

APPENDIX B:
Transcript of a CITY COMMISSION MEETING
May 12, 1991

PARTICIPANTS (in order of appearance):

Mayor Bob Walters
Commissioner Bob Schulte
Commissioner Shirley Martin-Smith
Commissioner Bob Schumm
Commissioner John Nalbandian

Mr. Daniel R. Wildcat, President of the Board of Directors, Lawrence Indian Center, and Chairman of Natural & Social Sciences, Haskell Indian Junior College

Mr. Fargo, Human Relations Department, City of Lawrence
Ms Joyce Grover, Women's Transitional Care Services
Ms Stephanie Ring, Women's Transitional Care Services
Mr. Bill Simons, former Director of Ballard Center
Ms Connie Brook

The Reverend Mr. William A. Dulin, Pastor, Calvary Church of God in Christ and President of the Ecumenical Fellowship, Inc.

Ms Marsha Epstein, Headquarters [An authorizing vote on a grant for Lawrence Indian Center . . .] [Hearing regarding a zoning variance for a piece of real estate, lot 109, . . .]

MAYOR BOB WALTERS . . . we are taking up basically where we left off last Tuesday night, a continuation of the discussion about the initiatives and improvements about law enforcement's response to calls having to do with domestic disturbance situations.

I wish to reiterate that I, and I do believe that I speak on behalf of the Commission and the community. That the death of young Gregg Sevier is a very, very much of a tragedy. And we recognize that this incident has caused great emotions and turmoil within the family, the officers of the Lawrence Police Department, and all of us. I also recognize that the unexplained deaths of young Native Americans causes additional anguish. I can only hope that there will be a break, a breakthrough somewhere along the line of those investigations, and I know those investigations will remain open. We have had perseverance, a kind of patience, and so I so very much appreciate that understanding and that patience. It is important to do the right thing, and I believe we are trying to do just that: The right thing. The right things for all concerned, and for the right reasons. Might I also reiterate an observation that was made to me. That being that the responsibility for fair treatment and respect should be borne by all citizens and not just the local government. Churches, schools, employers, and service organizations cannot escape some responsibility for helping with solutions. The broader issue of dealing with differences in our community and our society is not solely a city government problem, even though it is being treated as one at the present time. I believe, too, that we need to communicate, and more importantly, to educate. To share with one another the good and the bad, for if we do not, then we leave things undone and unsaid. And we hope we are open to doing things better or in a different way.

We have many perceptions of what has happened. Many confusions. Many thoughts in the community right now. But let us not forget that we are a good community. A community that cares, and that we shall endure through this duress and that we will become, I believe, better because of it.

While I have heard many questions about the actions of the Lawrence Police Department and Chief Ron Olin, I have also heard many positive things. I am confident that we have one of the best police departments and one of the best police chiefs in the Midwest.

I truly hope we are in a period of understanding and healing. There has been much conversation about what has not been done, but there is much that has been done and is being done. Believe me, and please do so, that there has been much dialog and much consideration of all things by many, and there will continue to be such interaction.

Please allow me to share, perhaps, the latest. Last Thursday, May the ninth, I met with Dan Wildcat to continue to hear his concerns on behalf of the Native American community. Mr. Wildcat is a member of the faculty of Haskell Indian Junior College and a President of the Lawrence Indian Center, and I believe he is one of the leading spokesmen of the Native American community here in Lawrence. Let me also say that this is not the first time that Mr. Wildcat and I have met or otherwise communicated, nor will it be the last time, for I have confidence and trust in his sayings.

Joining us at that particular meeting were City Manager Mike Wildgen, Mr. Jim McCleen, representing Congressman Jim Slattery, Mrs. Judy CookKay(?) representing Senator Bob Dole, Mr. Mike Harper, representing Senator Nancy Kassebaum, Mr. Atkins Ward, representing the Community Relations Service of the U.S. Department of Justice, Mrs. Sandy Praeger, State Legislature Representative from Lawrence, Mrs. Charlene Johnson, Director of the Lawrence Indian Center, and Mrs. Hannes Combest, representing President Bob Martin, president of Haskell Indian Junior College, who was out of town on business travel.

We had what I believe to be a very informative and very productive discussion. And I will report to you that Mr. Wildcat shared his position and concerns and I will try to summarize those the best I can.

And Number One, in mind, in the matter of the Gregg Sevier case, the officers of the Lawrence Police Department followed policy. If the policy is one of confrontation and use of force in a domestic situation, then the policy must be reviewed.

Number Two: There is a belief that there is a necessity for better training for the Lawrence Police Department officers in dealing with the threat of suicide in family disturbance situations without violent confrontation.

And Number Three: An immediate performance evaluation of Police Chief Ron Olin.

After hearing Mr. Wildcat's presentation I presented a list of initiatives already in place and suggested new initiatives, and I would like to present those that are in place now and the new initiatives for the Commission's consideration.

Initiatives now in place have to do first with an investigation that is being conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation which is being directed by the U. S. Attorney of the claim that Gregg Sevier's civil rights were violated. This represents an outside independent investigation of the circumstances of his death caused by officers of the Lawrence Police Department.

Secondly, a program of seminars that's been organized by Mr. Wildcat and others to present information about cultural diversity and the need to be sensitive and understanding of the various cultures and traditions present in our community. The program of seminars is being presented to the City of Lawrence and the departments of the City of Lawrence, including the Police Department and the City Commission.

Thirdly, a self initiated investigation conducted by the Lawrence Police Department Internal Affairs Division into the events surrounding the death of Gregg Sevier and the actions of the officers involved in that particular affair.

