



# CITY OF NORMAN, OK CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL SESSION

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

Tuesday, February 20, 2024 at 5:30 PM

---

## MINUTES

The City Council of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met in Special Session in the Executive Conference Room of the Norman Municipal Building on the 20th day of February, 2024, at 5:30 p.m., and notice and agenda of the meeting were posted at the Municipal Building at 201 West Gray Street 48 hours prior to the beginning of the meeting.

### CALL TO ORDER

#### PRESENT

Mayor Larry Heikkila  
Councilmember Ward 1 Austin Ball  
Councilmember Ward 2 Lauren Schueler  
Councilmember Ward 3 Bree Montoya  
Councilmember Ward 4 Helen Grant  
Councilmember Ward 5 Michael Nash  
Councilmember Ward 7 Stephen Holman  
Councilmember Ward 8 Matthew Peacock

#### ABSENT

Councilmember Ward 6 Elizabeth Foreman

### AGENDA ITEMS

#### 1. DISCUSSION REGARDING FILM-FRIENDLY CERTIFICATION FOR THE CITY OF NORMAN.

Ms. Sara Kaplan, Business and Community Relations Manager, said this subject was brought up in the Business and Community Affairs Committee (BACA) and now it is being brought to the City Council to be implemented.

Visit Norman started this process and will be the primary point of contact for the Film-Friendly Certification. Visit Norman has done the ground work such as submitting site locations with the Oklahoma Commerce Department. The Oklahoma Commerce Department runs the state certification process for the film industry.

Ms. Kaplan said there are many similarities between the special event process and the film permit process through the City of Norman. Therefore, it was decided the film permit would go through the special event process to get a permit issued. In order to create this permit there is Ordinance language that must be updated. On the City of Norman website there is a video showing the film permit process and how to apply for a special event permit. Ms. Kaplan will be editing this area of the website since we have now switched to Cityview software (portal).

Item 1, continued:

The special event application process through the portal asks all the necessary questions, including those necessary for a film permit. The application will ask about noise, street closures, etc.

Ms. Ashlynn Wilkerson, Assistant City Attorney, said that the substantive changes to the Special Event Ordinance (Article 20-XXXX) are the following:

1. Adding film language to the definition section (20-3001)
2. Supporting documents added to special event permit section (20-3005) this section is where we need input from Council as to whether there will be a fee for the film permit? Currently, there is not a fee for a special event permit.
3. Event Access Requirements section (20-3011) to request complete street closure to public for a limited time.

Councilmember Grant asked about the costs associated with issuing a film permit. The City needs to cover any staff costs with the fee associated with the film permit.

Ms. Kaplan said that each situation is different but for example closing down Main Street takes more staff time, having fireworks would require involvement from the Fire Department to make sure all safety precautions are being observed. There could also be involvement from the Sanitation Department for clean up. Each scenario can be wildly different depending on the size of the production, how many days they plan to shoot film, etc.

Ms. Wilkerson said after researching other similarly sized cities, it was found that most cities do not charge for the actual film permit and only charge for related permits. For example, street closures or noise variances do have related charges. The smaller cities researched do not charge a film permit fee but Oklahoma City charges \$25 and Tulsa charges \$30.

Councilmember Grant is in favor of a fee if the production will take staff time to coordinate and assist.

Councilmember Peacock asked if a permit is required for each day a film crew is on site or if there will be a multiple day permit issued. We do not want the process or fees to be cumbersome to the applicants. However, covering staff costs is agreeable but we should consider the money the film crews will spend while here and that should be considered a benefit as well. In fact, it would be preferable to not have a fee.

Ms. Kaplan said even though the base Special event permit does not have a fee, the street closure, noise variance permits do have a fee and we can add on to those for those situations that warrant extra staff time to manage. While at the workshop, it was discussed that having a small fee is ideal because then you have a paper trail, if nothing else. A nominal fee would allow the local production manager to have something in hand if asked that shows their permission to film or perform whatever activities are taking place.

Councilmember Ball asked if it would encompass local TV news crews interviewing someone in their front yard? Do OU students putting together a documentary have to be issued a film permit? He said he is not in favor of a fee for this permit and wanted to clarify that I am not in favor of this permit if it would include a resident going in his front yard and using his phone to go live and film.

Item 1, continued:

Ms. Wilkerson said this is why we need Council input and the definition of what type of event would be required to have a film permit needs to be broad to encompass everything we do want and have a fee system that is tiered.

