

Contact: Nick Hernandez
Phone: (620) 441-4415
Fax: (620) 441-0869
nhernandez@arkansascityks.gov

City Manager's Office
City of Arkansas City
118 W. Central Ave.
Arkansas City, KS 67005



News Release

Health Care Sales Tax town hall meeting set at middle school

Meeting will begin at 7 p.m. Thursday in ACMS orchestra room, 400 E. Kansas

ARKANSAS CITY, Kan. (July 10, 2018) — The City Commission of Arkansas City, which also serves as the South Central Kansas Medical Center Board of Trustees, will be host to its third town hall meeting on the Health Care Sales Tax proposal at 7 p.m. Thursday at Arkansas City Middle School.

The meeting will be in the middle school's **orchestra room (Room 114)** and is expected to last for 1 1/2 to two hours. The public is invited to attend and ask questions about the upcoming tax vote.

Mail-in ballots will be mailed to registered voters living within the city limits of Ark City starting on or around Aug. 17. They are due back by noon Sept. 6. If the proposed one-cent general sales tax is approved by voters, it would replace the current one-cent and half-cent sales taxes that benefit SCKMC.

This would have the effect of reducing the current sales tax rate in Arkansas City from 9 percent to 8.5 percent, bringing Ark City more into line with the sales tax rates of many neighboring communities.

Additional town hall meetings will be held on subsequent Thursday nights at the following locations:

- **7 p.m. July 19** — Water Treatment Facility, located at 400 W. Madison Ave.
- **7 p.m. July 26** — Roosevelt Elementary School, located at 300 North B St.
- **7 p.m. Aug. 2** — Adams Elementary School, located at 1201 N. 10th St.
- **7 p.m. Aug. 9** — Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 1254, located at 3212 N. Summit St.
- **7 p.m. Aug. 23** — Frances Willard Elementary School, located at 201 N. Fourth St.
- **7 p.m. Aug. 30** — Arkansas City High School, located at 1200 W. Radio Lane.

Tax not intended to be permanent

State law does not allow the proposed sales tax to have a sunset date, but as part of a resolution they approved in June, the City Commission stated for the record that its intent is for the tax to be retired once hospital bonds are paid off.

For immediate release

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“The Governing Body of the City of Arkansas City may take action to eliminate this sales tax when the original or refinanced Hospital Bonds are paid,” the resolution states. “It is the intent of the Governing Body to eliminate this ... sales tax when the hospital's bonds are paid.

“While this stated intent cannot bind a future Governing Body of the City of Arkansas City to require it to terminate the sales tax on a specific date, this provides guidance to those future elected officials as to the intent of the Governing Body and the citizens of the City of Arkansas City when they approved and supported this 1-percent sales tax election.”

City and hospital officials hope that approval of the Health Care Sales Tax, which would generate about \$1.6 million annually to secure the remaining 20 years of debt payments, will provide the City with the opportunity to refinance the bonds to a lower average interest rate in 2019.

This potentially could save taxpayers \$4 to \$8 million in interest over the course of the remaining payments. But refinancing is not possible without approval of a tax that lasts for the life of the bonds.

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