

SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING
January 5, 2006, 8:30 a.m.

CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ABILENE, TEXAS
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL

The City Council of the City of Abilene, Texas, met in a Special Called Session on January 5, 2006, at 8:30 a.m. in the Council Chambers at 555 Walnut Street. Mayor Archibald was present and presiding with Councilmen Sam Chase, Anthony Williams, Kris Southward, Stormy Higgins and Councilwoman Laura Moore. Also present were City Manager Larry Gilley, City Attorney Sharon Hicks, City Secretary Jo Moore, and various members of the City staff. Councilman John Hill was absent.

1. & 2. Mayor Archibald called the Council meeting to order and gave the invocation.
3. Councilman Williams led the Pledge of Allegiance.

BOND PROJECTS WORKSHOP

4. Discussion and possible action regarding potential Bond Projects/Election.

City Manager Larry Gilley referenced the bond projects notebooks that were submitted to Council that outline the bond committees' recommendations totaling \$29,820,000. Mr. Gilley commended the Bond Committee for their outstanding job in evaluating approximately \$80 million dollars in possible projects. Mr. Gilley noted the streets/rehabilitation projects would be the major projects and stated staff is prepared to review all of the recommended projects or any additional projects.

Mayor Archibald stated today's meeting will consist of questions for discussion concerning the proposed bond projects and Council will determine if further review is needed on the proposed recommendations or if additional projects need to be considered.

Council and staff discussed ballot wording for a possible bond election noting the need for flexibility in the ballot wording but the importance of limiting negative perception by providing sufficient voter information and education. In reviewing potential Bond Election dates staff noted the election could be ordered to be held in conjunction with the May 13, 2006 General Election (with the Order for that election being placed on the Council's February 9th agenda) or it could be held in conjunction with the November 7, 2006 Gubernatorial Election.

The 2005 Bond Election Advisory Committee recommendations were reviewed and included the following:

Street Rehab/Reconstruction
\$18,565,000

Council and staff discussion included: 1) the reason specific streets were listed as a top priority (included condition and type of street (major collector), number of people served; 2) basis/process staff used to determine street priorities for rehab/reconstruction; 2) Council referenced citizen input received concerning Meadow Drive's need for repair; 3) streets qualifying for a future

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CO program; 4) if approved in a bond election the timeline that would be required to complete street projects; 5) impact on cost and street completion timeline by utilizing city staff versus outside contractors/engineers; 6) adding the \$600,000 listed under the Ft. Phantom Improvements paving to the Street Rehabilitation/Reconstruction project, which would result in a change to the bond proposal package but not to the total dollar amount, and; 7) staff being comfortable, even with material cost increases, that the dollar amount in the street proposal will be sufficient to meet needs.

Airport Improvements
\$2,260,000

Council and staff discussion included: 1) consolidated car rental facility cost, utilization of building and potential recovery cost; 2) source of runway extension request; although loss of military traffic is occurring this is a commercial and cargo justification, not a military one; 3) proposed projects are planning dollars (study would be conducted prior to work being done); 4) staff noted benefits to runway extension including more traffic which justifies keeping tower open; 5) staff addressed a parking lot not included on bond projects and noted possibility of a future request coming to council for additional funding; 6) Council requested staff submit the cost to pave the parking lot to them prior to the February 9th council meeting, and; 7) City Manager clarified the differences in the airport projects due to federal match dollars involvement and recommended ballot wording not be specific to projects in case FAA does not approve.

Stormwater/Drainage
\$4,180,000

Council and staff discussion included: 1) Council noting concerns over flooding and drainage issues and cost involved in alleviating these problems; 2) the drainage problem existing on Northway Drive, in the Pasadena Heights residential district that is not included in the Bond package; 3) staff reviewed several levels of solutions and annual project cost for drainage improvements (as listed in bond project notebook).

Zoo Improvements
\$1,100,000

Council and staff discussion included: 1) projects listed being viewed differently by voters due to $\frac{3}{4}$ of the money needed (\$3.3 million) having already been raised by the Zoological Society.

Ft. Phantom Improvements
\$1,725,000

Council and staff discussion included: 1) the origin of, basis and concept for, the Dyess Recreation Area proposal; 2) how the Dyess Recreation Area would be monitored and the possibility of utilizing an existing park; 3) the Dyess Recreation Area not being a high dollar cost but viewed as impacting the quality of life in Abilene and supports the Dyess community, and; 4) the Unnamed Park on East Side not being expensive and improvements lasting life of potential bonds (20 years).

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Sidewalks
\$690,000

Council and staff discussion included: 1) staff briefed Council on the Sidewalk Improvement Program and noted criteria is being developed on where sidewalks will be placed.

Ball Field Lighting
\$1,300,000

Council and staff discussion included: 1) staff stated all projects are located on city owned land with exception of joint project with AISD (staff noted possibility of cost sharing with AISD).

Council referenced projects that were not part of the bond recommendations, but were addressed in the December 15, 2005 letter from the Bond Committee as needing Council attention.

Further Council and staff discussion included: 1) Council considering setting meeting dates (possibly the first to be held within the next 2 to 3 weeks) to begin to address issues outlined by the Bond Committees December 15, 2005 letter; 2) Council noted a careful study for a long term vision concerning library services needs to be addressed; 3) staff reiterated Council's past comments on the need to meet on a more regular basis to review projects that may be funded through the issuance of general obligation bonds; 4) consideration needed concerning more frequent bond elections; 5) staff addressed issues surrounding, and high interest noted in pursuing a north side library branch; 6) Council noted importance of packaging of proposed projects (avoiding jeopardizing projects because they are packaged with others); 7) the city not being by law allowed to promote projects but will provide sufficient factual information to citizens (including the number of people that will benefit from a project, i.e. the number of children that use the ball fields), and; 8) staff reviewing the issue of the Fort Phantom lake property being privatized and the lake water level stabilized (legal staff will review the legalities of privatizing the lake and if that would require an election).

Staff stated as a result of Council discussion the following three items would be placed on the Council's January 24, 2006 agenda to be considered to be included as part of the proposed Bond package: 1) alleviating the drainage problem that exists on Northway Drive, in the Pasadena Heights residential district; 2) paving Abilene Regional Airport's parking lot, and; 3) adding Meadow Drive to the list of proposed streets to be repaired.

Mayor Archibald stated the next Council meeting would be held Tuesday, January 10, 2006.

5. No Executive Session was held.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:25 a.m.

Jo Moore
City Secretary

Norm Archibald
Mayor

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