

Q&A with LRC director Diana Moore on upcoming ballot question



Coming up on Nov. 2, a lot key races will be decided in the upcoming election. One of the hot button topics is concerning the Louisburg Recreation Commission asking for a one mill increase.

The question on the ballot will be as follows:

Shall the following be adopted?

Shall the one mill cap for the Louisburg Recreation Commission be removed and the levying of two mills in the tax year 2022, providing support of current and future recreational projects, which may include new sport facilities on Louisburg city-owned property; Thereafter, such increase shall not exceed one mill in each successive budget year and not exceed a total of four mills; pursuant to the provisions of K.S.A. 12-1927 et seq.?

Louisburg Sports Zone had a chance to reach out to Louisburg Recreation Commission director Diana Moore, and she explained what the ballot question is about, along with some of the misconceptions on what the recreation commission is using the extra mil for.

Here is our Q&A with her.

LSZ: First off, can you just explain what people are voting on

in November and some of specifics around it?

DM: The Louisburg Rec Commission is asking voters in November to release us from the one mill cap and allow us to levy two mills in the 2022 tax year. The LRC wants to maintain and improve our current programming and add new programs. We started operations in February of 2018 and have outgrown our mill. We know WE CAN DO MORE!!!! Some of the new programming would include a triathlon, a shooting club and improvements to our eSports program. Plus we want to continue adding to the adult sport offerings, preschool activities and of course more Senior programming. There are so many possibilities.

LSZ: Is it just a one mil increase or is the LRC asking for more? I have seen signs around town where people are claiming of a 400 percent tax increase if this passes. What can you say about that?

DM: Yes it is just a one mill increase we are asking for. We are asking the voters for a one mill increase for tax year 2022. The signs around town saying 400 percent are very misleading. The most a rec commission can ever levy is four mills so going from 1 to 2 mills is a 100 percent increase. If the LRC would ever levy the full four mills going from 1 to 4 is a 300 percent increase. One thing that is a constant is the fact that if you own a \$200,000 home your taxes would go up \$23 per year. And a full increase to four mills would be \$69 per year from the current rate. Per state statute, any mill increase for the Louisburg Recreation Commission would be at the decision of the USD 416 school board and the city council.

LSZ: You have stated the LRC is wanting to build a quad plex out at Lewis-Young. How needed is that, and if this passes in November, will that mil increase pay for all of that?

DM: There is a lot of conversation surrounding a potential quadplex at Lewis and Young. One thing is for certain that our

participation numbers are growing. Growing numbers of players means there are more teams. Growing participation numbers is a great problem to have. But with a limited number of fields this can make scheduling practices and games a lot like putting a puzzle together. If the ballot question passes in November, then the City Council would then need to decide the build options, the builder and how to carry the debt. LRC can't build property, so it would be up to the city as to how they handle the financial side of it. The school district and the LRC would then contribute funds, more than likely over a 10 year period. A portion of the mill increase would go to helping the city pay down the debt.

The first thing that needs to happen is releasing us from our mill. Other funding would be able to come in from field sponsorships and rental fees from organizations. Louisburg is so close to Johnson County we are often asked if there are fields available to rent for metro tournaments. This would bring people to town. These people would be spending money in Louisburg. This could attract people to Louisburg. I think it could be a big boost for the local businesses.

LSZ: What other things will the mill increase go toward and why?

DM: The mill would go to our programming. It would go to improving and adding programming. When the LRC first started programming we were youth sports only. In the 3 years that have followed we have added adult sports, a fishing club, added tackle football and several enrichment classes. With enrichment classes we cover everything from yoga to drawing classes, cooking classes, crafts and even Sip and Paint nights. We offer programming for all ages from our 3 year olds to our senior citizens. Now it's time to expand on these programs and add additional opportunities for our patrons.

The funds would go to the start up costs. We are in the planning stages for a Shooting Club, we would like to host a

yearly triathlon and we have just started with our eSports online program. We want to bring that in person. We want to offer more adult sport options. The request we keep getting is offering an adult soccer league. These programs are ones that people have asked for. These are the activities that people are currently heading out of Louisburg to participate in. Our goal is to keep the citizens of Louisburg in Louisburg to "Stay & Play."

LSZ: How important do you feel the passage of this question is?

DM: This ballot question passing means so very much to me because I know we can do more. It has been a privilege and an honor to build the LRC from the ground up. I am so proud of all we have done for Louisburg. When the LRC got up and running we surveyed the community to see what activities, programs and events were wanted. We work tirelessly to bring those suggestions and ideas to reality. We have been at our current level for awhile and we are to a point where we need to go to the next level. Louisburg deserves the LRC doing more. It can help the business community today and it can help the future of our great town. This passing can do so much for all of Louisburg.