

DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION OF ABILENE, INC.
BOARD MEETING MINUTES
November 16, 2017

MEMBERS PRESENT:	Dave Copeland Gregg Blair	John Beckham Jack Rentz	Jack Rich
STAFF PRESENT:	Kent Sharp	Kim Tarrant	
GUESTS PRESENT:	Mark Zachary Bruce Kreitler Mike Rains Doug Williamson Kate Alvarez Don Green Judy Wilhelm Justin Jaworski Shaun Martin Joe Spano	McMahon Law Firm City Council COA Finance Chamber Military Affairs Committee Abilene Regional Airport Abilene Regional Airport Small Business Development Center Abilene Industrial Foundation Chamber Military Affairs Committee Chamber Military Affairs Committee	

1. CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER:

President Dave Copeland called the meeting to order at 12:30 p.m. at 174 Cypress St., 3rd floor conference room, Abilene Texas.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE OCTOBER 17, 2017, BOARD MEETING:

Jack Rich moved to approve the corrected minutes from the October 17, 2017, board meeting as presented. Jack Rentz seconded and the motion carried.

3. SALES TAX REPORT FOR NOVEMBER 2017: Mike Rains, the City's Director of Finance, presented the sales tax report for November 2017. The sales tax rebate is \$3,858,083.53, which represents September sales. Economic Development received \$964,520.88, which is 3.64% above last year and 3.64% above the projected FY 18 budget amount. For the period October through November, sales tax is 4.32% above last year and 4.32% above the approved FY 18 budget amount.

4. PRESENTATION OF ANNUAL REPORTS FOR FISCAL YEAR ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2017 BY: TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER, ABILENE INDUSTRIAL FOUNDATION, ABILENE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE MILITARY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE, AND CITY OF ABILENE AIRPORT BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT MANAGER:

Texas Tech University Small Business Development Center (SBDC):

Judy Wilhelm, Director of the SBDC, presented their FY17 annual report to the DCOA. The year for SBDC was tough due to funding cuts and hiring freezes but one of the best years for assistance to individuals covering a wide range of businesses from dentists to snake removal with funds totaling \$9,267,500. SBDC is a partner in the new BE in Abilene program and will participate in training the award recipients, following up afterwards to assist in the first several years in business to avoid normal pitfalls of new businesses. The annual Needs Assessment survey done for the Northwest Texas corridor in partnership with the SBDC network and the Federal Reserve of Dallas shows accessing capital as the biggest challenge for small business owners followed by quality workforce.

Abilene Industrial Foundation (AIF):

Justin Jaworski, Executive Director of the AIF presented the annual report for FY17. Several of the leads responded to this past year were looking for developable raw acreage or a building of at least 100,000 sq ft to finish out. The DCOA is currently in the process of developing acreage located at FM 18 and Hwy 36 for an industrial park, on which the AIF has already received several inquiries.

This past year the AIF has been working alongside the DCOA, SBDC and ACU developing a new entrepreneurship program, BE in Abilene. The goal is to find qualified applicants to participate in ACU's Griggs Center Springboard competition to compete against one another for prize money. Participants who are awarded funds will then be required to meet with the SBDC to ensure each business has the necessary tools and information to succeed.

The other program introduced by the AIF in the last year is NEXT University, a career development program to help fill the workforce gap long term and provide businesses with the needed skilled labor. The Communities in Schools (CIS) workforce coach works with high school juniors and seniors to make them aware of the industrial programs available as an alternative to a 4-year college and provides one-on-one support to ensure the student successfully completes the chosen program.

