

Minutes
Abilene-Taylor County Events Venue District
Board Meeting July 8, 2020

Public notice having been posted, a meeting of the Board of Directors of the Abilene-Taylor County Events Venue District was held on Wednesday, July 8, 2020 at 1:30 pm at City Hall, 555 Walnut Street, Council Chambers, Abilene, Texas.

Board Members Present: Downing Bolls, Jr., Judge, Taylor County
Anthony Williams, Mayor, City of Abilene
Kyle McAlister, Councilmember, City of Abilene
Chuck Statler, Commissioner, Taylor County
Glenn Dromgoole, Director

Others Present: Representing City of Abilene:
Stanley Smith, City Attorney
Mike Rains, Director of Finance
Kristina Session, Accountant
Kaitlin Richardson, Deputy City Secretary

Additional Attendees:
Jeff Salmon, Frontier Texas!
Rochelle Johnson, Taylor County Expo Center

1. The meeting was called to order at 1:33 pm by Judge Bolls.

Anthony Williams, Downing Bolls, and Kyle McAlister were sworn in as board members by Kaitlin Richardson, Deputy City Secretary before the meeting began.

2. A motion for Officer nomination was made by Commissioner Statler and seconded by Glenn Dromgoole:

President:	Downing Bolls, Jr.
Vice President:	Anthony Williams
Secretary:	Kyle McAlister
Treasurer:	Vacant

All Board members voted to approve; motion carried.

3. A motion to approve the minutes for the July 30, 2019 meeting was made by Mayor Williams and seconded by Councilmember McAlister. All Board members voted in favor; the motion carried.

4. 1) Jeff Salmon, Executive Director of *Frontier Texas!* presented information related to the past year's activities and financial status. He addressed that the venue revenues account for 67.7% of the budget. Mr. Salmon addressed the current pandemic and the negative impact it had on businesses in Abilene.

Budgeted revenue for *Frontier Texas!* was affected in March, April, and May. The museum and gift shop closed on March 18th, but the travel information center remained open to serve the public. On June 1st the museum and gift shop opened with limited hours and on July 1st hours began full time. *Frontier Texas!* experienced a \$43,000 loss due to Covid-19. Mr. Salmon projected to have a loss of \$150,000 once the fiscal year ends.

Mr. Dromgoole asked if *Frontier Texas!* had received a PPP Loan. Mr. Salmon said the nonprofit had received the maximum amount, but would still need to cut costs to meet budget requirements.

Frontier Texas! continues to operate with 4 full time employees and 3 part time employees. Mr. Salmon stated the venue revenues allow *Frontier Texas!* to continue to serve Abilene without losing staff members and closing its doors. Mr. Salmon asked for the allocation to remain the same.

- 2) Rochelle Johnson, Executive Director of the Taylor County Expo Center, provided an update on the activities and the financial status for FY 2019.

In 2019, the Expo Center hosted 317 events days, not including early move-in days or hourly barn rentals, which totaled 38. The Expo Center hosted 185 different events using the facility for 194 calendar days. ACBV serviced over 24 events hosted by the Expo Center. Those events generated over \$5,580,047 direct impact with 14,695 room nights. The estimated total attendance of events is over 251,000.

The Expo Center employs 16 full time and approximately 184 part-time or seasonal employees based on needs of events. In 2019, \$283,579 was paid in utilities and \$151,078 on repairs, maintenance, and supplies. Some of the major events are the Texas High School Rodeo Finals, the Abilene Winter Spectacular, the Winter Circuit, and the Abilene Special and World Series Team Roping.

Ms. Johnson discussed how the Expo Center depends on the Western Heritage Classic and the West Texas Fair for 50% of its budget. Unfortunately, due to Covid 19, the Western Heritage Classic was canceled. The Expo Center's \$500,000 reserve fund has also decreased to \$270,000. The Expo Center did receive a PPP loan. If the PPP loan is forgiven, the Expo Center has experienced a \$100,000 loss as of 5/31/2020.

Mayor Williams asked what percentage of the Expo Center's budget was venue revenues. Ms. Johnson replied that venue revenues were 9 percent of the budget. Councilmember McAlister asked how many events had been affected by

the pandemic. Ms. Johnson reflected that 22 events had been postponed and 45 events had been canceled and money had been refunded.

The Expo Center is currently in phase 3 of construction, which will be completed in April, 2021. Ms. Johnson emphasized that the Expo Center is critical for the economic wellbeing of the City of Abilene.

Due to the challenges presented, Ms. Johnson asked for the full 2.5% increase to the Expo Center's venue allocation.

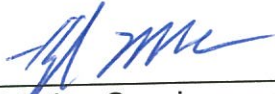
5. The Board members discussed the possibility of change in the allocation of the venue tax. Mayor Williams addressed how the venue revenues had more of an impact on *Frontier Texas!* as they make up 2/3 of its budget. He expressed his view that allocations should not be changed.

Commissioner Statler discussed how both nonprofits had been affected by the pandemic and right now would not be the best time to make a change to the allocation.

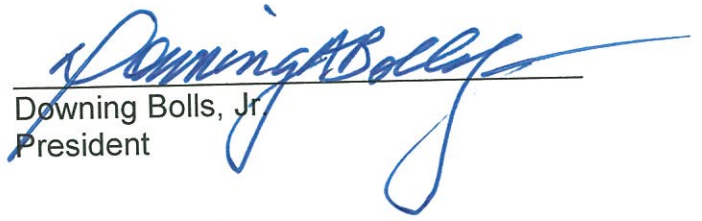
Judge Bolts highlighted that the hotel business had been greatly negatively affected by the pandemic, which forces entities to increase revenues in other forms.

Mayor Williams made a motion to make no change to the current venue allocation. Commissioner Statler seconded. All Board members voted in favor; the motion carried.

6. Mike Rains presented the 2019 annual audit report prepared by BKD CPAs & Advisors. Commissioner Statler made a motion to accept the report; Councilmember McAlister seconded. All Board members voted in favor of the motion; motion carried.
7. Mike Rains presented the Revised Budget for fiscal year 2019-2020 and the Proposed Budget for fiscal year 2020-2021. Commissioner Statler made a motion to approve the 2019-2020 Revised Budget and the 2020-2021 Proposed Budget; Councilmember McAlister seconded. All Board members voted in favor; motion carried.
8. Councilmember McAlister made a motion to adjourn; Glenn Dromgoole seconded. Meeting was adjourned at 2:32 p.m.



Kristina Session, recording secretary for
Kyle McAlister, Secretary



Downing Bolls, Jr.
President
