

MINUTES
ABILENE-TAYLOR COUNTY EVENTS VENUE DISTRICT

Public notice having been posted, a meeting of the Board of Directors of the Abilene-Taylor County Events Venue District was held on Tuesday, June 3, 2008, in the Basement Conference Room of City Hall, 555 Walnut, Abilene, Texas, at 3:00 p.m.

Board Members Present: Norm Archibald, Mayor, City of Abilene
 George Newman, Judge, Taylor County
 David Polnick, Superintendent, AISD
 Stan Egger, Commissioner, Taylor County
 Laura Moore, Councilmember, City of Abilene

Others Present: Dan Santee, City Attorney, City of Abilene
 Mindy Patterson, Interim Finance Director, City of Abilene
 David M. Wright, Former Finance Director, City of Abilene
 Linda Smith, Finance Secretary, City of Abilene
 Representing Frontier *Texas!*: Jeff Salmon, Billye Proctor Shaw,
 Petty Hunter
 Representing Taylor County Expo Center: Tony McMillan,
 Rochelle Johnson, Jack Turner, Dwayne Tucker,
 George Woodfin, Kelly Gill, Tommy Holmes,
 Glenn Tallant, Ikie Taylor, Mike Pueschel
 Representing AISD: Ross Jones, Shotwell Committee

1. The first order of business was the administration of the Oath of Office to the following Board Members: Mayor Norm Archibald, County Judge George Newman, and Councilwoman Laura Moore.
2. The meeting was called to order at 3:05 p.m. by Norm Archibald, President.
3. The election of officers was held. A motion was made by David Polnick to retain the same slate of officers. Stan Egger seconded the motion. The motion carried. The officers for 2008 are: Norm Archibald, President; George Newman, Vice President; and Laura Moore, Secretary.
4. The Board meeting minutes for August 22, 2007 were presented for approval. A motion was made by Laura Moore to approve the minutes of the August 22, 2007 Board meeting. George Newman seconded the motion, and the motion carried.
5. Presentations regarding programs and venue tax use were made by 1) Frontier *Texas!*, 2) Taylor County Expo Center, and 3) AISD-Shotwell Stadium, as follows:

Frontier *Texas!* – Jeff Salmon thanked the members for serving on this board. Mr. Salmon commented that through the wisdom of the committee that started the venue district, the community has benefited. The budget for Frontier *Texas!* has not changed much since its inception. Costs have been kept down. The venue tax pays for approximately 59.4% of the budget for Frontier *Texas!*. Their number one issue is depreciation of equipment, and funds are set aside monthly for this item. Frontier *Texas!* is advertising with the Abilene Convention and Visitors Bureau (ACVB) for marketing purposes.

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Billye Proctor Shaw commented that Frontier *Texas!* is not only entertaining but educational and is a magnet to bring visitors to Abilene. Staff works with a tight budget and small staff. The venue tax is critical to Frontier *Texas!*.

Taylor County Expo Center – Tony McMillan provided the Board a hand-out on how the venue tax funds are used. He commented to the Board that the venue tax is used for maintenance and operations. He reported that there have been increases in major expenses over the last year. Due to a highly competitive market, the facility has to be kept in top-shape to compete with new facilities, and rental fees must be reasonable. Per the ACVB for last year, it is estimated that events through the Expo Center generated a total of 9,266 rooms with a total value of \$6,147,580. Mr. McMillan reported that in FY 2007, there were 458 event days (multiple events on same days), with total estimated attendees of 389,000, and the total direct spend estimated economic impact was \$33,065,000. Mr. McMillan commented that due to inflation and a lean budget the Expo Center appreciated the support from the county commissioners and the dollars generated from the venue tax.

Rochelle Johnson commented that the Expo Center works hard and has a small staff, and thanked the Board for their support.

Norm Archibald asked what Expo Center projects were funded by the venue tax from the issued debt. Stan Egger reported that the projects were the cattle pens cover and the coliseum ceiling tiles.