Abilene Chamber of Commerce Military Affairs (MAC):

Doug Williamson, Vice President for Military Affairs, presented the annual report for FY17. Abilene received the Barksdale Trophy, which recognizes the best relationship between a community and a military base. In 2016, Dyess' economic impact/spending in the City of Abilene was approximately \$424 million. MAC continues to be focused on two important issues: 1) another round of base realignment and closure activity and, 2) the B-21 next generation bomber. Proactive work is constantly being done to strengthen the base's position to gain future missions. One item currently out-of-compliance at the base is an old fence that stands 750 feet from the centerline of the runway instead of

the required 1,000 feet. The City of Abilene applied for a Texas Military Preparedness Commission (TMPC) grant of \$281,678, matched by the DCOA for \$198,880, with the remaining \$82,000 from Dyess, to demolish the fence and erect a new one. MAC expects to hear the results of the TMPC grant funding in December.

City of Abilene Airport Business Development (ABI):

Kate Alvarez, Marketing and Development Manager for Abilene Regional Airport presented their FY17 annual report. Enplanements are up 4%, which is also reflected in the number in rental cars and parking lot revenues. Marketing continues as it has in the past with TV commercials, billboards, print and radio ads. Social media still tends to be one of the best ways to communicate with potential and current passengers. During the past year, the 5:30 a.m. flight to Dallas was dropped leaving six flights a day, but ABI is still working with American Airlines to possibly add it back. Currently there is a \$250 fare to fly from Abilene to Dallas, which does not compete well with the cost to drive to Dallas.

5. **PRESENTATION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF THE FY 17 ANNUAL REPORT OF ACTIVITIES OF THE DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION OF ABILENE, INC.:** Kent Sharp, CEO of the DCOA presented the DCOA's FY17 Annual Report of Activities. The board approved an additional \$179,600 to purchase the acreage needed for construction of the new TSTC Abilene campus. Groundbreaking was held in April, and construction on the new campus is underway. Earlier this year, the DCOA formed a partnership with AIF and Communities in Schools (CIS) to hire a workforce training coach (Coach) whose responsibility it is to provide one-on-one support to at-risk high school juniors and seniors to finish and graduate. After a skills assessment, the Coach will ensure these students complete one of the workforce training programs through Cisco and obtain a certificate in HVAC, electrical, plumbing, welding or industrial maintenance. The BE in Abilene program focuses on Strategy 3 pertaining to the development of an entrepreneurial ecosystem in Abilene. The DCOA board approved \$250,000 to fund the program and has partnered with the AIF, SBDC and ACU to administer the program.

The property located at Hwy 36/FM 18 was cleared, which resulted in another 100 acres of developable land with easy access to the airport. Enprotec/Hibbs & Todd are under contract to develop a site plan and preliminary plat, which are expected to be complete in January. Another matter not mentioned in the annual report is the transitioning of the AbLabs building to different ownership. Hardin Simmons University made an offer to purchase the building, parking lot and all equipment inside to move their physical therapy program from its current location on the HSU campus. In addition to providing more space, the building will allow the possibility of a research component and educational collaboration with other universities in Abilene.

Greg Blair made a motion to accept the FY 17 annual reports given by the SBDC, AIF, MAC and ABI, and to approve the DCOA'S FY 17 Annual Report as presented. Jack

Rich seconded and the motion passed. The annual report will be presented to the City Council in December.

6. EXECUTIVE SESSION – SESSION 1:

I hereby announce we are going into Executive Session pursuant to Texas Government Code Sections 551.071, 072, 074 and 087 to consult with our legal counsel, discuss real property transactions, personnel matters, and discuss economic development negotiations involving a business prospect, as set forth on the agenda. Any vote or action will be taken in open session.

President Dave Copeland announced the date is November 16, 2017, and the time is 1:15 p.m. Later, President Copeland announced the date is still November 16, 2017, and the time is 1:57 p.m. No vote or action was taken in Executive Session.

7. DISCUSSION OF THE NEXT MONTHLY BOARD MEETING SCHEDULED FOR WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 20, 2017, AT 1:30 P.M.: President Copeland announced the next scheduled meeting of the DCOA would be Wednesday, December 20, 2017.

8. ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.



Dave Copeland, President