

Norman Board of Parks Commissioners
Special Meeting
August 6, 2024

The Norman Board of Parks Commissioners of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met in a Special Session in the Executive Conference Room of the Norman Municipal Building, on the 6th day of August 2024 at 5:01 p.m., and notice of the agenda of the meeting were posted at the Municipal Building at 201 West Gray and on the City website at least 24 hours prior to the beginning of the meeting.

ROLL CALL

Present: Chair Sheriff and Commissioners Davison, Isacksen, Usry and Wright

Absent: Commissioners Ross, Sallee Moxley and One Vacancy

City Officials

Present: Jason Olsen, Director of Parks and Recreation
James Briggs, Park Development Manager
Mitchell Richardson, Interim Recreation Manager
Wade Thompson, Parks Manager
AshLynn Wilkerson, Assistant City Attorney
Colin Zink, City Forester
Karla Sitton, Administrative Technician IV

SUMMARY OF AUGUST 1, 2024 REGULAR PARK BOARD MEETING

There was not a quorum at the August 1, 2024 Regular Park Board Meeting and Chair Sheriff postponed Items 1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9; however, she requested short presentations be given on Items 2, 4, 10, 11 and 12. Item 2: Mr. Jason Olsen, Director of Parks and Recreation, highlighted the previously approved Council items for the months of June and July, 2024. Item 4: Ms. Katherine Leidy, Healthy Living Norman, gave a quick presentation about the mission, programming, events and goals at the Adult Wellness and Education Center (AWE). She highlighted the financials and said the AWE should break even in August. Item 10: Mr. Olsen said since the last meeting, Mitchell Richardson was promoted to Recreation Manager and Mr. Richardson gave a presentation on the new proposed logo for the Parks and Recreation Department (P&R). He said recently P&R initiated a rebranding project to modernize and enhance its visual identity and the previous logo was deemed dated and less versatile for current branding needs. He showed pictures depicting the new proposed logo and said it aims to reflect the department's commitment to health, wellness and community engagement. Item 11: Mr. Olsen highlighted the Norman Forward projects stating Staff will be closing out the Griffin Park and AWE projects at the next Council meeting. He said ribbon cuttings are scheduled for Falls-Lakeview Park (August 9 at 5:30pm) and Sunrise Park (August 29 at 5:30pm). He said a park dedication for Bentley Park, Norman's newest park, is scheduled on August 17 at 10am. Item 12: Staff did not give Department Update(s). There was no Miscellaneous Discussion or Public Comment and the meeting ended at 6:58pm.

ITEM 1, being:

CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL, REJECTION, AMENDED AND/OR POSTPONEMENT OF LAND
OR FEE IN LIEU OF PARKLAND FOR THE BOB MOORE FARMS NORTH ADDITION PUD

Mr. James Briggs, Park Development Manager, said the Bob Moore Farms North Addition PUD is located on the east side of 36th Avenue SW, just south of Main Street. He said this large development is a mix of Multi-Family housing and commercial properties. Mr. Briggs said there are 642 total units of RM-6-type development in the PUD requiring either 2.84 acres of public parkland or 5.68 acres of private parkland. He said the development will yield \$48,150 in Neighborhood Park Development Fees and the same amount in Community Park Development Fees once all the building permits have been issued if public parkland or Fee-in-Lieu of land is provided. Mr. Briggs said the Neighborhood Fees will not be collected if it is Private Park Land. He said the Developer has requested a Fee-in-Lieu of land decision; however, the preliminary site plan shows enough recreational space and proposed development to meet the requirements of a Private Park Land.

Mr. Briggs said the nearest neighborhood park is Cherry Creek Park, on the west side of 36th Avenue. He said any fees collected from the Bob Moore Farms North Addition PUD would likely be spent to make improvements to Cherry Creek Park. Mr. Briggs said Staff recommends the Park Board recommend a Fee-in-Lieu of Land Decision for the Bob Moore Farms North Addition PUD.

Commissioner Isacksen said she is concerned that citizens would need to cross 36th Avenue, a very busy street, in order to get to the nearest neighborhood park (Cherry Creek Park). Mr. Briggs said the proposed development includes Private Park Land with amenities that the residents can utilize. He said if there is a change in land use, a new preliminary plat will be developed and brought back to the Park Commission which may merit a different decision at that time. Chair Sheriff asked whether the Board can request a traffic signal be added on 36th Avenue to assist pedestrians who wanted to visit Cherry Creek Park and Staff said no, if warranted, that would be a Public Works/Traffic requirement. Mr. Briggs said there is plenty of green space as well as a Private Park within this development.

