



# CITY OF NORMAN, OK CITY COUNCIL CONFERENCE

Municipal Building, Executive Conference Room, 201 West Gray, Norman,  
OK 73069

Tuesday, June 27, 2023 at 5:00 PM

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## MINUTES

### **AMENDED START TIME**

*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 405-366-5446, Relay Service: 711. To better serve you, five (5) business days' advance notice is preferred.*

### **CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Heikkila called the Meeting to Order at 5:00 p.m.

### **PRESENT**

Mayor Larry Heikkila  
Councilmember Ward 1 Austin Ball  
Councilmember Ward 2 Lauren Schueler  
Councilmember Ward 3 Bree Montoya  
Councilmember Ward 4 Helen Grant  
Councilmember Ward 5 Rarchar Tortorello  
Councilmember Ward 6 Elizabeth Foreman  
Councilmember Ward 7 Stephen Holman  
Councilmember Ward 8 Matthew Peacock

### **ABSENT**

None

### **AGENDA ITEMS**

#### **1. UPDATE ON 718 NORTH PORTER AVENUE.**

Mr. Anthony Purinton, Assistant City Attorney, said during the June 13th Budget meeting, Council allocated \$500,000 for renovation of 718 North Porter to be a temporary location for the Warming Shelter currently located on Gray Street. During the June 13th Special Session, Staff was directed to begin preparing 718 North Porter

Item 1, continued:

as an alternate location for the Warming Shelter. In addition, Council expressed interest in the possibility of housing additional agencies to provide day services.

Mr. Purinton said in previous discussions for a Warming Shelter location, one of the locations was deemed controversial because of its location relative to a school (Le Monde International Academy). He researched 718 North Porter's location to schools and found the location is in the middle of three schools that includes Wilson Elementary (735 feet), Longfellow Middle School (836 feet), and Jefferson Elementary (1,743 feet). There is also a Children's Daycare 550 feet from the location. For comparison, the previous location considered by Council on Griffin Hospital property was 300 to 750 feet from Le Monde International School.

The building located at 718 North Porter was office space used by Norman Regional Health Systems (NRHS) and a medical equipment retailer (in the first floor) until the City obtained the property in a land swap deal in 2022. The building constructed in 1978, has two floors that consists of approximately 8,800 square feet per floor.

The proposed property lies within the Porter Corridor Zoning Overlay District, which was created to provide regulations that create a buffer between commercial and residential areas that protect both land use types yet encourages redevelopment of the Porter Avenue Corridor. The Porter Avenue Corridor has its own zoning requirements, such as fencing and landscaping requirements that are specific to this area so there would have to be a masonry wall separating commercial from residential. He said the City should exceed the current Porter Avenue Corridor requirements so instead of a four foot masonry fence along the back line of the property, Staff recommends enclosing the back parking lot to some degree. He said a masonry fence would cost \$150,000 to \$200,000. If the City used the first floor only, there will need to be layout changes, code upgrades to account for habitation, slab cuts to accommodate higher occupancy and restroom requirements. The second floor would be too costly to renovate for this type of use due to code requirements for stairways, elevators, etc.

The property needs to be rezoned to a Simple Planned Use Development (SPUD) in order to accommodate the proposed use of the property as a Warming Shelter as well as to ensure the inclusion of other uses allowing the property to remain marketable. Rezoning will take 90 days and will be effective October 26th, the bid process will take approximately three to four weeks, and construction will take approximately six to eight months with an estimated completion date of July 2024.

Mr. Purinton said the initial cost estimate is \$1.75 million to \$2 million that includes construction; engineering/design services; zoning requirements (fence); and 10% contingency. The cost estimate does not include the second floor, cost to buy new beds and equipment, or increased costs of operation.

Councilmember Holman asked what options Council has for a Warming Shelter if City cannot use 718 North Porter, if not here then where? Mayor Heikkila said Council and Staff continue to look for options and moving the conversation towards an idea of what City could do, could there be a building elsewhere that could be used, could the City build somewhere, etc.

Item 2, continued:

Councilmember Tortorello asked if there are any other locations in Norman that would fit the needs and timeframe and Mr. Pyle said none that the City controls. He said Staff was unable to find a landlord willing to rent space to the City for Warming Shelter use. He said Cleveland County may have a piece of real estate that would be more optimal and that conversation would need to take place with Cleveland County.

Mayor Heikkila said the type of facility needed would include parking, allowing animals, agency services, etc. He said maybe there could be two locations, a location by Mission Norman who has some land for apartments that were never built and Mission Norman may be agreeable to selling some of the property to the City for a Warming Shelter. There may also be some land available near the Cleveland County Detention Facility.

Councilmember Foreman said she assumes the City has looked for funding offers including grants, public/private partnerships, etc. Mr. Pyle said there are lots of dollars for lots of programs, but very little money available at federal or state level to address emergency homeless shelter issues. He said there does seem to be interest on the affordable housing side and the continuation of tax credit project so the City will be able to make a dent in Section 8 affordable housing space. He said the City is not seeing support in terms of addressing emergency needs from any state or federal agency.

Councilmember Grant said utilizing 718 North Porter gives Council one more year to find a solution, but there is still a big timeline for design and construction (at least a year or two). She would like Council to stay on a one year timeline to obtain a permanent location. She said there is also opportunity in asking Cleveland County if they are interested in helping with this project.

Chairman Holman supports moving forward with the 718 North Porter location until an alternative solution is found and suggested beginning discussions regarding property near the Cleveland County Detention Facility or Mission Norman.

Councilmember Peacock said he supports moving forward; however, he does have quite a bit of heartburn in putting money into this building and trying to shoehorn a use into it and believes the money would be much better spent on a permanent location.

Mr. Pyle said there seems to be consensus to advance discussion with the conversation with the design architect and outreach to Cleveland County so Staff will move forward in that direction.

Item 1, continued:

Items submitted for the record

1. Staff report dated June 23, 2023, from Anthony Purinton, Assistant City Attorney, through Kathryn Walker, City Attorney, to Honorable City Council
2. PowerPoint entitled, "City of Norman 718 N. Porter Shelter Relocation Project Updated," presented by Anthony Purinton, Assistant City Attorney

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2. DISCUSSION REGARDING COUNCIL CONSIDERATION OF ANTI-DISCRIMINATION AND ARTISTIC EXPRESSION RESOLUTIONS.

Mayor Heikkila said most of the language related to these resolutions are contained in Section 8 of the City's Code of Ordinances so there is really no reason to approve another resolution. He does not support the second resolution because there are no boundaries and even free speech has boundaries. He said the resolution language is too vague and written in such a way that it can be interpreted to mean almost anything to anyone so he cannot support either resolution.

Councilmember Schueler felt Council should have a broader and deeper conversation on the intension of the resolutions. She said there has been no presentation to Council on these resolutions until tonight and she would like to hear the reasoning behind the resolutions.

Mayor Heikkila said Council can have a broader discussion at the Council Retreat in August.

Items submitted for the record

1. Draft Resolutions

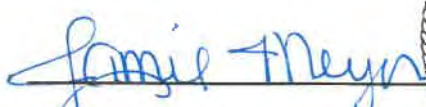
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**ADJOURNMENT**


The meeting was adjourned at 6:03 p.m.

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ATTEST:

  
Deputy City Clerk



  
Mayor