

Norman Board of Parks Commissioners  
October 5, 2023

The Norman Board of Parks Commissioners of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met on the 5th day of October 2023 at 5:32 p.m., and notice and agenda of the meeting were posted at 201 West Gray Street - 24 hours prior to the beginning of the meeting.

ROLL CALL

Present: Chair Wright and Commissioners Davison, Moxley, Ross, Sallee, Sheriff and Usry

Absent: Commissioners Isacksen and Salmond

City Officials

Present: James Briggs, Park Development Manager  
Bethany Grissom, Park Planner  
Lisa Krieg, CDBG/Grants Manager  
Wade Thompson, Facility and Park Manager  
Veronica Tracy, Recreation Manager  
Karla Sitton, Administrative Technician IV

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ITEM 1, being:

CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL, REJECTION, AMENDED AND/OR POSTPONEMENT OF MINUTES FROM AUGUST 3, 2023, PARK BOARD MEETING

Commissioner Sallee made the motion, and Commissioner Davison seconded to approve the August 3, 2023, Park Board minutes. The vote was taken with the following results:

YEAH: Chair Wright and Commissioners Davison, Moxley, Ross, Sallee, Sheriff and Usry

NAY: None

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ITEM 2, being:

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

Ms. Veronica Tracy, Recreation Manager, highlighted the previously approved Council actions pertaining to the Parks and Recreation Department.

The previously approved Council actions are as follows:

- Amendment No. Three to Contract K-1617-113, between the City and Half Associates in the amount of \$91,750 for additional design services for the Norman Forward Reaves Park Project;
- Amendment No. Five to Contract K-2021-97, between the City and GE Johnson Construction Company in the amount of \$333,876 for the construction management at-risk services for the YFAC;
- RFP-2324-64, between the City and Precision Construction and Contracting in the amount of \$208,817 for the Bentley Park Tennis and Pickleball Courts Project;
- Resolution R-2324-61, transferring \$254,250 from the Matoon Property Cleanup Project to Mold Remediation and Reconstruction account for Mold Remediation of Fire Stations #3 and #7;
- Amendment No. One to Contract K-2324-46, between the City and RDG Planning & Design, Inc., in the amount of \$311,540 for Professional Comprehensive Planning Services related to the Parks Recreation Trails Master Plan; and
- Contract K-2324-83, for purchase and sale agreement between the City and the Board of Cleveland County Commissioners for the sale of real property located at 718 N. Porter in Norman.

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ITEM 3, being:

FRIENDS OF TREES RECOGNITION TO GRANT RIEGER FROM THE TREE BOARD

Mr. Don Menzie, Chair of the Tree Board, introduced Mr. Grant Rieger to the Board and presented him with the recognition award for "Friends of Trees". He said Mr. Rieger completed an Eagle Scout Project at Ruby Grant Park last fall to include planting three loblolly pines and four shantung maple trees just north of the bathroom building

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on the west side of Ruby Grant Park (near the playground). Mr. Rieger said he arranged for Grissom Landscape Nursery to donate the trees & dig the holes and he helped City Staff plant the trees. He said the City provided the T-posts, straps, and TreeGator bags. Mr. Rieger thanked the City for allowing him this opportunity and Mr. Menzie for the recognition.

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ITEM 4, being:

**CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL, REJECTION, AMENDED AND/OR POSTPONEMENT OF LAND OR FEE IN LIEU OF PARK LAND FOR THE MONTE VISTA ESTATES PUD ADDITION**

Mr. James Briggs, Park Development Manager, said the Monte Vista Estates Addition PUD is located on the west side of 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE and south side of Tecumseh Road. He said this development is proposing 91 lots of R-1 type housing, requiring .596 acre of park land. Mr. Briggs said this development will yield \$6,825 in Neighborhood Park Development Fees and the same amount in Community Park Development Fees once all the building permits have been issued. He said the Developer has requested a Fee-in-Lieu of land decision for this project and the proposal appears to be a better option, as the addition is to be a gated community.

Mr. Briggs said there are two residential neighborhoods west and south of this proposed addition, which have park land in them. The Park Hill park site and associated green space is a private park land decision from years ago; while the Deerfield Addition is home to a large public park that has been developed and opened over 13 years. Mr. Briggs said the fees collected for this addition would be assigned to the Deerfield Park development account, since it is the closest public park that is within the same square miles as Monte Vista Estates PUD. He said the Deerfield Park funds collected over the years will one day be combined with the Norman Forward Neighborhood Park Improvement Project funds and when it is time to make upgrades to Deerfield Park, Staff will survey the surrounding residents to help guide what improvements they would like to be completed. Mr. Briggs said Staff recommends a fee-in-lieu of land decision for the Monte Vista Estates Addition PUD.

