

**City of Westwood, Kansas
City Council Work Session
4700 Rainbow Boulevard
March 13, 2025 – 6:00 PM**

Council Present: David E. Waters, Mayor
Andrew Buckman, Councilmember
Jeff Harris, Council President
Jason Hannaman, Councilmember
Laura Steele, Councilmember
Holly Wimer, Councilmember

Council Absent: None

Staff Present: Leslie Herring, City Administrator
Curtis Mansell, Police Chief
John Sullivan, Public Works Director
Abby Schneweis, City Clerk

Call to Order

Mayor Waters called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. on March 13, 2025. The meeting was held in a hybrid manner with attendees being able to join in person and virtually via Zoom.

2025 Westwood Complete Streets Projects: Review and Overview

Ms. Herring and Mr. Sullivan provided an overview of current and upcoming Complete Streets projects on Mission Road, Rainbow Boulevard, and 47th Place. Ms. Herring shared plans for potential road safety improvements for residential streets.

Adjournment to Regular Meeting

The Work session adjourned at 6:53 p.m. to prepare for the regular City Council meeting.

**City of Westwood, Kansas
City Council Meeting
March 13, 2025 – 7:00 p.m.**

Council Present: David E. Waters, Mayor
Jeff Harris, Council President
Andrew Buckman, Councilmember
Jason Hannaman, Councilmember
Laura Steele, Councilmember
Holly Wimer, Councilmember

Council Absent: None

Staff Present: Leslie Herring, City Administrator
Curtis Mansell, Police Chief
John Sullivan, Public Works Director
Ryan Denk, City Attorney
Abby Schneweis, City Clerk

Call to Order

Mayor Waters called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. on March 13, 2025. Ms. Schneweis called the roll. A quorum was present. The evening's meeting was held in a hybrid manner, with attendees joining both in person and via Zoom.

Approval of the Agenda

Motion by Councilmember Harris to approve the March 13, 2025, agenda as submitted. Second by Councilmember Buckman. Motion carried by a 5-0 voice vote.

Public Comment

David Gomoletz, 2427 W 48th Street, said he hope the City would use diligence in whatever capacity the Kansas State Statutes allow to inform voters about the Karbank proposal. Mr. Gomoletz said he was concerned about the messaging coming from those opposed to the proposal.

Steve Platt, 4910 Glendale, Westwood Hills, read a written statement he prepared and submitted for the record. The document is included in these minutes document.

Presentations and Proclamations

Tom Franzen, Johnson County Treasurer, provided an overview of a tax relief program for seniors and disabled veterans.

Consent Agenda

All items listed below are considered to be routine by the Governing Body and will be enacted in one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a member of the Governing Body so requests, in which event the item will be removed from the consent agenda and considered separately following approval of the consent agenda.

- A. Consider February 13, 2025 City Council Meeting Minutes
- B. Consider February 24, 2025 City Council – Planning Commission Joint Work Session Minutes

C. Consider Appropriations Ordinance 772

Motion by Councilmember Harris to approve the Consent Agenda as submitted. Second by Councilmember Steele. Ms. Schneweis conducted a roll call vote. Motion carried by a 5-0 vote.

Mayor's Report

Mayor Waters reminded the community to vote in the spring 2025 special election.

Councilmember Reports

Councilmember Hannaman reminded the community that ballots are due by noon on April 1st for the spring 2025 special election.

Staff Reports

Administrative Report

Ms. Herring provided an overview of the March 2025 Administrative Report included in the agenda packet and offered to answer questions.

Public Works Report

Mr. Sullivan provided an overview of the February and March 2025 Public Works Reports included in the agenda packet and offered to answer questions.

Public Safety Report

Chief Mansell provided an overview of the February 2025 Public Safety Report included in the agenda packet and offered to answer questions.

Treasurer's Report

The February 2025 Treasurer's Report was included in the agenda packet, no questions or comments were made about the report.

City Attorney's Report

Mr. Denk did not have any items to report.

Old Business

No old business items were considered during the meeting.

New Business

Consider Resolution No. 140-2025 appointing Jay Corazza to the board of the Westwood Foundation

The Westwood Foundation is a Kansas not-for-profit corporation organized and existing as an instrumentality of the City of Westwood, Kansas and is governed in the conduct of its affairs by its Board of Directors, its articles of incorporation, and its bylaws. The Westwood Foundation bylaws as amended state that residents of the City of Westwood, Kansas may be appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by a resolution adopted by a majority of the members of the Westwood City Council to serve terms of four (4) years on the Westwood Foundation Board of Directors.

