

CITY COUNCIL MEETING
August 23, 2007, 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 Regular Session on August 23, 2007, at 8:30 a.m. in the Council Chambers at 555 Walnut Street. Mayor Archibald was present and presiding with Councilmen Sam Chase, Stormy Higgins, Joe Spano, Anthony Williams, Councilwomen Laura Moore and Celia Davis. Also present were City Manager Larry Gilley, City Attorney Dan Santee, Interim City Secretary Danette Dunlap, and various members of the City staff.

Mayor Archibald gave the invocation.

Mayor Archibald introduced Austin Borcik who led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flags of the United States of America and the State of Texas. Austin is eight years old and is a 3rd grader at Wylie Elementary and he is the son of Teresa Borcik, Court Administrator for the City of Abilene.

Mayor Archibald expressed how proud he was of the city and the city staff for a job well done during the flooding that took place this last weekend. Mayor Archibald explained that the flooding had been greatly alleviated by the creek cleaning that has been taking place since the flood of 2002.

Mayor Archibald welcomed Danette Dunlap as the new Interim City Secretary upon Jo Moore's retirement Monday, August 20th.

Mayor Archibald advised that under the regular agenda items 4.1 & 4.2 has been pulled at the request of the proponent. Item 4.4 has been postponed until the next council workshop meeting. Item 4.4 is the Resolution for a water and sewer rate increase.

DISPOSITION OF MINUTES

2.0 Mayor Archibald stated Council has been given the minutes from the August 2, 2007 Workshop Meeting, and August 9, 2007 Regular Council Meeting. There being no deletions, corrections or additions to the minutes Councilman Chase made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Councilman Williams seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

AYES: Councilmen Chase, Higgins, Spano, Williams, Councilwomen Moore and Davis, and Mayor Archibald.

NAYS: None

CONSENT AGENDA

Councilwoman Davis made a motion to approve consent agenda items 3.1 through 3.7, as recommended by staff. Councilwoman Moore seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

AYES: Councilmen Chase, Higgins, Williams, Spano, Councilwomen Moore and Davis, and Mayor Archibald.

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NAYS: None

Resolutions:

3.1 Oral Resolution authorizing the City Manager to execute URS Corp Task Order 8, Administration, Inspection and Testing Services for Air Carrier Ramp Reconstruction Area B and Runway 17L/35R Lighting Rehabilitation.

3.2 Resolution relating to a public hearing and approving financing by the Stamford Higher Education Facilities Corporation for the benefit of Hardin Simmons University and related matters.

The Resolution is numbered 28-2007 and captioned as follows:

RESOLUTION RELATING TO A PUBLIC HEARING AND APPROVING FINANCING BY THE STAMFORD HIGHER EDUCATION FACILITIES CORPORATION FOR THE BENEFIT OF HARDIN-SIMMONS UNIVERSITY AND RELATED MATTERS.

3.3 Resolution denying the request of Atmos Energy Corp., Mid-Tex Division for an annual Gas Reliability Infrastructure Program (GRIP) rate increase in the City of Abilene.

The Resolution is numbered 29-2007 and captioned as follows:

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF ABILENE, TEXAS, DENYING THE REQUEST OF ATMOS ENERGY CORP., MID-TEX DIVISION, FOR AN ANNUAL GAS RELIABILITY INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM (GRIP) RATE INCREASE IN THIS MUNICIPALITY, AS A PART OF THE COMPANY'S STATEWIDE GAS UTILITY DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM; SUPPORTING STATUTORY REFORM OF THE TEXAS GRIP STATUTE, FINDING THAT THE MEETING AT WHICH THIS RESOLUTION IS PASSED IS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC; AND PROVIDING FOR NOTICE OF THIS RESOLUTION TO ATMOS ENERGY CORP., MID-TEX DIVISION AND THE CITY'S LEGISLATIVE DELEGATION.

3.4 Oral Resolution authorizing a change order on Miscellaneous Alleys Project.

3.5 Oral Resolution to consider a Street Use License request form Hardin Simmons University to Control Vehicular Access on Simmons Avenue.

3.6 Oral Resolution approving the Abilene-Taylor County 9-1-1 Emergency Communications District Revised FY 2007 and Proposed FY 2008 Budgets.

Ordinance:

3.7 **Z-2007-17** Request to rezone property from AO (Agricultural Open Space) to LI (Light Industrial), property located at 4034 Newman Rd., and set a public hearing for September 13, 2007 at 8:30 a.m.

REGULAR AGENDA

4.1 Oral Resolution considering Case No. **PA-2007-01**, a petition from Danielle Delhomme for relief from a dedication on construction requirement for property located at 1901 East Highway 80. Item pulled from the agenda by the proponent.

