

Mayor gives more detail on civic center plans

4-12-72

By BOB FELL
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High spirits prevailed at city hall Wednesday morning following the successful passage Tuesday of the revised sales tax ordinance. Mayor Don Barnett, who led the drive, looked like he had a telephone growing out of his ear.

In between congratulatory calls, which he said were coming from throughout the state, he was able to fill in a few more details on what is expected to happen in the next few months.

The revised city sales tax is expected to raise an additional \$400,000 or more a year with which to help finance the proposed civic center facility.

He said that he already has received offers from private citizens who want to contribute money for the civic center construction.

He has had several calls from booking agencies who want to schedule entertainment shows and other events. In fact, one agency already has put in its bid to book the opening date of the center.

Barnett said he will meet with Lowell Schmidt, commissioner of revenue, either Friday or Monday to go over details of putting the new system of city sales tax into effect. Provided

these administrative details can be worked out, the new system will go into effect on May 1.

As for a time schedule on the facilities, Barnett said the council will be consulting with architects for the design and plans and an overall on-site evaluation within the next 60 days.

"Important decisions will have to be made and we certainly will be making them with the utmost care, but we will be moving ahead just as quickly as possible," he said. He expressed the hope that construction of the center could be under way by next year.

"The response of the voters certainly gives the council confidence to act," he said. "The people have expressed their confidence and faith in the council's decision making ability."

He said that he plans to meet next week to begin organization of the non-profit corporation which will build the facility and lease it back to the city. The state legislature passed a law earlier this year which authorizes municipalities of over 20,000 population to enter into long-term leases with non-profit corporations for the acquisition of real and personal property to be used as municipal auditoriums.

The state law, however, does not go into effect until July