



CITY OF NORMAN, OK
CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION
Municipal Building, Executive Conference Room, 201 West Gray, Norman,
OK 73069
Tuesday, January 06, 2026 at 5:30 PM

MINUTES

The City Council Study Session of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met in Regular Session in the Executive Conference Room in the Municipal Building, on Tuesday, January 06, 2026 at 5:30 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.

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CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Holman called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

PRESENT

Mayor Stephen Holman
Councilmember Ward 1 David Gandesbery
Councilmember Ward 2 Matthew Peacock
Councilmember Ward 3 Robert Bruce
Councilmember Ward 4 Helen Grant
Councilmember Ward 5 Brandon Nofire
Councilmember Ward 6 Joshua Hinkle
Councilmember Ward 7 Kimberly Blodgett
Councilmember Ward 8 Scott Dixon

OTHERS PRESENT

Mr. Darrel Pyle, City Manager
Ms. Tiffany Vrska, Chief Communications Officer
Ms. Shannon Stevenson, Assistant City Manager
Ms. Kathryn Walker, Assistant City Attorney
Mr. Anthony Purinton, Assistant City Attorney
Mr. Anthony Francisco, Finance Director
Mr. Chris Mattingly, Utilities Director
Mr. Jason Olsen, Director of Parks and Recreation
Ms. Brenda Hall, City Clerk
Ms. Jamie Meyer, Deputy City Clerk
Mr. Lee McWhorter, Norman Police Department
Mr. Jackson Lisle, Amber Integrated
Mr. Derrick Paus, FSB Architects and Engineers
Mr. Shawn Lorg, FSB Architects and Engineers

AGENDA ITEMS

1. PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION REGARDING THE RESULTS OF THE HOMELESS SHELTER SURVEY.

Presenter: Jackson Lisle, Amber Integrated

Mr. Lisle presented the results of a survey conducted among 339 registered voters in the City of Norman between December 1–3, 2025, noting a margin of error of just over 5%. He summarized key findings, including that homelessness is widely viewed as a serious issue in the community, with broad support for the concept of a homeless shelter across demographic and political lines.

The presentation highlighted limited public awareness regarding the current City-owned, contractor-operated shelter and its funding structure, as well as limited awareness of pressures on the City's General Fund. A majority of respondents expressed support for relocating the existing shelter and showed initial majority support for a proposed 20-year bond to construct a permanent shelter, though cost and tax concerns were identified as primary drivers of opposition.

Council asked questions regarding survey methodology, sampling, voter selection, confidence levels, and question wording. Discussion also addressed how survey data has historically been used to guide public education efforts related to prior bond initiatives. Council discussed the importance of additional public education regarding shelter capacity, costs, funding sources, and the broader shelter system, including distinctions between different service providers.

2. DISCUSSION REGARDING THE DESIGN, TIMELINE AND COST ESTIMATES FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A HOMELESS SHELTER.

Presenters: Mr. Derrick Paus and Mr. Shawn Lorg, FSB Architects and Engineers

Mr. Jason Olsen, Director of Parks and Recreation provided a brief update indicating that direction had been given to move away from a phased construction approach in favor of a single-phase design utilizing prefabricated metal buildings to reduce costs and construction time.

Mr. Paus and Mr. Lorg, FSB Architects and Engineers, presented the conceptual site plans, floor plans, and exterior renderings for a proposed permanent homeless shelter located on Reed Avenue. The presentation included discussion of site constraints, separation of uses, security considerations, landscaping, lighting, and neighborhood compatibility. The proposed design includes separate buildings for men's and women's dormitories, family units, and medical respite services, as well as indoor and outdoor kennel space.

Council discussed building capacity, accessibility, security features, operational considerations, maintenance expectations, and flexibility in design elements to manage costs if needed. Preliminary cost estimates were reviewed, including an all-in project cost of approximately \$8 million, which includes design, construction, contingencies, furnishings, and site improvements. Mr. Darrel Pyle, City Manager, explained that proceeds from the potential sale of the existing Gray Street shelter property would be applied toward debt service.

Council also discussed the anticipated election timeline for a potential bond measure and the importance of public education prior to any election.

3. CONTINUED DISCUSSION REGARDING POSSIBLE AMENDMENTS TO THE GUEST ROOM TAX ORDINANCE.

Presenters: Ms. Kathryn Walker, Assistant City Attorney; Mr. Jason Olsen, Director of Parks and Recreation.

Ms. Walker reviewed proposed amendments to the guest room tax ordinance, including clarifying applicability to recreational vehicle spaces rented on a short-term basis and a proposed increase in the tax rate from 8% to 10%. She explained the need for corresponding definitional changes and reviewed draft ballot language.

Council discussed potential allocation of revenues generated by the increase, including continued funding for tourism-related entities and increased funding for parks capital improvements. Additional discussion focused on whether a portion of the increased revenue could be used for other City priorities and how such language might be perceived by voters.

Mr. Olsen provided an overview of current and projected guest room tax revenue distributions and discussed potential uses of increased funding for parks, cultural facilities, beautification, and related capital needs.

Item 3, continued

Council discussed election timing, voter fatigue, and the possibility of separating ballot questions. Direction was provided for staff to proceed with drafting an ordinance and ballot language reflecting an April election for the tax rate increase and RV applicability, with further discussion to continue regarding any future amendments to allowable uses.

4. DISCUSSION REGARDING POTENTIAL CHARTER AMENDMENTS

Presenter: Ms. Kathryn Walker, Assistant City Attorney

Ms. Walker reviewed potential Charter amendments previously discussed by Council, including clarification of City Auditor provisions, possible adjustments to Council compensation, and modification of the start date of Council and Mayor terms to reduce the delay between election and swearing-in.

Council expressed general support for advancing the amendment related to the swearing-in timeline, noting it would not impact current terms and would improve governance continuity. Council discussed deferring consideration of compensation-related amendments to a later election due to timing, ballot complexity, and the non-urgent nature of the issue.

Direction was given for staff to proceed with preparing Charter amendment language related to the swearing-in date, and Internal Auditor for the April, 2026 Elections.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:47 p.m.

ATTEST:

City Clerk

Mayor