Third, uh, Fourthly, the Mayor's task force on racism, discrimination, and cultural diversity has been working for approximately one year and has now completed its work. On May the sixth at a study session with us filed a preliminary report of its findings. Included in that report is the proposal that the task force continue its work, but under a new name: The Lawrence Alliance. And with broad community involvement and the City Commission has accepted that preliminary report and has requested Mrs. Ann Weick who is the chair of that particular task force to develop a more detailed proposal for the creation of that Alliance. The Lawrence Alliance is visualized to be the organization to best provide continuity and community wide forum addressing issues of racism, discrimination and cultural diversity.

Recommended new initiatives: I recommend a peer review of the Lawrence Police Department policies, procedures, and training be conducted by an outside, independent organization or persons. The purpose of this review would be to provide a thorough study of the department's standard operating procedures and training programs by someone independent but knowledgeable in current, new and emergency emerging police procedures, training, and law enforcement methods and techniques.

I recommend several additional things that would go along with that, and this would come under the organization of the City Manager.

I recommend the formation of the Lawrence Police Department Review Board. The formation and selection of that membership review board shall or would be the responsibility of the City Commission.

I recommend leadership of ethnic minorities and other community leaders to have the opportunity to comment and be involved in the development of the goals and objectives of that particular board. And I have attached a draft copy of the proposed Review Board prepared by City Manager Mike Wildgen for the consideration of the commission.

I recommend a determination be made of the feasibility of developing a crisis intervention program as a means of providing assistance to Lawrence Police Department officers and others responding to calls for assistance involving domestic disputes and threats. I have proposed that the City Manager to survey other communities in our region in order to determine what kinds of successful crisis intervention programs are in place. And I have scheduled a meeting with Dr. Sandra Shaw, Director of the Bert Nash Community Mental Health Center to determine how that Center might provide assistance. The meeting with Dr. Shaw shall include the City Manager, the Chief of the Lawrence Police Department, and myself.

I recommend the City Manager make a determination of the feasibility of providing enhancements that might be made to our law enforcement computer aided dispatch system. In other words, the Enhanced 911 System. The enhancements sought is a database feature which might allow the dispatcher on calls for Police Department assistance involving domestic disputes and threats, and perhaps, medical emergencies to have the ability to call up information based on the caller's name or address that would provide information that could be communicated to the officer enroute to the scene so that the officer would be in a better position to be informed about the situation that would be likely to be encountered.

The City Commission periodically meets with officials of the University of Kansas and its student leadership to discuss common goals and objectives.

I recommend that we extend that same method of communication exchange to the officials and student leadership of Haskell Indian Community College.

I recommend that I be responsible for organizing and conducting a Mayor's Prayer Breakfast and Roundtable Series that would meet quarterly or at some periodic time to provide a forum for discussion of ethnic and cultural topics of mutual interest.

The City of Lawrence would sponsor and host such meetings, with the meetings to be open to the public, the Mayor to be responsible for inviting the ethnic minority communities, that is, the Native American community, the African-American community, the Hispanic-American community and the Asian American community to determine the delegation of two or three persons in leadership positions along with others to attend and to participate. In addition, members of the City Commission would be invited to attend the meetings.

I recommend the City Manager draw up a Memorandum of Understanding which would outline the initiatives and programs instituted as the result of many ideas for better communication and the relationships now being promulgated, developed, and agreed. It is well understood that changes in the mayoral position and the City Commission, because of elections, provide a state of discontinuity, and a Memorandum of Understanding would provide a record of agreements that would afford the transition from one Mayor and one Commission to another.

I recommend further that the Mayor and the City Manager continue dialog with ethnic minority groups for the betterment of our community. The minority groups shall include, but not be limited to, certainly, the Native American community, the African American community, the Hispanic-American community, and the Asian-American community. Those are perhaps some things that have occurred. I think some things that in my judgment of importance. I have, the Commission would understand, tried to be as busy as I possibly could, visiting with lots of people about these matters and what not, and I wanted to bring this to your attention this evening for your consideration, for your comments, and for others as well. So, I open it up to the floor.

COMMISSIONER BOB SCHUMM I'd like to say thanks for taking all the time, and I think the foundation of this is an excellent basis to hopefully move and improve our community relations. You have done a hard job and I know you have I appreciate the effort that you have put in on this. It certainly shows that your recommendations, both you and the City Manager have some real good ideas. Excellent.

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COMMISSIONER SHIRLEY MARTINSMITH Yeah, you took the words right out of my mouth! I do appreciate your addressing Don Wildcat's concerns. I know they are very important to him and the Native American community, and I want to proceed on and pursue his concerns

COMMISSIONER BOB SCHULTE I agree, and I assume that for the items that are proposed that there is a rough time table for getting started and a...I wish to move in that direction. MAYOR WALTERS Some have been started. In essence, Mike has been working in several areas as a predisposition to this kind of thing. So it's not that something hasn't been started. There's a fair amount of reviews and surveys that they are doing at the present time.

COMMISSIONER JOHN NALBANDIAN I want to convey my appreciation, too, for the work that you have done. It's not always apparent to the rest of the Commissioners, as well as I'm sure to the public, the amount of time that you have spent on this, as well as the time that we have spent as well. My fear in all of this is that we expect too much too soon. It's taken a long time to build up to these points. People who have lived here longer than the fifteen years that I have seen events like this before, and I'm sure that they understand that the important thing is to be able to take steps that we can sustain, rather than steps that we take simply to show some action. MR. SCHUMM I just wanted to mention, also, what the Mayor just read is a lot of work.

