



PEDIATRIC AND ADOLESCENT MEDICINE, P.A.

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CITY MANAGERS OFFICE
LAWRENCE, KS

July 20, 2015

To: Lawrence City Commissioners

I apologize for being unable to attend the meeting tonight concerning the discussion with the public about a Police Station for our great city of Lawrence. I have a conflicting medical meeting in Kansas City which was scheduled months ago.

I have a great interest in this subject and significant information because I was on the last city commission. I realize that you have significant financial concerns about the station. I will leave that to your expertise because you know the budget and understand what you can and can't do. A police building can be done in a cost effective way. I would like to share some of my other thoughts.

First is the question of whether this is needed. Absolutely, we need a new police station that will serve the police in their duties to protect the citizens. I, myself, was surprised when this was brought up during my two year period as a commissioner. I therefore was not surprised that the public was unaware, unprepared, and skeptical.

After reviewing all the data from the previous discussions and visiting the facilities, I conclude that we have a pressing need for a new facility that meets the particular needs for our police as they protect us. This is a must after seeing how and what they do in an environment that is not adequate for our police. The public might not understand, but that can be corrected. The negative vote was due to lack of education, a negative city opinion of the Recreation Center, and a small number of people who have a negative stance to any improvements that involve finances.

Second, I would like to encourage you to build one new building for the police because theirs is a specialized service that is difficult, nearly impossible to create from a free standing building. The cities of Overland Park, Leawood, Shawnee, and Meriam in Kansas have only one station and Rolla and Columbia Missouri also have only one building. The Architects made it clear, along with our Police Chief, that our size of city is not conducive to substations. We made a mistake years ago when we purchased the building on Bob Billings. Let us not make that mistake a second time.

Third, I recommend you not consider this with the need for better mental health. If one entertains the concept of the County to house and treat citizens with mental health issues, which are common today, and also make changes in sentencing for these mentally affected individuals, then that is possible at a reasonable price to the citizens of our city and county. If you try to

address the overall needs of all mentally affected citizens, including inpatient and outpatient needs along with mental health specialist, then you are probably talking in the tens of millions of dollars in cost. You also must then cover the ongoing yearly cost of upkeep to support their needs which adds excessive cost. Costs, which are often non reimbursed medical costs, are the reasons every hospital in our area have closed their Mental Health Units. Please do not hook these together since you do not have the time or financial resources to solve both these issues.

I deal with this problem every day in my job as a Pediatrician, so I am well aware of the needs of our citizens affected by Mental Illness and I experienced them first hand because of a Schizophrenic and homeless brother-in-law.

I encourage you to address the needs but do not delay the decision on a new police facility. This is needed in a timely manner and will allow our citizens to be safer. I am convinced of the urgent need and ask you to move forward.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. Riordan', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Terrance P Riordan MD