Board member Kumud Pyakuryal moved from Westwood earlier this year, creating a vacancy on the Board. Mr. Pyakuryal's term ends in May of 2027. Around the same time, the Mayor issued an open call for candidates for the Planning Commission. Following interviews of Planning Commission candidates, Mayor David Waters is recommending one of those candidates – Jay Corazza – to fill the vacancy.

Jay Corazza is a 2-year resident of Westwood. His wife grew up in Westwood in the house next door to their current home, where his mother-in-law still resides. Jay retired in 2018 from a varied career as a pilot, highway construction executive, partner in a wholesale pipe valve and fitting business, and sales manager for a manufacturing company. He is interested in serving on the Westwood Foundation to have a hand in helping to shape Westwood's future.

Motion by Councilmember Wimer to adopt Resolution No. 140-2025 confirming the appointment of Jay Corazza to the Westwood Foundation Board of Directors. Second by Councilmember Buckman. Motion carried by a 5-0 voice vote.

Consider Resolution No. 141-2025 approving a five-year Johnson County CARS program

On an annual basis, the City of Westwood adopts by resolution a proposed five-year County Assistance Road System (CARS) Program Project Plan. The CARS Program is administered by Johnson County to allocate the distribution of motor fuel taxes within the County to be used on specific designated roads.

The recommended roadways for the City of Westwood for calendar years 2026 to 2030 is as follows:

Year	Project
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2026	W. 47th Place, Rainbow Boulevard to State Line Road
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Motion by Councilmember Steele to approve Resolution No. 141-2025 approving the City of Westwood's 2026 – 2030 projects for inclusion in the County Assistance Road System (CARS) Program. Second by Councilmember Wimer. Motion carried by a 5-0 voice vote.

Consider non-conforming signage package for commercial business Blair & Blythe, 4812 Rainbow Blvd.

Sarah Brown, organizing member of property owner Iris Holding Company, LLC has renovated a former fur retail space at 4812 Rainbow Blvd. into Blair & Blythe, a home goods retailer, zoned C-1 Commercial – Mixed Use. Exterior signage changes are part of this renovation.

The Westwood Zoning Ordinance Section provides:

9.2.1.D

If the Building Official determines that the proposed sign is not in compliance with all requirements of this chapter or any other laws or any other ordinances of the City, the Building Official shall not issue the requested permit, and shall notify the applicant of such denial and the reason therefore within fourteen days of the application being completed and filed with the City.

9.2.1.F

Any applicant aggrieved by a decision of the Building Official shall be entitled to an appeal to have said decision reviewed by the Governing Body. Said appeal must be taken within thirty days of the decision from which an appeal is taken. The Governing Body shall hear such appeal at the earlier of its next regularly scheduled meeting or the passage of twenty days from the decision from which an appeal is taken.

The desired signage package does not meet the requirements of the applicable provisions within Article 9 of the Westwood Zoning Code relating to signs and is, therefore, before the Governing Body for consideration on appeal.

The submitted signage application is to install (3) signs to the front/east facade of the building. These signs will say 'tabletop' (42.5"W x 8.25" H) 'Blair & Blythe' (185.5" W x 20"H) and 'interiors' (45.5" W x 6.5"). These signs will be 1" thick aluminum letters painted black, elevated off the face of the building 1" and backlit in the evening.

The signs will be installed in the middle of the two brick ledges, centered on the building. The brick ledges are 4" each and rest right above the installed awning and below the window ledges. The installation space is 28" in height. The signage letters will be sitting between 6-8 inches above the installed awning.

The window decal with the lettering Blair & Blythe approved as part of the temporary signage package approved by the Planning Commission for installation throughout construction is also to be left up. The temporary signage indicating "coming soon" and the large picture decals have already been removed. An illustration is provided below.

In order for staff to permit the signage application, the applicant needs approval from the Governing Body to install the "Blair & Blythe" channel cut letters, which constitute the one (1) allowed façade sign and exceed the 20 sqf. Maximum allowable size by 5'9" as well as the smaller signage outside of the "Blair & Blythe" channel cut letters and the window decal, which result in more than one (1) façade sign on the east façade of the building.