4.2 **TC-2007-04** – Request to abandon Fair Drive between E. Highway 80 and Sandy Street, and the west 660 feet of Sandy Street. Item pulled from the agenda by the proponent.

4.3 Mr. Burdine, Assistant City Manager brought forward a recommendation from the TIF Board #1 to seek authorization to spend \$30,000.00 for contracting expenses of the Abilene Branding Partnership in hiring North Star Destination Strategies of Nashville, Tennessee to develop a brand for Abilene.

Members of the Partnership

Chair, George Nichols, TIF #1 Board
Lynn Barnett, Abilene Cultural Affairs Council
Richard Burdine, City of Abilene
Michael Burke, MCM Elegante
Nancy Jones, Community Foundation of Abilene
Nanci Liles, Abilene Convention & Visitors Bureau
Mike McMahan, Abilene Chamber of Commerce
Chris Proctor-Cleveland, Abilene Psychiatric
Jeff Salmon, Frontier Texas!
Judy Wilhelm, Texas Tech Small Business Development Center

- What do residents, visitors and prospective businesses say about Abilene?
- What are we known for?
- In other words... What is our Brand?

What is destination branding?

- A destination brand conjures an image at the mere mention of the city's name. Its goal is clear: **to appeal to and to entice visitors, residents, the creative class, economic development, the arts, a better education system** — everything that makes a city sustainable and desirable.
- A brand is not a campaign theme, tag line, or slogan. **It's an expression of a compelling, unique experience (tangible or intangible) that our city offers potential visitors, future residents and prospective businesses.** It manifests through a message or promise that is seen and heard through multiple channels of communications and direct sales. Ultimately, a destination brand concentrates on the experience in our city, and our ability to deliver on that promise.

Seven qualities of a successful destination brand

1. Front-load total buy-in.
2. It is NOT about advertising.
3. Adhere to a set of principles.
4. Stand out to stand apart.
5. Brand evangelists are critical.
6. Consistency, consistency, consistency.
7. Live the promise.

Branding is not a one-size-fits-all process. Our city needs to entice tourists, the creative class and new business. Branding is more than a buzz word, more than a tagline or ad campaign. **A strong brand conveys the best of our city and is a revenue-producing asset designed to compete and win.**

Why is destination branding important?

- Proactive, competitive communities must brand themselves to be distinctive.
- Communities and regions are taking a page from the private sector in developing effective branding to stand out in the minds of prospective employers and residents. Unfortunately, many who start with lofty branding goals end up settling for a slogan and visual identity that falls short of becoming a true brand.
- Figuratively, it's like having a picture of ice cream but not the satisfying experience of the ice cream itself. Is it possible to have a deeper brand experience that makes your community a magnet for economic development? When our communicated message is backed by the real life experience, we will tap into the powerful force of economic development.
- This is integrated branding – the ability to communicate and keep a branding promise. An effective integrated brand contributes to a stronger economic base, higher property values, diverse and sustainable employers and citizen retention.

Tourism

- Tourism is an economic engine for cities, counties, and regions. As more communities awaken to this fact, the competition for "mind share" and "wallet share" is growing more intense.
- Mobility is king, and travelers are time-programmed and pressured like never before. More long weekends and fewer extended vacations are the trend; and a "been there, done that" attitude is spurring the need for convention and visitors bureaus (CVBs) and local tourism marketing partnerships to differentiate – brand – their communities in the sea of pick-up brochures, ads, media stories, and Internet portals.
- Budgets to accomplish this are even more critical; and with little money available for marketing or communications, marketers must ensure that every dollar works twice as hard.

Two key goals of pursuing the project:

- 1. Clarification of key messages of the community that builds from strengths of the past and present and which also provide a compelling and unifying platform for actions to shape our future.
- 2. The identification and clarification of a consistent image, look, identity or brand for Abilene that would strengthen and unify current and future presentation efforts.

Improvements with several important aspects of community including:

- Creation of a platform (connecting our past and present) for the community to be intentional in building a worthwhile and compelling future story about Abilene.
- Instill a common and actionable sense of identity and aspiration with existing residents, businesses and community groups.
- A consistent and compelling theme to support efforts to create additional interest in Abilene as a destination and to attract visitors and key events to Abilene, Texas.
- A focused message to support our local businesses and to build on current and future targeted efforts to spur our economic development efforts in order to grow the local economy.
- **A connectedness** in presentation and message **between all key community organizations** including civic, education, business, tourism and cultural groups.
- **A community web infrastructure with consistent items in look, feel and message** while still preserving individual identities and missions.
- **Project a welcoming community** where people of many different backgrounds and interests can find a place they are proud to call home.