There's a lot of input in staff preparation and action time that has to be put in place before these steps can occur, so it is going to take some time to move forward on this. And I agree with John Nalbandian that for us to undertake something just for window dressing is just wasting our time. What we would do is concentrate on what we think is in the best interest of the community and then follow it through on a long-term basis as you have indicated with the Memorandum of Understanding and Agreement, that hopefully it will bridge future Commissions and it will have a definite effect into perpetuity. That's what needs to happen. But I do think all the points are, are good. MR. NALBANDIAN I would like to raise one other point to see if there is any support for it among the Commissioners. Because if there isn't, then I'll drop it and not try to push staff to pursue it. Last week I talked a little bit about my concern about making a public policy based on stories and anecdotes rather than some systematic collection of data over time that we could continue. My sense is that I want to be able to do is I want to be able to track over a period of years what kind of progress we're making and actually be able to set some concrete goals. I don't see us being able to do that now. We don't really have a database that would outline for us the degree of satisfaction that the citizens have with a variety of city services. Those city services would include not only the Police Department, but all departments where the city actually comes in contact with citizens seeking some service. I think that we could do something like that. It would involve a good amount of staff time. I think it's a good investment. I think we would need to at least endorse that as a group rather than me trying to do that.

MAYOR WALTERS I think it follows along that we have established as a goal some financial planning for five years and some performance kinds of things that go along with that. It's not unreasonable what you're indicating. That's an ally of what we talked about at the goal setting part of our retreat and our considerations. I don't think it would be fair to ask as the City Staff, City Manager considers our service oriented products for the community to have some mechanism by which we can collect the very positive and certainly the negative kinds of reactions, too. And perhaps there's some basis and some means, some mechanized means of doing that. Again, I don't know, but that again, with the computer aided dispatch system and you know that may be rather expensive, but I think we need to at least examine the feasibility of that kind of enhancement, and if it's another enhancement that we can utilize for the other input kinds of things, I think we need to look into that, too.

COMMISSIONER SHIRLEY MARTINSMITH I would agree with John in that if there is a way that we can track citizen satisfaction with the delivery of our services, then I think we have a responsibility to look at those actions and to take it under serious consideration. The reason is because as the Mayor alluded to a while ago, the Commission changes every two years, but the goal of good service should never change, and if we can look at some options in tracking that and measuring that, I think it would be an important thing to do.

MR. SCHUMM I agree with John and I agree with Shirley. That seems to be a little bit broader topic than this specific agenda item. And we have recognized that one of our primary goals to have a better level of understanding of what the consumers feel how we deliver city services, and so I think that that is one of our goals and that we should proceed with that. In addition to that, one of the recommendations is the Police Review Board. Two. Actually, an outside peer group as well as a citizens' group. That in itself should help to produce a quality control measure of how do the citizens perceive their being helped or hindered with the Police Department, and what, what are we doing. You know, I look at the professional peer review board as one that's going to show how well we are functioning in all aspects of the Police Department. And then I look at the review the Citizens' Review Panel as one that will be one that will be a complaint department for those parties. If people feel that they have been injured in some way and would like to present their case to a review board and have the satisfaction of saying yes, you weren't handled correctly or no there wasn't a discrepancy in policy. So I think those two boards themselves should produce a level of quality control that we'll be able to get a handle on. And we'll I think we'll be able to make adjustments to our policy based on that information with regards to the Police Department per se. So I would think that once those panels come on line that we're going to get a lot of information that should help us understand what kind of service we're delivering from the department. Secondly, the other point I wanted to make along with all this is that, I think that one of the most, I think the police department has a story that we need to tell, too. And unfortunately, I'm no strong advocate for any group. I'm trying to remain neutral, but I think the most shocking and I guess enlightening study session that we had last year was the review of all the weapons that have been confiscated off people in Lawrence who were breaking the law. And I think we've got to realize, too, that Lawrence has changed the character of Lawrence has changed quite a bit, and as we grow, we also have more elements of crime in the community. And so that, maybe, needs to be explained, and the seriousness with which our police officers are protected. And so there's another story then that I don't think was quite explained. I was a party to that study session, and I think you were, Mayor, and I think Shirley was, but I was, I was, it was certainly something that I never expected to see in Lawrence, but it was something that we're got to remain knowledgeable about so that's another point that, you know ... MAYOR WALTERS I spoke on behalf of someone who is here, and he's here. Dan Wildcat. Dan, would you care to make any comments or observations? MR. DAN WILDCAT Yes. My name is Dan Wildcat and I am presently President of the Board of Directors at the Lawrence Indian Center and also serve as chair of the Natural and Social Sciences department at Haskell Indian Junior College. First of all, let me extend thanks to our Mayor for his, I think, deep-felt concern on this issue, and I do welcome the opportunity to address the entire Commission because