This application was originally published for a March 3, 2025 public hearing by the Westwood Board of Zoning Appeals, and notices of the public hearing were mailed to all property owners in Westwood within 200' of the property and to property owners outside Westwood within 1,000' of the property. The Board of Zoning Appeals determined that, pursuant to the Westwood Zoning Ordinance, the application was outside of their jurisdiction and should be considered on appeal to the Governing Body pursuant to provisions 9.2.1 D and F. Although there were three requests from those within the notice area to review the requested signage, there were no objections nor concerns stated either before or at the Board of Zoning Appeals meeting.

Motion by Councilmember Wimer to approve the submitted signage package for the commercial business Blair & Blythe located at 4812 Rainbow Blvd. Second by Councilmember Hannaman. Motion carried by a 5-0 voice vote.

Consider application of Wulff Building & Additions on behalf of property owner Kei Kamara to plat property at 4810 Belinder Ct.

A plat is a document recorded with a property parcel that establishes lot lines as well as areas intended for public use, if any. Westwood has a mixture of platted, partially platted, and unplatted lots. The subject parcel of this application is comprised of two parcels and a total of three tracts of land. The two parcels are taxed separately. A majority of the larger, southern parcel is platted, while the northern portion of the site is unplatted. Illustrations of the existing condition are provided below.

Section 1.5 of the Westwood Zoning Ordinance specifies the procedures and requirements for the consideration of a final plat, which include submission to the Planning Commission for review and approval and then submission to the Governing Body for acceptance/approval. Following approval by both the Planning Commission and Governing Body, the plat shall be recorded with the County Register of Deeds.

At its March 3, 2025 regular meeting, the Planning Commission was reviewed by the Planning Commission and forwarded to the Governing Body for consideration and approval. There were no Platted Not Platted Taxing Parcel A Taxing Parcel B conditions nor concerns voiced relating to the plat. This matter was heard in conjunction with the review and subsequent approval of a waiver/exception application by the property owner to construct a new house on the property.

The submitted final plat creates one (1) lot on the subject property. The entirety of that proposed Lot 1 is currently owned by Kei Kamara. No additional right-of-way nor public easements are being dedicated on the property.

Staff review of the application submittal – including review by the City’s attorney supporting the Planning Commission – concludes that the plat as submitted complies with applicable laws and requirements to be accepted by the City and recorded with Johnson County.

Motion by Councilmember Buckman to approve the plat for 4810 Belinder Ct. as provided by the applicant and included in the meeting packet. Second by Councilmember Steele. Motion carried by a 5-0 voice vote.

Consider agreement with Johnson County, KS for the 2025 Stormwater Best Management Practices (BMP) cost-share program

The Stormwater Management Advisory Council determined that it is in the best interests of the residents of Johnson County for the County’s Stormwater Management Program to participate in a costshare program with the City that promotes the use of rain barrels, rain gardens, native trees, and native plantings on residential property to reduce stormwater runoff as well as increase public awareness of stormwater-related issues, all as required by federal NPDES stormwater rules and regulations.

Motion by Councilmember Harris to authorize the Mayor to execute the 2025 Agreement for Stormwater BMP Cost-Share Program with Johnson County. Second by Councilmember Wimer. Motion carried by a 5-0 voice vote.

Consider Agreement with the City of Roeland Park, KS for the operations and maintenance of streetlighting systems (Mission Road)

As part of the Mission Road improvement from W. 53rd Street to W. 47th Street, the streetlighting system is to be improved for the benefit of both parties. The new streetlighting system will be located within the City of Roeland Park and as such will be owned by the City of Roeland Park. With Mission Road being a shared corridor, both cities will benefit from streetlighting and as such Westwood will agree to fund 50% of the operation and maintenance to include insurance claims related deductibles, electrical energy costs, maintenance costs and replacement costs needed to keep the Streetlighting System operating as designed. Roeland Park will provide the personnel either with its own force or through contract with an outside vendor to perform the maintenance as required for the system. The rates shown in Appendix “A” represent the costs paid by Roeland Park under an annual contract to a maintenance contractor, per pole, for routine maintenance. The monthly maintenance rates may not include non-routine service, such as knockdowns, fire repairs, luminaire replacement, underground cable repair, and major modifications. Actual costs for non-routine service shall be shared proportionately Fifty percent (50%) by each city. The maintenance and operation of the Streetlighting System shall be administered by Roeland Park acting by and through its Director of Public Works.

