

Bond Election Advisory Committee
August 15, 2005, 2:00 p.m.
Upstairs Conference Room – Civic Center

The Bond Election Advisory Committee met Monday, August 15, 2005 at 2:00 p.m. in the Upstairs Conference Room at the Civic Center, 1100 North Sixth, Abilene, Texas 79601. Mike Waters, Chairman of the Board was present and presiding with other Committee members present including Leigh Black, Seaton Higginbotham, Gary Galbraith, David Green, Mike Schultz, Mike Walls, Mike Hernandez, Bob Gomez, Petty Hunter, Gary McCaleb and Nelson Wilson. Committee members absent were: Bruce Bixby, David Lynn, Harold Preston and Liz Nunez.

Mike Waters called the meeting to order. Jill Frizzell-Flores took roll call. Chairman Waters reminded everyone present that there would be time for public comment at 3:15. He reminded the Committee of the field trip on August 22nd at 8:30 a.m. to look at the Public Works Capital Improvement Program projects. He stated that #13 and #20 on the CIP list would not be seen on the field trip. The next meeting will be August 31st at 2:00 p.m. The Finance Sub-Committee will meet on August 23rd at 1:30 in the Finance Conference Room at City Hall. Chairman Waters stated that Lindsay Minter sent him a Letter of Resignation from the Bond Committee.

Jill Frizzell-Flores administered the Oath of Office to Dr. Gary McCaleb.

Jon James, Director of Planning and Developing Services, did a presentation titled “Overview of the Thoroughfare Plan”. He summarized what the comprehensive plan is for the City of Abilene for the next 10 to 20 years. Mr. James stated two of the guiding principles for the plan: 1) promote infill and redevelopment and maximize the efficient use of existing resources by targeting development in areas with existing services, 2) target the development and redevelopment of Activity Centers that are linked with attractive, pedestrian-friendly street corridors. He stated that the Comprehensive Plan’s strategies are to emphasize designing safe and attractive roadways, encourage alternative transportation options and to require roadway improvements in conjunction with new development. The Thoroughfare Plan does not establish priorities or phasing of when these streets should be constructed/expanded. The Plan also does not indicate funding sources nor who is responsible for construction. Mr. James stated that the main question for road bond projects is does it promote infill development and redevelopment. Chairman Waters asked if the City pays for projects outside the city limits. Mr. James stated that it is funded in coordination with Taylor County and Texas Department of Transportation. Chairman asked a question regarding the streets around Fort Phantom Lake and Mr. James stated that Bob Lindley would be the best person to answer those types of questions. Chairman Waters asked if the streets were prioritized by the color they were on the map in the power point presentation. Mr. James explained the hierarchy of streets by colors. Seaton Higginbotham asked a question regarding the streets at the lake. Mike Schultz asked about the information that is given to a developer. Mr. James stated that subdivision regulations let the developer know what he or she is responsible for. Bob Gomez asked how extensive the development plan is for the northeast quadrant of the City. Mr. James stated that he has seen interest in developing that area of town.

Chairman Waters pointed out where the major proposed projects are and told the Committee that they will see these projects on the field trip. Petty Hunter asked about the flooding at and around Southwest Drive and the highway. Larry Gilley stated that Bob Lindley could answer this question about the impact to Elm Creek and this localized issue should be addressed to the Stormwater Services team. There was a discussion about the area the new WalMart is located and how the developer will help with the cost of flood prevention. Mr. Higginbotham asked about the residential area north of WalMart. Chairman Waters asked if there is existing City services and Mr. James stated he was unsure about that.

Melvin Martin, Chief of Police, summarized the three projects that are proposed by the Police Department (PD). The projects are as follows: add security fencing around south lot parking area, renovate and expand the Police Academy and set up a Forensic Laboratory in the Law Enforcement Center.

