

Topeka JUMP takes a step forward after city officials approve proposals



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Published: Apr. 26, 2021 at 10:24 PM CDT

<https://www.wibw.com/2021/04/27/topeka-jump-takes-a-step-forward-after-city-officials-approve-proposals/?fbclid=IwAR0EZRMN11wmLq7duTgJ0XI8LSJpz-46bfokuBPawvPzFc7NI83ymPWT66A>

TOPEKA, Kan. (WIBW) - Passionate members of Topeka JUMP talked over important issues at their annual Nehemiah Action Assembly Monday night.

Topeka JUMP's annual Nehemiah Action Assembly went virtual this year.

"We have two issues that we're going to be bringing up to the mayor and the city manager on issues of justice," Co-chair Board Member of Topeka Jump, Steve Schiffelbein said.

The Nehemiah Action Assembly focused on those two things - ways to improve affordable housing and help those who may be struggling with addiction.

"The oxford house is the most successful intervention we found in our research," Pastor Curtis Odum explained. "Oxford houses are places where people in recovery can go and live with others who understand what they're going through."

"Our research taught us that thousands of families are suffering from an affordable housing crisis," Topeka JUMP member, Carol Babcock added. "Our worst fears we're realized when

everyone was expected to stay at home last year. We were told, we would be safer at home, but what about the people that had no home of their own.”

Topeka JUMP says there were two ways to stand up for justice: the audience could zoom in or drive into Topeka First United Methodist Church to listen to the event on FM 99.9 radio too.

“Some of us wanted to be in a parking lot, and some of us are not technology creative, an expert. This is going to be one of the largest community events in the year and we’re doing it around justice,” Schiffelbein said.

During the event, [Topeka JUMP](#) presented three proposals to Topeka City Manager Brent Trout and Mayor Michelle De La Isla.

“Will you make a proposal to the governing body by October 2021?” Topeka JUMP spokesperson asked. “During this time of opportunity and innovation, will you make a proposal to the governing body to move \$5 million dollars into the housing trust fund by January of 2022?”

In the end, the organization was able to take a step forward.

“My message to JUMP is this is a collaborative work and it takes all of us in our community working together and it’s important that not only for all of you, but also for our governing body to understand that the work that we are going to be doing hopefully to find a house in a trust fund,” Mayor De La Isla said. “It’s not just the idea of a few or individuals in our community these are hard facts and needs that we must address together.”

The city manager agreed to create a proposal on an annual funding stream for Topeka JUMP to present to the city council by December.

He also agreed to meet with Topeka JUMP in 45 days to discuss the housing trust fund.

Mayor Michelle De La Isla has agreed to support the proposals he puts in place.

For more information on what all took place at the event, [click here](#).

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