

CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING
September 6, 2007, 8:30 a.m.

The City Council of Abilene, Texas met in a Special Meeting in the Council Chambers at Abilene City Hall to consider an ordinance on second and final reading approving the Revised 2006-07 Budget and Proposed 2007-08 Budget and an ordinance considered on final reading setting the FY 2007-08 Tax Levy. Mayor Norm Archibald was present and presiding with Councilmen Sam Chase, Anthony Williams, Joe Spano, Stormy Higgins, and 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.

1. Mayor Archibald called the meeting to order.
2. Councilman Higgins gave the invocation.
3. Mayor Archibald led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flags of the United States of America and the State of Texas.
4. **Ordinances:**
Public Hearing:
 - a. Consider on second and final reading – Ordinance approving Revised 2006-07 Budget and Proposed 2007-08 Budget.

Mayor Archibald stated the purpose of today's meeting is for Council to consider an ordinance on second and final reading to approve the General Fund Revised 2006-07 Budget of \$65,707,720 and Proposed 2007-08 Budget of \$69,310,170, to consider an ordinance on final reading setting FY 2007-08 Tax Levy and to hold the appropriate public hearings.

City Manager Larry Gilley stated it is his pleasure to ask the council to consider adoption of the Revised 07 and the proposed 08 Budget. City Council along with city staff have been working all summer on this proposed budget and Mr. Gilley stated that this budget will serve this community well in terms of providing programs and services this community desires and is recommending approval by council.

The Mayor stated this item does call for a public hearing and anyone wanting to speak on the issues would be allowed to do so and for the record they would need to state their name prior to speaking. The Mayor explained the public hearing timing process and noted that each speaker would be allowed 3 minutes to address the Council.

Mayor Archibald then opened a public hearing on the item and the following individuals addressed Council:

- Maria Velasquez – Ms. Velasquez stated that she is against the bus fare increase, and that the city council didn't need to tax and burden the poor people. She stated that council needs to give free transportation to all people.

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- Betty Bradley – Ms. Bradley Executive Director of Meals on Wheels, stated that Meals on Wheels provides home delivered meals Monday through Friday to 1,000 people in Abilene, 90% are low income and receive the meal free of charge, 10% receive meals due to physical limitations. Meals on Wheels is asking the City Council to consider including in the budget for FY 07-08 \$20,000.00 to help provide for additional meals.
- Julian Bridges – Dr. Bridges stated that he is here to appeal a small portion of the budget, namely the CityLink bus fares. Dr. Bridges stated: 1) the proposed increase in fares were 100% to 200% increase; 2) the proposed fares for the Elderly and Disabled were being increased by 43%; 3) the buses are used by the poorest; 4) the increase in fares would also affect agencies that work with the Elderly and Disabled in providing assistance for transportation. Dr. Bridges has been working with City Staff and has made a proposed change to the CityLink portion of the Budget.
- Margaret Suggs – Ms. Suggs stated that she was for CityLink and the Meals on Wheels programs, without CityLink how would those citizens get to work.
- Mark Hewitt, Founder and Director of Loving and Care Ministries – Mr. Hewitt stated that we are called to love and help the poor people, and Mr. Hewitt supports CityLink, but has concerns over the raise in fees. A lot of the people he sees can't afford the fees now and will struggle even more with raised fees.
- Pam Barnhill – Mrs. Barnhill stated that she had served on the committee that had reviewed the rates and she believes that the modification that Dr. Bridges is suggesting is the best way to go. Mrs. Barnhill asked that the City Council consider the modifications.
- Mr. Presley – Mr. Presley stated that A) bus fare is reimbursable through SSI and SSDI for those that qualify; B) those that are seeking jobs and those that are going to school are illegible for reimbursement from Work Force Commission and other agencies; C) Medicaid reimburses fares for those that are going for medical appointments.
- Dale Cotton – Mr. Cotton stated that he was representing the underclass and the indigent that are unable to be here. Mr. Cotton believes that any increase will hurt those that are unemployed, underemployed and the indigent.
- Audrain Dunlap – Ms. Dunlap asked that the city would not raise the bus passes. The bus is Ms. Dunlap's only transportation to and from Doctor's appointment etc. Ms. Dunlap is blind and unable to drive and sometimes she has others to take her places that she needs to go.
- David Barnhill – Mr. Barnhill also served on the ADA board. Mr. Barnhill believes that the increase in rates will make a hardship on him and his family.