Commissioner Sheriff made the motion, and Commissioner Moxley seconded to approve a fee-in-lieu of land decision for the Monte Vista Estates Addition PUD.

YEAH: Chair Wright and Commissioners Davison, Moxley, Ross, Sallee, Sheriff and Usry

NAY: None

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ITEM 5, being:

**CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL, REJECTION, AMENDED AND/OR POSTPONEMENT OF LAND OR FEE IN LIEU OF PARK LAND FOR THE CRIMSON FLATS PUD ADDITION**

Mr. James Briggs, Park Development Manager, said the Crimson Flats PUD is located north of Imhoff Road and east of Oakhurst Avenue and contains 75 units of PUD multi-family residential zoning. He said when it develops there will be a total required park land dedication of .3319 acres. Mr. Briggs said this development would yield \$5,625 in Neighborhood Park Development fees and the same in Community Park Development fees once all the building permits have been issued. He said the Park Board previously reviewed this development in August, 2008 and at that time the proposed development was for this same number of units for senior living. Mr. Briggs said that plat has expired and this new plat (and new name) is for family housing, instead of senior living. He said this development is approximately ¼ mile south of the Oakhurst Park, which is a public park; and less than a mile from Woodcreek Park. Mr. Briggs said in 2008, a private park decision was made for the Crimson Creek PUD and Staff recommends that the Park Board renew their original decision for this development, the Crimson Flats PUD Addition.

Commissioner Sallee made the motion, and Commissioner Ross seconded to approve accept a private park land decision for the Crimson Flats PUD.

YEAH: Chair Wright and Commissioners Davison, Moxley, Ross, Sallee, Sheriff and Usry

NAY: None

ITEM 6, being:

ANNUAL PRESENTATION FROM HEALTHY LIVING

Ms. Claire Dowers-Nichols, Executive Director Healthy Living Norman, presented to the Board. She said the Adult Wellness and Education (AWE) will open in November; therefore, no financial information was provided to include Balance Sheet, Profit and Lost, and Annual Budget. She said Healthy Living Norman has had numerous community presentations and meetings with various stakeholders. Ms. Dowers-Nichols said she has been hiring staff and introduced Ms. Katherine Leidy, Branch Manager. She said Healthy Living staff has been recruiting members, founding members (three-year membership paid upfront for \$1,000) and corporate sponsors as well as other fundraising efforts.

Ms. Dowers-Nichols said the membership fees are \$35 for individuals per month; adult (same household) couples are \$60 per month; there will not be any enrollment fees and/or signed contracts and month-to-month memberships will be available. She said to date, 50 members have signed up at the AWE. Ms. Dowers-Nichols said both Renew Active (United Healthcare/Optum) and Silver Sneakers have confirmed they will accept AWE memberships on their insurance plans. She said there will be a sliding scale based on Federal Poverty Guidelines stating a local group is raising funds to assist those in need. Ms. Dowers-Nichols said the Young Family Foundation has graciously donated \$10,000 to fund one-year AWE memberships for those seniors who are *current* Senior Center users.

Ms. Dowers-Nichols said the AWE website is live and offers the capability for member(s) to sign-up. She said membership forms are also available at the current senior center and at the Parks and Recreation Department. Ms. Dowers-Nichols said Healthy Living Norman brochures have been printed and distributed at various places in Norman and the Healthy Living Norman Facebook page continues to provide program updates.

Ms. Dowers-Nichols highlighted the projected first year budget reflecting \$535,000 in revenues and \$527,000 in expenses. She said a LLC Advisory Board has been formed which includes five Norman residents and highlighted the 501(c)(3) Board Members and their leadership. She said she would be putting together a Membership Advisory Board soon to help with the day-to-day operations and programs at the new facility.

Staff said the opening dates for the AWE are as follows:

- ❖ VIP Preview Party will be the evening of November 9, 2023 and include Founding Members and Ad Hoc Members.
- ❖ Ribbon-Cutting will be on November 13, 2023 at 11:00 a.m. and include food trucks, demonstrations throughout building and facility tours.

Commissioner Sheriff asked whether meals will be served at the new facility or continue to be served at the current Senior Center and Ms. Dowers-Nichols said the meals will be served at the current facility until December 11<sup>th</sup> and then only prepared at the current facility, but brought to and served at the AWE. Ms. Veronica Tracy, Recreation Manager, said the current facility will remain open until January 1, 2024, and then the Mary Abbott House will begin using the facility, except for the kitchen and dining room areas.

The Board acknowledged the presentation.

