

**ABILENE CITY COUNCIL RETREAT
SEPTEMBER 23, 2004**

**OAKWOOD TRAILS LODGE
ABILENE STATE SCHOOL CAMPUS
2501 MAPLE STREET
ABILENE, TEXAS**

The City Council of the City of Abilene, Texas, met in a City Council retreat at 1:40 p.m. on September 23, 2004, in the Oakwood Trails Lodge of the Abilene State School, 2501 Maple Street. Mayor Norm Archibald was present and presiding with Councilmen Sam Chase, Kris Southward, Anthony Williams (arrived at 1:50 p.m.), John Hill, Stormy Higgins, and Councilwoman Laura Moore. Also present were City Manager Larry Gilley, Assistant City Manager Michael Morrison, Assistant City Manager Kathy Merrill, Assistant City Manager Richard Burdine, City Attorney Sharon Hicks, and City Secretary Jo Moore.

Mayor Archibald called the meeting to order, welcomed those in attendance and stated today's retreat is expected to conclude by 6:00 p.m. The Mayor then turned the meeting over to City Manager Larry Gilley.

Mr. Gilley introduced Terry Childers of the Childers Group as the facilitator for the Council retreat. Mr. Childers briefed the Council on his background in city government and as a facilitator. Mr. Childers then reviewed the Retreat objectives as follows:

- To Focus on Being More Effective
- To Set Prioritized Council Policy Goals for Next 3 Years
- To Sharpen Vision for Abilene City Government

Mayor Archibald noted that "topics" set for the retreat were a result of feedback he had received from the Council.

Mr. Childers noted the importance of the Retreat Topics which included:

- Council Role Clarification
- 10 Principles of Good Practice of Effective City Councils
- Strategic Direction Concepts
- Team Building Concepts
- Council Priorities – Policy Agenda

Mr. Childers stated the topic "Council Role Clarification" focuses on Council roles in the community and city government and of their understanding of the various roles and action they can take to be more effective.

The Council and Mr. Childers discussed Councils individual view of roles as follows:

- Individual role on the City Council.
- Primary role of the City Council.
- Primary role of the City Manager and his staff.

Mr. Childers reviewed the role clarification of Councils noting:

Highly effective Councils have a clear sense of their roles.

- Roles articulated
- Disciplined on their roles
- Strengthen roles of others
- Part of the broader team

Role Perspectives:

- External (Outside World)
 - Political
 - Leadership
 - Seat of Authority
- Internal (City Organization)
 - Policy Makers
 - Vision makers / keepers
 - Monitor / evaluate
 - Set lines of authority / accountability
- Council Perspectives (Internal Council)
 - Council relations
 - Decision making
 - Protocol

Mr. Childers emphasized to Council that their primary role is to set policy and to set clear directions for the organization and that if they do not fulfill their role someone else will.

Mr. Childers distributed and reviewed the Council Constituency Model as follows:

- **10% Complainers and Dissenters.** This group is against everything.
- **65% Silent Majority.** This group pays little attention to city government.
- **15% Supporters and Encouragers.** This group is generally informed about city government and supports city government in general.
- **10% Committed and Informed.** This group tends to be very active in the community and local government.

Mr. Childers then distributed and reviewed a handout on the 10 Principles of Good Practice for City Councils' and their impact on the effectiveness of City Councils. The principles were reviewed as follows:

- **Principle 1:** The Council has a very clear sense of the Strategic Direction for the city organization.
- **Principle 2:** The Council has a clear sense of its role and function in the community and the city organization.
- **Principle 3:** The Council has in place clear written policies which vest authority in the entire Council not blocks or factions.

- **Principle 4:** The Council views itself as a *Team* and understands its role as a *Team* in the broader context of city government and the community.
- **Principle 5:** The Council establishes clear lines of authority and accountability to run the business of city government.
- **Principle 6:** The Council monitors and evaluates its own performance as a Team to insure compliance with its own rules of conduct and expectations.
- **Principle 7:** The Council has a well thought out and agreed upon policy agenda to move the organization towards its strategic objectives.
- **Principle 8:** The Council understands its responsibility to its stakeholders and holds itself accountable to the entire community of stakeholders for its work and results.
- **Principle 9:** The City Council finds creative ways to insure citizen involvement but never allow citizen input to substitute for the Council's need to make decisions which are in the best interest of the organization and the Council's strategic direction.
- **Principle 10:** The Council advocates and supports a continuous learning environment in the city organization seeking to find a creative solutions to problems to advance its strategic agenda.

Council recessed for a break at 2:55 p.m. and reconvened at 3:20 p.m.

Mr. Childers asked the Council to use the 10 Principles of Good Practice for City Councils to do a Council self-evaluation and for the development of consensus of Good Practice priorities to improve the effectiveness of the Council team. Following the evaluation Mr. Childers encouraged the Council to review the information in 6 months to determine the progress that is being made.

Mr. Childers then directed the Council to identify individually their top 5 priorities that they believe the Council must insure happens to accomplish its strategic objectives over the next 3-5 years, thereby determining its effectiveness.

Council recessed for a break at 5:05 p.m. and reconvened at 5:10 p.m.

Following Council selecting their top priorities Mr. Childers requested Council to place the strategies under broad issues.

The Council listed the following broad issues and strategies:

COMP PLAN

- Infill
- Ft. Phantom
- Parks
- Annexation
- Neighborhood Associations
- Council Priorities

WATER

- Regional Efforts

- Bonds
- Long Term Planning

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Wadley-Donovan
- Regional Efforts
- COMP Plan
- Water
- Moskin Report (Tourism)
- Section 4 B Vote

CITY HALL

- Outsourcing
- Evening Meetings
- Q/A Sessions
- 3-5 Year Plan
- Long Term Budget Plan
- Bonds vs. C.O.'s
- ACE Report
- Employee Development
- Intra Council Committees
- Technology/Supervisor Training

INFRASTRUCTURE

- Communication System
- Water
- COMP Plan
- CIP Program
- Bonds / C.O.'s
- Parks

OTHER

- Smoking
- Ambulance (ALS)
- Police Car / Officer

Mr. Childers requested Council to review the six categories, further prioritize and be prepared at tomorrow's Retreat to compile clear direction for the City Manager in the accomplishing of those priorities.

Mayor Archibald noted that the retreat would resume tomorrow, Friday September 24th at 1:00 p.m. in the Tom Roberts Conference Room located at Hendrick Medical Center.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mayor Archibald recessed the Council into Executive Session pursuant to Sections 551.071, 551.074, and 551.072 of the Open Meetings Act, to seek the advice of the City Attorney with respect to pending and contemplated litigation, to consider the appointment and evaluation of public officers, and to consider the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property.

Councilwoman Moore left during Executive Session.

REGULAR SESSION

The Council reconvened from Executive Session and reported no action taken.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:58 p.m.

Jo Moore
City Secretary

Norm Archibald
Mayor