

Anti-Smoking Group Makes Push In Holton

(KNZA)--A group of Holton area residents plan to be in attendance Monday evening when the Holton City Commission meets, working to push their goal to see smoking banned in outdoor areas.

Working with Wendy Simmons, Program Coordinator for the Multi-County Health Department based in Hiawatha, the anti-smoking group wants to see all tobacco use banned at all Holton parks, ball fields, and city lakes.

The group has already drafted an ordinance, ready to be signed by the Commission, if the City leaders decide to do so.

The effort comes following a survey sent in 2010 to registered voters in Holton, asking a variety of questions related to smoking.

Of the 3-thousand-65 surveys sent, 1-thousand-594 were returned completed.

Despite including such questions as whether or not respondents believe second hand smoke to be unsafe, there is no mention of outdoor area bans, such as the one now being proposed.

While smoking, and its accompanying second hand smoke, is apparently the key reason behind the proposed ban, the wording of the drafted ordinance states that all tobacco, including the smokeless chewing variety, would also be included, written to say that no person shall use any form of tobacco at or on any City-owned or operated outdoor recreational facilities, including the restrooms, spectator and concession areas. These facilities include playgrounds, athletic fields, swim beaches, aquatic areas, lakes and parks.

Along with Simmons, Deanne Armstrong, Director of the Jackson County Communities That Care Committee, is expected to attend Monday's meeting to support the anti-tobacco effort.

For their part, however, the Holton City Commission does not have the matter listed on the agenda for Monday evening.

The only issue, similar to the no-smoking push, found on the agenda, is a discussion item proposing a designated smoking area in the Holton ball fields. If approved, that item would not include an outright ban. Instead, it would require smokers to light up only in the proper area, keeping discarded cigarette butts at a minimum elsewhere.

The Holton City Commission will meet Monday evening, beginning at 7:00, at Holton City Hall.

Drafted Ordinance to Be Presented to the Holton City Commission:

City of Holton Kansas

City-Owned Outdoor Recreational Facilities

Tobacco-Free Policy

Section 1: Rationale

WHEREAS, the City believes that tobacco use in the proximity of children and adults engaging in or watching outdoor recreational activities at City-owned or operated facilities is detrimental to their health and can be offensive to those using such facilities; and

WHEREAS, the City has a unique opportunity to create and sustain an environment that supports a non-tobacco norm through a tobacco-free policy, rule enforcement, and adult-peer role modeling on City-owned outdoor recreational facilities; and

WHEREAS, the City believes parents, leaders, and officials involved in recreation are role models for youth and can have a positive effect on the lifestyle choices they make; and

WHEREAS, the tobacco industry advertises at and sponsors recreational events to foster a connection between tobacco use and recreation; and

WHEREAS, cigarette, once consumed in public spaces, are often discarded on the ground requiring additional maintenance expenses, diminish the beauty of the City's recreational facilities, and pose a risk to toddlers due to indigestion; and

WHEREAS, the City Park & Recreation Board determines that the prohibition of tobacco use at the City's recreational facilities serves to protect the health, safety and welfare of the citizens of our City.

THEREFORE, be it resolved that tobacco use is prohibited in outdoor recreational facilities. No person shall use any form of tobacco at or on any City-owned or operated outdoor recreational facilities, including the restrooms, spectator and concession areas. These facilities include playgrounds, athletic fields, swim beaches, aquatic areas, lakes and parks.

Section 2: Enforcement

1. Appropriate signs shall be posted in the above specified areas.
2. The community, especially facility users and staff, will be notified about this policy.
3. Staff will make periodic observations of recreational facilities to monitor for compliance.
4. Any person found violating this policy may be subject to immediate ejection from the recreation facility for the remainder of the event.

Section 3: Effective Date

This policy statement is effective immediately upon the date of adoption,
which is _____, 20__.

Appropriate City Official

Date

Many Signals Communications