



CITY OF NORMAN, OK
CITY COUNCIL OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE MEETING
Municipal Building, Executive Conference Room, 201 West Gray, Norman,
OK 73069
Thursday, October 09, 2025 at 4:00 PM

MINUTES

The Oversight Committee of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met in Regular Session in the Executive Conference Room in the Municipal Building, on Thursday, October 09, 2025 at 4:00 PM, and notice of the agenda of the meeting was posted at the Norman Municipal Building at 201 West Gray and on the City website at least 24 hours prior to the beginning of the meeting.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was opened by Chairman Grant at 4:00 pm.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Ward 4 Councilmember Helen Grant - Chair
Ward 1 Councilmember David Gandesbery
Ward 5 Councilmember Brandon Nofire
Ward 8 Councilmember Scott Dixon

OTHERS PRESENT

Mr. Darrel Pyle, City Manager
Ms. Shannon Stevenson, Assistant City Manager
Mr. Anthony Purinton, Assistant City Attorney
Ms. Michele Loudenback, Environmental & Sustainability Manager
Mr. Ronnie Warrior, A Better Way, Opportunity Knocks (ABWOK) Program Manager
Mr. Scott Sturtz, Director of Public Works
Mr. Jason Olsen, Director of Parks and Recreation
Ms. Katherine Hammans, Admin Tech III, City Clerk

AGENDA ITEMS

1. UPDATE ON THE DAILY WORK PROGRAM "OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS"

Ms. Michele Loudanback, Environmental and Sustainability Manager, provided an update on the "A Better Way – Opportunity Knocks" (ABWOK) program, which combines litter cleanup and wraparound support services for participants, primarily funded by the opioid settlement and City allocations. The program is managed by the Mental Health Association and overseen by the City of Norman.

The primary goal of the program is to clean up litter and dumping, improve water quality and provide employment and support services for vulnerable populations.

Participants

- Up to 8 individuals per 2-week cycle (voluntary participation)
- Paid \$65/day
- No application required (low-barrier access)

Schedule

- 3 days of litter crew work in Week 1
- 2 days of litter work in Week 2
- Remaining days used for wraparound services (career help, case management, etc.)

Priorities for Cleanup Crews

- Clean Neighborhood Program support
- Resident and staff service requests
- Priority mowing areas (20 total for pre-mowing cleanup)
- Parks during event prep (e.g., Legacy Park, Sutton Wilderness)
- Heavily traveled corridors (Main St, Lindsey, Alameda, Classen/Porter)
- Bus stops, stormwater inlets, park benches, trailheads

Results and Metrics (June – September 2025)

- 32.9 tons of trash collected
- On pace to nearly double previous records (compared to 2023's 29 tons)

Wraparound Services Provided

- Total Riders: 89
- Received Services: 57
 - 2 referred to permanent housing
 - 2 referred to recovery services
 - 5 for DHS/Veteran's Affairs benefits
 - 11 medical referrals
 - 6 mental health referrals
 - 3 gained permanent employment (Taco Mayo, Salvation Army, third employer not specified)
 - 156 job applications submitted
 - 4 job interviews
 - 3 hires

1. (continued) UPDATE ON THE DAILY WORK PROGRAM "OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS"

Projected Program Goals

Benchmark Goal	Status
25% access recovery services	12.5% so far
10% enroll in job program	64% enrolled
20% submit job applications	100% submitted
25% achieve stable employment	7% achieved so far

A Program manager, employment specialist and a van driver were hired as part of the program. The van driver vacancy/coverage caused an overage in salaries. Approximately 25% of the total budget has been spent, aligning with expectations,

Goodwill Industries recently came on board as a partner. They will help with certification programs for forklift operation, customer service, unarmed security, and warehouse training. The following industries are targeted for Job placements.

- Restaurant and service industry
- Retail
- Certified skilled labor (via Goodwill)

Councilmember Holman raised concerns about litter in specific corridors, to which Ms. Loudanback said photos and locations for cleanup were submitted and the ABWOK team addressed the sites the next day, showcasing the flexibility of the program.

