

Norman Board of Parks Commissioners
January 2, 2025

The Norman Board of Parks Commissioners of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met in a Regular Session in the Development Center Conference Room A, on the 2nd day of January 2025 at 5:36 p.m., and notice of the agenda of the meeting were posted at the Development Center Building at 225 N. Webster Avenue 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, Sallee, Usry and Wright

Absent: Commissioner Ross and Two Vacancies

City Officials

Present: Jason Olsen, Director of Parks and Recreation
Lance Harper, Facility & Construction Program Manager
Mitchell Richardson, Recreation Manager
Wade Thompson, Parks Manager
Karla Sitton, Administrative Technician IV

ITEM 1, being:

CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL, REJECTION, AMENDED AND/OR POSTPONEMENT OF MINUTES FROM THE SEPTEMBER 5, 2024, PARK BOARD REGULAR MEETING AND MINUTES FROM SEPTEMBER 10, 2024, JOINT PARK BOARD & AIM PARK SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING

Commissioner Isacksen made the motion, and Commissioner Davison seconded to approve the Regular Park Board minutes of September 10, 2024, and the Joint Park Board & AIM Park Sub-Committee minutes of September 10, 2024. The vote was taken with the following results:

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

NAY: None

ITEM 2, being:

NOMINATION AND ELECTION OF CHAIR, VICE-CHAIR, AND SUB-COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS OF THE BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS

Chair Sheriff asked for nominations for Chair, Commissioner Sallee nominated, and Commissioner Usry seconded to approve Sherrel Sheriff as the Chair of the Board of Park Commissioners. The vote was taken with the following results:

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

NAY: None

Chair Sheriff asked for nominations for Vice-Chair, Commissioner Isacksen nominated, and Commissioner Sallee seconded to approve Ellen Usry as the Vice-Chair of the Board of Park Commissioners. The vote was taken with the following results:

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

NAY: None

The Board discussed the following Sub-Committee and Appointments:

Naming & Recognition of Parks & Recreational Facilities

Kristi Isacksen
Kristi Wright

Advisory Comm. for Urban Wilderness Parks

Liz Ross
Sherrel Sheriff
Ellen Usry

Advisory Comm. for Parks/Recreation Policy & Procedures

Billy Davison
Kristi Isacksen
Sherrel Sheriff

Norman Forward Saxon Park Ad Hoc Ex-Officio

Mary Sallee
Ellen Usry

The motion was made by Commissioner Sallee and seconded by Commissioner Usry to accept the new Sub-Committee Appointments. The vote was taken with the following results:

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

ITEM 3, being:

CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL, REJECTION, AMENDED AND/OR POSTPONEMENT OF PREVIOUSLY APPROVED COUNCIL ACTIONS

Mr. Jason Olsen, Director of Parks and Recreation, highlighted the previously approved Council actions pertaining to the Parks and Recreation Department as follows:

- Awarding RFP-2425-22, Contract K-2425-75 with Happy Playgrounds LLC in the amount of \$227,004 for the William Morgan Park Playground Project, and Resolution R-2425-75 Granting Tax Exempt Status.
 - Contract K-2425-82 with the Sooner Theatre, Inc. in the amount of \$88,381.00 to assist with the Operation of the Sooner Theatre and the Provision of Hospitality Services Provided to the Community at Such Location.
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ITEM 4, being:

PRESENTATION REGARDING TSET GRANT OPPORTUNITIES – HEALTHY INCENTIVE GRANT FOR COMMUNITIES & BUILD ENVIRONMENT GRANT

Ms. Sarah Bloom highlighted the *TSET Healthy Incentive Grant for Communities (HIGC)*. She said it is designed to help municipalities adopt and implement best and promising practices for tobacco-free environments, access to healthy foods, and physical activity opportunities to improve resident's health and quality of life. She said the FY25 application period is October 25 – November 22, 2024.

Ms. Kenzie Thompson highlighted the *TSET Built Environment Grant* and said it could fund various projects, including developing comprehensive plans for community parks and trail systems, improvements to community fitness centers and downtowns, and ADA-compliant sidewalks and playgrounds. She said the infrastructure projects should promote physical activity and nutrition, and the FY25 application periods are March 3 – 28, 2025.