I think probably that Mayor Walters may be in a position better position by virtue of the kinds of discussions we have had to understand the deep concern that exists within this community. So let me just, first of all, caution you this commission on something that I think is very serious. And that is that even the discussion here seems to almost automatically digress into a discussion of services, rendering of services, and whether we are meeting consumers' needs. For a very important segment of our community the Native American community to discuss specifically this concern in that form of discourse is one that is insulting. I mean that. With all sincerity I make it as a positive statement. What we're talking about is a grieving that has occurred a sense of loss within our community, and I think you need to be very aware of how deep that is. We have a lot to expect I think, and I think from talking to the Mayor that he believes this community deserves a lot. We do want steps to be taken in this community that can be sustained. We don't want token action taken. The problem here is not one of tokenism. But to begin talking about building a database and services and quality and consumers, keep in mind, please, Commissioners, that we're talking about three deaths that for many of us have not been explained. We're talking about one death that for many of us in the community raises serious questions about current procedures and policies, and for some, even attitudes that may exist within our governmental agencies. I shared something with Mayor Walters that I think it's imperative for all of you to know. And that is that what I have seen in the past several years within the community over all. I don't believe this is a Native American versus everyone else problem. If it is, then, as I have said on many occasions before, we do have a serious problem. What I have seen, though, is a grieving process that has occurred. A grieving process that I think all of us can respect and empathize with. And most recently a grieving process for the Sevier family. And we do, I truly mean this, to the members of the family that are here tonight, I want you to know that there are many in this community that grieve with you. I shared this, my perceptions of it, with the Mayor gives way to fear and frustrations, and I'm not being reckless when I say anger. You need to know that. There's a growing sense of anger about not having questions answered. [long pause] When you undertake to address these concerns I want you to keep that in mind. I think the members of, particularly, the Native American community locally have been very responsible in the way they have dealt with the local situation. But let's not start talking so much about cautiousness to the extent that feeds a very real perception that many have, that nothing is going to happen. Something has to happen. And the City of Lawrence must do the right thing. I'll just echo one other thing that was cited earlier: And that is the need for a comprehensive performance evaluation of Police Chief Ron Olin. That is something that I think is much needed. I think that, particularly in the area of community relations, I think that's an important part, an important professional responsibility our Police Chief has.

That there needs to be an assessment made. And that's the only thing I want to emphasize about that. You know, we did say a comprehensive performance evaluation, but I think it's absolutely crucial that that encompass things like community relations. So, please, I wish you, I hope for you, I pray that you can do the right thing here in Lawrence Kansas, but don't lose sight of the fact before we start talking about it and burying it under these broad terms and talking about building a database. Let's don't reduce these tragedies to some sort of statistic on a Uniform Crime Report. Let's don't lose the human dimension in this situation. Thank you very much for giving me this opportunity to share these concerns with you. MAYOR WALTERS Dan, I would only say that it hasn't always been pleasurable in conversations because of the subject matter. I certainly do have a great respect for you and where you're coming from. And as I told you before, and I think you would acknowledge that we have had quite a few conversations now, discussions, I do pledge and I hope you would accept that I will continue to, in the sense of this Commission and the sense of the community, is to have continuing conversations about all of these things and to place some things into effect and to, to do something, as you said. It is not here I would stop either because next week I hope to share some conversations with the African American community and some representatives and also the Hispanic American community and also the Asian American community as well. Our task force, I'm going to make it a little broader in terms, but that really is, too, what our Lawrence Alliance, if it comes about as I would believe it would, is going to have to do with some other things that you have spoken to. But I would ask you to please give me your pledge of further cooperation, further conversation as we go through this and to try to develop some mechanisms that will help all of us. And, uh, so far your ideas have been excellent, and I think I have a better sense, better feeling for the culture of which you are speaking and I wish to continue that and to continue that with your community as well as with the community as a whole. MR. WILDCAT Thank you. I feel a deep sense of responsibility and I know that the board members of Lawrence Indian Center do. You saw one of our staff people before you earlier this evening, I believe Marcia Heimer. And we are trying to do things here, to build some bridges. We want to be constructive. I want to also say one thing: And that is, I cannot engage in any form of self censorship, and Bob knows what I mean by this. I will tell you some things sometimes that you may not want to hear. MAYOR WALTERS No, Dan, you're frank. MR. WILDCAT Okay. But: I want you to understand the spirit in which that information is conveyed. I think one of the strengths we'll see whether it's a strength or not, but I think one of the things that potentially holds some positive things for Lawrence, is the fact that I believe the citizens of this community, whether they be black, white, or what ever red I believe that they are willing to confront problems, to admit there may be problems, and recognize that we're the stronger, that we're the better off for doing that.

So I encourage you to please, keep that in mind. And again, I didn't mean to suggest in any way that anyone was insincere, but be careful about the way you discuss this situation. Language, symbolism, metaphors, tell us a lot. And so let's hope that we can work together to find and create justice in this community. Thank you very much. MR. SCHUMM What do you think about the Mayor's proposals? Can you be specific with any of those, or do want some time to think about them? We're trying to get input back. MR. WILDCAT I want to give other people in the community an opportunity to speak, but let me make one, one quick, a couple of very quick comments. I believe it's absolutely imperative that we have an outside investigation or study made of the Lawrence Police Department. I believe that that is absolutely crucial. I think in terms of the selection of who will do that, I would encourage you to be open to community input. Please. MR. SCHUMM We will be. MR. WILDCAT Secondly, I think that in terms of I forget exactly what it's being called here, but the Review Board. Someone help me ..the Citizens' Review Board. Let's put the emphasis on the citizens. I'm hoping that you will allow the Lawrence Alliance, if that proceeds and follows through, I think that might be something that would be certainly within their purview. To have some input on, and how that would be structured, what kind of representation you know would end up on there, maybe with your direction or nomination of people. But certainly, let's put the emphasis on citizens. On the members of our community. Those would be just two comments that I have about recommendations that have been made. MR. SCHUMM Can I make one short comment, and I hope you, I, things fall into place at a funny time I guess, but we're sitting here with an agenda topic that says a very specific mechanical kind of issue that we're talking about, and you're here on much broader, different track, and so we got started talking on one particular area that didn't mesh exactly with yours. And I apologize to you for that and I hope you understand that we're not trying to avoid your issue that your here on, but we're on schedule talking about something else. And I think Leo Barbee said it most effectively last week. He said, "The issue with which I think we are most involved with at this moment is a much broader issue than the five people at this table, and he said there should be more people at this table. And I think that perhaps probably a dozen institutions or groups of people that ought to be involved. The schools ought to be involved, there's the business community, there's neighborhoods, there's KU, there's Haskell, and there's probably a dozen institutions or groups of people that ought to be involved to try to rectify and find a better solution to the problem. So on one moment we're talking about a rather mechanical process here that's on the agenda and I know that you've got a much broader, deeper issue that we want to share with you, so we got off track a little bit on that and I apologize to you and whoever else might have felt a little upset about what we were talking about originally. Anyway, thank you.