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ITEM 7, being:

ANNUAL PRESENTATION FROM NORMAN YOUTH AND SOCCER ASSOCIATION

Mr. Chris Vinson, Board President, Norman Youth Soccer Association (NYSA), gave an annual presentation to the Board. A written report, including financial information, was provided to the Board before the meeting.

Mr. Vinson said NYSA currently has about 2,800 participants and offers three youth soccer leagues to include Recreational, Academy, and Competitive. He said 300 teams will play about 2,600 games in each of the Fall 2023 and Spring 2024 seasons. Mr. Vinson said NYSA annually issues approximately \$16,000 in recreational scholarships and \$150,000 in academy and competitive scholarships. He said NYSA hosts tournaments throughout the year as fundraising projects which help provide their teams the opportunity to compete in a local venue as well as provide tax revenue to the City of Norman via lodging, meals and other travel expenditures.

Mr. Vinson said the Norman Forward Griffin Park ribbon-cutting took place on September 16, and the event marked the completion of the project's final phase. He said the project added new soccer fields, renovated existing soccer fields, improved parking facilities and upgraded road infrastructure. He said Griffin Park is a special place in the Norman Community and the enhancements to the park will allow NYSA to offer exceptional recreation space as well as host larger tournaments.

The Board acknowledged the presentation.

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ITEM 8, being:

**ANNUAL PRESENTATION FROM THE PUBLIC ART COMMITTEE OF THE NORMAN ARTS COUNCIL**

Ms. Erinn Gavaghan, Executive Director, with the Norman Arts Council (NAC) gave an annual presentation to the Board and financial information was provided prior to the meeting. She highlighted the completed and future Norman Forward Art Project, stating that the public art for NF Projects is made possible through the Norman Forward 1% for Art Program. Ms. Gavaghan showed pictures depicting each of the art pieces, provided the artist's name and gave a brief description of the art, stating each was carefully thought out to compliment the park and/or building where it is, or will be placed to include:

- *Splash* installed at Westwood Swim Complex and dedicated on December 7, 2017;
- *Prairie Wind* installed at Norman Public Library East Branch and dedicated June 28, 2018;
- *Unbound* installed at Norman Public Library and dedicated on June 28, 2018;
- *Triptych* installed at Ruby Grant Park and dedicated December 4, 2020; and
- *In their Words* installed at Andrews Park and dedicated November 12, 2021

Ms. Gavaghan said future Norman Forward art projects include:

- *Elevate the Game* will be installed at the Young Family Athletic Facility (YFAC) and dedicated this fall;
- *Emergence* will be installed at the Adult Wellness and Education (AWE) Center in January/February, 2024;
- *Home Run Mechan* is scheduled to be installed soon at Reaves Park and dedicated in November, 2023; and
- *Windrose* will be installed at Griffin Park late March, 2024 and will be dedicated shortly after

Ms. Gavaghan said public art will be placed at the James Garner and Flood Street roundabout; however, it is too soon to announce any specifics, stating the piece has been selected, but the approval process is not complete. She showed the Board a map depicting the area where the art will go and said the proposed art will complement the area very well. Ms. Gavaghan said a mural titled "Circle of Inclusion", will soon be painted along the hallway in the City of Norman Development Center Building. She showed a picture of the proposed mural and said NAC is working to incentivize Norman businesses to install murals to promote art and inclusion within the community.

Ms. Gavaghan said Sound Trekking will be coming soon to Andrews Park and run through Fall, 2025. She said Sound Trekking is site-specific GPS-activated and completely guided by the user. Participants will download an app and wander the 20 acres of winding paths and surrounding trails, experiencing a world of music, spoken word and sound design created for the very spot where they stand in the park. She showed a map depicting the "secret" guide trail(s) through the park and encouraged everyone to check it out.

Ms. Gavaghan said NAC has identified art projects that need to be removed, repaired and replaced to include Samo Duckys in parks and bike racks throughout the City.

The Board acknowledged the report.

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ITEM 9, being:

**UPDATE REGARDING PUBLIC FIXTURE PERMITTING IN CITY PARKS**

Ms. Bethany Grissom, Park Planner, said Staff brought forth options regarding public fixture permitting in City Parks at the September Park Board meeting and the Board requested Staff to bring a draft permit application forward for review. She distributed a proposed draft application and said any individual or group that would like to donate and/or dedicate amenities and plaques in City Parks would need to submit the application and obtain approval to include scout projects, the Adopt-A-Park program and/or install public outreach fixtures.

