

### Town Hall Meeting Held on Movie Theater Proposal

(KNZA)--Information was presented and questions answered during a town hall meeting Monday evening on the proposal for a city-owned movie theater in Hiawatha.

Hiawatha voters will decide during the April 1st general election the fate of a half-cent city-wide retailers sales tax increase to fund the construction of a just over 78-hundred square foot three-screen theater at a total estimated cost of nearly \$1.7 million. Funding from the sales tax, which is projected to raise around \$330,000 annually, would also be used for recreational and economic development purposes.

Mayor Crosby Gernon says with the current Arrow Theater closing soon, the theater committee arrived at the current proposal as the best option going forward. He noted a sales tax means the burden of funding the theater and other recreation/economic development initiatives doesn't just fall on property owners.

One woman in attendance said she felt the city should address it's infrastructure-such as streets--before getting into the movie theater business, while another person questioned the feasibility of the project. However, most of those speaking at the meeting voiced support for the proposal. Hiawatha business owner Joe Koechner said he had been on the fence, but now supports the proposed project. Koechner said he feels it would provide an economic benefit to the community. Others said they don't go to the current theater, but would go to the new one.

Another town hall meeting is planned March 24th on the proposal. Information on the sales tax proposal and proposed theater is also available on-line at [arrowtheater.com](http://arrowtheater.com)

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