Council expressed much praise for the success of the program and its dual impact on community cleanliness and social services. They said they could see the funding shifting from the general Fund to solid waste and opioid settlement funds. Acknowledgement and appreciation of the proactive acquisition of the van and wrapping it to make the program very visible in the community.

Immediate Program Goals

- Fill van driver vacancy
- Continue community outreach and awareness
- Expand employer partnerships
- Promote use of cleanrequests@norman.gov and referral QR codes
- Provide quarterly reporting to Oversight Committee

HUB 107 has expressed an interest in having the ABWOK van visit, to assist with cleanup for their upcoming closing next Friday and its consolidation into Central Oklahoma Community Mental Health Center (COCMHC). Staff will be working on a partnership with COCMHC as they also provide job placement support.

1. (continued) UPDATE ON THE DAILY WORK PROGRAM "OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS"

Participant Pickup Locations

Regular Scheduled Pickup

- City Care
- Food and Shelter
- Drop-in Center

Alternate Pickups

- Participants often determine the best pickup point.
- For example, one participant requested pickup at ARQ off Flood Avenue.
- Pickup spots are flexible and based on participant needs.
- Referrals do not include formal applications; they are communicated to the case manager and van driver.
- Each morning, the van driver builds the pickup list and notifies staff of the participant count for lunch and pay preparations.

Post-Program Follow-Up

- There is no set duration. Follow-up continues until the participant's needs are met (e.g., employment, vital records, medical or legal assistance).
- The formal program is a two-week employment period, but case management may extend beyond that.
- Participants are encouraged to move forward after the initial two weeks.
- Returning is possible depending on program capacity and prioritization of new applicants.

Materials, Referral Cards and Rack Cards can be provided to council members and agencies, including hospitals and client-facing organizations giving program information and referral cards (with QR codes) for potential participants.

Program funding and sustainability will come from using the Opioid Settlement Funds that has a projected span of 18 years. The City is already planning for sustainability beyond that time with funds coming from future sanitation rate increases, (none in over a decade), that could help support the program. With resident continued support for the program, it could be built into future sanitation budgets or expanded.

Councilmembers praised the wide variety of job application targets and contacts made by program participants. (e.g., big box stores, fast food, full-service restaurants, retail). They strongly expressed their appreciation of the effectiveness of wraparound services and noted that while trash pickup is essential, the social services element is even more impactful.

2. PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION REGARDING THE USE OF PORTABLE RESTROOMS IN PARKS.

Mr. Jason Olsen, Parks and Recreation Director, provided information to Council on portable restroom solutions in City parks. Two companies provided proposals to Mr. Olsen for review, "Good 2Go and Throne Labs".

2. (continued) PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION REGARDING THE USE OF PORTABLE RESTROOMS IN PARKS.

Good2Go:

- Provides restroom access via QR code systems, primarily for retail locations, like Target or Kohl's.
- Expressed interest in a pilot partnership with the City's park system.
- Has surveillance system integration for security, e.g., in case of vandalism.
- Pricing includes installation fee plus a small monthly technology/software fee.
- Technology limitations noted:
 - QR system is primarily a deterrent mechanism.
- Not connected to identity tracking, user feedback, or monitoring features.
- Meant primarily as a deterrent to misuse.
 - Does not collect detailed user data, feedback, usage analytics or allow behavior-based access control

Throne Labs

- Full presentation postponed until next month.
- Offers mobile restroom units with the following features:
 - Air-conditioned and heated interiors.
 - Anti-vandal wallpaper that is easily replaceable.
 - ADA-accessible.
- Not permanently installed - fully mobile, self-contained units.
- Fresh water and waste storage tanks included; no sewer hookup required.
- Remote monitoring available 24/7.
- Technology & Access
 - Access controlled via QR code — users scan to enter.
 - For people without smartphones:
 - Works with local homeless shelters to provide QR code cards.
 - Shelters help register users and issue these cards.
 - Data collected can be used to:
 - Identify misuse or vandalism.
 - Restrict repeat offenders from accessing restrooms.
 - Units have timers that notify users when their allotted time is nearly up.
 - Cleaning & Maintenance
- Throne Labs requires a minimum of 15 units in a region to establish critical mass for hiring local contractors.
- Offers cleaning options:
 - One to three times per day based on selected service level.
- Units are leased, not purchased.
- Quarterly relocation is part of the service — enables testing locations and adapting to city needs.
- Mobile and adaptable.
- Ideal for testing placement before permanent construction.
- Annual lease cost per unit: ~\$80,000

2. (continued) PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION REGARDING THE USE OF PORTABLE RESTROOMS IN PARKS.