Roeland Park is anticipating October 1, 2025, beginning operation of the new system which is reflected in Appendix "A" of the Agreement. Staff recommend the City Council authorize the mayor to sign the agreement.

The cost of the electricity and maintenance should be comparable to the current expense we outlay for the street lighting that is being replaced. The schedule in Appendix "A" reflect the estimated amount of expense to operate the system annually. Westwood is responsible for Fifty percent (50%).

Motion by Councilmember Hannaman to authorize the mayor to execute the Agreement between the City of Roeland Park, Kansas, and the City of Westwood, Kansas, for the operation and maintenance of Streetlighting Systems. Second by Councilmember Steele. Motion carried by a 5-0 voice vote.

Announcements/Governing Body Comments

Councilmember Buckman encouraged the community to vote in the spring 2025 special election.

Executive Session

No Executive Session was held during this meeting.

Adjournment

Motion by Councilmember Hannaman to adjourn the meeting. Second by Councilmember Wimer. Motion carried by a 5-0 voice vote. The meeting was adjourned at 8:13 p.m.

APPROVED: _____
David E. Waters, Mayor

ATTEST: _____
Abby Schneweis, City Clerk

Appendix A

Document submitted for Public Comment

I am Stephen Platt, and I live at 4910 Glendale in the neighboring Westwood Hills.

I would like to know who wrote the supplemental answers to questions regarding the upcoming election. It is blatant electioneering with misdirection, deception, half-truths, and omissions.

My time is limited to refute.

From the start, the City's narrative has been to move the conversation away from a large office complex to be built on Joe D. Dennis Park. The approved planned development allows residential use and 140,000 square feet of buildings. Do you believe Karbank won't threaten to sue or bypass the local planning commission if a special use permit is not granted to build more, or include residential, in an approved planned development that has not been maxed out.

The benefits are a half truth. They should be offset by the value of the rezoned land of \$5.5 million to \$6.5 million being given away. This is more than Karbank is contributing. Quoting the Multistudio value is intentionally misleading. It is 4.25 acres being given away not 3. Truthfully, it is a benefit to the developer of \$1 million to \$2.5 million dollars and not to the city.

Calling the bond proceeds of 4.5 million a benefit is a stretch. This money must be repaid with interest and there is no guarantee Karbank will cover it in its entirety.

Don't fool the residents that you have not decided whether the bonds will be general obligation or special obligation. Was Karbank asked if they would support special obligation bonds? Karbank does have the first crack at buying the bonds.

Last month, factual evidence was used to show the Columbia Capital Memo projection was optimistic. The supplemental Q&A discussion of class A building rates is nonsense and completely dismisses the financial advisor's memo. The fact that the leasable space projection was wrong was completely overlooked in the rebuttal.

The TIF is deception by over projection and electioneering. It is the same reason Kansas City continues to pay a developer to cover shortfalls in revenue from the Power and Light district. With a general obligation bond component, the tax paying residents are ultimately responsible.

The supplement Q&A creates confusion using the term lien on the remaining interest in the 8 acres instead of a right of first refusal for its purchase.

Here's the worst-case scenario. Karbank buys the general obligation bonds. The TIF revenues fall short. The city now has to use tax dollars to pay off the bond's principal and interest to the developer. Let's say Karbank offers to pay off the bonds for the park interest. The payoff would be the right of first refusal.

Couldn't happen, you ask? Check out the recently heard Kansas Supreme Court case - Karbank Holdings versus Regional Evangelical Alliance of Churches. The claim is that Karbank has the right of first refusal to buy property price set by the sale value of the mortgage value instead of having to match an offer to purchase reported to have come from Kenny Block. \$1.2 million of the Church's equity is at stake.

The Karbank proposal has been a bad deal from the start, it favors the developer and puts the city residents at risk. All along the way the city has overridden objections to the project ignoring, intimidating, threatening lawsuits, and bullying residents and surrounding neighbors.

Benefits, TIF, Right of First Refusal. Only highlights to refuting the 10 page Q&A. Be honest and be fair.

Last point, If the residents vote NO the city gets a chance for a do over. The planning commission and city council must be firm and limit any request especially in height, size, and safety impact to be compatible with the surrounding residential neighborhood.

Vote NO and give the Mayor and City Council another chance to get this one right.