MAYOR WALTERS Let me ask anyone else if they would like to visit briefly ? MR. FARGO I just briefly want to just briefly address Commissioner Nalbandian's suggestion about the database. The Lawrence Human Relations Department is a department of the city government and they've been functioning for a number of years and I believe they would have the data the information that you seek now because that's . MR. NALBANDIAN You don't have the data that I want. They only have data regarding what that department does. I want data on the Water Department, I want data on the Sanitation Department, MR. FARGO It was the issue before the Commission that I was interested in and the Human Relations Department, I read in the task force report, needs your support and that's all I have to say. Thank you. MS. JOYCE

GROVER My name is Joyce Grover. I work with Women's Transitional Care Services. Women's Transitional Care Services has been providing services to homeless and battered women and their dependent children for the past 14 years in Lawrence. We have worked with the Lawrence Police Department over the years. Mostly in a struggle to improve communications between our agencies and to improve police response to domestic violence in the community. We participate in this public forum tonight in an effort to share some of our experiences and insight, as it relates to police and domestic calls in general.

As some of you may remember, approximately a year ago, a group called People Against Violence presented a petition with 1500 signatures to this body. The signers were expressing concerns about law enforcement response to domestic violence, they expressed a need for creating with community input, I emphasize, in a protocol outlining police response and responsibility to domestic violence in Lawrence. This petition was presented to both the City and the County Commission, and here we are before you again, expressing great concern about the same problems. We've seen the letter of understanding in domestic violence and prosecution cases that's been signed by the District Attorney, the KU Police Department, the Douglas County Sheriff, and the Lawrence Police Department, and this was presented as an acceptable solution to the concerns expressed about. We do not agree that it is acceptable. A major concern about this letter understanding is that it was composed unilaterally without public input, without public review and without input of domestic violence victims. Legislation was passed this session by the state, requiring all law enforcement in Kansas to adopt written policies regarding domestic violence calls. This new law is requiring that standard operating procedures in all areas of domestic violence be written and available to all officers of the agency, it requires that training be provided yearly on these policies and procedures. We feel this is a good opportunity to begin community input here in Lawrence.

As the current policies and procedures are reviewed and written down and complied with in these statutes, we urge community input in this process. In addition we recommend the following, which in some instances does coincide with what you're recommending there: That screening for sensitivity to the issues of racism, sexism, homophobia, agism, ablism, and antisemitism be done prior to hiring new officers, that ongoing training on these issues be done on a regular basis for all law enforcement personnel. This is not an issue that's going to be taken care of with one training session. That the city and all of its departments begin an ongoing review concerning these issues of oppression. A review that honestly evaluates all areas and services of the city government. And that is ongoing.

In conclusion, Women's Transitional Care Services shares the concerns of the Native Americans as expressed by Mr. Wildcat here in Lawrence. Lack of trust in the Lawrence Police Department's certainly effects our ability to work with battered women of all backgrounds in this community. We support many of your recommendations, Mayor, and urge examination and evaluation of the Lawrence Police Department. And we support changes being made in how local law enforcement is accountable to this community. As I was listening to you talk I had some concerns about the recommendations that were made that more information be given to that officer before that officer arrives on the scene of a domestic call. I think in many instances this serves to deter and decrease the kind of services that may be given to someone who has had several calls that evening. I might give as an example the situation in the community recently where there were six calls to the police and the final call involved a fire in the apartment being set by the perpetrator. And so I urge that recommendations be taken with caution because having more information doesn't necessarily provide better services. MAYOR WALTERS I understand.

I understand the need, too. I think that the enhancement to the 911 system has really to do more with the emergency response to someone who has a heart problem or something of that nature. I don't know whether that database can go further than that. And all I'm asking the City Manager to do is to explore what enhancements may be available, and if they are feasible, in terms of can they help us? would they interfere? And if it helps, how much does it cost, all those kinds of things. MS. GROVER I understand. I just don't want us to make the assumption that that information is going to be helpful. For many women, it is not necessarily helpful to have the police department know that they are calling again. MAYOR WALTERS Names and addresses are also would be very private in that kind of thing. MS. GROVER I also want to again support Mr. Wildcat's urging that there be an evaluation done on Chief Ron Olin and the police department. Over the years we have struggled back and forth with keeping communication open and improving the services to battered women in the community, and it's a constant struggle.

