



Abilene City Commission Meeting Minutes
Abilene Public Library – 209 NW Fourth Street
March 22, 2021 @ 4:00 p.m.
Abilene, Kansas

1. Call to Order

2. Roll Call – City Commission Present: Mayor Rein, Commissioners Marshall, Ostermann, Shafer and Witt.

Staff Present: Interim City Manager/Finance Director Rothchild, City Attorney Martin, City Clerk Soukup, Convention and Visitors Bureau Director Roller-Weeks, Water Treatment Plant Superintendent Leusman, Water Treatment Plant Operator Blacketer and Public Works Director Schrader.

3. Pledge of Allegiance

Consent Agenda

4. Agenda Approval for the March 22, 2021 City Commission Meeting

5. Meeting minutes: March 8, 2021 Regular Meeting

Motion by Commissioner Marshall, seconded by Commissioner Witt to approve the Consent Agenda as printed. Roll call vote: Marshall YES, Ostermann YES, Shafer YES, Witt, YES, Rein YES. Motion carried unanimously 5-0.

Public Comments and Communications

6. Persons who wish to address the City Commission may do so when called upon by the Mayor.

There were no public comments or communications.

Old and New Business

7. Consider bid for remote telemetry units for water production system in the amount of \$174,399.00 from HOA Solutions.

Public Works Director Schrader presented information regarding the bids for telemetry units for the water production system at the Water Treatment Plant.

Motion by Commissioner Witt, seconded by Commissioner Marshall to approve the bid of \$174,399.00 from HOA Solutions of Lincoln, NE for the purchase of remote telemetry units for the water production system at the Water Treatment Plant. Roll call vote: Ostermann YES, Shafer YES, Witt YES, Rein YES, Marshall YES. Motion carried unanimously 5-0.

8. Executive Session: Motion by Commissioner Witt, seconded by Commissioner Marshall to recess into executive session for 45 minutes to discuss and consider individual applicants for the position of City Manager, based upon the need to discuss personnel matters of non-elected personnel pursuant to K.S.A. 75-4319(b)(1) to include the City Commission, City Attorney Martin, and Consultant Beth Tatarko. The regular meeting will resume in this room at 4:52 p.m. Roll call vote: Shafer YES, Witt, YES, Rein YES, Marshall YES, Ostermann YES. Motion carried unanimously 5-0.

Regular meeting resumed at 4:52 p.m.

Motion by Commissioner Marshall, seconded by Commissioner Witt to recess into executive session for 20 minutes to discuss individual applicants for the position of City Manager, based upon the need to discuss personnel matters of non-elected personnel pursuant to K.S.A. 75-4319(b)(1) to include the City Commission, City Attorney Martin, and Consultant Beth Tatarko. The regular meeting will resume in this room at 5:15 p.m. Roll call vote: Witt YES, Rein YES, Marshall YES, Ostermann YES, Shafer YES. Motion carried unanimously 5-0.

Regular meeting resumed at 5:15 p.m.

There was no action taken.

Beth Tatarko announced that the interview process will begin at the next City Commission study session meeting on April 5th and will also be held during a special meeting on April 6th. They will begin at 4:00 p.m. both days. Extensive background checks will be completed on the candidates after the interview process.

City Attorney Martin explained these interviews will take place during scheduled City Commission meetings as they are subject to the Open Public Meetings Act.

Reports

9. City Manager reports

Lon has received bids for 2021 concrete paving project. We held this item off today's agenda to provide you more time to work with Beth Tatarko. We will plan to have this information for you at the next Study Session.

City of Abilene is excited to announce that Dollar General will be opening a second location at 409 North Buckeye Avenue in what was most recently the Family Video store and some of us remember it growing up as Bogart's Grocery store building. Dollar General will be a great addition to our downtown.

I received numerous calls from concerned citizens about recent railroad blocked crossings. After a conversation with the County Administrator Brad Homman, he followed up with Senator Roger Marshall's office and they provided a link to a portal that was created in November of 2020 to track blocked crossings. We are going to share this link on our website and Facebook so the community can report these incidents which will help the USDOT collect data on our situation. DOT will be using the submissions to this portal to determine a need for action, so the more data the better.

Progress was made on three dangerous structures last week as Boyd excavating took down the home that caught fire at 107 Texas Street along with the house and church on Mulberry.

Our fire department had a busy weekend. At 12:54 pm yesterday the Abilene Fire Dept dispatched Squad 35 to the 500 block of Old Hwy 40 for mutual aid with Solomon Fire Department for a grass fire that put multiple structures in danger. Very strong winds were present with gusts over 40 mph fueling heavy fire in tall dry grass. While in route to the initial call they were redirected to 599 2350 Ave for a grass fire that jumped both lanes of I-70 from the South. Due to very rapid growth progressing North and a structure in immediate danger they requested Abilene's back up Engine 31 for structure protection while all other units from neighboring fire departments were committed on the south side of I-70 attacking the original fire. Just as Engine 31 was leaving the station for structure protection, the Abilene Fire Department was dispatched to the area of mile marker 272 on I-70 for multiple vehicle accidents with fire in the ditches and median. Rescue 1 responded from headquarters and engine 31 was redirected to that location for fire suppression and to back up Rescue #1 with extrication operations if necessary. Once operations were complete on I-70, Rescue 1 returned to headquarters and Engine 31 proceeded on to provide structure protection they originally set out to do. Firefighters were also sent to set up truck fill operations at a hydrant on Fair Rd by Love's Travel Center where approximately 10-12,000 gallons of water was used. As Squad 35 was parked on 2350 Ave finishing up, a civilian vehicle collided with the front end of the Squad 35 shoving it backwards into a fire fighter who was taken to the hospital but able to return to work later that evening. Squad 35 will now be taken out of service until it can be repaired.

In just this one incident the Abilene Fire Department used four different units and a total of thirteen total full time and volunteer firefighters combined. Throughout this entire process, there were still two firefighters at headquarters with primary Engine 34 and Ladder Truck 33 to provide protection to the City of Abilene in the case another call would come in. A huge shout out goes to Interim Chief Strunk and all our firefighters for their work on Sunday. Their quick reaction time and experience helped control and ultimately stop a dangerous fire without losing any structures. I am extremely proud of the work they put in yesterday.

Also, on a separate note, the Fire Department finished their training last Monday and the new extrication tools are already being put to work. On two separate incidents over the last week, the new tools were used to do significant extrication work to gain patient access on two vehicles. One vehicle was a 2020 Cadillac SUV that is made of a modern high tensile steel. The new tools worked flawlessly where the old ones would have really struggled on that type of material.

Adjournment

10. Consideration of a motion to adjourn the March 22, 2021 City Commission meeting.

Motion by Commissioner Marshall, seconded by Commissioner Witt to adjourn at 5:37 p.m. Roll call vote: Marshall YES, Ostermann YES, Shafer YES, Witt YES, Rein YES. Motion carried unanimously 5-0.



Brandon Rein, Mayor

ATTEST:

Penny L. Soukup, CMC
City Clerk