

Sales tax committee makes recommendation

(KAIR)--The Atchison County Sales Tax Committee has held its last meeting, finalizing a recommendation on how to proceed with use of the countywide sales tax, approved by voters in 1993, to fund solid waste and joint communications in the county.

Use of the sales tax has long been a point of contention between city and county government, with the two sides questioning the benefits gained from the collections.

Committee co-chair Shawn Rizza told MSC News the group, January 10, unanimously approved a recommendation it feels is best moving forward with the issue.

According to Rizza, the committee is recommending that solid waste and joint communications be funded by remittance of the county's 1% general use sales tax.

The county, and each city's portion of the budget, will be determined by the state's formula for dispersing the sales tax revenue.

The plan also means that Solid Waste and Joint Communications will be tasked with the requirement of developing a comprehensive 5-year plan, while formulating annual budgets that conform to that plan.

Atchison County will be required to take additional steps for financial transparency, but those specifics are not yet negotiated.

Rizza said tipping fees, and what they are used to fund, will also be revisited.

He said the next steps will include presenting the recommendation to the Atchison City and County Commissions, in order for those entities legal counsel to begin drafting an interlocal agreement based on the feedback of the commissions.

Rizza calls the outcome of the Committee's work the first step in a long, ongoing process, but says he feels the progress made as an outcome of the Committee's January 10 meeting is more than has been made, pertaining to the issue, during the past 20-years.

The sales tax committee was formed last year, holding it's first meeting in May, followed by additional sessions, leading up to this month's final session.

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