Ms. Bloom highlighted the priority funding criteria for both TSET to include: 1) the City adopting a tobacco-free, city-owned property ordinance, i.e., ban tobacco use on Westwood Golf Course and parking lots of

playgrounds; 2) the City adopting the zoning ordinance which restricts selling tobacco products within 300 feet of schools and playgrounds; 3) development and implantation of a Worksite Wellness policy; and 4) promotion of the Oklahoma Tobacco Helpline and Shape Your Future website.

TSET HIGC funding is based on population, and the City of Norman would be in the Gold Class, having an opportunity to get a maximum combined *TSET HIGC* grant in the amount of \$150,000. Norman has already received a total of \$50,000 from *TSET HIGC* funds in 2012 and 2013; thus, Norman remains eligible for \$100,000 that could be used for a miracle ADA- accessible baseball field at Reaves Park. She said all funds must be spent within one year from the award date.

The *TSET Built Environment Grant* is also based on the City's population and has two funding categories. The first funding category is *Planning, Design, and Policy Development Projects*, which has funding up to \$80,000 per project, up to a 12-month project completion with no match required, and must be ready to begin work immediately upon receipt of a fully executed agreement. The second funding category is the *construction implementation of small to medium sized projects, with funding of up to \$100,000 per project for up to two years of completion and a 20% required match of total project costs*. Ms. Thompson said the *TSET Built Environment Grant* could be used for various projects, including Norman's endeavor to construct an all-inclusive Kids Space Playground at Reaves Park.

Mr. Jason Olsen, Director of Parks and Recreation, said the Norman Planning Commission unanimously approved the recommendation to the Council to restrict the use and sales of tobacco products (including vaping) within 300 feet of schools and playgrounds. He said Staff recommends the Park Board support and recommend that the City Council update City Ordinances to ban the use of Tobacco Products on all City Property, including the Westwood Golf Course and Park Parking Lots, and update Zoning Ordinances related to the sale of Tobacco Products within 300 feet of Schools and Playgrounds.

The motion was made by Commissioner Usry and seconded by Commissioner Sallee to support and recommend that the City Council update City Ordinances to ban the use of Tobacco Products on all City Properties, including the Westwood Golf Course and Park Parking Lots and update Zoning Ordinances related to the sale of Tobacco Products within 300 feet of Schools and Playgrounds. The vote was taken with the following results:

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

ITEM 5, being:

ANNUAL REPORT FROM THE PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT: PARKS, PARK DEVELOPMENT, PARK MAINTENANCE, RECREATION AND FACILITY MAINTENANCE DIVISIONS

Mr. Jason Olsen, Director of Parks and Recreation, highlighted the Parks and Recreation (P & R) Department and said the P & R Department includes Park Administration, Park Development, Recreation, Park Maintenance, Facility Maintenance, and Westwood Golf & Golf Maintenance. He said the Park Administrative Division is responsible for each division's department budget, capital projects, planning, and overall guidance. Mr. Olsen gave an overview of the Capital Projects, including Norman Forward Projects, which have been completed and are currently underway. He said the Administrative Division has three full-time employees and an \$831,450 million M&O budget funded by the General Fund.

Mr. Wade Thompson, Parks Manager, said the Park Maintenance Division has 32 full-time employees, Eight seasonal employees and maintains 68 park sites plus 37 Municipal locations (1,154 acres). He said the Division mows, trims, prunes, repairs irrigation, installs, and repairs playground equipment, and assists with

Special Events, including Norman Fourthfest, Winterfest on Main Street, International Festival, Medieval Fair, and many others. Mr. Thompson said the division has a \$4.5 million M&O budget funded by the General Fund.

Mr. Lance Harper, Facility & Construction Program Manager, said Facility Maintenance provides maintenance to all City buildings and facilities. He said the division completed several Capital Improvement Projects, including remodeling existing buildings, upgrading HVAC, and managing City projects versus hiring a general contractor, and making buildings more energy efficient, i.e., LED lighting throughout the City. Mr. Harper said the division has 11 full-time employees, including custodial, and operates on a \$1.7 million M&O budget funded by the General Fund.

