

Contact: Nick Hernandez
Phone: (620) 441-4415
Fax: (620) 441-0869
nhernandez@arkansascityks.gov

City Manager's Office
City of Arkansas City
118 W. Central Ave.
Arkansas City, KS 67005



News Release

Commission issues resolution of support for SCKMC sales tax

Commissioners vote 4-0 to urge citizens to vote 'Yes' in today's mail-in ballot

ARKANSAS CITY, Kan. (May 4, 2016) — The City Commission of Arkansas City voted 4-0 on Tuesday night to issue a resolution of support for South Central Kansas Medical Center and for the proposed one-cent, 10-year sales tax to help the medical center to make its annual bond payments.

"Whereas members of the governing body have stated on several occasions that in order to pay the debt service of SCKMC, it is necessary and advisable ... to institute the SCKMC Sales Tax, the failure of which could lead to increased property taxes and/or reduced City services to citizens," Mayor Duane Oestmann read aloud from the text of the resolution, "the governing body of the City of Arkansas City hereby urges all citizens of the City of Arkansas City to vote 'YES' to the SCKMC Sales Tax."

"I think, just as a commission, we should express our support," said Vice Mayor Dan Jurkovich.

"We did vote to put it on the ballot, but this is saying we support it and we think it's probably the best way — at least, this is what I'm voting for when I vote — I think it's probably the best way for us to dig out of the (financial) hole."

The commissioners also urged citizens in the resolution to return their ballots in a timely manner.

Registered voters who live within the city limits of Arkansas City should start receiving mail-in ballots for the tax today or Thursday. They will have until May 24 to return them to the county clerk's office.

The resolution also states commissioners' continuing faith in SCKMC administrators and trustees.

"The governing body of the City of Arkansas City expresses continued support for the efforts of Chief Executive Officer Virgil Watson Jr. and the administration of South Central Kansas Medical Center, as well as the SCKMC Board of Trustees, to improve the medical center's financial position and better position it to be a leading and sustainable rural health care facility for years to come," Oestmann read.

For immediate release

more

Commissioner Charles Tweedy III moved to adopt the resolution as presented and Commissioner Jay Warren seconded the motion. Commissioner Chad Giles was absent from Tuesday night's meeting.

"I've had people tell me different things, what they think ought to happen to the hospital, but no matter what happens to the hospital, we're going to need some money to pay for the debt," Jurkovich said.

"And think this is the best way, the fairest way to do that. And in my mind — we're talking to the citizens of Arkansas City only — this will help us to bring some money from the surrounding areas to help pay for the hospital that we all use. We all use it, and it's important. It's nice to have doctors right here in town."

Questions about the tax may be directed to Andrew Lawson at (620) 441-4415 or alawson@arkansascityks.gov, or Clayton Pappan at (620) 441-5920 or claytonp@sckrmc.org.

Citizens may watch a replay of the commission meeting at bit.ly/ArkCityYouTube.

In other business Tuesday, the City Commission:

- Heard an annual report from Tom Langer, administrator of the City-Cowley County Health Department and public health officer for Cowley County.
- Witnessed Oestmann's proclamations of May 1-7 as Public Service Recognition Week and May 1-8 as National Music Week in Arkansas City. Sherry Baxter and Darlene Patterson, president and vice president of the Arkansas City Music and Dramatics Club, accepted the second proclamation, while the first one was given to recognize all City employees in the audience.
- Unanimously approved the following consent agenda items: approval of the April 5 revised regular meeting and April 19 regular meeting minutes as written; approval of Personnel Policies, Americans with Disabilities, Immigration Law Compliance, and Discrimination, Harassment and Retaliation personnel policy updates; ratification of Oestmann's appointments of Brian Mayfield and Leonard Mumford to the Building Trades Advisory Board; ratification of Oestmann's reappointments of Carl Mills to the Board of Zoning Appeals, Ruben Garcia and Gary Hale to the Northwest Community Center Advisory Board, Mike Munson to the Planning Commission, and Mark Bartlett, Dave Billings, Mike Hammel and Brian Lawrence to the Building Trades Advisory Board.
- Voted unanimously to table until May 17 a resolution authorizing the City to enter into a contract with JCI to replace the clearwell backwash pump at the Water Treatment Facility, for an amount not to exceed \$42,104. Jurkovich asked City staff to look into other options, including whether a refurbished pump could be installed at a lower price because the water plant is scheduled to be

more

decommissioned in October 2017. Staff is concerned that a pump failure could render the City unable to provide water to citizens until a replacement can be installed.

- Unanimously approved the Federal Aid Fund Exchange Master Agreement between the Kansas Department of Transportation and the City. City Manager Nick Hernandez said the funds could be used for the 15th Street bridge project and the mill and overlay of South Summit Street from its intersection with the U.S. 77 bypass to the south City limits. Both projects are tentatively scheduled for 2017.
- Unanimously approved a resolution authorizing a City Commission study session at noon May 13 in the city manager's office at City Hall, 118 W. Central Ave., to discuss City advisory boards and the reorganization meetings timeline, as well as a strategic planning retreat at 9 a.m. June 10 at a location to be determined later to discuss 2017 budgeting priorities.
- Heard updates from Hernandez on the Arkansas City Convention and Visitors Bureau's desire to become more independent of the Arkansas City Area Chamber of Commerce and the need to acquire property from Union Pacific, at a cost of \$30,000, in order to build a waste-stream pipeline from the new Water Treatment Facility to the Wastewater Treatment Facility.
- Heard a reminder from Tweedy about the Kansas Sampler Festival on Saturday and Sunday in Winfield. He urged citizens to attend the festival and see the many products created in Kansas.

###