

Ordinance No. O-2627-8

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF NORMAN, OKLAHOMA, AMENDING SECTION 2-316 AND SECTION 24-507 OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF NORMAN PROVIDING FOR OVERSIGHT; PROHIBITING CERTAIN ACTIVITIES IN PUBLIC PARKS; PROVIDING EXCEPTIONS; PROVIDING FOR ENFORCEMENT; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

- § 1 **WHEREAS**, the City of Norman leases and maintains the George M. Sutton Urban Wilderness as a unique natural area dedicated to the preservation of native ecosystems, wildlife habitat, environmental education, scientific study, and passive recreation; and
- § 3 **WHEREAS**, the City Council finds that the protection of sensitive natural resources within the George M. Sutton Urban Wilderness requires regulations that minimize human impacts and reduce disturbances to wildlife, vegetation, waterways, and other ecological features; and
- § 4 **WHEREAS**, the City Council further finds that the operation of watercraft, including boats, canoes, kayaks, rafts, float tubes, paddleboards, and similar floating devices, may adversely affect natural resources, wildlife habitat, water quality, and public safety within park waters; and
- § 5 **WHEREAS**, the City Council finds that the introduction of motorized vehicles, unauthorized camping, fires, hunting, trapping, and the collection of biological or geological specimens can cause damage to park resources and interfere with the public's enjoyment of park facilities; and
- § 6 **WHEREAS**, the City Council recognizes that Community and Neighborhood Parks are intended primarily for recreational, educational, and community uses and that certain activities are incompatible with the safe and orderly operation of such parks; and
- § 7 **WHEREAS**, the City Council finds that clarifying prohibited activities, including the operation or launching of watercraft and the possession or discharge of devices capable of propelling projectiles, will promote public safety, protect park resources, and assist in the consistent enforcement of park regulations; and
- § 8 **WHEREAS**, the City Council further finds that permitting limited exceptions for scientific study, conservation activities, park maintenance, and other authorized purposes serves a legitimate public interest while preserving the natural character and intended use of public park properties; and
- § 9 **WHEREAS**, the City Council determines that these amendments are necessary to protect public health, safety, and welfare and to preserve the City's parks and natural areas for the benefit of present and future generations.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORMAN, OKLAHOMA:

§ 10. THAT, Section 2-316 of the Code of the City of Norman, Oklahoma be amended as follows:

2-316 Duties and Powers of the Board

The Board of Park Commissioners shall advise the City Council on policies pertaining to the use of the park and recreational facilities of the City, and pursuant thereto:

- (a) Propose rules and regulations for the maintenance of order, safety, and decency in those parks and recreational facilities;
- (b) Consider and investigate any matter affecting the development and improvement of parks and recreational facilities and policies pertaining to the use of those facilities;
- (c) Make recommendations to improve the park and recreational facilities;
- (d) Make recommendations regarding systems of supervised recreation, and modifications in existing recreational programs;
- (e) Act as the presiding authority over the matters contained in NCC 16-IX, with review and oversight by the City Council;
- (f) Provide copies of the minutes of its meetings to the office of the City Clerk within ten days from the date of their approval; ~~and~~
- (g) Provide an annual report of the Board's acts and affairs;
- (h) Designate park classifications for all City parks; and
- (i) Advise the Parks and Recreation Department as needed regarding the administration of a permit system for outside groups that desire to use a City park for scientific study, park maintenance, and conservation or other purposes.