Councilmember Nash said he would support as low a fee as possible to encourage big productions to come here and film and generate fan fare for Norman.

Mayor Heikkila agrees the fee structure should be tiered so that larger productions pay their fair share but the little guy can also afford to film as well.

Council supports a graduated fee schedule.

Councilmember Holman asked if the City was only issuing film permits for indoor films.

Several Councilmembers asked if a waiver could be included for student projects. The City does not want to burden students with fees but does want to make sure larger film companies pay fees that cover staff expenses.

Councilmember Schueler said if the production is part of a student project then it should be exempt from the permit process. The intent of this permit is for larger productions of film, movies, etc. and to attract Hollywood level companies or Indy films. Having some type of trigger would be the smart way to go.

Councilmember Holman suggested that if the production were enclosed inside a studio then a film permit would not be required. Also, if production occurs on University of Oklahoma property, a permit would not be required.

Ms. Brenda Hall, City Clerk, said some of the larger productions required noise variances and street closures and also hired off duty Norman Police officers as security.

Councilmember Grant asked if the Convention and Visitors Bureau assist the production companies with getting blocks of hotel rooms at discounted rates?

Ms. Kaplan assumes the Convention and Visitor's Bureau does assist them with these things when a larger production is happening.

Ms. Hall indicated that the production companies usually contact the Convention and Visitor's Bureau first to ask about permits, etc. and they refer them to the City.

Councilmember Hinkle asked how we would build fee waivers into this process.

Ms. Wilkerson said we can structure that however Council would like to, but based on the comments today, we need to define what a large production is versus a small one and what those threshold amounts would be. There could be a base fee for the permit then add on fees if street closures or noise variances are needed.

Mayor Heikkila indicated that charging a base fee and then adding additional fees as other services are needed would be sufficient.

Councilmember Ball asked that local business commercials be exempt from this permit.

Item 1, continued:

Ms. Wilkerson said that she would draft a fee structure and Council would see it during the first reading ordinance. The last change is to allow an entire street closure for longer duration and also making other changes, such as making the language in the ordinance gender neutral, the numbering within the ordinance is inconsistent, therefore, updating that so it is all the same throughout. We will be reorganizing some of the sections to make it clear and concise.

## **2. FOLLOW-UP ON A LITTER CONTROL PROGRAM.**

Ms. Michelle Loudenback, Environmental & Sustainability Manager, said the Litter Control RFP asked for non-profit organizations to send a plan outlining how they would provide litter control and how they would manage a program utilizing vulnerable people and provide a low barrier employment opportunity with wrap around services for those individuals. Two responses were received and the committee chose Mental Health Association of Oklahoma. This organization was chosen because they have in-house services offered within their program umbrella. These services include mental health recovery services, outreach and prevention services, pro bono services, employment services and an emergency response program to help divert calls from 911. Additionally, the Mental Health Association of Oklahoma has a contract with the Department of Rehabilitation Services to provide employees for jobs.

The motto for this program is "Empowering people and beautifying Norman". The Mental Health Association of Oklahoma operates a van in Oklahoma City that is wrapped with their motto, "Real Change for Panhandling". The City of Norman owns and operates a handicap accessible van which is an asset because MHAO wants to service unhoused individuals that have physical disabilities. Staff would direct them to locations where staff has seen vulnerable people and needs arising. Eight participants can be transported in the van at one time along with the Case Manager and driver. Three days per week will be designated for litter collection, the wage is \$65 per day, per person and this is a cash wage that is paid to the individuals at the end of each day. The other two days per week are when services are provided to those individuals. This program helps people learn how to deal with others, work as a team and how to interact in a work environment. Lunch is provided for the participants and during that time the case manager meets with each person to determine what other services are needed. The Case Manager is dedicated to this group of people and will find the necessary resources. One of the big needs is permanent low-barrier housing and permanent stable employment. The van driver drives three days a week for the litter program but the other two days of the week, the driver will provide transportation to necessary services. For example, a person may need transportation to the Department of Motor Vehicles or a tag agency to get identification or to the Social Security office to obtain a social security card replacement, etc. The services provided build confidence and help bolster life skills.

MHAO plans to make contact with and talk to at least 200 people each calendar year in addition to the eight participants in the litter control program. They plan to provide as many services as possible to those they come in contact with.