Commissioner Isacksen made the motion, and Commissioner Wright seconded to approve a Fee-in-Lieu of Land Decision for the Bob Moore Farms North Addition PUD. The vote was taken with the following results:

YEAH: Chair Sheriff and Commissioners Davison, Isacksen, Usry and Wright
NAY: None

ITEM 2, being:

CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL, REJECTION, AMENDED AND/OR POSTPONEMENT OF A DONATION TO THE FIREHOUSE ART CENTER IN THE AMOUNT OF \$23,855.00

Mr. Jason Olsen, Director of Parks and Recreation, said Firehouse Art Center (FAC) approached Staff regarding a proposed mural on the south wall of the FAC Building located at 444 S. Flood Avenue, using an in-kind donation of \$23,855.00 to pay for the project. He showed the Board pictures depicting the mural and said FAC has commissioned Carol Barboza to paint the mural, which will take approximately 14 days to complete. Staff recommends the Board recommend that City Council accept the in-kind donation in the amount of \$23,855.00 for a mural installation on the south wall of the FAC.

Commissioner Usry made the motion, and Commissioner Wright seconded to recommend that City Council accept the in-kind donation in the amount of \$23,855.00 for a mural installation on the south wall of the FAC. The vote was taken with the following results:

YEAH: Chair Sheriff and Commissioners Davison, Isacksen, Usry and Wright
NAY: None

ITEM 3, being:

CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL, REJECTION, AMENDED AND/OR POSTPONEMENT OF THE REQUEST FROM THE PIONEER LIBRARY SYSEM TO INSTALL A MOBILE LIBRARY AT REAVES PARK

Mr. Jason Olsen, Director of Parks and Recreation, said the Pioneer Library System (PLS) requested to place a 24-hour Mobile Library at Reaves Park. He said the Mobile Library will be a pick-up point for books and DVDs ordered through the PLS online checkout system. Mr. Olsen said the Parks Department is working with PLS to find a permanent spot in Reaves Park and showed the Board several areas that would work. He said this Mobile Library will help PLS fill a service gap on the south side and campus area of Norman. Staff recommends the Board direct the Director of Parks and Recreation to work with the PLS to find a location for

the Mobile Library and recommend to City Council that the request from PLS to install a Mobile Library at Reaves Park be approved.

Commissioner Davison made the motion, and Commissioner Isacksen seconded to direct the Director of Parks and Recreation to work with PLS to find a location for the Mobile Library and recommend to City Council the request from PLS to install a Mobile Library at Reaves Park be approved. The vote was taken with the following results:

YEAH:	Chair Sheriff and Commissioners Davison, Isacksen, Usry and Wright
NAY:	None

ITEM 4 being:

CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL, REJECTION, AMENDED AND/OR POSTPONEMENT OF THE PROPOSED TREE ORDINANCE

Ms. AshLynn Wilkerson, Assistant City Attorney highlighted the proposed Tree Ordinance and said Davey Resource Group (Davey) was selected for the Ordinance Review work and the process began in July 2023. She said much of the work focused on things such as definition changes and clarification of what is regulated; allowed and prohibited activities on regulated trees; establish license and permitting processes for certain tree work and/or alterations; updates to abatement process for tree nuisances; update to tree protection with certain construction projects; added notification requirements for utility companies; and establishing “Tree Districts” in place of the former historic tree designation. Ms. Wilkerson said the City’s Legal Department did an extensive review to ensure the proposed changes would agree with other policies, codes and procedures followed by different departments in the City.

Ms. Wilkerson said the proposed Tree Ordinance will only apply to *regulated* trees and said regulated trees are trees located in the street right-of-way (ROW), City parks and *Commercial Tree Districts* such as Downtown Main Street, West Lindsey Street, Campus Corner and most street medians. She said companies working on commercial tree maintenance for trees 10 feet and higher would apply for a City license and a permit would need to be obtained before altering or removing a regulated tree. She highlighted the abatement process stating trees that pose danger to public safety can be declared public nuisance and the City may abate via lien for tree nuisances if, after proper notice, the property owner does not take steps to mitigate. Ms. Wilkerson said proposed ordinance added a section stating that utility companies are exempt from permit and licensing requirements; however, they must give a 24-hour advance notice to the City for tree work, except for emergency tree work whereas notification would be given within 24-hours following the completion of the work. She said Tree Districts will replace the historic tree designation(s) and Tree Districts will include two sections *Commercial Tree Districts* (as explained previously) and *Historical Tree Districts*. Historical Tree Districts are residential areas that contain large, valuable, historic trees that the community/area wish to protect. Ms. Wilkerson said at least 51% of the residents in any location must recommend a Historic Tree District, along with a management plan, which will need approval from the Park Board. She said the trees will still be the property owner’s responsibility, but upon approval of the Tree District, the City may assist with planting, removal, and/or replacement of trees only in the ROW of the district.