§ 11. THAT, Section 24-507 of the Code of the City of Norman, Oklahoma be amended as follows:

24-507 Activities Prohibited In Sutton Urban Wilderness at Public Park Sites; Exceptions By Written Permit

(a) Sutton Urban Wilderness

~~(a)~~ (1) No person shall engage in the following activities within the Sutton Urban Wilderness, ~~except by written permit for scientific purposes issued by the Parks and Recreation Department:~~

- ~~(1)~~ (i) Littering;
- ~~(2)~~ (ii) Operating any motorized vehicles or bicycles;
- ~~(3)~~ (iii) Starting or maintaining a fire;
- ~~(4)~~ Camping;
- ~~(5)~~ (iv) Swimming;
- ~~(6)~~ (v) Hunting;
- ~~(7)~~ (vi) Trapping;
- ~~(8)~~ (vii) Collecting biological or geological specimens, except by written permit for scientific purposes issued by the Parks and Recreation Department;
- ~~(9)~~ (viii) Cutting or collecting wood;
- ~~(10)~~ (ix) Operating a boat or canoe or launching any watercraft, including but not limited to boats, canoes, kayaks, rafts, float tubes, paddleboards, and similar floating devices, unless otherwise allowed by posted park rules;
- ~~(11)~~ (x) Fishing by means of a trotline or jugline;
- ~~(12)~~ (xi) Possessing a bow, slingshot, air gun, firearm, or any other such device to hurl projectiles Discharging any firearm, bow, slingshot, air gun, or other device capable of propelling a projectile, except as authorized by law;
- ~~(13)~~ (xii) Defacing or damaging any natural object or park facilities or appurtenances;
- ~~(14)~~ (xiii) Introducing plant or animal species; and
(xiv) Violating posted park rules.

~~(b)(2)~~ Organized group events exceeding 35 people shall have written authorization by the Parks and Recreation Department.

~~(e)(3)~~ The Parks and Recreation Department may issue permits for scientific study, park maintenance, and conservation or other purposes appropriate to use of wilderness area; and where questions arise concerning administration of the permit system, the George M. Sutton Urban Wilderness Advisory Committee shall act in an advisory capacity.

(b) Community and Neighborhood Parks

- (1) No person shall engage in the following activities within Community and Neighborhood parks:
 - (i) Littering;
 - (ii) Operating any motor vehicle; provided, however, that bicycles, electric-assisted bicycles, wheelchairs, and other power-driven mobility devices used by individuals with mobility disabilities shall be permitted as required by applicable law;
 - (iii) Starting or maintaining a fire;
 - (iv) Swimming;
 - (v) Hunting;
 - (vi) Trapping;

- (vii) Collecting biological or geological specimens, except by written permit for scientific purposes issued by the Parks and Recreation Department;
 - (viii) Cutting or collecting wood;
 - (ix) Operating or launching any watercraft, including but not limited to boats, canoes, kayaks, rafts, float tubes, paddleboards, and similar floating devices unless otherwise allowed by posted park rules;
 - (x) Fishing by means of a trotline or jugline;
 - (xi) Discharging any firearm, bow, slingshot, air gun, or other device capable of propelling a projectile, except as authorized by law;
 - (xiii) Defacing or damaging any natural object or park facilities or appurtenances;
 - (xiv) Introducing plant or animal species; and
 - (xv) Violating posted park rules.
- (2) The Parks and Recreation Department may issue permits for scientific study, park maintenance, and conservation or other purposes appropriate to use of Community and Neighborhood Park sites.

§ 12. **SEVERABILITY CLAUSE.** If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, phrase, portion of this ordinance is for any reason held invalid or unconstitutional by any court or administrative agency of competent jurisdiction, such portion shall be deemed a separate, distinct, and independent provision and such finding shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions thereof.

§ 13. **EMERGENCY.** An emergency is hereby declared to exist for the preservation of the public peace, health, safety, and welfare by reason whereof this Ordinance shall take effect immediately upon its adoption and publication.

§ 14. **REPEAL OF CONFLICTING ORDINANCES.** That all ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict herewith be and the same are now expressly repealed.

ADOPTED this _____ day of _____ NOT ADOPTED this _____ day of _____
_____, 2026. _____, 2026.

Stephen Tyler Holman, Mayor

Stephen Tyler Holman, Mayor

ATTEST:

City Clerk