Mr. Mitchell Richardson, Recreation Manager, said the Recreation Division has 13 full-time employees and Thirty-seven permanent part-time employees, and includes six recreation centers (12th Avenue, Irving, Whittier, and Little Axe Recreation Centers, the YFAC, and the Adult Wellness and Education (AWE) Center (operated by Healthy Living). The Recreation Division offers a variety of programs, including summer and after-school programs. It manages the Youth Basketball, Youth Volleyball, and Westwood Tennis programs and coordinates many special events such as Norman Fourthfest, Daddy Daughter Dance, Mother-Son Dance, and many more. Mr. Richardson said the division has a \$1.9 million M&O budget funded by the General Fund.

Mr. Olsen said Westwood has 10 full-time and 100 seasonal employees and includes an 18-hole Professional Golf Course, Tennis Complex, and Swimming Complex. He highlighted the amenities for each and said Westwood is a \$2.4 million Special Revenue operation. Mr. Olsen highlighted the amenities at the YFAC, stating that the YFAC will host many local sports leagues, clubs, swimming meets, and regional and national sporting events. He said the YFAC has a \$1.2 million special revenue operation.

Mr. Olsen highlighted the Park Development Division, stating it coordinates construction projects in the park system along with the supervision of the Urban Forestry program. He said there are three full-time employees, and the division oversees the Parkland Dedication Ordinance and Park Development Ordinance and coordinates master plans for parks. Mr. Olsen said the division has a \$260,000 M&O budget funded by the General Fund.

The Board acknowledged the presentation.

ITEM 6, being:

NORMAN FORWARD UPDATE

Mr. Jason Olsen, Director of Parks and Recreation, said the new playground equipment has been delivered, and the installation has begun for William Morgan Park. He said we would keep the old swingset and install new boulder climbing-style play features, including the old climbing feature that used to be in Andrews Park by the old playground. A new shade structure will be installed, and we will replace the park furniture. The project should be completed in 3-4 months; then, we will move on to renovating the playground at Northeast Lions Park this fiscal year. Depending on the available budget, we will look at one additional renovation in early 2025 at either Springbrook or Kiwanis Parks. Mr. Olsen said the NF Saxon Park Ad-hoc Committee met in December to review the project's 95% plans and cost estimate based on the feedback received at the previous committee meetings. Construction is set to begin in Spring 2025.

ITEM 7, being:

DIVISIONAL UPDATE

Mr. Mitchell Richardson, Recreation Manager, said the Daddy Daughter Dance is scheduled for February 1, 2025, at the Young Family Athletic Facility (YFAC). Dads and Daughters can dance the night away with music and fun from a live DJ. There are three dance times to choose from: The Sensory-friendly dance at 2:00 pm, the Pink dance at 4:30 pm, and the Blue dance at 7:00 pm. Snacks, refreshments, and fun are included in your ticket price! The YFAC Youth Basketball League for boys and girls in Pre-K through 8th grade starts on January 6, 2025, and over 1,600 kids have signed up. The league will include an 8-game season, & both pre-season and post-season tournaments. The MLK Clean Up Day is scheduled for January 20, 2025, & the Parks & Recreation Department has invited the community to come together to honor MLK's legacy and contribute to the cleanliness of neighborhood and community parks across Norman.

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

Chair Sheriff said RDG will present the AIM Norman Comprehensive Park Master Plan at a Council Study Session on January 7, 2025, and invited the Board to attend. Staff said this will be the first of several AIM Comprehensive Plans presented to the Council and will send a calendar invite to the Board so they can get it on their schedule!

Mr. Jason Olsen, Director of Parks and Recreation, said Ms. Eileen Grubbs with the American Legion. Post 88 approached him regarding the Wreaths Across America (WAA) Mobile Education Exhibit (MEE). He said the WAA MEE is a rolling interactive museum that shares the organization's mission to remember the fallen, honor those who serve, and teach the next generation the value of freedom. Mr. Olsen said Ms. Grubbs is working with WAA to get the MEE to come to Norman around Memorial Day and will bring back more information to the Board once a date has been secured.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Sheriff adjourned the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Passed and approved this 6th of March 2025


Sherrel Sheriff, Chair