Who will have input into the process? Everyone!

- This project will be developed utilizing **input from all key organizations within the Abilene community**. This includes entities that represent health care, education, tourism, heritage, arts, culture, economic development, and businesses of all sizes. The BrandPrint program will gather community stakeholders to participate in **focus groups**. The process will include **one-on-one interviews** with key community leaders and with people on the street as well as **community vision surveys** that will be available both written and online to everyone. This participation level from everyone is what makes the project successful.
- Once the final Abilene BrandPrint report is presented, we will all have a **fresh community brand that is distinct and positions us to generate more economic growth** for all involved.

Why North Star Destination Strategies?

- North Star has successfully proven to incorporate both economic development and tourism development marketing into a single, unified brand initiative. **North Star specializes in developing destination brands for small-to-mid-sized cities like Abilene.** A sampling of communities North Star has branded includes:
 - Augusta, Georgia
 - Lansing, Michigan
 - Williamsburg, Virginia
 - Seward, Alaska
 - Jackson, Mississippi
 - Overland Park, Kansas
 - Dayton, Ohio
 - Santa Rosa, California
 - Columbus, Georgia
 - Greeley, Colorado
 - Mesquite, Texas
 - **McKinney, Texas**
 - Plano, Texas
 - Uvalde, Texas

How will North Star develop the brand?

- North Star Destination Strategies combines research, strategy and creative work to develop a unique community brand. They will help us discover our optimum brand positioning, and then leverage their equity in that brand through a strategic communications and community initiatives plan. They call this proven approach **Community BrandPrint™**.
- **1. Understanding: Where the brand has been and why**

This phase addresses the current brand positioning of the community. Vital organizations and leaders are invited to share their perceptions to help coordinate activities to market the community as a whole. The evaluation compiles **information about the environment, community attitudes, current communications, and perceptions of target audiences and their influencers.**

- **2. Insights: Where the brand should be**

The goals for the community may involve many elements: gross receipts, population, education registrations, overnight guests, and bed-tax collections. Branding influences these goals by affecting expectations and attitudes, and ultimately behavior and usage.

The most successful brands establish an emotional – not just intellectual – connection. Insights come from asking several thought-provoking questions. What emotional attachments can the brand hold? How does the brand fit into his or her lifestyle? It is from these insights that North Star determines the overall positioning of the brand.

- **3. Imagination: What will get us there**

North Star considers all methods of communication to be created or changed that influence responses and behavior toward the brand. Brand-shaping issues are often confronted: overall positioning, synergy within the community, packaging, budget allocation, stakeholder participation, sponsorship association, co-operative efforts, and advertising and promotion. Business-building ideas are generated. Positioning lines and logos are created and tested. Foundation creative is developed.

- **4. Evaluation: How the brand is performing**

Evaluation provides new information that may lead to a new planning cycle. **Information gathered from concept pre-testing, campaign impact in the marketplace, and tracking studies will help measure the brand's performance over time.**

- **Ideally, two basic questions must be answered:**

Have responses to the brand among target audiences changed in the way the Community BrandPrint™ intended?

Have these changes resulted in action that will achieve the desired objectives of the brand? Turnkey or do-it-yourself programs are recommended depending on the needs of the community.

When will Abilene develop and launch a brand?

- BRAND DEVELOPMENT October 2007 – April 2008
- **Research**
 - Marketing audit
 - Vision scope
 - FAM tour
 - Economic Development Data
 - Travel research competitive report
 - Hospitality development index
 - Vision survey
 - Inquiry mapping analysis
 - Origin mapping analysis
 - Who-What-Where report (Who are visitors/residents)
 - Target audience perception interviews
 - Perception of materials from non-users report
- **Strategy**
 - Community situation brief
 - Blue sky meeting
 - Community strategic branding brief

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- **Creative**
 - Business building Ideas
 - Positioning lines
 - Copy testing
 - Foundation creative

- **Follow-Up**
 - Accountability measures
 - 3-year annual branding check-up

- **ROLL-OUT** Spring 2008

The roll-out process is a time of implementation – when all key players are exposed, indoctrinated and trained in the finely tuned beliefs, behaviors and ways of a destination brand. **This phase will raise the level of brand awareness with a view toward improving the ability to "live the promise."**

Total commitment and support is critical. All levels of government, hospitality, economic development, and community service become spokespersons for the brand. **A team effort is required to ensure that all messages are aligned with the promise.**

“Being a brand is the only way to stand out in a crowded marketplace. It is nothing more (and nothing less) than creating a distinct personality – and then telling the entire world about it.”

