



CITY OF NORMAN, OK
AIM NORMAN COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PARKS & RECREATION SUB-COMMITTEE

Development Center, Room B, 225 N. Webster Ave., Norman, OK 73069

Tuesday, April 09, 2024 at 3:00 PM

MINUTES

It is the policy of the City of Norman that no person or groups of persons shall on the grounds of race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, age, place of birth, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, familial status, marital status, including marriage to a person of the same sex, disability, relation, or genetic information, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise subjected to discrimination in employment activities or in all programs, services, or activities administered by the City, its recipients, sub-recipients, and contractors. In the event of any comments, complaints, modifications, accommodations, alternative formats, and auxiliary aids and services regarding accessibility or inclusion, please contact the ADA Technician at 405-366-5424, Relay Service: 711. To better serve you, five (5) business days' advance notice is preferred.

Chair Lee Hall called the meeting to order at 3:03 p.m.

ROLL CALL

SUB-COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Lee Hall, Chair
Jennifer Baker
Dennis Brigham
Marcus Madlock, arrived at 3:06 pm
Mark Nanny
Amanda Prince
Sherrel Sheriff
Roberta Pailes, Alternate

OTHERS PRESENT

Molly Hanson (RDG)
Brian Trusty (PROS Consulting) via zoom
Amanda Nairn (Steering Committee)
Patrick Schrank (Steering Committee)
Andy Couch (Firehouse Art Center)
James Briggs (Staff)
Jason Olsen (Staff)
Mitchell Richardson (Staff)
Karla Sitton (Staff)
Wade Thompson (Staff)
AshLynn Wilkerson (Staff)

MINUTES

1. CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL, ACCEPTANCE, REJECTION, AMENDMENT, AND/OR POSTPONEMENT OF THE MINUTES AS FOLLOWS:

AIM NORMAN COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PARKS AND RECREATION SUB-COMMITTEE MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 15, 2024

Motion by Dennis Brigham to approve the minutes from February 15, 2024, AIM Norman Comprehensive Plan Parks & Recreation Sub-Committee meeting, **Second** by Sherrel Sheriff.

The motion passed unanimously with a vote of 6-0.

AGENDA ITEMS

2. DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES, THEMES AND GOALS

Molly Hanson, RDG, said at the February 9, 2024 meeting the Committee was asked to bring back comments regarding the following ten Development Principles; specifically, explore providing a strategy for improving the parks system and creating synergy with the other Sub-Committees (Water, Wastewater, Housing, Transportation, Stormwater and Land Use.

1. Use urban services efficiently
2. Promote diverse housing options
3. Promote infill development and neighborhood reinvestment
4. Respect and protect the environment in all decision making
5. Foster distinctive, attractive communities with strong sense of place
6. Provide a multi-modal and connected transit network
7. Enhance public safety and minimize hazards
8. Encourage balanced and connected neighborhoods
9. Make development decisions predictable, fair and cost-effective
10. Make decisions in a transparent and collaborative manner

Ms. Hanson asked the Committee which principles they felt were more important and why. Mark Nanny said Development Principle #8 encourages connectivity and Chair Lee Hall agreed and felt the current green spaces, trees and greenbelts could be utilized for better connectivity. Roberta Pailes said having pathways that lead to neighborhoods, parks and greenways would be wonderful and felt an ordinance could be created so Developers are encouraged to leave pathway(s) when developing housing additions. Marcus Madlock agreed and stated "we are better together." Sherrel Sheriff said Development Principle #9, offers availability to everyone, regardless of financial stature. Chair Hall agreed and felt park development fees should be considered and updated regularly. She said at this time only residential developers pay park development fees, but wondered if commercial developers should pay them as well. Dennis Brigham said Development Principle #10 is significant because the City of Norman should always be transparent and everyone needs a fair seat at the table. Mark Nanny agreed and said communities and neighborhoods need to be safe social sites as well as conducive to pedestrians and bicycles. Chair Hall felt that there is strong leadership on the Park Board as well as collaborative efforts with community leaders to address these principles and topics. Jennifer Baker asked the Committee to think about "what brings people to Norman?" and "what is Norman's identity if the University of Oklahoma were taken away?" Amanda Prince said she and her family decided to move back to Norman because of the school system, neighborhoods, youth sports and culture. The Committee discussed and agreed that people come to Norman to 1) stay and live, 2) visit/tour and 3) for business. Ms. Hanson asked the Committee to forward any additional comments to her and she would update the list before the next meeting.