COMMISSIONER BOB SCHULTE You spoke of the screening for sensitivity. Are you speaking in a general sense or a specific sense, and I guess what I'm asking is, if you are aware of a program that's available that does that? MS. GROVER I'm not aware of a program that does that, but I think, I don't know exactly what kind of questions are asked when someone is being considered for hire for the city, but there should be some questions asked about what kind of work you have done with cultures other than your own? If you find you have a problem with racism, with homophobia, with sexism, what are you doing to rectify that problem? So I think there are some things that can be done, some screening that can be done initially that it doesn't seem to me is getting done, from the responses we have had in the community. MR. SCHUMM It would be nice if there was some way to do that and to be sure if the answers were given were. . . MS. GROVER I agree with you, and I think as has been expressed throughout the evening. This is not a problem that can be taken care of by one workshop or one review. I think it's an ongoing thing, and I think as you begin to do these things on regular basis maybe things do improve on the long run because you are asking some hard questions and doing some screening before you have someone come into the system who is obviously sexist or obviously racist. You know, MR. SCHULTE Perhaps it's the realization that people are asking the question that . . . ah . . . that might make people . . . ah . . . understand that it was not going to be some kind of accepted practice. MAYOR WALTERS We should go back to what Commissioner Schumm was indicating before. I think there has to be a lots of people involved in all these considerations. You know, there's a different flavor for a lot of things, for a lot of reasons, in fact I had organizations, victim support organizations report to me very recently that they enjoyed excellent relationships with the Police Department and the relationship in terms of what they do. So your perspective may be one, one direction, and we may have the perspective of someone else from a different direction of things. And I think we need to come together and find out what it is that we do best and what we can improve upon. MS. GROVER We have someone else here who will be talking a little bit more about what it looks like on our end in terms of working with the police, in terms of anecdotal kinds of evaluations that we have got from women we have served and talked to over the phone, and our own staff and volunteers. Thank you. MR. SCHUMM Do you have specific recommendations? Could you make some? And have them ready? For, uh, for us, so we can look at them? I mean, sometimes, you deal with a group of people that . . . ah . . . on a regular basis that have a genuine need for a specific kind of action. And this goes back to what John Nalbandian said. We need to know, if we are missing something we need to know what it is. We need to know if we can provide it. And you are the person, or your organization is the person who can give that information to us.

MS. GROVER And we would be glad to sit down and do that. I also want to emphasize that many of the women that we work with are Native American, African American, Asian American, Hispanic American, and that every time they make the decision to call law enforcement they make the decision of, you know, Will This Happen In My Home? I mean, Will Someone Be Killed In My Home by virtue of calling the Police? And so there's a connection here that we really need to stay with in terms of what's gone on in the community recently. I think there is a growing lack of trust in terms of using the Police as a resource. So I would be glad to sit down with some other people to make some recommendations on that end as well as . . .MR. SCHUMM Well, aside from the fear issue that I am not trying to move away from, but what are specific instances where we can improve service to your clients and your organization? I'd be interested in seeing what those are. Cause that's the only way we are ever going to make it better is if we can get specific input. Generalizations [gesturing] can't get anything done. MS. GROVER I guess in all fairness, I feel like we've been trying to do that over the years... MR. SCHUMM We want to help you. We want information. MR. NALBANDIAN People are speaking from notes. If anyone who is doing that would like to prepare those comments in writing, I'm sure it would be easier. MR. SCHUMM I would think, also, that any input that we receive we can certainly keep in our own files as well as turn them over to the outside peer group that is going to review, review the Police Department to see how these things can be improved or if there is sufficient or insufficient action in these specific areas . . . so it would be helpful for us. It would be a starting point to improve, if that's what needs to be done. MAYOR WALTERS A young lady has been waiting patiently in the back who would like to speak. MS. STEPHANIE RING My name is Stephanie Ring and I also work with the WTCS. In its advocacy for battered women in the Lawrence community, we at WTCS have had to develop a close working relationship with the police agencies. Because in the past the contact with the LPD has been marked by failures of communication, we began to keep records of our contacts, both directly and through victims of domestic violence with law enforcement agencies. We started this about one year ago. The decision to compile records of police contacts was also done at the suggestion of Police Chief Ron Olin that we substantiate allegations of inadequate police response to domestic violence. The evaluations of police conduct we compiled consist mainly of a record of the officer's name and the agency that they represent, a description of the incident, and a rating of the response as excellent, good, fair, or poor.

While the ratings are based on subjective criteria, the results of these evaluations are somewhat disquieting. While the majority of police contacts with WTCS advocates and staff were rated excellent or good, but the contact between police and survivors of domestic violence, 15 of 22 of these were rated fair or poor. This suggests that while efforts on behalf of WTCS and local law enforcement agencies to keep open lines of communication have met with some success, interaction between police and battered women who are representative of the general community is badly in need of improvement. We feel that the situation could be dramatically improved through the adoption of a standard operating procedure as Joyce mentioned for response to domestic violence calls in accordance with a new Kansas state laws. While I reiterate that the evidence we have compiled regarding police conduct is not presented as fact in any absolute sense, we feel that the lack of a consistent response to incidents of domestic violence has led to confused expectations, frustration, and anger towards the police officers. The Gregg Sevier case is now bringing much of this apprehension to the surface. Police policy and incidents of domestic violence should be publicly reviewed and receptive to public input. WTCS further suggests that a screening process for sensitivity to issues of racism, sexism, heterosexism, agism, and ablism be implemented as part of the hiring procedure of the Lawrence Police Department. Education on these issues as well as on domestic violence should become a part of the ongoing training process of the police force representatives. Furthermore, as an organization committed to nonviolence, we are alarmed at the use of police violence in response to a domestic call especially when we feel this was unnecessary. We strongly encourage the revision of police policies regarding its use of guns and its practice of shooting at armed threatening person at the torso and shooting to kill. Such policies again should be review publicly and be responsive to public input. In its support of battered women and their children, WTCS has had long history of involvement with the Indian community and because of this relationship the death of Gregg Sevier casts serious doubts on Women's Transitional Care to work with the police department to intervene in crisis situations. Adopting these recommendations would promote confidence in the Police Department in the Lawrence community. MR. SCHUMM In these statistics, you mentioned there was, could you go over that just briefly again? You said there was a rating of excellent or very good between the a group of people and then there was a different feeling between the victims and the investigating patrol officer. MS. RING Yes. The statistics have shown that advocates and staff volunteers, Women's Transitional Care have had a lot better success in the contacts with police officers than the women themselves have. We feel this is a result of a lack of understanding on the part of the women on what they can expect from police officers as well as a lack of consistency on the part of police officers and what they do in situations like this.

