



## CITY OF NORMAN, OK STAFF REPORT

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**MEETING DATE:** 06/09/2022

**REQUESTER:** Kathryn Walker

**PRESENTER:** Kathryn Walker

**ITEM TITLE:** CONTINUED DISCUSSION REGARDING THE CITY'S BOARDS, COMMISSIONS AND COMMITTEES.

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### **Background**

Norman has 36 boards, commissions and committees; 21 were established by ordinance, 4 were established by Charter, 5 were established by resolution, 2 were established by statute and contract, 1 was established solely by contract, and 2 were established by Mayoral appointment. Seven of the committees are ad hoc committees (committees formed for a specific task and designed to be dissolved upon completion of the task). All but 6 of the boards, commissions and committees are staffed by City employees, meaning Staff prepares the agendas, back up materials, and minutes and attends the meeting, oftentimes after regular work hours. In recent years, Council has discussed Boards and Commissions in its Oversight Committee on October 10, 2019, March 12, 2020 and November 12, 2020. At each meeting, the Committee members have considered consolidating some committees, re-scoping some committees, increasing membership on some committees, eliminating some committees, and creating new committees. Where committees are suggested to be consolidated, specialized committee makeup has been discussed to ensure relevant interest areas are being represented. Additionally, Council has discussed the value of ward specific representation in certain committees to ensure the interests of all areas of Norman are represented. A summary of the proposals discussed at the November 2020 Council Oversight Committee meeting is provided below. This summary was discussed at the April 2021 and August 2021 Council Oversight Committee. A summary related to the discussions from April 2021 and August 2021 is provided for each proposal in red and green font respectively below.

### **Proposal One: Consolidate Greenbelt Commission and Planning Commission/Make Planning Commission Appointments Ward Specific**

#### Current Language- Greenbelt Commission (Code, Section 4-2022):

There is hereby created and established the Greenbelt Commission for the City of Norman. The Norman Greenbelt Commission shall consist of a total of nine (9) members, one (1) from each ward and one (1) at-large. The members shall be appointed by the Mayor, with approval of the City Council, based upon their interests or expertise regarding open-space preservation. All members shall serve without compensation and may be removed by the City Council as provided in the Code of Ordinances. City staff and administrative guidance shall be provided to the Greenbelt Commission by the Department of Planning and Community Development, with assistance from the City Forester and other Departments,

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as necessary. The implementation of the activities associated with this article shall be dependent upon the City Council's ability to provide funds on an annualized basis.

#### Current Language – Planning Commission (Charter, Article XIX, Section 2)

In order to avail itself of the powers conferred by this Article, the City Council shall appoint the Norman Planning Commission. Such Commission shall consist of not less than nine citizens, all of whom shall reside in the City of Norman and who shall be nominated by the Mayor, and confirmed by the City Council, each for a term of three years; provided, however, that in the first instance, one-third shall be for three years, one-third for two years, and one-third for one year. Appointments to fill vacancies shall be for the unexpired term only. Such Commission shall serve without pay, and it shall be the duty of such Commission to exercise all powers granted by this Article or ordinances enacted pursuant thereto. The Commission shall have the power and authority to employ personnel for the purpose of carrying out its functions, subject to approval of the appropriations of funds by the City Council.

#### Proposed Changes:

##### 1. Add amendment to Article XIX, Section 2 to Charter Election Ballot:

In order to avail itself of the powers conferred by this Article, the City Council shall appoint the Norman Planning Commission. Such Commission shall consist of a total of nine (9) members, one (1) from each ward and one (1) at-large ~~not less than nine citizens, all of whom shall reside in the City of Norman~~ and who shall be nominated by the Mayor, and confirmed by the City Council, each for a term of three years; provided, however, that in the first instance, one-third shall be for three years, one-third for two years, and one-third for one year. Two of the appointments shall be appointed based upon their interests or expertise regarding open-space preservation. Appointments to fill vacancies shall be for the unexpired term only. Such Commission shall serve without pay, and it shall be the duty of such Commission to exercise all powers granted by this Article or ordinances enacted pursuant thereto. The Commission shall have the power and authority to employ personnel for the purpose of carrying out its functions, subject to approval of the appropriations of funds by the City Council.