Ms. Grissom asked the Board if they had any questions or suggestions. Commissioner Usry asked if Staff talked to legal about the draft application and process and Ms. Grissom said yes. Commissioner Ross asked whether public art will have to submit an application and Staff said yes. Ms. Grissom said each applicant will need to submit a one year maintenance plan with the application and if they do not maintain what was installed, the City can remove their amenity/plaque/garden etc. Chair Wright asked how the public would be aware of this new permit requirement and Staff said applicants would be made aware of the process when contacting our office requesting to install something in a park. Commissioner Sheriff asked if this application would address food pantries and Ms. Grissom said yes. Ms. Grissom said staff will review the applications and the Parks and Recreation Director would approve/disapprove the requests, consulting the legal department if and when necessary. She said if a permit application is approved by Staff, it will be presented to the Park Board for approval as well.

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ITEM 10, being:

**NORMAN FORWARD UPDATE**

Ms. Veronica Tracy, Recreation Manager gave an update on the Norman Forward Projects.

**Norman Forward Halfway Celebration**

Ms. Tracy said City leaders and Norman community members celebrated the halfway point of the 15-year Norman Forward initiative on October 19<sup>th</sup> at the Adult Wellness and Education (AWE) Center. She said the city has completed 90% of the projects under the initiative since it was approved eight years ago. This initiative not only helps improve the lives of Norman citizens but also inspires them to keep doing more for the community.

**Young Family Athletic Center**

Ms. Tracy said construction continues and finishes are happening throughout the Young Family Athletic Center (YFAC). She said the Norman Regional Hospital space is coming along nicely as well. Ms. Tracy said the Winter league youth basketball will begin in January and a ribbon cutting is scheduled on February 19, 2024, so that Trae Young can take part in the celebration.

**Adult Wellness and Education Center**

Ms. Tracy said millwork is being installed and furniture is being delivered at the Adult Wellness and Education Center (AWE). She said the fitness equipment will be installed next week. A Temporary Occupancy has been issued so Healthy Living staff can start moving in and getting ready for the November 13<sup>th</sup> ribbon-cutting. Ms. Tracy said a VIP Fundraiser is scheduled for November 9<sup>th</sup> when those in attendance can purchase silent auction items and tour the facility.

**Griffin Park**

Mr. Wade Thompson, Parks Manager, said the Griffin Park ribbon cutting was on September 16<sup>th</sup> and the all the fields are ready for play. He said the High Meadows and 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue road construction began this week and will be finished in mid-November.

**Bentley Park**

Mr. Briggs said the tennis courts will be constructed soon and the shelter footing will be poured later this month. Additional work for this new neighborhood park include a new playground, walking trails, basketball half-court, picnic shelter and all associated park furniture and signage.

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ITEM 11, being:

**DIVISIONAL UPDATES**

Ms. Veronica Tracy, Recreation Manager, highlighted the October activities for recreation to include the Outdoor Movies Series showing of Hocus Pocus at Lions Park on October 13<sup>th</sup>. She said the Annual International Festival is October 14<sup>th</sup> at Reaves Park from 4:00 pm to 8:00 pm and said there will be a variety of international cuisines, live music and guest speakers. The @Legacy Concert Series continues on October 20<sup>th</sup> from 7:00 pm to 10:00 pm featuring Rainbows Are Free and Helen Kelter Skelter. Citizens are encouraged to dress up in the favorite Halloween costumes and enjoy the music, food trucks and drinks from local breweries. The Zombie Run is October 28<sup>th</sup> at Ruby Grant Park. The Off-Road 5k and 1-mile Fun Run will begin at 6:00 pm. and after the race, participants can enjoy snacks, fun and dancing at the picnic pavilion.

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Mr. Wade Thompson, Parks Manager, said Staff is helping assist with the Parks and Recreation Division events and continue to install the annual Christmas Lights throughout the City.

Mr. James Briggs, Park Development Manager, said Staff held a community meeting at Fall Lakeview Park on September 28<sup>th</sup> after the community contacted Staff stating the park was in need of repairs. He said Staff is preparing work plans for this neighborhood park to include new playground equipment because the current one is obsolete. Mr. Briggs said the contractor has begun work in Sutton Wilderness to improve the southern trail spur in the park that connects down to Griffin Park along its western edge by fixing low/washed out areas, adding drainage structures and topping the trail with decomposed granite (like the rest of the Sutton Wilderness trail). They will also be constructing a 12-car addition to the trailhead parking lot off 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue in the coming months, using project funding attained from the Recreational Trails Grant program operated by the State of Oklahoma Department of Tourism and Recreation (80% of the project costs).

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**MISCELLANEOUS DISCUSSION**

None.

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**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None.

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**ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Wright adjourned the meeting at 7:19 p.m.

Passed and approved this 21<sup>st</sup> of DECEMBER 2023

  
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Kristi D. Wright, Chair