



CITY OF NORMAN, OK
PUBLIC SAFETY OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE MEETING
Development Center, Room B, 225 N. Webster Ave., Norman, OK 73069
Thursday, August 13, 2026 at 3:00 PM

MINUTES

The Public Safety Oversight Committee of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met in Regular Session in Conference Room B at the Development Center, on Thursday, August 13, 2026 at 3:00 PM and notice of the agenda of the meeting was posted at the Norman Municipal Building at 201 West Gray, Development Center at 225 N. Webster, and on the City website at least 24 hours prior to the beginning of the meeting.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT

Chairman Linda Price
Committee member Kyle Hurley
Committee member Mark Emerson
Committee member Russell Rice
Committee member Ann Gallagher
Committee member Gregory Gilkey
Committee member Brittany Elliott
Committee Member Nicholas Heflin
Committee Member Rebecca Bean

ABSENT

None

OTHERS

Deputy Chief Jamie Shattuck, NPD
Major Gary Hopcus, NPD
Asst. Chief Joel Chesser, NFD
Asst. Chief Chad Roney, NFD
Clint Mercer, Director of Finance
Kim Coffman, Chief Accountant/Asst. Finance Director
Dannielle Risenhoover, Admin. Tech. IV
Jacob Huckabaa, Budget Analyst
Bill Scanlon, Citizen
Kyle Steele, City Council Member Ward 6

1. DISCUSSION REGARDING THE PURVIEW OF THE PUBLIC SAFETY OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

City Attorney Rick Knighton discussed what was within the purview of the Public Safety Oversight Committee. The ordinance was enacted by the electorate on May 13, 2008. Section

10 provided for the establishment of a Public Safety Oversight Committee with the purpose being to review the funds that were collected and spent pursuant to the Public Safety Tax, as well as submit recommendations to Norman City Council. Section 11 pertains to the members of the Public Safety Oversight Committee and section 12 expands on the Committee's duties.

"In the context of statutory interpretation, the two things that we as attorneys often look at is use of the term "shall" and "may," Knighton said. "If a statute uses the term "shall," it's mandatory. It is telling you, 'This is a mandatory duty.' You don't really have any discretion regarding whether to do it or not do it. And when a statute uses the term "may," it means it's permissive, which means you've got discretion to do it or you cannot do it."

Knighton continued, "When you are looking at section 12, the purposes of the Citizens' Oversight Committee, the first part says, 'Citizens' Public Oversight Committee shall review the expenditures and revenue collected pursuant to this ordinance to determine if such funds are expended for the purposes specified in the ordinance; so, that is a mandatory obligation. That is something the Committee has to do. It goes on toward the end and says the Committee may review and make recommendations on such other issues related to public safety as may be assigned by City Council. The City Council does have the ability to assign the Committee issues related to public safety that aren't necessarily related to the PSST fund expenditure, but the committee has discretion as to whether to make those recommendations or not. On this particular one, I know some of the difficulties have to do with the issue of funding. How would you fund those additional (firefighter and police) positions? Currently, the budget really doesn't provide for sixteen additional firefighters, eight additional police officers, unless you make cuts in other areas. However, that number was assigned, and you guys don't really have that information to be able to make an evaluation of how you go about doing that - whether it's appropriate or not. I thought the recommendations you guys did give to Council were pretty consistent with the information you had. You don't have the budget numbers; you are not part of the budget process. That really is an issue between the city manager and his proposed budget that Council reviews every year."

A concern regarding appropriate and inappropriate dialog between Council Members and Committee Members (during meetings) was brought to Knighton's attention. "A Council Member in this meeting is just another citizen. I understand they've got influence based on their position as a council member, but when they're attending this meeting, they're just another citizen," Knighton said. It was determined that if inappropriate dialog occurs, someone from the Committee should call for "point of order". "We did talk a little bit about that (at the City Council retreat) from the perspective of the chair having the ability to shut that down, if they think something's inappropriate," Knighton said. "There is some information about that in our handbook, and we have been encouraging our Council Members: 'Again, you can come, you can listen.'"

MINUTES

2. CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL, REJECTION, AMENDMENT, POSTPONEMENT, AND/OR DISCUSSION OF MINUTES FROM JULY 9, 2026

Member Rice moved to approve the July 9, 2026, Public Safety Sales Tax (PSST) Oversight Committee minutes which were duly seconded by Member Gilkey. The motion passed unanimously.

Items submitted for the record:

Citizens Public Safety Committee Minutes from July 9, 2026.

REPORTS

3. CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL, REJECTION, AMENDMENT, POSTPONEMENT AND/OR DISCUSSION OF FINANCIAL REPORTS

Kim Coffman gave the report. The last school resource officer (SRO) payment for fiscal year 2026 was received from Norman Public Schools. Fiscal year 2027 SRO invoices will start being billed in September and will show a 2% increase over the prior year.

"I am kind of hoping that they are going to have some negotiations. I think the city manager mentioned at one point that they might look at negotiating a different contract, but I haven't heard anything else about that. So, I am going to just bill the two percent increase over last year, as is in the current contract," Coffman said.

