



CITY OF NORMAN, OK
WARD 5 CANDIDATE SELECTION COMMITTEE
Development Center, 225 North Webster, Conference Room C, Norman,
OK 73069
Thursday, August 28, 2025 at 4:00 PM

MINUTES

The Ward 5 Candidate Selection Committee Meeting of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met in Regular Session in Conference Room C in the Development Center, on Thursday, August 28, 2025, at 4:00 PM, and notice of the agenda of the meeting was posted at the Norman Municipal Building at 201 West Gray, the Development Center at 225 N. Webster and on the City website at least 48 hours prior to the beginning of the meeting.

It is the policy of the City of Norman that no person or groups of persons shall on the grounds of race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, age, place of birth, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, familial status, marital status, including marriage to a person of the same sex, disability, relation, or genetic information, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise subjected to discrimination in employment activities or in all programs, services, or activities administered by the City, its recipients, sub-recipients, and contractors. In the event of any comments, complaints, modifications, accommodations, alternative formats, and auxiliary aids and services regarding accessibility or inclusion, please call 405-366-5424, Relay Service: 711. To better serve you, five (5) business days' advance notice is preferred.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Evans called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Heidi Smith
Randy Carter
John Griego
Aysha Prather
Chairman Shavonne Evans

MEMBERS ABSENT:

None

OTHERS PRESENT:

Kathryn Walker, Assistant City Attorney
Brenda Hall, City Clerk
Jamie Meyer, Deputy City Clerk

AGENDA ITEMS

1. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE AUGUST 25, 2025, MEETING.

Member Carter moved that the minutes be approved, which the motion was duly seconded by Member Prather.

Items submitted for the record

1. Ward 5 Candidate Selection Committee minutes of August 25, 2025

YEAS: Members Heidi Smith, Randy Carter, Aysha Prather, John Griego, and Chairman Shavonne Evans

NAYES: None

The Minutes were approved.

2. INTERVIEWS WITH INTERIM WARD 5 CANDIDATES:

Dianna Hutzel

Ben Fenwick

Brandon Clark

Brandon Nofire

Committee members interviewed the candidates by asking the questions listed below in a round table environment.

1. We've all reviewed your application and resume, but more informally, can you tell us a little about yourself?
2. What motivated you to apply for this appointment, and why do you want to serve Ward 5 at this time?
3. What professional, personal, or community experiences do you feel best prepare you to serve as a contributing member of City Council?
4. Have you attended City Council meetings, board and commission meetings, or Ward meetings?
5. What do you know about the role of the City Council in Norman?
6. In your view, what are the 3 most important issues facing Ward 5? What other issues do you see in Ward 5? How should these issues be addressed by the City?
7. What are the most important issue(s) facing the City of Norman as a whole?
8. Residents may ask you to vote a specific way on an issue because of how that decision impacts them in the moment. The greater good of the entire city requires consideration of long-term implications and perhaps making a different decision. How would you balance the interests of Ward 5 with the interests of the City as a whole?
9. The City Manager, City Attorney and the City Auditor are the only employees of the City Council. How would you develop and maintain an effective and productive relationship with the City Manager? The City Attorney? The City Auditor?

Item 2, continued

10. How do you think the City Council should interact with other staff?
11. City Council requires a significant time commitment, including at least 5 meetings a month, as well as hours reading in preparation for meetings, communication with constituents, and representing the City at various events. Typically, this can require attending daytime, evening and sometimes weekend meetings. Are you available to take on additional responsibilities beyond the regular business meetings? How will you balance Council responsibilities with your other professional and personal obligations?
12. How do you view the relationship between OU and the City?
13. Civility and mutual accountability are important for productive relationships. How would you ensure that your actions promote civility and mutual accountability?
14. What is your approach to handling controversial and complicated issues?
15. Give an example of a contentious issue you have helped resolve, and explain how you approached conflict resolution, consensus-building, or problem-solving.
16. How will you communicate with your constituents?
17. How would you address and combat misinformation in the community?
18. Do you intend to run for the Ward 5 seat in February?
19. If you received a \$1 million grant to use for the City any way you wanted, what would you do with it and why?
20. What do you believe the Council's response should be to the turnpike issue?
21. What are your thoughts about tax increment financing (TIF) in general and the Arena Project specifically?
22. What would you do differently, if anything to address the housing crisis, including homelessness, then the approach the current council has taken?
23. How will you balance the needs and wishes of the rural portions of Ward 5 with the needs and wishes of the more urban portions of Ward 5?
24. Final Question – Is there anything else you would like the Panel to know regarding your application or your interest in serving Ward 5? Any questions?

All candidates participated in the interviews.

3. DISCUSSION OF CANDIDATES AND MOTION TO RECOMMEND A CANDIDATE FOR CITY COUNCIL CONSIDERATION.

The Committee discussed the strong/weak points for each of the applicants. Chairman Evans said she was impressed with all four of the finalists. She said all were sincere, service-minded and community-oriented and the Committee Members concurred.

Member Prather moved that Brandon Nofire be approved for the Ward 5 Interim Council seat and his name be submitted to City Council for formal consideration, which motion was duly seconded by Member Smith; and the question being upon approving Brandon Nofire for the Ward 5 Interim Council seat and upon the subsequent submission, a vote was taken with the following result:

Item 3, continued

YEAS: Members Heidi Smith, Randy Carter, Aysha Prather, John Griego, and Chairman Shavonne Evans

NAYES: None

Chairman Evans declared the motion carried and Brandon Nofire as the Ward 5 Interim Council seat nomination approved; and his name will be submitted to City Council for formal consideration.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:47 p.m.