3. ENGAGEMENT SYNTHESIS

Molly Hanson, RDG, said RDG Staff has collected and compiled data from visiting all the City parks, Recreation Centers (Irving, Whittier, 12th Avenue Recreation Centers and Little Axe Community Center), and Cultural Facilities (Firehouse Art Center, The Depot, Sooner Theatre, and the Cleveland County Historical House). She said the Cultural Facilities operators were

requested to submit their “wish and dream” lists that they felt would improve their facility and she highlighted the lists to the Committee. Ms. Hanson said data was collected from interviews with Staff at the Young Family Athletic Center (YFAC), Norman Optimist Club, Norman Youth Soccer Association, Sooner Swim Club, and the Adult Wellness and Education Center (AWE). She said RDG also held Neighborhood Workshops as well as a Parks Online Survey, stating a total of 97 participants have attended six Neighborhood Workshops and another workshop is scheduled on April 11, 2024. Ms. Hanson highlighted the results from the Parks Online Survey, stating 323 responses were obtained for questions #1, #2 and #3; and 204 responses for question #4. She said some of the results included: enhancing trail systems, include more natural areas/native plants in parks and the unhoused and those with physical abilities are populations that are underserved by current programs and facilities. She said the main theme(s) from what people have seen in other towns and feel would be good additions to the Norman Parks and Recreation include: create greenways and trails connectivity; prioritize covered pickleball facilities and expand sports facilities; enhance park maintenance, cleanliness and safety; ensure parks are accessible to all residents and evenly distributed across neighborhoods; and incorporate native plants, pollinator gardens and riverfront parks while minimizing chemical usage and focus on sustainability.

4. RECREATION PROGRAM ANALYSIS

Brian Trusty, PROS Consulting, attended the meeting via Zoom and said a Recreation Program Analysis was done on the topics of age segmentation, lifecycle, program classifications, pricing strategies and recommended area of growth. He highlighted the 12 Core Program Areas as follows:

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| Aquatics | Older Adults Arts and Crafts |
| Bingo | Older Adult Education/Entertainment |
| Child Care | Older Adult Fitness |
| General Public Activities | Senior |
| League Programs | Special Events |
| Meals on Wheels | Youth Athletic Programs |

Mr. Trusty said Norman’s programs are very robust and have a great overall age representation. He said the lifecycle analysis reflects that Norman falls into the categories of best practices and regularly evaluates programs to make any necessary changes (to include cancel) in order to offer better programs. Mr. Trusty highlighted the program classification, which reflects the services and programs that Norman *could* provide (Value-Added Services), *should* provide (Important Services) and *must* provide (Essential Services). He said the analysis helps determine what Essential Services could be offered to citizens for a lower fee and /or free versus what Value and/or Important Services could be offered to citizens at a higher price. Mr. Trusty said Norman offers a variety of prices and a broad usage of strategies that are creative and innovative. He recommended areas of growth to:

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| Adult programs and fitness | Outdoor recreation/environmental education |
| Teen/tween programs | Community gardens and un-programmed open spaces |
| Affordable childcare | Additional special/community events |
| Adaptive programs | Outdoor Adventure/family programs |

Mr. Jason Olsen, Director of Parks and Recreation, said in 2022 the Parks and Recreation Department hired ETC Institute to do a Community Interest and Opinion Survey to assess the usage, satisfaction and needs for Norman's park and recreation facilities and programs. He said the 2022 survey aligns with the data and analysis presented today by Molly Hansen (RDG) and Brian Trusty (PROS Consulting). Chair Hall said Park and Recreation Staff is very responsive to the citizens of Norman and their efforts do not go unnoticed.

