



CITY OF NORMAN, OK CITY COUNCIL BUSINESS & COMMUNITY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE MEETING

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

Thursday, August 01, 2024 at 4:00 PM

MINUTES

The City Council Business & Community Affairs Committee of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met in Regular Session in the Executive Conference Room on the 1st day of August, 2024, at 4:00 p.m. and notice of the agenda of the meeting were posted at the 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

Chairman Peacock calls meeting to order at 4:00 P.M

PRESENT:

Councilmember Ward 2 Matthew Peacock (Chair)
Councilmember Ward 4 Helen Grant
Councilmember Ward 8 Scott Dixon

ABSENT:

Councilmember Ward 5 Michael Nash
Councilmember Ward 6 Joshua Hinkle

OTHERS PRESENT:

Ms. Beth Muckala, Assistant City Attorney III
Mr. Chris Mattingly, Director of Utilities
Mr. Jason Olsen, Director of Parks and Recreations
Mr. Scott Sturtz, Interim Director of Public Works
Ms. Shaakira Calnick, Internal Auditor
Ms. Sara Kaplan, Business and Community Relations
Ms. Shannon Stevenson, Assistant City Manager
Ms. Michele Loudonback, Environmental and Sustainability Manager
Mr. Scott Martin, Norman Chamber President
Mr. Dan Schemm, President and CEO Visit Norman
Ms. Sandra Simeroth, Administrative Technician. IV

1. UPDATE ON THE 820 SOLAR INITIATIVE PROGRAM.

Ms. Michele Loudenback, Environmental and Sustainability Manager, presented the 820 Solar Initiative Program. She said solar is sustainable, renewable and plentiful energy. Energy cost and bills continue to rise, while solar can help reduce cost and avoid rolling black-outs. Council has already agreed with the Mayor's Climate Protection Agreement. Tax credits and other benefits are available for all participants.

Solar Education and Group Purchasing Program will educate all of Norman residents on what solar is and why it is important and how to reduce energy uses at home or at work. The City of Norman has already surpassed Oklahoma City contacts of interest list. The contractor is going to be giving the City big discounts because they have large resources. The only requirement for the City was to promote and be part of the coalition to receive these discounts.

Some primary benefits for residents are zero down payment options and 30% Federal Tax Credits. The commercial benefits include pricing five to eight year returns with 30 years of energy. Nonprofit/Municipal benefits include Inflation Reduction Act Incentives (\$369B) and 30% Direct Pay for Tax Exempt status.

820 is going to gift the City a Community Project where Council can meet with the community members and decide what that looks like. Norman has 589.74 contracts signed and have 433 more submissions, 36 won deals and seven installed. The City is on the home stretch and the deadlines for contracts are August 31, 2024. Deadlines for residential contracting is October 31, 2024, and all contracting deadlines is set for December 31, 2024. They hope to have all installation done by April 30, 2025.

Chairman Peacock said he would like to see the City of Norman get involved in this project. He would like to see shade structures installed for vehicles for protection at Fleet Maintenance and solar panels installed on top of them.

Councilmember Grant said she would like to know more about the low income housing and the 75-Unit Affordable Housing Project and is there any connection there.

Ms. Loudenback said this is one of the projects being discussed during the upcoming coalition meeting.

Councilmember Grant asked if apartment complexes are interested in using Solar.

Ms. Loudenback said due to many complexing finance issues with apartments it is harder to get them interested in solar.

Councilmember Peacock said it may have to do with the metering and getting landlords permissions. Is there any campaign information Council needs to push out or share?

Ms. Loudenback said there are many and Staff will be sharing several posts on social media and if Council can also share these post that would be most beneficial.

2. REPORT ON SPECIAL EVENTS ATTENDANCE AND VISITORS.

Mr. Jason Olsen, Director of Parks and Recreation, said in June Staff provided its first report and is coming back again with updated information on how many people are visiting Norman that are not normally here. He said Staff is seeing around 2.8 million people a month that normally do not hang out in Norman.

