



**CITY OF NORMAN, OK**  
**CITY COUNCIL OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE MEETING**  
Municipal Building, Executive Conference Room, 201 West Gray, Norman,  
OK 73069  
Thursday, October 12, 2023 at 4:00 PM

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## MINUTES

The City Council Oversight Committee of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met in Regular Session in the Executive Conference Room on the 12<sup>th</sup> day of October 2023, at 4:00 p.m. and notice of the agenda of the meeting was 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.

### CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Lauren Schueler called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm

### PRESENT

Councilmember Ward 2 Lauren Schueler, (Chair)  
Councilmember Ward 3 Bree Montoya  
Councilmember Ward 7 Stephen Holman

### ABSENT

Councilmember Ward 1 Austin Ball

### OTHERS PRESENT:

Councilmember Ward 4 Helen Grant  
Ms. Kathryn Walker, City Attorney  
Ms. Jeanne Snider, Assistant City Attorney  
Ms. Ashlynn Wilkerson, Assistant City Attorney  
Mr. Jason Olsen, Director of Parks and Recreation  
Mr. Lance Harper, Facility & Construction Program Manager  
Ms. April Doshier, Food and Shelter Director  
Ms. Lisa Webb, Admin Tech III, City Clerk

## AGENDA ITEMS

### ITEM 1: EMERGENCY SHELTER UPDATE

Ms. April Dosier, Food and Shelter Director, presented the September 2023 warming shelter report.

96 unique guests in September 2023 - (61 males and 34 females, Six Veterans)

Nightly average for the shelter in September was 53.

Fifteen per day are turned away

Two guests have moved to permanent housing

The shelter has housed 499 people over the past year, (since November 1, 2022), who were homeless at least one day.

Staff have been focusing efforts on getting ID's, social security cards and birth certificates needed for guests to get into permanent housing

Recently a couple came to A Friends House after living in a tent for more than a year. They were awakened the night before with a stranger coming into their tent yelling at them for sleeping. They decided it would be safer to be inside, even if they had to be in separate dorms. By having access to the safety and support of A Friend's House they were able to develop a plan, get their ID's and birth certificates so they could access benefits and on September 29, 2023 the couple moved into an apartment.

Chairman Schueler asked how long people are staying at the shelter. Ms. Dosier said half of the guests have been there a long time, some since day one, who are in need of more intensive care than is available. Chairman Schueler asked why they are coming to Norman, are they using the available support to move on?

Councilmember Grant asked how many people with jobs are using the shelter, to which Ms. Dosier said she does not have those numbers.

Chairman Schueler asked what is the results of Federal funding ending. Ms. Dosier said there is a nine to ten month wait for Norman Housing Authority voucher, with only \$150,000 received annually from HUD's Emergency Solutions Grant program. These funds are used to keep people from becoming homeless and it's a crisis because there is not enough funding to help.

Councilmember Holman asked if people being turned away from the shelter has helped reduce behavior issues because they do not want to lose their bed. Ms. Dosier said calls to the Police are rare, EMT calls are more prevalent and the Continuum of Care, (CoC), is called for Mental Health Crises.

Councilmember Holman said the August police report shows half of the arrest came from Food and Shelter. Ms. Dosier said medical calls are the most frequent reasons to call the Police Department and EMT's.

Ms. Dosier said there is a misconception on the number of people working and living at the shelter. The majority of the guests are disabled, do not make enough to pay rent and without the shelter there would be 53 more people on the street, the shelter is a last resort.

## ITEM 1: (continued) EMERGENCY SHELTER UPDATE

Councilmember Grant asked that future updates include the number of people with disabilities staying at the shelter. Ms. Dosier said she will pull the information from the CAPER report and include it each month.

Councilmember Grant asked about the shower issues, to which Mr. Jason Olsen, Director of Parks and Recreation, replied the church bus was disposing of water incorrectly and they are working on the issue.