-Tom Peters

Councilwoman Davis asked if Mr. Burdine might clarify to the citizens what the TIF fund may be used for. Mr. Burdine explained that TIF was established 25 years ago, it is funded through taxes on new value created from improvement in the downtown area after the fund began. These funds are to be used for enhancement and attraction of business in the downtown area. The TIF funding ends in December of this year.

Council and staff discussion included: 1) will a website design come with the branding; 2) what is the total funding cost for the branding approximately \$110,000.00; 3) will be looking to businesses for funds to help implement the project; 4) local foundations currently involved include the Abilene Cultural Affairs Council, Abilene Convention & Visitors Bureau and the Abilene Chamber of Commerce; 5) will the city have to change their logo, they could. The city could change out gradually as items needed to be replaced; 6) what is the shelf life, this brand should take us into the future; 7) steering committee and evaluation of the brand; 8) TIF funds can not be used for creek and stream cleaning; 9) can we utilize what we already have “Friendly Frontier”, we are living this promise of being “Friendly”; 10) the consideration of past sayings “Key City” “Big Country”; 11) what story are we telling; 12) the need to set ourselves apart and the idea that will stick with people.

Councilman Spano made a motion to approve the Resolution authorizing \$30,000 of TIF funds for participation with Abilene Branding Partnership, to hire North Star Destination Strategies to develop a brand for the City of Abilene. Councilwoman Davis seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

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AYES: Councilmen Chase, Spano, Williams, Councilwomen Moore and Davis, and Mayor Archibald.

NAYS: Councilman Higgins

The Resolution is numbered **30-2007** and captioned as follows:

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ABILENE, TEXAS, AUTHORIZING THE ABILENE REINVESTMENT ZONE NUMBER ONE BOARD A/K/A TAX INCREMENT FINANCE DISTRICT BOARD (TIF) OF THE CITY OF ABILENE, TO USE THE FUNDS TO PARTICIPATE IN CONTRACTING EXPENSES WITH THE ABILENE BRANDING PARTNERSHIP TO HIRE NORTH STAR DESTINATION STRATEGIES TO DEVELOP A BRAND FOR ABILENE.

4.3 Resolution adopting the Schedule of Rates and Charges for the Water and Sewer Utility Services. The item was pulled from the agenda and will be presented at the September 6th Workshop.

4.4 David Wright, Director of Finance briefed the Council on the proposed Ordinance setting the 2007-2008 tax rate. Mr. Wright stated the FY 2008 budget approved by the Council on July 19, 2007 set the tax rate at 66.78 cents per \$100.00 valuation. State law requires that two (2) public hearings must be held prior to the final public hearing and vote. The final public hearing and vote to be held on September 6, 2007. Staff recommends that the City Council hold the public hearing in accordance with state law. No action is required by Council.

Mayor Archibald opened a public hearing on the item and there being no one present and desiring to be heard Mayor Archibald closed the public hearing.

No Council action was required.

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF ABILENE, TEXAS, APPROVING THE ASSESSMENT ROLL FOR 2007, LEVYING AN AD VALOREM TAX FOR THE CITY OF ABILENE, TEXAS, FOR THE YEAR 2007; PROVIDING FOR THE ASSESSMENT AND COLLECTION THEREOF; REPEALING ALL ORDINANCES AND PARTS OF ORDINANCES IN CONFLICT HEREWITH; CALLING A PUBLIC HEARING; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mayor Archibald recessed the Council into Executive Session pursuant to Sections 551.071, 551.074, 551.072 and 551.087 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, to consider the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property, and to discuss contemplated business prospects and or economic development matters.

The Council reconvened from Executive Session and reported no votes or action was taken in Executive Session.

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5.5 Councilwoman Moore made a motion to approve by Oral Resolution Mayor Archibald's appointment of Kyle Thomas as Assistant City Attorney. Councilman Higgins seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

AYES: Councilmen Chase, Spano, Williams, Higgins, Councilwomen Davis and Moore, and Mayor Archibald.

NAYS: None

5.6 Councilman Spano made a motion to approve by Oral Resolution Mayor Archibald's appointment of Rita Johnston to the Betty Hardwick Center Board of Trustees (MHMR). Councilman Higgins seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

AYES: Councilmen Chase, Spano, Williams, Higgins, Councilwomen Davis and Moore, and Mayor Archibald.

NAYS: None

5.7 No action was taken on an appointment to the Housing Authority Board of the City of Abilene.

5.8 No action was taken on the annual performance evaluations of the City Manager, City Attorney, and Municipal Judge.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 11:10 a.m.

Danette Dunlap
Interim City Secretary

Norm Archibald
Mayor