

MINUTES OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON ASSESSMENT AND TAXATION

The meeting was called to order by Senator Paul "Bud" Burke at _____
Chairperson

11:00 a.m./p.m. on March 12, 1984 in room 526-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except: Senator Hayden (excused)
Senator Mulich (excused)

Committee staff present: Wayne Morris, Research Dept.
Tom Severn, Research Dept.
Don Hayward, Revisor's Office

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Representative Keith Farrar
Representative R. D. Miller
Ron Vine, Director of Parks and Recreation for Topeka
John Koepke, Kansas Association of School Boards

The committee held a hearing on HB 2926 which allows voters to petition for an election to reduce the recreation commission's tax levy. Under current law, voters may vote only to revoke an established recreation commission levy.

The chairman recognized Representative Farrar, sponsor, who explained that under present law, once a mill levy has been approved, the only recourse is to carry a petition which contains at least 5% of the qualified voters. Presently there is no choice about lowering the levy. The vote would only repeal it. This bill provides an alternative to reduce the mill levy. He said maybe they would be a little more careful with their budgets, and this bill will give voters the flexibility of reducing a recreation commission's levy.

Ron Vine, legislative chairman for the Topeka Recreation Commission, said that Representative Farrar has a unique situation in his community and he thinks they need special legislation; however, he doesn't see the need to have this on a statewide basis. He said it is difficult to be opposed to legislation giving the voters of the community more flexibility but he feels the flexibility is already there through the efforts of citizen members of recreation commissions. He indicated another piece of legislation, HB 3004, changes the methodology for forming recreation commissions in the community. The present method is to have 5% petitions and then bring before the voters; HB 3004 changes that so can be put before the voters without the 5% petition. Their concern with this bill and also HB 3004 in its present form is that any time the governing body of the city or the school district could eliminate the mill levy by bringing this before the voters without a petition at all and that would prevent the recreation commissions to set the mill levy. He said HB 3004 could have some negative effects in conjunction with HB 2926. (Attachment #1)

John Koepke, KASB, has the same concerns regarding HB 2926. He doesn't object to the bill except as it relates to HB 3004 in which the intent applies to just when establishing, not abolishing or rejecting a recreation commission. There would still be the required election but not the petition requirement. He said the carriers of the petition would need to specify what they intend to have the mill levy reduced to but this is not explicitly in the bill.

The committee held a hearing on HB 2782 which authorizes any township which has established an ambulance service to levy not to exceed two mills. Under present law townships are limited to one mill except for Johnson and Ford Counties.

The chairman recognized Representative R. D. Miller, sponsor, who told the committee that in Rush County the central part of the ambulance system serves three townships and has approximately \$34,000 to operate on. The increased operating costs make the mill levy increase necessary.

The vice-chairman adjourned the meeting at 11:35 a.m. The committee will meet March 13, 11:00 a.m.

Unless specifically noted, the individual remarks recorded herein have not been transcribed verbatim. Individual remarks as reported herein have not been submitted to the individuals appearing before the committee for editing or corrections.

Testimony before the Senate Assessment and Taxation Committee

Attachment #1

House Bill No. 2926

March 12, 1984

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee,

My name is Ron Vine, Director of Parks and Recreation for the City of Topeka, and Legislative Chairperson for the Kansas Recreation and Park Association. I am here to speak on behalf of the Kansas Recreation and Park Association regarding House bill No. 2926. The members of our association are keenly interested in this bill as we are the chief operators of recreation commissions in the state of Kansas. We appreciate having the opportunity to voice our concerns before the Senate Committee on Assessment and Taxation regarding House Bill No. 2926.

We use the word "concern" to represent our testimony rather than "support" or "opposition" for a special reason. It is difficult for the members of our association to be opposed to legislation which purports to give the voters of the community more flexibility in making their opinions known toward the mil levy of recreation commissions. However, at the same time, many of our members feel this flexibility already exists through the efforts of citizen members of recreation commissions. These members are appointed to represent their communities on policy decisions of recreation commissions including the setting of mil levies. For over 40 years, they have performed this role and, to our understanding, have done so in an exemplary manner. We are, therefore, sincerely puzzled as to the need for this bill across the state and the changes it would implement.

We thank you for giving us the opportunity to testify and would be happy to answer any questions regarding our thoughts.

RAV/rjm

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