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- Yolanda Maddox – Ms. Maddox Executive Director of Just People, stated Just People does offer transportation assistance to those that are job seeking. Ms. Maddox encouraged the City Council to support the proposal that had been worked out with Dr. Bridges and City Staff.
- Maria Delacruz – Ms Delacruz Administrative Assistant of City Light Ministry, stated they help people with personal assistance. One of the programs they offer is payment of bus fares for those that are headed to the doctor or for jobs or job related interviews. Ms. Delacruz advised that the increase in fares will affect how many people they would be able to assist with. Ms. Delacruz is not against the increase but she would support the proposal put forth by Dr. Bridges.
- Charlotte Bridges - Mrs. Bridges works with City Light Ministries, stated that we are a blessed city and appreciates all the things that the city does. Mrs. Bridges supports the compromise that has been put forth by her husband.
- Maria Velasquez – Ms. Velasquez addressed the city council again, she explained that the poor people don't always know where to go to fill out the paper work to get help or reimbursement.

There being no one else present and desiring to be heard the public hearing was closed.

Mayor Archibald turned the meeting over to City Manager Larry Gilley. Mr. Gilley explained that City Staff has been working with this issue for sometime and Dr. Bridges has been in contact with City Staff on numerous occasions to look at alternatives.

Mr. Gilley called on Paul Knippel Director of Public Works, who has been instrumental in refining this budget in a way that meets both the needs of the community and those that use it on a regular basis, and still allows the City to have sufficient funds available to operate the service efficiently.

Original Proposed Action Steps from the 08 Budget

Page 1			Operational Cost	Fare Revenue
Service	Action Steps	Rider Ship		
Fixed Route	Operational Changes (Action Step C) (eliminate Route 4, Abilene Zoo as requested deviation)	(9,100)	(\$22,000)	(\$4,000.00)
Fixed Route	Increase E&D fare (Action Step D) (\$0.35 to \$0.50)	(18,000)	No change	\$16,000.00
ADA Paratransit	Reduce base service area &	(25,000)	(\$220,000.00)	\$50,000.00

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	increase fares (Action Step G) (3/4 mile, \$2.00 service area \$3.00 extended service area)			
ADA Paratransit	Provide specialized service with surcharges (Action Step L) (same day service \$6.00/alternate destination fee \$4.00)	900	\$8,000.00	\$23,000.00
Evening Service	Increase current fare structure (Action Step M) (\$2.00 for work & school-related trips \$5.00 for general trips)	(4,600)	(\$48,000.00)	\$10,000.00
	TOTAL SYSTEM IMPACT	(56,200)	(\$282,000.00)	\$95,000.00
	PROJECTED NET BUDGET CHANGE			\$377,000.00

**PROPOSED ACTION STEPS WITH
DR. BRIDGES' MODIFICATIONS**

Page 2			Operational Cost	Fare Revenue
Service	Action Steps	Rider Ship		
Fixed Route	Operational Changes (Action Step C) (eliminate Route 4, Abilene Zoo as requested deviation)	(9,100)	(\$22,000)	(\$4,000.00)
Fixed Route	Increase standard adult fare (\$1.00 to \$1.25)	(6,300)	No change	\$17,000.00
Fixed Route	Increase E&D fare (\$0.35 to \$0.40)	(5,900)	No change	\$6,000.00
ADA Paratransit	Reduce base service area & increase fares (3/4 mle, \$1.25 service area \$2.00 extended service area)	(7,600)	(\$66,000.00)	\$22,000.00
ADA Paratransit	Provide specialized service with surcharges (same day service \$6.00/alternate destination fee \$4.00)	900	\$8,000.00	\$23,000.00
Evening Service	Increase current fare structure(\$2.00 for work & school-related trips \$5.00 for general trips)	(4,600)	(\$48,000.00)	\$10,000.00
	TOTAL SYSTEM IMPACT	(32,600)	(\$128,000.00)	\$74,000.00
	PROJECTED NET BUDGET CHANGE			\$202,000.00