Commissioner Wright asked whether permitting and licensing is a common practice and Staff said it is not as common in Oklahoma like some of the eastern states; however, the City’s goal is tree preservation. Chair Sheriff asked whether the ROW areas/medians at Brookhaven Boulevard to Robinson Street will be taken over by the City if the Brookhaven Improvement Group (BIG) stops maintaining them and Staff said that area could be added or grandfathered in. Ms. Wilkerson said she has reviewed feedback from Sean Rieger’s office (local attorney who represents real estate clients) on the proposed Tree Ordinance

and will request the Planning Department and the Parks and Recreation Department to review; however, she does not think the proposal will change or be altered before presenting to City Council for approval.

Commissioner Davison made the motion, and Commissioner Isacksen seconded to recommend adoption of the proposed Tree Ordinance to the City Council. The vote was taken with the following results:

YEAH:	Chair Sheriff and Commissioners Davison, Isacksen, Usry and Wright
NAY:	None

ITEM 5, being:

CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL, REJECTION, AMENDED AND/OR POSTPONEMENT OF THE REAVES PARK BUILDING RENOVATION PROJECT

Mr. Mitchell Richardson, Recreation Manager, said in 2023, the Center for Children and Families (CCFI) and the Boys and Girls Club of Norman submitted a proposal for the Reaves Building to return to its usage to its original purpose as a Teen Center. He said Zena's Kitchen is a project spearheaded by Assignment of Hope International, Inc., (AHI) aimed at renovating the kitchen at the Reaves Building and the initiative is a part of a broader effort to refurbish the entire building in collaboration with CCFI and the Boys and Girls Club. Mr. Richardson said this project represents a significant donation to the City, with all necessary funds secured by the AHI requiring no additional financing support from the City. He said the projected total cost of the renovations to the Reaves Park kitchen is \$30,610 and distributed the project overview and budget. Commissioner Wright asked if the donation amount for the project could change and Mr. Jason Olsen, Director of Parks and Recreation, said he was sure AHI vetted the project costs; however if the costs increase the Boys and Girls Club would cover, not the City.

Commissioner Wright made the motion, and Commissioner Usry seconded to accept and approve the donation of \$30,610 for the renovation of the kitchen in the Reaves Park Building. The vote was taken with the following results:

YEAH:	Chair Sheriff and Commissioners Davison, Isacksen, Usry and Wright
NAY:	None

ITEM 6 being:

CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL, REJECTION, AMENDED AND/OR POSTPONEMENT OF THE UPDATED YOUNG FAMILY ATHLETIC CENTER (YFAC) MEMBERSHIP AND RENTAL FEES

Mr. Mitchell Richardson, Recreation Manager, said Staff would like to propose changes to the membership and rental fees at the Young Family Athletic Center (YFAC). He said the current fees may be a little high and the varying fee options can be confusing, preventing some residents from using the facilities. Mr. Richardson said the City offered a Summer YFAC Sale; reducing membership fees from \$25 to \$35 depending on the type (resident, non-resident and military/senior) to \$20 per month for individual new members (all types) and the entry fees were reduced from \$7 to \$5 per visit. He said the membership increased 163% and facility usage and day pass sales had a substantial rise. Mr. Richardson said the proof of concept indicates strong community demand at reduced price points and the adjusted prices will encourage the potential for sustained growth and ensure financial viability to maintain quality services at the YFAC. He said Staff also proposes an increase for the Basketball and Volleyball Court rental fees from \$75 to \$85 and \$60 to \$70 respectively, to help address the large-scale tournaments. He said YFAC is pulling in national tournaments; therefore, Staff did some price matching across the country and felt YFAC could definitely be in a higher category. Commissioner Isacksen wondered about the members who have paid annual membership fees under the current (old) fee structure and Staff said no adjustments are proposed to be made but fortunately, that does not affect many annual memberships.

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Mr. Jason Olsen, Director of Parks and Recreation, said currently the YFAC opens on Sundays. He said there are not a lot of members visiting on the weekends and generally, only 10 people show up on Sundays when free community hours are advertised. He said Staff has been discussing options to make the YFAC hours more efficient. Mr. Olsen said Staff will bring back more data and possible recommendations to adjust some of the permanent hours at a future meeting.

Commissioner Wright made the motion, and Commissioner Davison seconded to approve the Director of Parks and Recreation to update the Young Family Athletic Center (YFAC) Membership and Rental Fees. The vote was taken with the following results:

YEAH: Chair Sheriff and Commissioners Davison, Isacksen, Usry and Wright

NAY: None

MISCELLANEOUS DISCUSSION

None.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Sheriff adjourned the meeting at 5:51 p.m.

Passed and approved this 5th of December 2024


Sherrel Sheriff, Chair

