

**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 Wednesday, May 30, 2012, 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  
Downing Bolls, Jr, Judge, Taylor County  
Stan Egger, Commissioner, Taylor County  
Robert Briley, Councilmember, City of Abilene  
Glenn Dromgoole

Others Present: Representing City of Abilene: Dan Santee, City Attorney;  
Mindy Patterson, Director of Finance; Danette Dunlap, City Secretary; Linda Smith, Finance Secretary  
Representing Frontier Texas!: Jeff Salmon  
Representing Taylor County Expo Center: Rochelle Johnson, Randy Bibb, Mike Pueschel, Ikie Taylor, Kelly Gill, Kelly Thompson, Randy Williams

1. The first order of business was the administration of the Oath of Office by Danette Dunlap to Mayor Norm Archibald, County Judge Downing Bolls, Jr., and Councilman Robert Briley.
2. The meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m. by Norm Archibald, President.
3. The election of officers was held. Stan Egger nominated Norm Archibald, President; Downing Bolls, Vice President; and Glenn Dromgoole, Secretary. A motion was made by Stan Egger and seconded by Robert Briley to approve these officers. The motion carried unanimously. The officers for 2012 are: Norm Archibald, President; Downing Bolls, Vice President; and Glenn Dromgoole, Secretary.
4. The Board meeting minutes for September 12, 2011 were presented for approval. A motion was made by Glenn Dromgoole to approve the minutes of the September 12, 2011 Board meeting. Downing Bolls seconded the motion, and the motion carried.
5. The Board discussed the release of funds from the AISD-Shotwell Stadium Improvement reserve. Norm Archibald reported that the reserve currently has a balance of \$44,116.18. Mindy Patterson noted that AISD had forwarded the information regarding the Shotwell project, which was for the custom end zones for the new turf at a cost of \$15,600. She reported after release of the \$15,600 the balance will be \$28,516.18. Mayor Archibald commented that the reserve fund can only be used for improvements at Shotwell Stadium. A motion was made by Norm Archibald to approve the release of the funds to AISD in the

## Abilene-Taylor County Events Venue District Minutes

May 30, 2012

Page 2

amount of \$15,600 for the capital improvement project. Robert Briley seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

6. Presentations regarding programs and venue tax use were made by 1) *Frontier Texas!* and 2) Taylor County Expo Center, as follows:

**Frontier *Texas!*** – Jeff Salmon thanked the Board members for their service. Mr. Salmon commented this has been a stable operational year. *Frontier Texas!* is open 7 days a week, has 1 part-time and 5 full-time employees along with a good volunteer core. He commented that *Frontier Texas!* works with 50 area school districts. Through their long-term strategic plan, a redevelopment of exhibits has started, which will include new content. Hopefully, the new content will appeal to the local base. Mr. Salmon reported the renovation will cost around \$1.5 million and \$1.45 million has already been committed from private sources. There will be a short shut-down of the exhibit in February 2013 for the update. Mayor Archibald asked how the money was raised. Mr. Salmon commented that they have been setting money aside from fund raisers for the past three years and have received money from donors. Robert Briley commented that *Frontier Texas!* is a good venue for education. Mr. Salmon commented that many area school children view the exhibit, and for teachers they offer a curriculum and training. Downing Bolls asked what *Frontier Texas!* request for funding was for next year. Mr. Salmon asked that they maintain their current allocation.

Mayor Archibald thanked Mr. Salmon for his presentation to the Board.

**Taylor County Expo Center** – Rochelle Johnson thanked the board. She reported that in FY 2011, there were 490 event days (multiple events on same days), and they hosted 243 events. The Expo Center has 16 full-time employees with a total payroll of \$840,000. The utilities for last year were approximately \$285,000, repair and maintenance expenses were around \$155,000, and the note at the bank was reduced to \$110,000.

Ms. Johnson commented that for additional revenue they host fundraisers, are seeking alternative funding, and have a marketing program that helps to support events. She commented they are reviewing rental rates, which are currently low. Some events do not make a profit for the Expo Center. Two large contracts will come up for renewal after 2013. If rates are raised, they could lose events. When bidding large events, they include incentives. She commented that it is a challenge competing with newer venues when bidding for events. Also, for horse events the cost of cattle has increased, and they are harder to find due to the draught.

Ms. Johnson commented that the Expo Center's budget is supplemented by about \$2 million including in-kind services from Taylor County. The county provides maintenance crews, but the Expo Center will need to hire employees for

## Abilene-Taylor County Events Venue District Minutes

May 30, 2012

Page 3

repairs and maintenance to replace the inmate crews that are not available anymore.

Ms. Johnson reported that both the 4-H Horse Show and the High School Rodeo have a direct spend of \$3 million each. She commented that they are doing an economic impact study. Downing Bolls commented that heads and beds fund the venue tax, and the Expo Center brings in many visitors to the area.

Mayor Archibald thanked Ms. Johnson for her presentation to the Board. No action was taken on this item.

7. The Board discussed the allocation of the 2% venue tax. Norm Archibald commented that the allocation is currently 62.5% for *Frontier Texas!*, 37.5% for Expo Center, and no reserve funds to AISD-Shotwell. The debt is always paid first and will be paid off in 2024. The cap is 2.5% that an allocation can change in any fiscal year. The venue tax depends on the hotel receipts and year-to-date receipts are up 7.96%. Mayor Archibald presented information regarding venue tax revenue for revised 2012 that is projected at \$775,000 and information on how it would be distributed. Then he presented information regarding how a change in the allocation percentage for next year could affect the entities. A projection of \$775,000 for 2013 was used. A change in allocation of 2.5% is \$16,310.

Stan Egger commented that the money makes a huge difference to the Expo Center when hosting large events. Their tax base is flat since they receive no sales tax. The coliseum needs new seats and the buildings need updating. He commented that he would like to see 2.5% shifted to the Expo Center to make the allocation of 40% to the Expo Center and 60% to *Frontier Texas!* to help keep major events here. Downing Bolls commented that he hoped both entities understand that they are not competing against each other. They both benefit the community. He commented that if the Expo Center loses events, it will have a negative economic impact to the community.

Downing Bolls made a motion to change the allocation to 40% for the Expo Center and 60% for *Frontier Texas!*. Stan Egger seconded the motion. Before voting, discussion continued. Robert Briley asked how the increase of approximately \$16,310 would be used by the Expo Center. Rochelle Johnson commented that it would be used as operating money for staffing to replace inmate crews. Glenn Dromgoole commented that this would be a fair split since the Expo Center brings in many visitors to the hotels. Mr. Dromgoole asked how much additional venue tax the entities received this year over last year. Mindy Patterson reported that *Frontier Texas!* has received \$18,771, and the Expo Center has received \$32,361 more venue tax year-to-date than last year. Mayor Archibald reported that millions of dollars have been brought into the community and the guests pay the venue tax. Following lengthy discussion, the Board voted

**Abilene-Taylor County Events Venue District Minutes**

**May 30, 2012**

**Page 4**

on the motion to allocate 40% to the Expo Center and 60% to Frontier *Texas!* effective October 1, 2012. The motion carried unanimously.

8. The Board discussed the next meeting to approve the audit and to adopt the FY 2013 budget. The next meeting was tentatively set for June 27, 2012 at 4:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers of City Hall.
9. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:47 p.m.

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Linda Smith, Recording Secretary for  
Glenn Dromgoole, Secretary

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Norm Archibald, President