##### 2. Eliminate Article XXI-Greenbelt Commission from Chapter 4 of the Code

April 2021: Council was mixed on whether to consolidate GBC and PC. Some liked that it would keep the GBC in an advisory role, but Councilmembers also expressed concerns about losing input on important topics to people in the community. If combined, Councilmembers felt it would be important to ensure some of the deep knowledge in the GBC would be represented on PC.

August 2021: No longer appeared to be support for consolidation. A suggestion was made to consider reducing the GBC commission meetings to quarterly instead of monthly to address concerns about staffing. Because GBC reviews certain development applications, quarterly meetings would negatively impact the timeline for development review.

#### **Proposal Two: Consolidate Tree Board/Bicycle Advisory Committee/Parks Board**

##### Current Language - Tree Board (Code, Section 4-1301)

(d) *Authority.* There is hereby created and established a City Tree Board for the City of Norman. The City Tree Board shall consist of a total of nine (9) members comprised of residents of this City. The members shall be appointed at-large by the Mayor, with approval of the City Council based on their interest or expertise regarding urban forestry. All members shall serve without compensation and may

be removed by the City Council as provided in the Code of Ordinances. City staff and administrative guidance shall be provided to the City Tree Board by the Parks and Recreation Department or by other City departments as necessary. The implementation of the activities associated with this article shall be dependent upon the City Council's ability to provide funds on an annualized basis.

Current Language – Bicycle Advisory Board (Resolution R-0607-58, Section 10)

That the Mayor appoint nine citizens to serve three year terms on a new permanent Bicycle Committee to be charged with reviewing the Bicycle Transportation Development Plan on an ongoing basis and to make and assist in implementation of recommendations to additionally encourage and support biking, both recreational and for transportation, and to consult with and forward those recommendations to the Transportation Committee. Committee members shall service three year terms with said terms being staggered. Committee positions designated as one through three shall initially serve a one year term, with subsequent terms lasting three years. Committee positions designated as four through six shall initially service a two year term, with subsequent terms lasting three years. Committee positions designated as seven through nine shall serve three year terms. Committee members shall be appointed to reflect the diversity of interested parties within the community including representatives from cycling and transportation groups; health promotion organizations; the University of Oklahoma; Norman schools; local businesses which support bicycle use and other interested citizens; and relevant City of Norman staff meetings attending meetings in advisory roles as needed.

Current Language – Board of Park Commissioners (Charter, Article VIII, Section 1)

The Mayor, with the approval of the Council, shall appoint a Board of Park Commissioners consisting of nine registered voters, who shall serve without compensation, and shall have such powers and duties as are now provided by law or may hereafter be conferred by ordinance. The City Manager, or his designate, shall be ex-officio member of the Board of Park Commissioners, but shall have no vote. His advice and services shall be at the disposal of the Board of Park Commissioners in the planning and execution of its work.

Proposed Changes:

1. Add amendment to Article VIII, Section 1 to Charter Election Ballot:

The Mayor, with the approval of the Council, shall appoint a Board of Park Commissioners consisting of nine registered voters, who shall serve without compensation, and shall have such powers and duties as are now provided by law or may hereafter be conferred by ordinance. Two appointees shall be selected based on their interest or expertise regarding urban forestry and two appointees shall be selected based on their interest in cycling including residents from cycling and transportation groups; health promotion organizations; the University of Oklahoma; Norman schools; local businesses which support bicycle use and other interested citizens. The City Manager, or his designate, shall be ex-officio member of the Board of Park Commissioners, but shall have no vote. His advice and services shall be at the disposal of the Board of Park Commissioners in the planning and execution of its work.

**April 2021: Support expressed for consolidating Tree Board and Parks Board**

**August 2021: Consensus to move forward with consolidation of Tree Board and Parks Board; Bicycle Advisory Committee fits in more with a transportation committee. In lieu of Charter change, we could add provisions for the Parks Board in Chapter 4 of the Code as long as they are not in conflict with the Charter provisions.**

### **Proposal Three: Rescope the Animal Welfare Oversight Committee**

#### Current Language (Resolution R-0203-111, Section 10)

Further, than an oversight board shall be established to include veterinarians, citizens, and a member of the City Council, which board shall be charged with the mission to: (1) insure that the Animal Shelter and Pet Adoption Facility is run in a humane manner in accordance with established and recognized standards for animal shelters; (2) implement the City Council's adoption policy; (3) educate the community; (4) coordinate volunteer services to the Animal Shelter/Pet Adoption Facility; and (5) implement an on-site spaying and neutering program.

#### Proposed Change:

1. Rescind Resolution R-0203-11.
2. Codify the committee in Chapter 4 and require some rural representation. Needs further discussion about possible updates to duties.

April 2021: Support for rescoping AWOC and making it permanent. Discussion about possible role of AWOC included promoting education (spaying and neutering for example), helping Staff develop two social media posts per month, etc.

August 2021: Some discussion about whether AWOC was a more appropriate fit as a sub-committee versus a standalone committee. Recognition that professional expertise and resident input should be reflected in board appointments, as well as rural representation.

### **Proposal Four: Eliminate the Children's Rights Coordinating Commission**

#### Proposed Change:

1. Repeal Article XVII, Section 4-1701 in its entirety

April 2021: Support for eliminating the CRC Commission

August 2021: Support for eliminating the CRC Commission. This will be included with rewrite of Chapter 4 after recodification process.

### **Proposal Five: Increase Committee Membership on Board of Adjustment**

#### Current Language

Section 4-101(b):

The number of appointive members of each respective body and their overall respective terms of office shall be:

- (1) Five (5) persons for three-year terms.

Section 22:441(4) of Zoning Ordinance:

The concurring vote of three (3) members of the board shall be necessary to reverse any order, requirement, decision, or determination of the administrative official, to decide in favor of the applicant on any matter upon which it is required to pass under this ordinance, or to effect any variation in the application of this ordinance.

Proposed Changes:

Section 4-101(b):

The number of appointive members of each respective body and their overall respective terms of office shall be:

(1) ~~Five (5)~~ Seven (7) persons for three-year terms.

Section 22:441(4) of Zoning Ordinance:

The concurring vote of ~~three (3)~~ four (4) members of the board shall be necessary to reverse any order, requirement, decision, or determination of the administrative official, to decide in favor of the applicant on any matter upon which it is required to pass under this ordinance, or to effect any variation in the application of this ordinance.

**April 2021: Support for expansion**

**August 2021: Support for expansion; will be included in final re-write.**

**Proposal Six: Increase Committee Membership on Norman Election Commission**

Current Language

Section 7.5-21. Definitions

Norman Election Commission shall mean a ~~five~~seven-member committee, appointed by the Mayor and approved by a majority of the City Council to serve three-year staggered terms. The terms of initial appointments shall be adjusted so as to provide that no more than two (2) terms shall expire in any one (1) year; subsequent appointments shall be for three-year terms.

**April 2021: Support for expansion**

**August 2021: Support for expansion; will be included in final re-write.**

**Proposal Seven: Create the following new committees – Senior Issues Committee, Youth Advisory Committee, Transportation Committee, Budget Committee, and Core Norman Development Committee**

Proposed Changes:

1. Codify each committee in Chapter 4.
2. Outline duties, frequency of meetings, etc.
3. Determine desired representation (interest groups, specific qualifications, ward specific, etc.)
4. Work with City Manager to identify the Department that will be charged with staffing the Committee.

**April 2021: New committees proposed included Core Norman Development Committee.**

**August 2021: New committees proposed include:**

- **Senior Issues Committee – to be coordinated by Senior Center operator**

- Youth Advisory Committee – to replace Youth Council and provide an avenue for input to Council for city policies or youth issues; open to middle and high school; still do field trips to City facilities but also work on policies/advocacy
- Citizen’s Transportation Advisory Committee – Bicycle Advisory Committee could be rolled into this.
- Budget Committee – ward specific; could be a sub-committee of Finance Committee
- Core Norman Development Committee – discussion about a preference to focus on Center City Ad Hoc Committee at this point.

**Proposal Eight: Change every committee appointment in Chapter 4 to 3-year terms, 3-year term limit.**

Proposed Changes:

1. Large scale ordinance amendment for each board
2. Consider how to address current appointments

April 2021: Support for three-year terms, three term limit

August 2021: Support for three-year terms, three term limit

Other Questions

- Could we add an appointment to the Norman Housing Authority? Creation of a housing authority is governed by State law. Title 63 Section 1058 provides for 5 persons to be appointed as commissioners of the authority by the Mayor with the advice and consent of the governing body.
- EDAB would like the ability to appoint subcommittees.