

Future of Horton Armory Discussed

Concerned for the preservation of history, a local resident questions Horton City Commissioners regarding future plans for the local armory; but, despite the push for specifics, commissioners say only money can determine the fate.

The issue arises as the Kansas Legislature works to turn the building over to the city.

As it stands, the city does use it, but does not own it; and confusing contracts keep them from full utilization.

However, some programs, including high school basketball and Head Start preschool, are conducted at the facility.

Questioning the Commission on their goals and plans for the building during their regular meeting this week was local resident Dean Tollefson(Play Audio :23 seconds)

The consensus of the commission, as summarized by Mayor Tim Lentz, is that the city wants to see the facility's use expanded for the entire community, but only future finances will determine what the reality will be(Play Audio :18 seconds)

Added to the current issues facing the armory is the recent discovery of termites following a local inspection.

However, based on the current contract, the National Guard was to provide inspections and handle such matters, but the city says that has not been the case.

Nonetheless, the city is on track to gaining ownership of the armory, shut down in 2010 as part of an effort to reduce the state's portion of the National Guard Budget.

Last week, the Kansas House passed a bill that would transfer ownership to Horton at no cost by a vote of 124-0.

The bill now goes before the Senate, and, if approved, would allow the Kansas Military Board to transfer the ownership, with the City of Horton becoming financially responsible for upkeep and all other aspects of the facility.