MR. SCHUMM Of the 22, are those people who have been victims? And they've come to your shelter to stay?

MS. RING Yes, either that or they called us on the crisis line. MR. SCHUMM You

interview all victims to see how they were treated in the confrontation situation by police officers or is it just the ones that volunteer the information saying, "Gee, I had a good experience." or "I felt this was terrible." MS.

RING We try to keep records of every contact there is between our clients and with the police department.

Yeah. MR. SCHUMM You have far more

than 22 per year don't you? MS. RING Well, we kept track of 61.

I think 61 was the total number. MR. SCHUMM Sixty-one

clients? MS. RING Sixty-one contacts

with police officers of which we have records. Yes, some of them might have slipped through the cracks, but I think there has been a real effort to be systematic about . .

MR. SCHUMM Would you be able to follow along with Joyce to develop, first of all, what you see as the ineffectiveness, as you perceive it or your clients perceive it, of the Lawrence Police Department when they are investigating a family dispute or a domestic dispute as well as then put down what you think the protocol ought to include and submit that to us? MS. RING Yeah.

Joyce says we have been working actively with the police department over issues such as this. The point is we're having a hard time getting anywhere. MR.

SCHUMM Well. What I'm asking you, and I think

this Commission wants to know is what your suggestions are in both of those areas so that we've got input from you and we can make some decisions as to what policy ought to be in effect.

And so, if you will submit that, we will appreciate it. You can

turn that in to the City Manager's Office. MR. BILL SIMONS I'm Bill

Simons, 1508 Vermont. I'm here tonight to speak as the parent

of four adult children, age 21 to 28. I've seen some old

friends and faces tonight. We kind of grown pudgy and gray or

bald, as the case may be, together. I think some

of the issues here need to be put somewhere in a historical

context because I think it helps. I really related when Daniel

Wildcat was talking about the anger and the fear aspect. My

four children are very proud of their Lawrence heritage. Their

great grandfather was born here in 1884. Both of his parents

were former slaves on their way to Nicodemus, Kansas when the

pregnancy culminated in the birth here and they wound up staying

here. He was raised in North Lawrence. All four of my children

graduated from Lawrence High School. I was first

full-time Director of the Ballard Center back in 1967 and 68

when there were other issues in this community along racial

lines. I know one of the fondest memories my oldest daughter

has in particular is of a young man who spent a year in our home

with us and really became like a brother figure to her. His

name was Rick Dowdell. He was killed by Lawrence Police

Officers twenty-one years ago under similar circumstances where

I think much of the community was never satisfied with the answers. So this is something that never seems to go away but comes back. We don't seem to learn from our mistakes. I feel that these kinds of things when they repeat themselves open up those old wounds. I have thought about him a lot over these past few weeks as this latest incident occurred. I also think we're a fairly assertive family. We make our grievances known as they come about over the years as they have occurred. I've been amazed as I have visited with my children now that they are older. My son now lives in Brooklyn, New York, and has the last two years and sometimes I think, My God, Big City, and the problems I read about in Brooklyn. And yet I don't really feel a sense of fear for him as much as . . . he was home recently and I know he spends quite a bit of his time out at night with his friends and his girl on short visits. And he has told me some stories that happened to him within the last four years when he was still living here in Lawrence as a young adult just several blocks from me that I'm sure are probably repeated throughout minority households throughout this community that he never even bothered to mention because he thought they were so insignificant: Walking home from Dillon's on Massachusetts Street at ten o'clock at night and carrying a bag of milk and being stopped by a police car and having to show what was in the bag, and I wondered if he were a white male at ten o'clock at night, if he would have been stopped and questioned under the same kinds of circumstances. Those are so commonplace for him and for my daughter that they don't even make an issue of those things. Mention it casually after a year after the fact, kind of thing. And so when he goes out at midnight to go over to someone's house and I know he's not going to be back till three or four I do feel a sense of nervousness, and I can still, when things happen like happened to the Sevier family, remember Mark Dowdell and I will never forget him and I never want the community forget him. I want somehow for these things to be addressed where there is an ongoing process somehow so we don't have to keep coming back over our dead young people to readdress them. That's all. Thank you. [ten minute recess] MS CONNIE BROOK I am also with Women's Transitional Care Services. The following is primarily to assert that the issues of "isms" is important to this community. We feel that all local agencies, organizations and governments in the community need to accept accountability for the issues of racism, sexism, heterosexism, antisemitism, agism, ablism and stereotyping in this community and recognize how they participate in and perpetuate these oppressions in our community. Our organization does not view this as a simple process that can be solved by tokenism or adaptation of an antidiscrimination policy but rather as an ongoing struggle which can be furthered by implementation of the following: First, review the composition of boards, staff and volunteers for diversity. Work toward inclusiveness in all areas including leadership roles. Implement regular training's raising awareness of all these issues. Review all policies and procedures to see if they reflect assumptions of stereotypes. Examine outreach and accessibility for all.