AISD-Shotwell Stadium – Ross Jones provided the Board a hand-out on Shotwell Stadium projects and funding sources. The updates on Shotwell Stadium are a joint effort between AISD, the Shotwell Stadium Committee, and the public. He reported venue tax funded \$990,000 of the \$1,299,944 cost for the parking lot and \$80,000 of the \$354,403 cost of Phase III (concrete on the west side/north side fence/painting and patchwork/stone columns). Mr. Jones reported that future projects are renovating the press box including an elevator, underground utilities, sound system, toilet upgrades, paving the northwest parking lot, expanding the dressing rooms, and fold-back seats. He commented that everyone has needs and asked for the current allocation to continue.

Norm Archibald thanked the three entities for their presentations. The Board continued discussion regarding the three entities. Stan Egger asked Jeff Salmon since the city does not contribute to Frontier *Texas!* and the venue tax pays for approximately 59.4% of the budget for Frontier *Texas!* what are their other sources of funding. Mr. Salmon reported that approximately 5.8% came from gifts, 27.2% from admissions, 6.1% from memberships, and 1.5% from facility rentals. They also receive funds from special exhibits, donations, and sponsorships. No action was taken.

6. The Board discussed the allocation of the 2% venue tax. Norm Archibald reported that the venue tax started in FY 2004 and \$2.298 million had been collected, with \$619,290 budgeted for this year.

Stan Egger commented that the city and the Development Corporation of Abilene (DCOA) benefit from the sales tax but not the county. The direct spend from the Expo

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Center benefits the city and community. If major events are lost, this will hurt the citizens through sales tax and the hotel/motel tax. Laura Moore asked if the percentage was increased for the Expo Center how that money would be utilized. Mr. Egger stated that it would be used to keep the facility upgraded. Judge Newman commented that since the marketing of events is so competitive, the Expo Center does not make a profit, but the community and city is profiting. Ms. Moore commented that she supports the Expo Center but does not want a change that would negatively affect the other two entities. Mr. Egger commented that other communities have put in new facilities by using sales tax dollars, which makes it harder to compete since the Expo Center does not get sales tax dollars but only the venue tax. Ms. Johnson commented that they have a very tight budget, are using inmates five days a week, and are using county crews as available. There are many upgrades that they need such as new doors at the Expo Center. Mr. Egger commented that the other two entities do a great job and all the entities maximize the amount received from the venue tax. He commented that at the first meeting when the percentages were set, it was agreed the allocation would be revisited. It is getting harder to obtain events due to competition, and the Expo Center needs to upgrade and modernize the current facility. The percent the Expo Center is allocated has not changed. The county increases their portion annually. The Expo Center would benefit by increasing their portion of the venue tax.

Ross Jones commented that it would hurt Shotwell Stadium if they lost the venue tax. David Polnick commented that the venue tax does not solve anyone's problems, but gives the entities incentive and support.

Following discussion, a motion was made by Judge Newman to redistribute the venue tax for FY 2009 as follows: 50% for Frontier *Texas!*, 35% for Expo Center, and 15% for AISD-Shotwell Stadium. Stan Egger seconded the motion. Prior to voting the Board discussed the allocation. Mayor Archibald commented that all three entities have great programs. The venue tax can not solve all the problems but is an enhancement to each entity. Mr. Egger commented that the venue tax allocation should be more equitable to how much revenue is generated. Following discussion, the Board voted on the motion. The following voted for the motion: George Newman and Stan Egger. The following voted against the motion: Norm Archibald, Laura Moore, and David Polnick. The motion failed.

Following discussion, a motion was made by Laura Moore to leave the allocation at 55% for Frontier *Texas!*, 25% for Expo Center, and 20% for AISD-Shotwell Stadium. Norm Archibald seconded the motion. The following voted for the motion: Norm Archibald, Laura Moore, and David Polnick. The following voted against the motion: George Newman and Stan Egger. The motion carried.

Laura Moore commented that she would like to see a committee formed between the county and city to discuss economic development, Expo Center, and venue tax. Following discussion, a motion was made by Laura Moore to form a committee with the city and county to discuss a relationship between the city and county to better serve the community. Stan Egger seconded the motion. The motion carried.

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7. The Board discussed the next meeting to adopt the FY 2009 budget. A tentative date of Wednesday, July 30th at 4:00 p.m. was set. No other action was taken.
8. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:40 p.m.

Linda Smith, Recording Secretary for
Laura Moore, Secretary

Norm Archibald, President