

Historic Paramount Theatre

Executive Director



Position Summary

The Executive Director will serve as the Historic Paramount Theatre's (Paramount) senior administrative and strategic leader, driving daily operations, stewarding finances, supervising staff, and partnering with the Board of Directors while keeping the theatre active, stable, and deeply connected to Abilene. This person will maintain the Paramount's programming model, build strong civic and cultural relationships, work closely with the Chief Financial Officer on budgeting and cash flow, and lead the creation of the organization's first strategic plan.

They will be a dynamic, community-minded ambassador who brings strong communication skills, sound financial judgment, and collaborative leadership to development, programming, and external relations. This leader will strengthen donor and foundation relationships, oversee grants, sponsorships, restoration projects, marketing, and programming, and advance a refreshed artistic direction that reduces dark days, broadens audiences, and deepens the Paramount's civic impact. They will guide planning for the 2030 centennial and champion accessible programming that welcomes new audiences and supports downtown revitalization.

Organization

Designed and built in 1930 by architect David Castle, the Historic Paramount Theatre is one of West Texas's most treasured cultural landmarks. A stunning example of the nostalgic "atmospheric" movie palace, the theatre was created during an era when attending the cinema was intended to be a grand and immersive experience. The main auditorium was designed to resemble a Spanish/Moorish courtyard at night, complete with drifting projected clouds, twinkling stars, and a neon-lit sky that transported audiences to another world.

Restored in 1987 and renovated to accommodate live theatre performances, the Paramount has evolved into a vibrant multidisciplinary performing arts venue serving the Abilene community and surrounding region. Today, the theatre hosts a broad range of programming, including concerts, film screenings, ballet, opera, touring productions, comedy performances, educational programming, and community events. For nearly 100 years, the Paramount has remained a defining entertainment destination and an enduring symbol of the cultural life of West Texas.

The theatre's programming is intentionally broad and diverse. Each year features between 150 and 170 nights of live performances or active rental use. Numerous local nonprofit organizations utilize the Paramount as their performance home, and facility rentals remain a significant source of earned revenue. Though originally constructed as a movie palace, films continue to be screened throughout the year. Paramount Productions has presented an annual summer musical for more than 30 years and produces a children's musical each January. Since 2020, the theatre has also produced twice-yearly cabaret performances that have become highly popular with audiences. In 2022, the organization expanded its focus on touring concerts and stand-up comedy events; what began as a goal of four touring presentations in the first year grew to more than 30 such events in 2025. Additional earned revenue is generated through concessions and bar sales.

Recent upgrades and restoration projects demonstrate the organization's ongoing commitment to preserving and modernizing the facility. Improvements include a new downstairs concessions area and bar (2025), expansion into the adjacent Wooten Hotel for additional office space (2024), complete LED stage lighting replacement (2025), mezzanine chair replacement (2023), installation of a new house audio system (2021), and a new digital projector (2021). In summer 2026, the theatre will undertake a nearly \$400,000 marquee replacement project featuring a new LED marquee system. A donor-funded architectural lighting and safety enhancement project totaling approximately \$1.5 million is also underway.

The Paramount has a 17-member board of directors led by Chair Ronalyn Sutphen. The Executive Director reports to the board of directors and oversees six full-time staff members and 40 part-time staff members. For the fiscal year ending March 31, 2025, Paramount reported total revenue of \$2.1 million, including 49% from contributions and 51% from earned revenue sources. The projected revenue for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2026, is \$1.7 million, including 54% from contributions and 46% from earned revenue sources.

Sources: edited from paramountabilene.com; propublica.org

Community

Located in the heart of West Texas, Abilene is a mid-sized city of approximately 125,000 residents known for its welcoming atmosphere, strong civic identity, and rich historical heritage. Founded during the cattle-drive era of the late nineteenth century, the city has grown into a regional center for education, healthcare, commerce, and military service while maintaining the character of a close-knit community. Abilene is home to three universities: Abilene Christian University, Hardin-Simmons University, and McMurry University, which contribute significantly to the city's educational and cultural vitality. The community is also deeply connected to Dyess Air Force Base, one of only two U.S. installations that house the B-1 Bomber, making military tradition and service an important part of local identity.

Abilene offers residents a high quality of life with affordable living, family-oriented neighborhoods, and a growing downtown district that has become a center for dining, entertainment, and cultural activity. Recreational attractions include the Abilene Zoo, Frontier Texas!, and the National Center for Children's Illustrated Literature, alongside a broad network of parks, trails, and community amenities maintained by the City of Abilene. Ongoing downtown revitalization efforts, including the Cypress Street Improvement Project and the Downtown Pedestrian Plaza, continue to strengthen the city's walkability, economic vitality, and appeal as a regional destination for arts, culture, and tourism. Community events, festivals, and arts programming contribute to an active civic environment, and the city is widely regarded as one of the best places in Texas to raise a family due to its strong schools, engaged community, and accessible lifestyle.

Sources: abilenetx.gov; census.gov

Photos: Getty Images



Roles and Responsibilities

Organizational Leadership & Administration

- Provide overall leadership and direction for the organization's operations, staff, and programming.
- Recruit, hire, supervise, and evaluate all full-time staff members.
- Foster a collaborative and mission-driven organizational culture.
- Ensure compliance with all applicable licensing and regulatory requirements, including TABC regulations.
- Embrace other organizational leadership and administration responsibilities as needed.