New Placer data showed the attendance at the Medieval fair for Saturday and Sunday was right at 91,000 for the two-day total. The City rearranged Reaves Park in order to host more festivals and to continue softball games and tournaments there. Earth Day had 2,000 in attendance. Norman Music Festival started on Friday and had a dip in attendance due to severe weather cutting a day off their schedule. The attendance on Friday was 22,600. The Pride Festival in Andrews Park had 2,600 people, Mayfair on Campus Corner had 11,612 in attendance. Jazz in June at Andrews Park had 2,000 on Friday night and 3,300 on Saturday. Juneteenth festival the City had 2300 people attend. This is the second year for the City of Norman to put on this event without partners. The 4th of July celebration had 8,300 in attendance, not counting the people outside of the park, and there was also a rain delay for the show.

Young Family Athletic Center (YFAC) did not open full time until February and the numbers keep going up, the YFAC to date shows 250,000 people that have attended the center and Westwood had over a 110,000 people attending this season. The YFAC is driving up sales up and down 24th Ave. N.W. The Shopping district at the University North Park (UNP) has most of the visitors and then Campus Corner and Sooner Mall are seeing a larger amount of people visiting from people staying here in Norman.

Mr. Dan Schemm, President and CEO of Visit Norman, said this is Visit Norman's lodging data is from the App called Key Data and this data is for the month of June. The average Hotel stay value is up, but the average length of stay is down, however, the City's lodging pacing is going up significantly. Heavily populated days are Thursday through Saturdays with Sundays and Mondays being the lowest. The hotel occupancy is up 6% over the City's prior year; average daily rate is up 6%, demand is up 6%, Hotel RevPAR is up 13%, and short term rentals occupancy is down a little.

Councilmember Grant asked if Mr. Schemm knew the reason why the short term rental is lower.

Chairman Peacock said the cost relationship has swapped an Air B&B use to be the cheaper option and that is not the case anymore. I think that market has cooled a little bit.

Mr. Schemm said he will have to do more research, but it is now more affordable to stay in hotels rather than renting a whole house. The hotel stay average is \$259.00 and the short term rentals is \$739.00 average and that also plays into the drop.

Mr. Olsen said Placer data also broke down the City's core parks. Griffin's in summer attendance is down, organizers are not trying to have games in 100-degree weather. Their busy season is Fall into late Spring. Reaves Park is getting a little more tournaments and their people are utilizing more hotels; heading over to the golf course and people are going out to eat. Westwood Aquatics attendees are going to stores before and after visits. YFAC visitors are staying multiple days, going to restaurants, and shopping before and after visiting.

Item 2, continued

Councilmember Grant said she sees Fadeaway Hoops on the report is that something that is happening regularly.

Mr. Olsen said they are a local Provider group out of Oklahoma City that puts together tournaments and they probably will be setting up more tournaments because they are local. They try to have tournaments between the big shoe tournaments like Nike and Adidas. In July YFAC hosted the first Corn Hole Event and allowed beer sales so Staff is curious to see the results on that event. The City will see more and different events as people get to use the YFAC. The City started with a lot of basketball and as time progresses the City should see more adult events happening.

Mr. Schemm said looking at The Lodging Pacing reports eight months prior and six months ahead Visit Norman is looking at what is being booked at hotels. The hotel average stay value on Tuesday was up 197%, then Visit Norman ran the report today and it is up 203% from historical stay value previously. The hotel value daily rate is up 155% and two days later it is up 159%: This is what gets the City the guest tax, which pays for Arts, Parks, and Visit Norman and the Sports Commission. The length of stay is up 2.1 days a lot of this is contributed to the SEC and doubling our freshman students with more parents staying.

Chairman Peacock asked how many tickets the college has given for away games this year vs last.

Mr. Schemm said he was not exactly sure but he estimates it was like 1,500 tickets per Big-12 game and they could give back unused tickets to sell here. Thinks SEC will be like 5,000 tickets and they cannot give those back. Looking at the schedule the end of the season may be a little soft for those weekends due to the fact the schools are not as large of a football program as others. The length of stay of visitors while here is longer and they are eating at the City's restaurants and shopping at our stores. Average spending for the month of June per visitor was \$116.00 per day.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 4:54 P.M.