$36 cut on the BSAPP would be a reduction in funding this year

Wellsville – \$51,000	Central Heights - \$22,000
West Franklin – \$49,816	Ottawa - \$120,000
2. Franklin County Schools Oppose Shifting the Tax Burden to Local School District Taxpayers. Maintain State Aid Equalization for local property taxes.
3. Fund All-Day Kindergarten and Support Early Childhood Programs
Add additional funding to the programs that have the greatest impact on student success.
4. Develop a Multi-Year Finance Plan
A multi-year plan will enable districts to plan ahead and manage cash balances more efficiently.

Thereupon, the Mayor thanked everyone for attending and adjourned the meeting at 7:37 pm.

Carolyn S. Snethen, City Clerk

November 29, 2011