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By JESSICA CRAWFORD

- Daily Leader

With Governor Mark Parkinson proposing a tax Monday that would certainly affect the price of cigarettes, the City of Liberal may further encourage locals to kick the habit by implementing a smoking ban that mirrors the ban going in place today in Wichita.

The possible smoking ban Liberal may face is only in the discussion stages at this time. However, according to City Manager Mark Hall, a first reading of an ordinance may find its way on to the agenda of the next city commission meeting scheduled for Jan. 26.

Commissioner Dave Harrison felt the ban should be made as simple as possible.

“Really, what I am looking for is just a public smoking ban in public places,” he said. “All the rest of this stuff about smoking in certain places, I am not interested in making exceptions. I am for making this as simple and as easy as can be. If you want to smoke in your home, in your car or in your back yard, that is fine – not public places.”

Commissioner Bob Carlile said, in his opinion, Liberal’s smoking policy is fine as is.

“I like it the way it is,” he said. “If people want to go in there and smoke and it is limited to adults, that is their business – I don’t care.”

Harrison and Carlile joked that they would, yet again, disagree with one another on an issue.

“I don’t disagree with that, all I care about is people that have to work there,” Harrison said.

“Oh, they don’t have to work there,” Carlile responded.

“They might have to, Bob,” Harrison replied. “Some people have to have a job no matter what.”

Hall informed commissioners a proposed ordinance mirroring the ordinance in Wichita, will possibly be on the next city commission agenda.

According to a report from KAKE News, every business will need to display a sign that says they either do not allow smoking or they do allow smoking. However, the report noted, only persons over the age of 18 are allowed to enter or the premises will provide a special smoking room.

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