Financial Management

- Collaborate with the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) to develop and present the annual operating budget for board approval each March.
- Oversee implementation of and adherence to the approved budget.
- Work closely with the Board and CFO to manage organizational cash flow and steward banking reserves.
- Review and approve all company expenditures, with expenditures over \$5,000 requiring a second signature from the Board.
- Work with staff to establish pricing for goods and services and determine inventory and merchandise offerings.

- Embrace other financial management responsibilities as needed.

Governance & Board Relations

- Prepare for and participate in all meetings of the Board of Directors, including providing timely reports, recommendations, and updates on organizational operations and strategic priorities.
- Implement directives and policies established by the Board of Directors.
- Engage and support board members in fundraising initiatives, long-range planning, and organizational strategy.
- Serve as the primary liaison between the Paramount and the building owners.
- Embrace other governance and board-relations responsibilities as needed.

Programming & Artistic Oversight

- Lead the programming, negotiation, and contracting for Paramount Road Shows and other live performances presented by the organization.
- Oversee film programming, including selections made by committees and staff.
- Ensure programming aligns with the mission, audience interests, and financial goals of the Paramount.
- Embrace other programming and artistic oversight responsibilities as needed.

Development & Fundraising

- Serve as the organization's primary development contact.
- Oversee grant funding strategies, donor cultivation and stewardship, and corporate sponsorship relationships.
- Support and guide fundraising initiatives in partnership with staff and the Board of Directors.
- Embrace other development and fundraising responsibilities as needed.

Marketing & Community Relations

- Produce, oversee, or approve all marketing and promotional materials and campaigns.
- Represent the Paramount within the community and serve as the primary spokesperson at public events, partnerships, and community engagements.
- Build and maintain strong relationships with patrons, community stakeholders, donors, sponsors, and partner organizations.
- Embrace other marketing and community relations responsibilities as needed.

Facilities & Capital Improvements

- Identify, secure funding for, and oversee all restoration, maintenance, and capital improvement projects related to the Paramount.
- Ensure the long-term preservation and operational functionality of the Paramount.
- Embrace other facilities and capital improvements responsibilities as needed.

Traits and Characteristics

The Executive Director will be an engaging and people-oriented leader who values communication, collaboration, and relationship-building across a broad range of stakeholders. This individual will demonstrate versatility and adaptability, navigating frequent change and shifting priorities with confidence and ease. Grounded in intuition, experience, and thoughtful decision-making, the Executive Director will bring a harmonious and balanced leadership style that fosters trust and stability within the organization. The Executive Director will also be resourceful and receptive, combining practical problem-solving skills with openness to new ideas, opportunities, and innovative approaches that advance Paramount's mission and long-term success.

Other key competencies include:

- **Personal Accountability and Diplomacy** – The capacity to be answerable for personal actions and effectively and tactfully handle difficult or sensitive issues.
- **Time and Priority Management** – The ability to prioritize and complete tasks in order to deliver desired outcomes within allotted time frames.
- **Leadership** – The capability to organize and influence people to believe in a vision while creating a sense of purpose and direction.
- **Teamwork** – The aptitude to cooperate with others to meet objectives.

- **Decision Making** – The faculty to analyze all aspects of a situation to make consistently sound and timely decisions.
- **Problem Solving and Resiliency** – The competence to quickly recover from adversity and solve problems effectively.

Qualifications

Two to three years of senior leadership experience in a historic theatre, professional arts organization, or relevant business setting are expected. A bachelor's degree in the arts or a related field is preferred. The ability to build and sustain a high-performing team is essential, as is experience with fundraising at varying levels. Strong written and verbal communication skills, including the capacity to represent the Paramount to diverse audiences and donors, are important. If you do not meet all the qualifications but possess transferable or equivalent skills, experience, or education, we encourage you to apply and highlight those areas.

Compensation and Benefits

The Paramount provides a competitive and equitable compensation package with an estimated salary range of \$110,000 to \$125,000. Benefits include paid time off and comprehensive employee support programs designed to promote work-life balance and long-term financial wellness. Full-time employees receive 12 vacation days annually, with additional accrual based on years of service, along with 12 sick days per year. Health insurance premiums for employee-only coverage are paid 100% by Paramount, with eligibility beginning on the first of the month after 60 days of service. Employees also have the opportunity to participate in a 403(b) retirement plan with up to a 6% employer match after 90 days of employment.



Applications and Inquiries

To submit a cover letter and resume with a summary of demonstrable accomplishments (electronic submissions preferred), please click [here](#) or visit [ArtsConsulting.com/OpenSearches](https://www.ArtsConsulting.com/OpenSearches). For questions or general inquiries about this job opportunity, please contact:

Flora Stamatiades, Vice President



Tel (888) 234.4236 Ext. 238

Email HistoricParamount@ArtsConsulting.com

[Click Here to Apply](#)

The Historic Paramount Theatre is proud to be an equal opportunity employer. We are committed to building a team that reflects the diversity of the communities we serve and to fostering an inclusive environment where all employees feel valued, respected, and supported. We welcome applicants of all backgrounds, identities, abilities, and experiences.