

**DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION OF ABILENE, INC.
JOINT MEETING WITH ABILENE CITY COUNCIL
MINUTES
March 16, 2017**

DCOA MEMBERS PRESENT:

Dave Copeland John Beckham Greg Blair Jack Rentz

CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Norm Archibald Shane Price Bruce Kreidler Anthony Williams
Steve Savage

STAFF PRESENT:

Kent Sharp Cynthia Nesmith Akane Thaxton Stanley Smith
Robert Hanna James Childers Alaisha Guerra Danette Dunlap

GUESTS PRESENT:

Alex Cooke-TIP Strategies; Judy Wilhelm-SBDC; Doug Peters-Abilene Chamber of Commerce; Justin Jaworski, Shea Hopkins and Audrey Schroyer-Abilene Industrial Foundation; Mary Ross-Workforce Solutions of West Central Texas; Sandra Harper-President of McMurry University; Joey Light-Deputy Superintendent of Wylie School District; Scott Senter-Senter Realtors; Rick Denbow- STC; Mark Zachary-McMahon Law Firm; Larry Gill-Dodge Jones Foundation; Ray Ferguson-Condley & Co.; Yvonne Batts-Batts Communication; Tim Chipp -Abilene Reporter News; Richard Kennedy-Mayoral candidate; Donna Albus-City Council Candidate; Cory Clements-City Council Candidate; Weldon Hurt-City Council Candidate

1. CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER: Mayor Norm Archibald called the meeting to order for the City Council. Dave Copeland, President of the Development Corporation of Abilene (DCOA), called the meeting to order at 1:35 p.m. for the DCOA at 555 Walnut St., 2nd Floor, council chambers, Abilene, TX. Mr. Copeland then turned the meeting over to Kent Sharp, CEO of the DCOA.

2. PRESENTATION OF THE FIRST ANNUAL ACCOUNTABILITY SCORECARD REGARDING THE FIVE YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN: Kent Sharp, CEO of the DCOA, gave a brief summary of the Five Year Strategic Plan (the Plan). In February of 2015, the Strategic Planning Committee (the Committee) sent an RFP out to develop a Strategic Plan (the Plan) for Abilene's economic growth, and TIP Strategies of Austin, Texas was chosen. The committee wanted to make sure once the consultants handed over their analysis, the document would not end up on a bookshelf. They requested an accountability scorecard given each year to see how all the partners are doing on their implementation of the Plan. The Plan was completed and handed over to the DCOA in

March of 2016, and by the end of the summer all the partners were well underway with their action items. In November of 2016 and in January of 2017, Mr. Sharp asked the partners to share with him what each group had done on the specific strategies and action items assigned to them. After compiling the information, he presented the report to the DCOA Board in November and the City council in February. Mr. Sharp then turned the meeting over to Alex Cooke with TIP Strategies.

Mr. Cooke stated it was very rare for TIP Strategies to have the opportunity to return and grade a community on progress made toward implementation of a strategic plan. In the past Abilene has focused on business recruitment, attraction, retention and expansion. The challenge for the future is retaining the best talent in Abilene instead of losing it to the larger metro areas. Over all, Abilene has done a fantastic job implementing the Plan. Almost every one of the 10 strategies has some level of progress made. Only five of the actions initially scheduled to start in 2016 have not been started; however, 10 actions not scheduled for implementation until later have been started. Going forward there needs to be continual re-evaluation, shifting of priorities and timeframes, new strategies and actions added, and new resources allocated.

Mr. Cooke opened a session of questions and comments from members of the audience for ideas on how to keep the momentum going in years 2 through 5 and longer. His evaluation was not based solely on the information Mr. Sharp provided. It also included conversations with several partners who are involved in the implementation and their accomplishments. Mr. Cooke made the suggestion for a steering committee who would oversee the implementation, have regular meetings of all partners to discuss the progress and evaluate priorities, determine if additional resources are needed and make sure the community is aware of successes.

Mayor Archibald asked Doug Peters, President of the Abilene Chamber of Commerce to give an update on the progress of Team Workforce. Mr. Peters gave a short summary on the constant need for skilled workforce. Mr. Peters then introduced Shea Hopkins, Director of Talent Development for the Abilene Industrial Foundation. Ms. Hopkins informed the group of the huge shortfall of trained workers now facing the community and the recently-formed partnership with Communities in Schools (CIS) to address the shortfall.

Mr. Cooke asked if there were any comments or questions, then turned the meeting over to Mr. Copeland. Mr. Copeland thanked all of the people who have joined forces to implement the Plan and to the Mayor and City Council for their great support. Mr. Copeland also thanked Ray Ferguson and the Strategic Planning Committee for their efforts in making the Plan a reality.

3. **ADJOURNMENT:** There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 3:10 p.m. by both Mayor Norm Archibald and DCOA President Dave Copeland.



Dave Copeland, President