CITY OF NORMAN, OK
CITY COUNCIL FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING

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

Thursday, August 20, 2026 at 5:00 PM

MINUTES

The City Council Finance Committee of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met in Regular Session in the Executive Conference Room in the Municipal Building, on Thursday, August 20, 2026 at 5:00 PM, and notice of the agenda of the meeting was posted at the Norman 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

PRESENT
Chair - Councilmember Ward 7 Kimberly Blodgett
Councilmember Ward 1 David Gandesbery
Councilmember Ward 3 Robert Bruce
Councilmember Ward 4 Helen Grant
Councilmember Ward 2 Jacy Deck

ABSENT
None

OTHERS
Councilmember Ward 8 Scott Dixon
Councilmember Ward 6 Kyle Steele
Mayor Stephen Holman
Clint Mercer, Director of Finance
Kim Coffman, Chief Accountant/Asst. Finance Director
Dannielle Risenhoover, Admin. Tech IV
James Briggs, Park Development Manager
Jason Olsen, Director of Public Works
Jane Hudson, Director of Planning
Jamie Vaugh, Treasury Support Supervisor
Darrel Pyle, City Manager
Jamie Meyer, City Clerk

AGENDA ITEMS

1. DISCUSSION REGARDING NORMAN FORWARD EXCESS FUNDS AND RANKING OF PROJECTS.

Director of Parks and Recreation, Jason Olsen, led the discussion. The Norman Forward program was initially budgeted at about $150 million and revised to about $176 million. Current project estimates total about $171 million, with debt service included.

Sales tax collections for Norman Forward end in December 2030 (not aligned to fiscal year end). Available funds mentioned include about $3.5 million currently on hand, with a projected excess of approximately $11 million by program end. The excess funds are said to be driven by improved sales tax collections and interest on unspent funds. If no further spending occurred, the projected fund balance would be about $22.7 million; with approximately $11.6 million in remaining projects, the ending excess is about $11 million.

The following Norman Forward large projects are complete: Young Family Athletic Center (YFAC), Adult Wellness & Education Center, Griffin Park, and Reaves Park. Saxon Park is not complete, and its designated funds are still accruing interest.

The following additional park projects have been identified, and staff recommend allocating approximately $11 million in excess funds to these improvements:

- Andrews Park Design Work (Pond & Restroom)
- Andrews Park Pond/Stormwater Construction
- Andrews Park Restroom Building
- Kids Space at Reaves Park
- Adult Wellness and Education Gym Expansion
- Griffin Park Playground
- Griffin Park Restroom Building
- Reaves Park Miracle Field
- YFAC Weight Room
- Park Signage Package

The Norman Forward Citizens' Financial Oversight Board, the Park Commission and the Parks and Recreation Department have identified and prioritized these additional park projects. The list represents shared priorities and is not in a strict sequence.

Discussion over these projects included the following points:

Andrews Park Improvements

- Scope includes pond improvements (expanding downtown stormwater capacity), a restroom building, and stormwater drainage, focused within a defined park zone. New courts are planned with cooler surface colors to improve usability.
- Requires a full-park survey and engineering (about $300,000), followed by construction drawings to refine costs; total project estimate about $2.7 million.
- It is impractical to install a restroom before completing pond design, as placement may conflict with future phases.

- Conclusion: Initiate survey and engineering to enable accurate bids and cost control, then proceed to construction drawings before permanent restroom installation.

Kid Space Playground and TSET Grant

- Kids Space is the most popular playground; renovation aims for durability over 30 years with a community-built approach.
- A TSET grant of $600,000 is near approval and requires a 20% match; the city anticipates about $400,000 additional funding to complete the area.
- Target readiness by spring to align with the Medieval Fair.
- Conclusion: With grant and match secured, Kids Space renovation proceeds with community involvement.

Adult Wellness & Education Center Multipurpose Gym Expansion

- Originally planned but cut due to funding limits; current estimate is about $2.5 million.
- Multipurpose floor (not hardwood) supports basketball, pickleball, volleyball, and events; includes an upper walking track and supports future weight room expansion.
- The center has nearly 5,000 members, with demand exceeding capacity.
- Conclusion: Expansion addresses high usage and enhances program flexibility and community benefit.

Griffin Park Playground and Restroom Building

- Proposed playground similar to Ruby Grant Park; add a public restroom to serve playground, dog park, disc golf, and Sutton Wilderness users.
- The City's contract with the State of Oklahoma limits construction within Sutton Wilderness; restroom placement near the northern edge would provide access while respecting constraints.
- Conclusion: Combined amenities are expected to have high community impact.