5. MICRO-COMMITTEE REPORTS

The Micro-Committees gave their reports to the Committees as follows:

Mark Nanny highlighted the City and Park Trails System. He said a greenbelt refers to three ways to protect natural areas and open space that work together to help maintain the beauty and livability of our City and include: public parks, golf course, and nature preserves; a system of trails between parks and open spaces; and large areas of privately owned land which may not allow public access but will help beautify the City. He highlighted urban and rural trails and distributed Norman's Priority Greenbelt Trail System. Mr. Nanny said implementation ideas include develop private/public collaborations; create incentives for developers to provide greenspace and trails; integrate trails with the Stormwater Management Program; consider funding, maintenance and security; and a possible partnership with the Oklahoma Department of Transportation and the City's Parks and Recreation Department.

Marcus Madlock highlighted the Recreation Programs. He said there are 20+ Special Events throughout the year to include the Annual Daddy Daughter Dance, Mom Prom, Egg Hunt, Fourth of July, and many 5Ks at area city parks. Mr. Madlock said Westwood Family Aquatic Center offers various programs to include swim lessons, swim classes and has served as a host location for the World's Largest Swim Lesson. He highlighted the Westwood Golf Course and Tennis Center and

Mr. James Briggs, Park Development Manager, said improvements were made a few years ago to the Westwood Tennis Facility and currently a Westwood Park Master Plan is being designed to bring the Golf and Grill areas so they align with the Tennis and Pool facility upgrades. Mr. Madlock said the Young Family Athletic Center opened early this year and serves youth basketball, youth volleyball, swim teams and pickleball. He said in summary, the micro-committee felt taking the existing programs to the next level while maintaining the current programs is a priority.

Sherrel Sheriff highlighted the Park Development and Impact Fees. She said in 1975, Council adopted a Park Land Dedication Ordinance that required developers to provide land for neighborhood parks when submitting new developments. Ms. Sheriff said in 1994, a Park Development Ordinance was established to provide for the development of park land, i.e., a \$150 fee was charged to every residential dwelling unit - \$75 for neighborhood park improvements and \$75 for community park improvements. She said the park land development fee structure (\$150 total) has not increased since 1994, even though costs to design, construct and maintain parks have substantially increased. Ms. Sheriff said in summary, the park land development fee structure needs to be updated and changed accordingly and possibly include options to fund trails, cultural facilities and recreation centers. She said while the Norman Forward initiative helped build new and update old facilities within the Parks and Recreation Department, it did not account for maintenance of these facilities. Chair Hall said AshLynn

Wilkerson with the City Attorney's Office is reviewing the current ordinance and a key piece will be researching how to fund parks, facilities, trails, etc.

Jennifer Baker and Dennis Brigham highlighted the Cultural Facilities and Community Arts Center. Ms. Baker said Norman does not have enough event space/venues for rehearsal, performance, offices and all other things associated with a centralized Norman Arts Organization. Mr. Brigham said such a space is not clearly defined but one wish would be to have a building that could offer office and lobby space for the Norman Arts Council and also provide event space for rentals, meeting rooms, catering kitchen, box office and ticket booth, artist studios and gallery space and much, much more. He said there is a list of needs, wants and dreams for each current facility and although the Parks and Recreation Department does a great job maintaining the facilities with a limited budget; the current facilities are very old and busting at the seams. Mr. Brigham said the arts industry generates over \$36 million to Norman's economy and provides nearly 600 jobs in Norman. Mr. James Briggs, Park Development Manager, said there is a vision for the Art in Norman's future to become an economic driver and felt there has to be a well thought-out plan that encourages public and private partnerships. He said the plan would need to include not getting "squeezed out" by other interests and not thought of as a third party operation or get lumped into a casino or arena or any other project while being recognized as a valid expense for the public funds.

ACTION ITEMS AND NEXT STEPS

Chair Lee Hall said the next meeting is June 11, 2024 and she anticipates a possible meeting in September. She said in order to not lose momentum, RDG will continue to email updates and send "homework" to the Committee. Ms. Hanson said she will send today's presentation, notes regarding the 10 Development Principles, Micro-Committee reports/notes and a proposed detailed plan to the virtual binder. She encouraged the Committee to ask questions and submit their input. Chair Lee Hall said the virtual binder link is a huge benefit that can be used to provide and study many sources of information. She encouraged the Committee to continue informing their family, friends, and colleagues to attend workshops/meetings and answer the weekly questions on the AIM website, www.aimnorman.com.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Lee Hall adjourned the meeting at 4:43 p.m.

Passed and approved this 11th of June 2024.



Lee Hall, Chair