Mayor Heikkila asked for an explanation of what their job program consists of.

Ms. Loudenback said that the job program can mean joining a Better Way and getting on the bus each day or connecting with the Department of Rehabilitative Services or other agencies they network with for employment opportunities. These services are provided to anyone MHAO staff contacts and not just those that participates in the Better Way program. 25% of those who

Item 2, continued:

participate in the job program and finish will have stable employment at the end of the program.

Wrap around services are not required, but they are offered and participants can choose to take advantage of them or not. 25% will obtain permanent housing while participating in this program. It is a known fact that it sometimes takes three to six interactions with someone before they decide to join the program. MHAO will submit monthly and semi-annual reports, which will be available for Council to review their progress.

The total expense for MHAO to provide all of these services is \$360,368 per year. Associated costs of the program are:

- a. Trailer (the City may have one that can be used so this may not be a huge cost)
- b. Wrap for van
- c. Gas and Maintenance for van
- d. Centrally located office space

From 2021 through current day the mileage for the program in Oklahoma City was 15,000 miles.

Councilmember Schueler said that it is possible the current location of the shelter may be a location for the office space. This would also be in close proximity to the population being served by this program.

Councilmember Grant agreed about the office space. She asked where they plan to pick people up for the program.

Ms. Loudenback said City staff will direct MHAO as to what locations would be best to recruit people for this program.

Mayor Heikkila said there is one room on the side of the Lindsey yard facility that may be potential office space for this program. This location would also provide a safe place to lock the van at night which would be in a gated area.

Ms. Loudenback said these costs are 80/20. 80% of the costs are what they provide to us and 20% would be budgeted for litter control.

Councilmember Holman asked what the fringe costs would include.

Ms. Loudenback said these costs are for employee benefits. The Program Manager for MHAO is over all of their programs, not just ours. The City only pays a portion of the salaries. The van driver is charged directly to our program, the employment specialist is shared but during the days working for our program those costs would be charged to our program.

Utilities and Sanitation received the litter program from Public Works in April. Utilities allocated \$50,000 and because it is an enterprise fund, the City has to show what services are being provided to paying customers. 20% of the total cost of this program is \$72,073.60 and 80% would be \$288,294.40. A case could be made for Utilities to provide the full 20%.

Mr. Chris Mattingly, Director of Utilities, said if there is an overspend of what was budgeted for this program, he would be forced to ask for a rate increase to cover those costs.

Item 2, continued:

Councilmember Holman asked if a Sanitation rate increase is requested, would it be possible to include funding of this program and ask voters if this is something they would want to have funded through the City Sanitation rate. We could fund the program through the General Fund until the Sanitation rate increase comes to a vote of the people and if the vote is successful, it can be explained that we would continue this program through the Sanitation rate increase.

Mayor Heikkila said that by that time staff have statistics and metrics to show the voters so they could see what a difference this program is making and hopefully they would want to vote for the rate increase in order to continue the program further.

Councilmember Holman said by doing it this way, we are not encumbering the General Fund forever with this program and voters can see the difference it is making.

Councilmember Peacock said he is in favor of this method of funding because his only negative about the program is encumbering the General Fund with this every year and if there is a way to have it funded through the Sanitation rate increase, this would be preferable.

Mr. Pyle said that the City would seek grant funding to pay for the service side of this program since 80% of the total cost is for service and not actual trash removal. Funds that come from Sanitation should be used to pay for the actual trash removal, which is 20% and not be used for the service portion of this program's cost. By having actual metrics to list when applying for different grants, this will give the City an advantage for grant approval.

Ms. Loudenback said the Mental Health Association of Oklahoma also said they would be seeking grants as well to help support the program.

Councilmember Schueler said even though the funding would be coming from the General Fund, this would save the City money in many ways. One way is keeping litter from getting into our storm water channels and the wrap around services provided to those being employed will benefit a community we have targeted for assistance.

All Councilmembers agreed that they were in favor of the program moving forward.