Reaves Park Miracle Field

- Miracle Field serves athletes of all abilities with a poured surface for accessibility; it was cut from the original program and is being reintroduced, estimated around $2 million total.
- The project is considered a community-built asset that is expected to deliver quick, positive impacts with a regional draw and economic benefits.
- A suggested location for this field was on University of Oklahoma property, which may require land acquisition at market price; a partnership with OU could provide public relations benefits. There is a City owned field available at Reaves Park that could be renovated for this project.
- Conclusion: Advanced planning and partnerships needed to create this inclusive facility.

Young Family Athletic Center (YFAC) Weight Room Addition

- YFAC has strong rentals but weak memberships (200–300) due to the lack of general workout space; adding a weight room is expected to increase membership and fee revenue.
- Operating trajectory: Year 1 loss ~$400,000; Year 2 loss ~$250,000; near break-even currently. The goal is financial independence to reduce reliance on the general fund.
- Cost-sharing with the Young family is anticipated; if city-funded alone, cost-saving measures (e.g., removing a proposed second story) may be considered.
- Conclusion: The weight room is a fiscally strategic investment to stabilize operations and enhance membership growth.

Park Signage

- Systemwide signage overhaul to replace outdated signs and update rules for enforceability across approximately 60–70 parks, phased over time.
- Neighborhood parks: front signage with park name, back signage with rules.
- Priorities include Ruby Grant, Saxon Park, and Griffin Park; Andrews Park deferred until master planning advances.
- Estimated cost is $500,000–$550,000.
- Conclusion: Implement a phased signage upgrade to improve navigation and compliance.

Olsen stated, "We just want to make sure that our priorities are shared with you. Once we know that you're okay with these priorities, we'll go back to our design partners and ask for a cost estimate." Several City Council Members showed support for the priority project list.

2. DISCUSSION REGARDING MONTHLY REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE REPORTS.

Finance Director Clint Mercer gave the report. The July sales tax revenue is up 13.35% from the prior year and July use tax is up 27.72% from the prior year. The Room Tax is up 16.6% from the prior year. The August sales tax is up 7.82% from 2025. The University of Oklahoma opened a new dorm that brought in $243,000 in water meter connection fees. The August sales tax is up 7.82% from 2025.

July expenditures totaled approximately $11.2 million, slightly below projections and below last July; however, due to the July 4th storm - additional expenses are coming. Mercer said, "We will use up the $1.7 million that was the budgeted 1% reserve. We've already allocated that for the storm debris clean-up." Mercer added that there is another $494,000 that will be coming out of the General Fund to also cover storm clean-up. Overtime costs also increased due to the storm event.

"Every department with a pickup truck, or a backhoe, or any kind of tractor was fully engaged beginning the early morning hours of July 5th. We had crews working seven days a week for a couple of weeks to make sure roads were open while the rest of the recovery was shaping up," City Manager Darrel Pyle said. "We don't have the luxury of waiting until the next Council

meeting to say, 'Council is it okay if we do this?'; so, we'll be bringing you a ratification action request on the next agenda."

Pyle continued, "Once all the bills are paid and all the revenue's in, our recommendation to Council will be, 'let's stick that reserve back'. We really have too much fiscal year ahead of us not to have that reserve replenished as soon as possible." Mercer added, "We still have a few franchise fees coming in for August; we've estimated that's about $367,000 above budget. That can be banked right back to the reserve."

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) reimbursement thresholds are likely met due to the July 4th storms, but reimbursement typically takes 1–2 years. Debris collection is expected to be completed by September 25, with at least a second pass.

Prior to the July 4th windstorm, it was the City Manager's desire to bring to City Council a staffing recommendation to add two firefighter positions to fully man the City's second ladder truck. "We feel confident that shortly we'll have the reserve reestablished and can bring you some recommendations," Pyle said. Other needs identified were a new roof for the Norman Investigations Center at an estimated cost of $600,000 and a sidewalk at Robin Hill.

Changes have been made to health insurance premiums that should go into effect by September, Pyle said. There are multiple health insurance cost-containment strategies underway. The City's self-insured model is currently about $3 million cheaper than fully insured options and remains the preferable option at the present time.

Items submitted for the record:
Monthly Financial Reports

ADJOURNMENT
Chair Blodgett adjourned the meeting at approximately 6:00 PM.

ATTEST:

City Clerk

CITY OF NORMAN CORPORATE SEAL OKLAHOMA

Stephen Tyler Holman, Mayor