No subsidy is required from the general fund or capital fund to keep the Public Safety Sales Tax Fund (PSST) positive for the current fiscal year.

The budgeted target for expenditures in each division is approximately eight percent; however, the Fleet division has used about thirty percent of their budget because they made an upfront payment in July for an annual computer maintenance contract. The Patrol division is 16.47% over the eight percent budget target due to overtime, the SRO division is 41.7% over the budget target because of overtime, and Criminal Investigations is 142% over the budgeted target. "They did have an officer retire in July, so they had a termination payout," Coffman said. "That's what caused that overage." Emergency Communications is 32.7% over the target due to overtime, and Fire Suppression salaries in the PSST Fund are 59% over the budget target due to overtime and uniform purchases.

Member Elliott presented the question, "If we're fully staffed, would that diminish overtime?" Kim Coffman agreed with Deputy Police Chief Jamie Shattuck and Major Gary Hopcus when she replied, "People have raised that point multiple times, and it just doesn't work with public safety." It was noted that hiring more staff does not always directly reduce overtime in public safety due to the unpredictable nature of call-outs, court appearances, and required training.

An interfund transfer was made from the PSST Fund to the Risk Management Fund in the amount of \$26,985. This was to pay for health insurance costs associated with PSST employees that use the City provided health insurance. "The portion for the PSST Fund for the full year is \$323,816 and that'll be \$26,895 each month," Coffman said. "Then going forward, because that's obviously not sustainable, we're increasing the insurance premiums to better fund our healthcare claims."

The only capital expense for the month was by the Fire Department. The expense was \$7,463 and it went towards the replacement of two F-450 brush pumpers.

Items submitted for the record:
Financial Reports

DISCUSSION ITEMS

4. MONTHLY UPDATES

a) FIRE DEPARTMENT UPDATES

Deputy Chief Joel Chesser and Assistant Chief Chad Roney collaborated on the update. Fire Stations 8 and 9 are using smaller, more cost-efficient apparatuses/brush pumpers for non-fire related calls to reduce wear on the more expensive fire engines. This has resulted in significant operating cost savings. Station 8 engine costs dropped from \$2.40/mile in 2025 to \$.88/mile year-to-date in 2026. Station 8 brush pumper costs dropped from \$1.33/mile in 2025 to \$.85/mile in 2026. Chesser gave additional cost savings examples from this program and said, "You can see that there's a significant reduction on the cost. That money doesn't go back into the Fire Department budget; that money goes back to Fleet, but what we're accomplishing here is a symbiotic relationship. We want our equipment to last longer and help the City out (financially). I think the data is starting to show that it's working." Three new, larger F-450 brush units are being built to better support this modified medical response system.

The Ladder One replacement is expected to arrive in January 2027, with the current unit moved to reserve status. According to Roney, this should positively impact the City's ISO rating. Land acquisition for the new Fire Station 5 is also in progress.

A January 2027 Fire Academy is planned with the goal of filling seven firefighter vacancies.

b) POLICE DEPARTMENT UPDATES

Deputy Chief Jamie Shattuck introduced Major Gary Hopcus who will be staffing the PSST Meeting in the future. Major Hopcus stated that the Police Department has 182 commissioned officers with 184 authorized positions. There are 12 cadets in the current police academy. They have a graduation date planned for October 2026.

Police Department community outreach events include Touch-A-Truck scheduled for August 22nd, August 29th, and September 18th. National Night Out will be held on October 5th at Legacy Park in Norman.

c) DISPATCH UPDATES

Major Gary Hopcus gave the update. A project to encrypt all public safety radios is in progress. The department is also exploring an Artificial Intelligence (AI) call triage system with the City's Information Technology Department to help manage staffing loads. The department is down four personnel and conducting interviews. The next Dispatch academy will start October 9th or 12th.

d) EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS OPERATIONS CENTER (ECOC) UPDATES

No update was given.

5. DISCUSSION OF PUBLIC SAFETY STUDY AND IMPLEMENTATION

Applications are being accepted for the Public Safety Study Ad Hoc Committee. On August 18 there will be a study session reviewing the purview and duties of this committee. The application

process closes on August 19th. This Committee will be represented by nine members who will be appointed by the City Council on August 25th.

6. ESTABLISH TOPICS FOR THE SEPTEMBER 10, 2026 MEETING

The Committee requested that Fleet Program Manager, Mike White, be invited to the September 10 meeting for a question-and-answer session regarding fleet expenses and cost savings.

A draft of the FY26 Citizens Public Safety Sales Tax Oversight Committee Annual Report will be prepared for the September meeting.

MISCELLANEOUS COMMENTS

Becca Bean was welcomed as the new Ward 4 Committee member.

The “Dog Is My Co-Pilot” program recently transported 71 City of Norman shelter animals to the Pacific Northwest for adoption. Citizen Bill Scanlon said, “I think that our (City of Norman) shelter has contributed just under 1,000 (dogs) over the last several years (to this program). This is a big deal.”

ADJOURNMENT

Member Rice made a motion to adjourn the meeting which was duly seconded by Member Hurley. The motion passed unanimously.



Linda Price, Chair
Citizens Public Safety Oversight Committee