\*\*\*\*\*

### **3. DISCUSSION REGARDING CITY OF NORMAN FACILITIES IMPROVEMENTS.**

Mr. Lance Harper, Facility and Construction Program Manager, said the Automated Logic for HVAC is provided through ES2 company. Automative logic optimizes building performances. This system controls air conditioning, heating and lighting for all City buildings. Implementing these items, helps consume less energy. The program is visual and easy to use. If there is an issue somewhere in the system, a red flag is given and problems can be diagnosed through the computer screen. When HVAC employees are called about a problem, Staff will already have a lot of information and know what the problem may be. The program is free once installed and training is also free for the City of Norman. Staff recently attended a two-day training and it was very good. Staff has gained access to the meeting room calendars so the temperatures can be programmed based on the activity in the room. The program also controls lighting based on occupied status of any room. Currently, this program is in use for the Central Library Building, East Library, Norman Investigation Center and Animal Welfare Building. Young Family Athletic Center and Adult Wellness Center will be added to the system. This system will be added to

Item 3, continued:

three fire stations and next year Staff will be adding it to three more fire stations. It is intended to have all buildings on this system due to the cost savings it provides.

The largest energy savings to date has been at the Central Library. In one year the City had \$30,000 energy savings by using this program.

Mr. Jason Olsen, Director of Parks & Recreation, said some offices do have more control of their environment and the ability to change the temperatures more to their liking. In the summer the average temperature for the buildings is 72 degrees. Employees in the buildings have the ability to change the temperature +/- five degrees. In the winter, the temperature is kept at 68 degrees. Staff can even monitor the buildings from home in case there are any issues that need to be addressed after hours or on the weekends.

The savings for 2023 with this program was \$74,617 overall. This will continue to get better as Staff learn more about the system and how to best utilize it.

Councilmember Peacock said if he understood correctly, it would cost \$15,000 per building to have the program installed.

Mr. Harper said it ranges from \$10,000-\$15,000 per building depending on how many units are included. This is a one-time cost.

Councilmember Peacock said if the City has eight buildings on the program, the cost for that is approximately, \$120,000 and the City saved \$75,000 in one year.

Mr. Harper said it is very beneficial to be able to remotely access the units and their functioning. When the City has a three day weekend for instance, the savings that comes from keeping the buildings on unoccupied status is quite a bit.

Mr. Harper said changing over the buildings to using LED lights is a savings as well and being able to control the lighting through this program will keep costs down. By summer this year, generators will also be controlled by this program, which gives Staff the ability to check ahead of storms to make sure the generator batteries are charged in advance. While the generators are running, the number of kilowatts can be tracked.

Mr. Olsen said it is key to have the ability to monitor all of the City buildings from a laptop so if there is an emergency somewhere the generators are ready to go. Also, with the new Emergency Operations Center coming online, this program will allow our Staff to take care of issues remotely during weather emergencies, etc.

Councilmember Ball asked if the City has a good rate with Oklahoma Gas and Electric and whether they have any type of program similar to this.

Mr. Harper said he reached out to OG&E about incentives for lighting and HVAC systems and the City is signed up for all we qualify for. OG&E does have a program where they will come out to any of our HVAC systems and clean them and tell us at what percent efficiency the unit is running. If it is below 80%, they will credit the City a certain amount if replacing the unit is necessary. The City can give copies of any of our building plans to OG&E and their engineers will review them and make recommendations of what mechanical equipment to use to help save initial cost and energy use.

Item 3, continued:

Ms. Brenda Hall, City Clerk, said the City has done this with all of the projects recently, which includes the Development Center, Municipal Court, etc.

Mr. Chris Mattingly, Director of Utilities, said Staff is having engineers go through the Utilities Department buildings and write in specifications where the City can install efficiency motors and blowers. The City is getting rebates for the Wastewater Plant and the Water Plant currently.

\*\*\*\*\*

**4. CONSIDERATION OF ADJOURNING INTO AN EXECUTIVE SESSION AS AUTHORIZED BY OKLAHOMA STATUTES, TITLE 25 307 (B)(4) TO DISCUSS PENDING CLASS ACTION LITIGATION AGAINST 3M COMPANY AND E.I. DUPONT DE NEMOURS AND COMPANY AND OTHER DEFENDANTS INVOLVING PER AND POLYFLUOROALKYL SUBSTANCES (PFAS) CONTAMINATION IN RE: AQUEOUS FILM-FORMING FOAM PRODUCTS LIABILITY LITIGATION, MDL NO. 2:18-MN-2873, UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT, DISTRICT OF SOUTH CAROLINA.**

Item #4 was not considered due to outside counsel not being available.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Council adjourned out of Special Session at 6:36 p.m.

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor