

CITY COUNCIL CONFERENCE MINUTES

February 22, 2022

The City Council of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met in a conference at 5:30 p.m. in the Municipal Building Executive Conference room on the 22nd day of February, 2022, and notice and agenda of the meeting were posted at the Municipal Building at 201 West Gray 24 hours prior to the beginning of the meeting.

PRESENT:	Councilmembers Foreman, Hall, Holman, Lynn, Peacock, Schueler, Studley, Tortorello, Mayor Clark
ABSENT:	None

Item 1, being:

CONTINUED DISCUSSION REGARDING WATER CONNECTION FEES.

Mr. Nathan Madenwald, Utilities Engineer, said the City has been working with Raftelis to review current connection fees. He said this was an opportunity to review everything regarding water and a rate increase is needed for Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI), disinfection, operations and maintenance, and pipe replacement.

Mr. Madenwald said the current water connection fee is \$1,000 (3/4 inch meter) and Raftelis is proposing three alternate options that include 1) augmentation of Lake Thunderbird - \$3,180, 2) purchasing water from Oklahoma City - \$2,010, and 3) digging more wells - \$2,150.

Norman's connection fees are the highest when compared to surrounding communities that include Newcastle; Edmond; Moore; Mustang; Blanchard; Oklahoma City; Yukon; Broken Arrow; Stillwater; Noble; Midwest City; Chickasha; and Lawton.

Councilmember Foreman suggested a \$500 increase.

Mayor Clark said an increase has to happen in the interest of fairness between business and residential rates. She said the City is going to ask residents for a 25% water rate increase and suggested connection fees be increased by 25% as well. She said it would be fair to require the same from developers. She is not comfortable asking voters to support a rate increase without asking everybody to support an increase and requesting the same percentage for businesses seems sensible.

There was consensus among Council to support a 25% increase along with a required review of connection fees every two years.

Mr. Darrel Pyle, City Manager, said the City is developing a pilot program for wastewater reuse to augment Lake Thunderbird by 12 to 17 million gallons per day (mgd). He said the City is attempting to demonstrate the benefits of reuse to Del City and Midwest City who share Lake Thunderbird for drinking water. He said a two-year window (2024) would provide the City a great opportunity to determine the feasibility of this program.

Item 1, continued:

Councilmember Lynn said he supports the proposed increase, but is concerned about comments in the community regarding police and fire services.

Ms. Kathryn Walker, City Attorney, said First Reading for a water rate increase would be scheduled for March 8, 2022.

Items submitted for the record

1. PowerPoint presentation entitled, "Water Connection Fee Discussion," dated February 22, 2022

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The meeting was adjourned at 6:12 p.m.

ATTEST:

City Clerk

Mayor