

City urged to allow NEK-CAP to use property

(KNZA)--A Hiawatha resident urged the Hiawatha City Commission Monday evening to “strongly consider” “allowing NEK-CAP to use the old RV park site on South 1st Street for the construction of a new administration building and Head Start Center.

NEK-CAP wants to re-locate to Hiawatha and has identified the 1st Street property as a preferred location.

Bob Freese, who previously served on the commission and on the Hiawatha Foundation for Economic Development Board, touted the economic benefits it would bring—including 35 to 40 new jobs. He said those employees would spend money in Hiawatha.

Freese said NEK-CAP has offered to pay for the re-location of the skate park currently located on the property.

Commissioners in May said they didn't think the city should give up the land, voicing concerns about limiting the land available to the city for future Parks and Recreation projects.

Freese said one of the jobs the commission has is economic development, and believes the city is sending the wrong message if they don't do something with NEK-CAP.

Commissioner Becky Shamburg said it wasn't a hard "no", but that other options should be looked at.

City Administrator Mike Nichols said he showed NEK-CAP representatives two other properties, both which would require dirt work.

It was agreed to put the matter on the commission's August 9 agenda for further discussion.

Many Signals Communications