



**CITY COUNCIL MINUTES  
CITY OF ODESSA, TEXAS**

**March 5, 2015**

On March 5, 2015, a special meeting of the Odessa City Council was held at 12:44 p.m. in the Joe Zant Community Room, Second Floor, Odessa College Saulsbury Center, 201 W. University, Odessa, Texas.

Members present: Mayor David R. Turner; Council members: Dewey Bryant, District Two; Barbara Graff, District Three; Michael Gardner, District Four; and Filiberto Gonzales, District Five.

Member absent: Council member Roger T. McNeil, District One.

Others present: Richard Morton, City Manager; Norma Aguilar-Grimaldo, City Secretary; Michael Marrero, Deputy City Manager; Konrad Hildebrandt, Assistant City Manager; Marty Collins, Gatehouse; Patrick Moccasin, PKF; Conan Chantz, UEB; Lynn Roberts, Ambridge; Diego Rodriguez; Scott Dorn, Colin McDonald; other members of City staff; and members of the news media.

A quorum being present, Mayor Turner called the meeting to order and the following proceedings were held:

**Hotel Conference Center Project including conceptual massing re-design and re-program, Ector Theatre, brand responses, adjacent surface parking alternatives, feasibility and other Downtown Development (Gatehouse).** Mr. Collins introduced the Gatehouse team. He stated that there were three brands that were interested in having a hotel next to the conference center: Hilton, Starwood and Marriott. Mr. Dorn, RTKL Architect Firm, reviewed the location of the two parcels for the convention center, parking garage and hotel. With the abandonment of the existing easement and the reroute of the easement, it allowed for reorienting of the project. The access points would be from East 5<sup>th</sup> St. and North Texas. There were surface parking lots that were owned by other entities and the sites were identified. The diagram showed possible expansion. The ballroom was downsized and there would be a junior ballroom. The hotel with the restaurant would have multiple uses for public events and it would be protected from the prevailing winds. The hotel tower would have 217 guest rooms with the ability to build out to 300 rooms. The parking garage had four levels that would accommodate 350 vehicles with the ability to expand to 500 vehicles. The pool deck would be on level two in the hotel. The wind studies were reviewed and taken into consideration with the layout of the project. The plaza had protection from three sides. The conference center had a total of 68,183 square feet of space. The Ector Theater with the awning would be used as an asset and potential retail would be in the plaza area. Mr. Collins stated that the new changes were taken from the suggestions from the last meeting. There was flexibility to expand the facilities.

Council member Bryant asked about assigning the business to the hotel or convention center. Mr. Collins stated that there were three entities for the business: 1) Convention & Visitors Bureau; 2) operator; and 3) the brand. All three entities would work together and the business would be based on flexibility. Mr. Dorn stated that there would be maximum flexibility with the variety of size of the two ballrooms.

Mr. Collins stated that the Ector Theater changes, if any, were to be determined. The theater would be a more active role with the conference facility. Council member Graff

asked about the ballroom space. Mr. Collins stated that there would be partitions to allow flexibility in room size.

Mr. Collins stated that with the Ector Theater, the ADA law would have to be met with changes. He mentioned preserving the auditorium with a nice lobby.

Mayor Turner asked about the possibility of sharing a parking garage with Ector County or if surface parking would be more economical. Mr. Collins stated that there was a lot of money involved for a parking space in a garage.

Council member Gonzales liked the layout and the plaza. He was concerned about the appearance of the convention center. Mr. Collins stated that it was conceptual and the design phase would be done at a later time. Council member Gonzales asked about the theater if it was preserving the use or the building. Mr. Collins stated that it would be a preservation of heritage and a community function. The theater could meet the needs of the plaza with the use by the community and convention center. The specifics would be determined by the community. The theater would need better technology and other improvements.

Council member Gardner liked the design layout. He asked about the flow into the theater. Mr. Rodriguez stated that there would be some flow from the convention center to the theater as well as from the front of the theater. Mr. Gardner appreciated all the input received from the citizens. He stated that the theater needs to be upgraded but serve a purpose and make useable. Council member Graff asked about a veranda from the restaurant to the plaza. Mr. Collins stated that can be determined but the patio would need coverage. The brand would have a decision in that determination. Council member Graff wanted the plaza for community and public events. The uses can be determined on its multi-use.

Mr. Moccasin reported on the survey results. There were good responses with the need and want of the conference center. Results favored the tie-in with the plaza, opportunity to attend events and the versatility with the convention center and hotel. The study supports the project. Mr. Collins identified the expansion areas without the contemplation of land ownership; it was more theoretical.

Comments were received from citizens. A citizen stated that the theater needed an upgrade but retain the integrity. Another set of restrooms was needed for the theater. The theater was a part of history and would catch attention. Randy Ham, Odessa Council Arts & Humanities Executive Director, stated there was an opportunity for public art to be incorporated in the project. Odessa needs to be identified with the project. Mayor Turner stated that the routes to the convention center needed to be determined. The routes needed to look nice and the downtown needed to be designated. Another citizen stated that the theater needed to be kept. Don Stice appreciated the Council's decision to keep the theater. He would like to see more restrooms and the new usage for the public. A citizen stated that the wall of the theater could be used to show laser light shows which were popular with the youth.

There was a short break at 1:45 p.m.

Upon returning from break, motion was made by Council member Graff and seconded by Council member Gardner to go into executive session under 551.086. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

Upon returning from executive session, motion was made by Council member Bryant and seconded by Council member Graff to come out of executive session. The motion was

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approved by unanimous vote. No action was taken.

Mr. Morton suggested the Council members visit the three hotel brands in another city. There was no other business, the meeting adjourned at 2:54 p.m.

ATTEST:

APPROVED:

Norma Aguilar-Grimaldo, TRMC, CMC  
City Secretary

David R. Turner  
Mayor