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Press Release

Retired Citizens Advisory Council hears update on senior dances

Friday night dances now only held twice a month, but attendance on way up

ARKANSAS CITY, Kan. (February 9, 2016) — Cutting the number of Friday night dances at the Arkansas City Senior Citizens Center from three a month to two has not led to a decline in attendance.

Instead, the number of visitors almost has doubled, the Retired Citizens Advisory Council heard in an attendance update at its meeting Monday afternoon — just as the council was hoping when it voted last December to trim back the number of dances, due to declining attendance and to reduce staff costs.

Council members present Monday were Jerri Achenbach, Larry Gilmore, Jack Givens, chair Carol Goldwater, Gary Humiston, Glen Morrison and advisor Kristin Sparks, director of senior services.

The dances were discussed at many of the council's meetings in 2015, with the board voting last September to raise admission fees by \$1, to \$6 per person, to assist with band travel and other costs.

While there were no complaints due to the price change, Sparks reported previously, attendance has dwindled to between 20 and 30 for most of the events. She blamed the dances' frequency.

"There's not enough participation to have and warrant three nights of dances," Sparks said in December. "I don't think it's a special thing anymore. (People think): 'Oh, I'll get it next Friday if I miss this one.' If you cut it back, they'll think, 'Oh, I've got to make it to this one because there's not going to be another one for a week or two.'"

With 55 people in attendance at the dance last Friday night, Sparks' theory appears to be correct.

Dances now are being held on the first and third Fridays of each month, with the next one planned for Feb. 19 at the senior center, 320 South A St. Doors open at 6 p.m. and the dances begin at 7 p.m.

The Retired Citizens Advisory Council, which meets every month on the second Monday, governs the operations of the Senior Citizens Center. Five of its seven members must be at least 62 years old.

For immediate release

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The advisory council's next meeting will be at 2 p.m. March 14 at the Senior Citizens Center.