Jim Berry, Assistant Chief of Police, presented in detail the three projects. He stated that the project with the highest priority is the enhancement to the Police Academy, which is located on East Lake Road. He told about the history of the Warren Dodson Training Complex and how it is a multi-use facility. There is a proposed expansion of 1800 square feet to the north of the main Academy building. There is also a proposed expansion of 900 square feet to the Firing Range Building to add a second classroom. The project that has the second priority is the Forensic Lab. The Police Department proposes to renovate existing floor space (up to 2000 square feet) in the basement of the Law Enforcement Center (LEC) and provide adequate equipment for the Forensic Lab. The third project with least priority is to provide fencing at the south parking lot of the LEC. This will provide a secure storage area for police vehicles and equipment and make more parking available at the LEC. The fencing proposed should be the same type of fencing as the east parking lot. Bob Gomez asked how long the police keep evidence. Mr. Berry stated that it depends on the crime. Mr. Gomez asked if the prison pays a fee to the City for use of the Academy. Mr. Berry answered no and stated that there is a stipulation for no charge to the prison and he thought that this was one reason the prison was drawn to Abilene. Chairman Waters asked how often academy classes take place. Mr. Berry stated that the PD has graduated 16 classes and 215 officers and there are in-service classes weekly. Dr. McCaleb asked how much the PD could not do now during an investigation because of lack of room or equipment. Mr. Berry stated that they only have one fuming vent and the space is too small for evidence to be stored and tasks to be completed that involve forensics.

Chairman Waters opened the floor for public comment, there was none. He then asked the Committee if there were any changes to the minutes. Gary Galbraith noted one change. Seaton Higginbotham made a motion to approve the minutes and Bob Gomez and Petty Hunter seconded the motion. The Committee then unanimously approved the minutes for the July 21st meeting.

Bob Gomez asked how big the Academy is and Mr. Berry answered stating it is 20 acres. Mr. Hunter asked if the Forensics Lab would be for City of Abilene's use only. Mr. Berry stated that adjacent counties could use it if assistance is requested. Sgt. Brad

McGary stated that they would not turn away any Big Country agency. Mr. Higginbotham asked about the breakdown of \$228,000 funds for the proposed project. Mr. Berry stated that \$35,700 would be for equipment and \$160,000 for renovation. Mr. Higginbotham stated that he thought \$80 per square foot seemed high. Mike Walls asked if the PD had renovated recently or if they had gotten that cost from a contractor. Mr. Berry stated that the PD has received a few estimates on the proposed project.

Chairman Waters stated that there would be an evening meeting on Thursday September 8th at 6:30 p.m.

Dan Weber, Director of Aviation, presented the projects for the Abilene Regional Airport Capital Improvement Plan. There are 18 projects that have start dates that span from 2005 to 2009. Chairman Waters asked how much of the funding the Bond Committee would need to look at. Mr. Weber stated that to get 30 million from the Federal Government the Airport would have to match with 3.9 million. Chairman Waters asked how the terminal renovations were funded and David Wright stated that the City sold C.O.'s for that project. Chairman Waters asked how these improvements to the Airport would help for future flights to the west of Abilene. Mr. Weber stated that these improvements need to be done to keep the infrastructure intact but will not insure potential carriers with western endeavors. Chairman Waters inquired how the airport acquired the leakage statistics. Mr. Weber stated that a firm by the name of Saber was hired to track emplanements by zip code. Mr. Gomez asked about the condition of the tower. Mr. Weber stated that the tower is 50 years old and it is now habitable due to the recent removal of mold infestation. The FAA will provide federal funding for a new tower to be built in 2009. David Green asked about capturing leakage. Mr. Weber stated that 456 daily passengers would be needed daily each way and 180,000 emplanements annually. Mike Hernandez asked if the airport has Dyess passengers. Mr. Weber stated that Abilene Regional Airport does have Dyess passengers but they do not have the room or lift capacity to transport gear when Dyess personnel are being deployed. Chairman Waters asked how much money the Airport would need annually to break even. Mr. Weber stated that the budget is 1.3 million and the revenue is 1 million (deficit is subsidized by the General Fund). Chairman Waters inquired if the airport could handle any size of plane. Mr. Weber stated that with any size of plane, the ramps still need replacement. Chairman Waters asked if these Capital Improvement Projects would be pursued without bond funds and Mr. Weber stated yes. Nelson Wilson asked if there is any extra revenue generated from the use of the airport for training flights. Mr. Weber stated that the military is not charged but there could be alternate fees such a fuel flowage fees for others. Mr. Gomez inquired about the parking facility and Mr. Weber stated that this was funded with the expansion and renovation.

Mr. Gilley stated that Brad Fitzer, Fire Chief, could not be here as scheduled.

Chairman Waters adjourned the meeting at 4:15.