***PROPOSED ACTION STEPS WITH DR. BRIDGES'
 MODIFICATIONS (REVISED ADA FARES)*
 This schedule is used for changes in CityLink Budget**

Page 3			Operational	Fare
Service	Action Steps	Rider Ship	Cost	Revenue
Fixed Route	Operational Changes (Action Step C) (eliminate Route 4, Abilene Zoo as requested deviation)	(9,100)	(\$22,000)	(\$4,000.00)
Fixed Route	Increase standard adult fare (\$1.00 to \$1.25)	(6,300)	No change	\$17,000.00
Fixed Route	Increase E&D fare (\$0.35 to \$0.40)	(5,900)	No change	\$6,000.00
ADA Paratransit	Reduce base service area & increase fares (3/4 mle, \$1.50 service area \$2.25 extended service area)	(14,100)	(\$122,000)	\$26,000.00
ADA Paratransit	Provide specialized service with surcharges (same day service \$6.00/ alternate destination fee \$4.00)	900	\$8,000.00	\$23,000.00
Evening Service	Increase current fare structure(\$2.00 for work & school-related trips \$5.00 for general trips)	(4,600)	(\$48,000.00)	\$10,000.00
	TOTAL SYSTEM IMPACT	(39,100)	(\$184,000.00)	\$78,000.00
	PROJECTED NET BUDGET CHANGE			\$262,000.00

2007-2008 BUDGET RECAPS

	PROPOSED 2007-2008
Beginning Balance	\$269,611
Total Current Revenue	\$3,250,660
Total Resources	<u>\$3,520,271</u>
Total Expenditures	\$3,783,690
Total Financing Uses	<u>\$3,783,690</u>
Ending Balance	\$(263,419)
Committee Recommendations	<u>\$262,000*</u> see above chart
End Balance	\$0

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Fare Category			Date of	Fare	Revision			
	08/01/81	10/01/84	09/01/86	04/01/92	10/01/92	11/01/99	10/01/05	12/01/05
DR – Evening Service								
Work/Education						\$1.00		
Regular						\$3.00		

Notes:

1. Students = Ages 5 to 18 and those with student ID
2. Elderly = 65+
3. Disabled = ADA defined disability and Medicare card holders
4. ID Card required for elderly & disabled fare
5. Elderly & disabled fare limited to no more than ½ of adult fare
6. ADA demand-response fare limited to no more than twice fixed route adult fare within ¾ mile of fixed route
7. Current ADA DR base service area is within 1 ½ miles on either side of fixed routes
8. Current ADA DR extended service area between base service area and city limits

**CITYLINK TRANSIT
UTILIZED FLEET**

FIXED ROUTE BUSES:

- 6 – 1992 CHANCE COACH RT-52
- 6 – 2000
- 2 – 1997 SPARTAN AAI ACL 3000 TROLLEY
- 5 – 2000 ELDORADO E-Z RIDER
- 1 – 2001 ELDORADO E-Z RIDER

DEMAND RESPONSE VANS:

- 1 – 1998 GENERAL COACH ELF
- 1 – 1999 FORD E350 CONVERSION
- 5 – 2002 GLAVAL UNIVERSAL
- 6 – 2005 ELDORADO AEROTECH
- 5 – 2006 ELDORADO AEROTECH

The net changes result in a \$0 fund balance and will allow the city to preserve the Capital Outlay projects which include the purchase of 2 buses and 2 vans, vehicle and shelter repair and the fencing and paving lot for bus storage. The purchase of the buses and vans will come out of grant funds which we need to exhaust. The City has added approximately \$200,000 into the budget for the City’s contribution.

