

Controversy follows meeting announcement

(KAIR)--A special meeting, focused on the soon-to-sunset sales tax used for funding the Atchison County Sports Complex is set for Tuesday, with use of the Atchison County Code Red Emergency Alert system to announce the session drawing controversy.

The session, billed as an “old fashioned Townhall discussion,” is set to explore the future of the sports complex locations in Atchison and Effingham as the Sales Tax Revenue Bonds series, used for funding of the operations, will be paid off soon.

On March 17, Atchison County subscribers to the [Code Red](#) service, regularly used to announce countywide emergency-related information, received a notice announcing the meeting.

That led to questions regarding use of the system, with MSC Radio News taking the issue to the County.

3rd District Commissioner Casey Quinn, who was named in the notification, said in email correspondence that the idea to use the system for the announcement came from one of her “constituents concerned that a meeting to do with [the sales tax sunset] should be promoted to everyone in the county and not just on social media.”

Quinn explained that a conversation with the County’s IT Director about utilizing Code Red to inform about the town hall meeting met the “general notification” category of the alert. While no such future use is planned, Quinn said “if a critical topic comes up again [the County] will utilize the tool at [its] discretion,” adding that Code Red subscribers are able to opt out of such “general notifications.”

1st District Commissioner Jack Bower sees the issue differently, telling MSC News in an email that the “communication was out of line,” adding that “the Commission runs the County not a single Commissioner, and that “the Emergency Manager Should have known better.”

Meanwhile, the Townhall meeting itself will be held Tuesday evening at 6:00 at Memorial Hall, located at 819 Commercial Street, in Atchison.

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