Portland Loo

- Permanent structure.
- Requires full utility hookups (electricity, water, sanitation).
- High upfront cost: \$225,000–\$250,000 per unit
- Installation: ~\$100,000
- Total: ~\$300,000–\$400,000
- Less flexibility — fixed location once installed.

- Pilot Locations Proposed
 - Andrews Park (during construction)
 - Downtown Norman
 - Transit Center Area
 - Potential third unit that rotates to test multiple areas.

- Operational Benefits
 - Improves public access to restrooms.
 - Supports families, park visitors, and unhoused individuals.
 - Reduces vandalism through surveillance and behavior tracking.
 - QR code system encourages accountability and safety.

- Future Planning Needs
 - Request for a realistic deployment list next month.
 - Investigate interest from nearby cities or entities (e.g., OKC, OU, COCHC) for shared regional rollout.
 - Some parks (e.g., Saxon Park, Reeves Park) currently lack restrooms or are in transition.

Council members expressed strong interest in learning more about how the vendors work with local shelters to provide access for unhoused individuals, with emphasis on the balance between public access and supporting vulnerable populations.

- Access Concerns for Unhoused Individuals
 - Some unhoused individuals may not have access to a smartphone to scan a QR code.
 - If someone in need cannot access the unit, they may relieve themselves near or on the unit, defeating the purpose.
 - Request for more information next month from the vendor about how individuals without phones are accommodated.
 - Solution discussed:
 - Vendor provides QR access cards via local shelter partners (e.g., City Care, CSC MHC).
 - These cards can be distributed at intake/check-in or via service providers.

2. (continued) PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION REGARDING THE USE OF PORTABLE RESTROOMS IN PARKS.

- Data Collection on Cell Phone Access
 - It was suggested that the City look into data collection to determine:
 - ∞ The percentage of individuals (e.g., shelter residents, municipal court attendees) who have smartphones.
 - ∞ Helps quantify how many people might be excluded from restroom access without a physical QR card option.
- Comparison to other cities
 - Los Angeles and San Francisco each have over 100 Throne Labs restroom units.
 - High success rates reported in ensuring restroom access for the homeless population, either via phone or QR card.
- Restroom funding
 - Could come from parks maintenance budgets or hotel bed tax.
 - Hotel bed tax revenues are partially allocated to park facilities maintenance.
 - A recent increase in OKC's hotel bed tax could justify adjusting Norman's rate and using additional funds to support this program.
- Service model:
 - Vendor requires 15 units in the metro area to justify hiring a local maintenance contractor.
 - Year-to-year lease allows flexibility:
 - If Norman only needs 2–3 units, the lease is adjusted accordingly.
 - If demand increases, more units can be added later.
 - Other municipalities or large institutions (e.g., OU) may participate to meet the regional minimum.
- Use Cases & Seasonal Mobility
 - Units are movable quarterly, allowing placement based on:
 - Seasonal events or festivals (e.g., Medieval Fair, Earth Day, Juneteenth).
 - High-traffic times and locations such as Reeves Park or Andrews Park.
 - Remote parks like Saxon, which lack utility infrastructure (water/sewer/electric).
 - Throne units are self-contained, providing:
 - Power
 - Waste storage
 - ADA access
 - Daily service and maintenance by the vendor

Restrooms must serve both the general public and unhoused individuals. Parents with children, skateboarders, and other park users frequently need access to facilities during operating hours and beyond. Lack of access often leads to individuals using sidewalks or other public spaces inappropriately. Emphasis is placed on ensuring dignified, private restroom access for all community members.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:40 p.m.