Council and staff discussion included: 1) The purchase of buses through Federal Grants; 2) Advertising and Marketing opportunities on the buses; 3) Waiting 6 months into the new year for

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projects of vehicle and shelter repair and fencing and paving lot for bus storage; 4) Do we have staff at the bus station that could assist citizens with filling out of paperwork to get reimbursement for bus fare? 5) How can we be proactive in getting the information out to the citizens about the ability of different agencies that reimburse for bus fares; 6) Different kinds of assistance is available; 7) Exposure of miles for the advertising opportunities; and 8) Incremental increase of rates, some disadvantages include having to reprint and republish rates.

Mayor Archibald recapped that the two items that have come forward to be proposed by staff is page 3 the proposed actions steps with Dr. Bridges modifications (revised ADA fares) with the following changes in the ADA Paratransit fee from \$2.50 to \$2.25 for extended service area. The second item that has come before the City Council is the request of \$20,000 for Meals on Wheels program. This amount is not included in the City's proposed budget. Last year the City Council moved \$10,000 from the Cultural Affairs Committee to the Meals on Wheels program.

Council and staff discussion included: 1) Budgeted amount for the Cultural Affairs Committee in the amount of \$34,000; 2) This money is General Fund Money; 3) Cultural Affairs receives monies from the Hotel Motel Tax; 4) The money that the Cultural Affairs receives from the City is disbursed to about 20 different agencies; 5) Requests from Non-profit's need to come in earlier in the budget process; and 6) Council is concerned that Non-profit's feel that they are entitled to funds.

Councilman Spano made a motion to Amend the Budget to give a grant in the amount of \$10,000 to the Meals on Wheels Program, the funding will come from Fund Balance as recommend by staff. Councilman Williams seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

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

NAYS: Councilmen Chase, Higgins.

Councilwoman Moore made a motion to approve the ordinance considered on second and final reading approving the Revised 2006-07 Budget and Proposed 2007-08 Budget, with amended CityLink fares from page 3 of the handout that is included in the minutes, with a correction of \$2.50 to \$2.25 for extended service area for ADA Paratransit service and the additional \$10,000 for the Meals on Wheels program (money coming from Fund Balance) as recommended by staff. Councilman Williams seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

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

NAYS: None

The Ordinance is numbered #39-2007 and captioned as follows:

AN ORDINANCE APPROVING REVISED BUDGET FIGURES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2006-2007; APPROVING AND ADOPTING BUDGET FOR THE FISCAL YEAR OCTOBER 1, 2007, THROUGH SEPTEMBER 30, 2008, FOR THE CITY OF ABILENE;

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APPROPRIATING FUNDS; REPEALING ALL ORDINANCES AND PARTS OF ORDINANCES IN CONFLICT HEREWITH; CALLING A PUBLIC HEARING.

Public Hearing:

b. Consider on final reading – Ordinance setting FY 2007-08 Tax Levy.

The FY 2008 Budget approved by Council on July 19, 2007 set the tax rate at 66.78 cents. State law requires that two (2) public hearings must be held prior to the final public hearing and vote. The first public hearing was held on August 9, 2007, and the second public hearing was held on August 23, 2007. Staff recommends that the City Council hold the final public hearing today and approve the Tax Levy Ordinance on second and final reading.

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

Councilman Williams made a motion to approve the Ordinance setting the FY 2007-08 Tax Levy by stating “I move that property taxes be increased by the adoption of a tax rate of 66.78 cents per \$100 valuation.” Councilwoman Davis seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

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

NAYS: None

The Ordinance is numbered #40-2007 and captioned as follows:

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.

5. Executive Session was not held.

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

Danette Dunlap
Interim City Secretary

Norm Archibald
Mayor