Councilmember Holman said the community thinks a certain type of person is staying at the shelter and asked for clarification if any sex offenders are staying there. Ms. Dosier said a full intake is done on each guest, the Norman Police Department registration list is checked and no known registered sex offenders have been allowed to stay in the shelter to the best of their knowledge.

Mr. Olsen presented proposed shelter building updates to the committee. Mr. Lance Harper, Facility and Construction Program Manager, has been working on the plans and he just received them back from the architect. To help minimize the impact on the guests, the plan is to work on the north half of the building first and then move to the south half.

The rehabilitation of the building will provide a minimum of 120 beds, an intake area, storage, additional bathrooms and bring things compliant with ADA requirements. This will be a pretty quick process and will include a sprinkler system coming into the shelter from the buildings south east side. Staff are waiting on the asbestos report before any remodeling on the building can proceed.

Councilmember Grant asked what the remodel cost is estimated to be, and Mr. Olsen said staff are waiting for contractor bids to come in to ensure staff estimates are within normal industry cost. Councilmember Grant asked if the original appropriation was for \$718,000. Chairman Schueler asked if these funds can be used on the project. Ms. Kathryn Walker, City Attorney, said additional funds will need to be appropriated by Council for the rehabilitation.

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## ITEM 2: CONTINUED DISCUSSION REGARDING THE CITY OF NORMAN BOARDS, COMMISSIONS AND COMMITTEES.

Ms. Jeanne Snider, Assistant City Attorney, presented information on the work done to update, consolidate, and/or eliminate some Boards, Commissions and Committees.

Discussions have been ongoing regarding consolidating Greenbelt Commission and Planning Commission, with the consensus to not consolidate, but make the duties more specific. Most of the committee members favor combining the Tree Board with the Parks Board and eliminating a separate Tree Board.

ITEM 2: (continued) CONTINUED DISCUSSION REGARDING THE CITY OF NORMAN  
BOARDS, COMMISSIONS AND COMMITTEES.

The Animal Welfare Oversight Committee, Resolution R-0203-11 was never codified, and terms or limits have not been set. The resolution needs to be repealed and more specific duties and terms need to be established. Some of the members have been on the committee from the beginning and the codification changes need to consider how to capitalize on the experience of the current members.

Councilmember Grant said there are vacancies on the Animal Welfare Oversight Committee right now, to which Ms. Snider said this may be because it was requested to not add new members while work on the boards is ongoing. Ms. Snider said she will talk to the Animal Welfare Oversight Committee about the upcoming changes to term limits, etc.

Ms. Snider is the advisor/oversight staff for the Norman Youth Council. The students enjoy the involvement in city government and benefit from what they learn in the process.

She said it would be good if the Council could be expanded at some time to allow more students to be involved. Some other areas the Youth Council want to focus on is safety and the homeless situations, etc. Chairman Schueler said it would be good for the Youth Council to visit different committees that address areas of concern. The program is beneficial to the students as well as the Council, who are able to hear the concerns of the youth and involve them in government issues and resolutions.

Councilmember Holman said the Youth Council could be given advisory responsibility to report to Council on youth issues. Ms. Snider said that it might be good to set up a hybrid solution for Youth Council by providing opportunities to shadow attorneys, have lunch and visit with Councilmembers, etc. There are many possibilities to involve the Youth Council participants in City Government and the community.

The GreenBelt Commission has asked about rewrites to increase their authority. Chairman Schueler said that the GreenBelt suggestions need to be brought to the committee before being taken to the full council in a study session in approximately a month.

Ms. Snider said it has been suggested to limit the number of terms a member can serve on a committee to allow opportunities for others to serve the community. Chairman Holman said the intent is to get people involved in serving the community and allow new members to join in while preserving the long term history and knowledge of past and current members.

Ms. Walker said staff could word the language for term limits to include a statement, "if a qualified person is not available, then the current member can remain until replaced".

Chairman Schueler asked how they need to proceed with the Boards, Commissions, and Committee changes. Ms. Snider said it is not time to bring the changes to Council yet, as they are not finalized.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:53 p.m.