

Friday, August 24, 2001

Despite controversy, Knight says, he's best man for the job

Wichita Business Journal - by [Mark Story](#)

Somebody voted against Bob Knight.

The tally was 8-to-1, sources say, when the executive committee of the Greater Wichita Convention and **Visitors** Bureau voted July 10 to hire Bob Knight, the mayor of Wichita, as the bureau's part-time vice chairman. The job pays \$60,000 a year.

Knight says he wasn't there when the vote was taken and he doesn't know who voted for him or against him. All he cares about, he says, is doing a good job.

"I didn't ask for this job," he says. "I was approached. Having served at a regional and national level, I'm going to try to use my influence to help the bureau with marketing and fund raising."

Knight's hiring has been controversial, at least in some circles.

"I am appalled that the citizens of Wichita are not up in arms over the appointment," wrote Sharon Mallory, owner of Event Planning Services, in a letter to the editors of the Wichita Eagle that was published Aug. 9.

No intention of withdrawing

Despite the criticism, Knight says, he has no intention of withdrawing from the new job. It's not the first time, he says, that some people disagreed with what he was doing.

"Most things I have been engaged in over the last 20 years have been controversial," he says.

Indeed, Mallory's observation that "the citizens of Wichita are not up in arms" over Knight's appointment appears true. A few outspoken people, however, are publicly questioning the process that led to Knight getting the job.

"Knight's appointment is bizarre," says Rod Stewart, a Wichita Realtor who has long been active in the Visitors bureau. What it looks like to him, Stewart says, is an effort to increase the city of Wichita's control over the Visitors bureau.