

## Mound City Aldermen Discuss Lodging Tax at Special Meeting

(KTNC) - It will be at least another year before Mound City residents will vote whether to approve a lodging tax, and the proposal may never come to a vote.

Mound City Aldermen discussed the lodging tax during a special meeting last Friday that served as a forum for people to express their opinions on the tax.

Mound City hotel owners restated their opposition to the tax, which is used by towns and cities in Missouri to promote tourism.

Henry Just, the owner of the Super 8 Motel, said he feels the tax is regressive and unjustified, and he doesn't think the tax would generate as much money as city officials believe.

Jack Patel, the owner of Audrey's Motel, said the additional five-percent tax would cause travelers to pass by Mound City and go to St. Joseph. He said the tax would be more reasonable if the city would bring in more businesses, jobs, and houses.

Mayor Chris Krueger said the city plans to use revenue generated by the lodging tax to promote Mound City and bring more people to town.

Larry Knapp suggested at the hearing that rather than a tax, the city should place billboards along the Interstate to promote Mound City. He offered to donate his time and raise funds for the billboards. Just offered to pay for half the cost of two billboards.

Mound City would need approval from the state legislature before taking a lodging tax proposal to voters. State Representative Mike Thompson has prepared a bill – HB 140 – that would allow Mound City voters to vote on the tax.

The bill has not been introduced in the legislature, and there is question as to whether the legislature could approve it this year.

Following discussion, Aldermen agreed to ask Thompson to move forward with the legislation. If the bill is approved that would then allow Mound City residents to vote whether to implement a lodging tax. The issue is unlikely to be on the ballot, though, until at least the April 2014 election.