Open lines of communication between different parts of the community between your agency, organization and local government We challenge other agencies, organizations and government in the community to begin and, or continue, working toward inclusiveness in terms of race, sexual orientation, religion, age, culture, ethnicity and differing abilities. It is not something that can be accomplished in a day or once a year, but rather as part of an ongoing process as we have said before. I won't reiterate all the things and recommendations, but I would like to reiterate that we do share the concerns of the Native American community in Lawrence. There is a lack of trust in the Lawrence Police Department and it continually effects WTCS and its ability to work with battered women in this community and we urge examination, evaluation and changes in how local law enforcement is accountable to this community. MAYOR BOB WALTERS Thank you and I would hope you will share a written copy of this with us and perhaps too with our task force which I think will become the Lawrence Alliance, as well, so you might give that some consideration. Thank you very much. THE REVEREND MR. DULIN Might of took me longer to write my name than I will be speaking. Mayor, good evening to you and the commissioners. I won't go over all my concerns, but I do have some questions in my mind. I have heard a lot of words tonight, and I hope, and this is no indictment on anyone, but I am concerned about the liberality and the use of these words: Review, Discuss, Study, Evaluate, Consider, Comment, Recommend, Explore. And then I heard another word that I feel is very troubling to me, and that was the word Cost. Now, if this Commission is concerned about Cost, on the gravity of this issue, and some other issues, sometimes we seem to with the flick of a pen throw millions of dollars into certain areas, and I'm not here to condemn that, but still there is a question in my mind as to how deeply committed is there in an issue of this gravity. My other concern is the recommend this outside review, and I believe Shirley Martin Smith asked earlier this evening for a clarification of that and I'm just wondering will that be public knowledge, the clarification, as to who is going to pick this outside review, because sometimes things can, now this is just from my perception, and here again it's not an indictment. And there can be someone from the outside that's really from the inside, and this is troublesome to those that already have a sense or feeling that it's all going to be swept under the table. So I hope you understand where I'm coming from.

MAYOR WALTERS Yes, sir. MR. DULIN I guess that's mainly all. I had another question, and this is food for thought for the Commission. I keep hearing about all of these different communities, and I'm just wondering how many communities are we going to have in Lawrence. Now the same thing that applies for one citizen, I would hope would apply to all of us. And certainly that is equal protection, and a trust for our law enforcement, which right now a lot of the Community, and I'm going to use the word Community, because I hope that I am viewed as a citizen of the Community of Lawrence, and not just a citizen of the Black Community, because I think we have a problem when we only want to isolate problems and segment it as Communities. Now, granted, sometimes the seriousness of these things are felt stronger on some citizens than they are others. But I would hope we this Commission, that we view it as a concern of all of this Community, because if we don't, we'll be back here again in another twenty years, going over the same things, some of us will. I don't know whether I'll be here in another twenty or not, but just twenty years ago this same thing come up and we got together and discussed it and reviewed it and recommended, and now here we are twenty years again, doing the same thing. Those things concern me. Thank

you. MS. EPSTEIN My name is Marsha

Epstein, and my job is that I am the Director of Headquarters Crisis Center. I was touched by Dan Wildcat's comments, and the first thing I would like to say is that on behalf of all the people at Headquarters who talked about all this a lot, I would like to express my sympathy, our sympathy to the friends and family of Gregg Sevier. I've been involved with Headquarters for a very long time. MR. NALBANDIAN Why don't you tell us first what Headquarters is? MS. EPSTEIN Okay.

Headquarters is the 24hour center where there are people on duty for people who come in or call in with all kinds of different personal crises, including about twice a day people calling because they, or somebody they deeply care about, is suicidal or maybe has already made a suicide attempt. So that's an issue very close to my heart when I work at Headquarters. Also, the work I do with kids on suicide prevention.

In terms of Headquarters and the Police and suicide intervention in the community, I guess I want to say a couple of things. One is that I think that we have a good relationship with the Lawrence Police Department and have, over the many years, relied on the Lawrence Police Department in situations that involved danger to our staff and to other clients in our facility. We have such a good relationship with the Lawrence Police Department that Kevin Harmon is actually on our Board of Directors at Headquarters because he has been so supportive of us during different situations that we thought he'd be a valuable person to be a part of our board.

On the other hand, we don't call Lawrence Police Department for suicide intervention, and I think that's something that we need to think about. It doesn't really make sense to expect police officers to do that kind of work. And I guess in my perspective it would be a very hard thing to shift gears from the kind of thing that they normally do to trying to engage somebody in the kind of dialog that it takes to prevent a suicide attempt or a suicide death.

And I find just terrible tragedy and irony in the fact that perhaps Gregg Sevier was suicidal, and was killed as a result of the request for help. In terms of Headquarters, we have had a staff and board discussion that Kevin was part of, and we made some specific offers with the Police Department. One of those is to be involved with training. Training in our opinion, what would be best would be some designated responders, not that every police officer can be fully trained in suicide intervention. Also, having specially trained outreach people from Headquarters. We already have an on call system and do go out in certain kinds of situations. I'll reiterate that we don't try to put ourselves in danger, and that we do rely on police protection, or Sheriff's Department's protection in those kinds of situations when it is appropriate for us to be of assistance. But I think it's really important to look at that, and also the meeting with Sandy Shaw. I think that you might also consider looking at some of the ways that we train people, because we have a long history of providing that kind of service and training. And again I said it's about twice a day our current statistics on suicide intervention. We are deeply concerned and I am glad to hear there are lots of things going on, but I also feel greatly for everyone that is concerned with this because so many people approach me because of my work at Headquarters, and they say, "Well, what do you think should have been done? Could Headquarters have helped?" I'm not in a position to judge that because I don't think we'll ever know all of what happened. But I think there's such a huge problem in the community right now that even the amount of time spent tonight doesn't begin to touch and to show the kind of concern that there is, and that really concerns me. MAYOR

WALTERS I appreciate so very much your comments. Asking Dr. Shaw to come and visit was primarily because I have known her and have great respect for her and for Bert Nash Mental Center, and I know that you can contribute to in that same kind of direction so count on that as well. Questions? Thank you very much. Thank you everyone for your patience and understanding. Appreciate the opportunity to hear from so very many of you and we will certainly keep you posted as we proceed down the path, but again please be patient with us. We want do this very carefully, very methodically and very patiently, too. And I will be visiting with many of you in the near future. So, thank you. The next item on our agenda...