



CITY OF NORMAN, OK
CITY COUNCIL FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING
Municipal Building, Executive Conference Room, 201 West Gray, Norman,
OK 73069
Thursday, February 19, 2026 at 4:00 PM

MINUTES

The City Council Finance Committee of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met in Regular Session in the Executive Conference Room in the Municipal Building, on Thursday, February 19, 2026 at 4:00 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.

CALL TO ORDER

PRESENT

Councilmember Ward 6 Chair Joshua Hinkle
Councilmember Ward 1 David Gandesbery
Councilmember Ward 3 Robert Bruce
Councilmember Ward 4 Helen Grant

OTHERS

Mayor Stephen Holman
Councilmember Ward 8 Scott Dixon
Bryce Holland, Multimedia Specialist
Clint Mercer, Chief Accountant
Dannielle Risenhoover, Admin. Tech IV
Darrel Pyle, City Manager
Devra Smith, NFD Admin. Tech
Jacob Huckabaa, Budget Analyst
Jamie Vaughn, Treasury Support Supervisor
Jason Murphy, Stormwater Program Manager
Jason Olsen, Director of Parks & Recreation
Kathryn Walker, Asst. City Attorney
Kim Coffman, Budget Manager
Lisa Krieg, CDBG Grants Manager
Tara Reynolds, CDBG Financial Management Analyst
Andy Couch, Firehouse Art Center Executive Director & Curator
Danielle Tipton, The Depot
Shari Jackson, Norman Music Festival & The Depot
Cody Giles, Norman Music Festival
David Floyd, Attorney

AGENDA ITEMS

1. DISCUSSION AND REVIEW OF OUTSIDE AGENCY REPORTS AND/OR REQUESTS FROM THE FOLLOWING:

Social and Voluntary Services Commission

Veteran's Day Parade Committee
Center for Children and Families
Firehouse Art Center
Cleveland County Historical Museum
Sooner Theatre
Aging Services - Kiwanis Kruiser
Performing Arts Studio (The Depot)
Norman Economic Development Coalition

The Finance Committee heard statements from outside agencies that are requesting additional operating funds out of the City's General Fund during Fiscal Year 2027. Five outside agencies were represented at the meeting and presented their rationale for their requests for repeat or increased funding. The agencies were: the Social and Voluntary Services Commission (SVSC), the Firehouse Art Center, The Depot/Performing Arts Studio, the Veteran's Day Parade, and the Norman Music Festival. Some of these outside agencies also receive funding from additional sources such as United Way and City of Norman Room Tax allocations.

The Social and Voluntary Services Committee is asking the City for \$275,000. The Firehouse Art Center is asking for \$150,000. The Depot/Performing Arts Studio is asking for \$67,000. The Veteran's Day Parade is asking for \$500 for parade insurance, and the Norman Music Festival is asking for \$50,000. The following outside agencies were not present at the meeting, but are asking the City for the following funding:

Center for Children & Families Inc.: \$150,000
Historical Museum: \$50,000
Sooner Theatre: \$88,381
Aging Services Inc. – Kiwanis Kruiser: \$14,500
Wildcare: \$65,000

Tara Reynolds, CDBG Financial Management Analyst, spoke on behalf of SVSC. "City Council allocates funding to the Social and Voluntary Services Commission every year to disperse among the social service agencies of Norman," Reynolds said. "If you are a registered 501c3 serving the citizens of Norman, you are eligible to apply." She stated that nonprofit organizations can apply for up to a \$10,000 grant from the City of Norman through SVSC. One of the unique things about SVSC is that it is one of the few funding sources that are eligible for general operation expenses, like utility costs; whereas, most funding sources to foundations, and other grants, require funds to be used for a specific program. Each year the SVSC Commission goes through an application process to determine the funding amounts for each applicant.

Firehouse Art Center Executive Director and Curator Andy Couch stated that they have increased their funding request from \$120,000/year to \$150,000/year because they have expanded their services and they're "not sure that grants are going to work out". Couch stated, "Last fiscal year we were serving around seven to 8,000 people. That number has drastically changed to 29,000 people. We're trying our best to figure out a way to put money away; or to save; or how to sustain the growth that we're experiencing right now." The Firehouse Art Center has also received funds from the Norman Public School Foundation, The McCasland Foundation, and the Katherine B. Wells Macmillan Foundation to fund their fifth-grade art program. Couch stated that any increase in funding would go directly to the expansion of operations.

Shari Jackson with The Depot/Performing Arts Studio addressed the Committee with her request for additional funding. The Depot runs a 365 day a year waiting room for the Amtrak train service. The City granted The Depot/Performing Arts Studio \$56,400 last year. "This year we did just a slight increase (in our funding request) because we kind of calculated what it took," Jackson said. "That funding allowed us to get a part-time facilities manager and receptionist."

Shari Jackson also represented the Norman Music Alliance which produces the Norman Music Festival. Jackson stated that the Norman Music Festival is the 10th largest, free music event in the country and that it brought in visitors from over 30 states last year. "For our open call this year, we received 820 applications from 44 states and 21 other countries," Jackson said. "Big bands are applying through our open call now, hoping to get to come play." Monster (energy drink company) is a national sponsor of the Norman Music Festival and other sponsors are being pursued as well.

Chair Hinkle asked the City Budget Manager Kim Coffman if there was an estimate on what the budget deficit or surplus was going to be for fiscal year 2027. Coffman replied, "There are a lot of different projections and scenarios. Right now, we're working on trying to keep the General Fund in the black for fiscal year '27. This includes 4% cuts to all expenditures and that includes salaries and benefits in the way of freezing merits for this year."

City Manager Darrel Pyle added, "With the 4% reductions that are in the current fiscal year, carried over in the next fiscal year, and a freeze on merit increases to the salary schedule, and of course all of the associated costs that are a percentage of payroll, right now it looks like we can deliver you a budget with revenues in excess of expenditure projections by \$300,000 or \$400,000. If we put the 4% merits in there, we're in the red by about \$1.2 million."

Coffman made it clear that the City is not the only source of income for the outside agencies. She also highlighted some of the documents that the City requests when agencies apply for funding. "These organizations submit a packet every year for this meeting. We request that they submit financial statements, tax forms, a list of all revenue sources, a detail of their ask and how they spend funds that they receive," Coffman said. "If you look at the packets, you'll notice that they're not all uniform. Some submit tax forms, some don't. Every ask is pretty different." What we want to propose for fiscal year 2027 is that we combine all of the arts and events organizations into a category called Arts, Culture, and Event Organizations." Coffman recommended that the Parks Board vet and evaluate the applications to decide which organizations receive funds and how much. "Council would still determine, obviously, the amount to be spent; but we felt that there is some benefit to a more refined evaluation and application process," Coffman said. City staff does recommend an 8% cut to the City's 2026 contribution level for the outside agencies.

Councilmember Dixon stated, "If we're looking at cuts for the City and looking at cutting sanitation workers, police officers, firefighters, billing clerks, whatever...I think this entire \$845,381 (donation) should probably go away."

Councilmember Grant stated, "I'm leaning towards that (an 8% cut to the funding of the outside agencies) just because there are some things being funded especially through social and voluntary services that help keep our seniors housed and that is the fastest growing segment of our unhoused population."

Mayor Holman stated, "I'm supportive of continuing to fund these things, it's such a small percent of our total budget; but, when it comes down to it, we're looking at a tight budget, and every

penny really matters. So, take into consideration what's the benefit of these things versus what they cost.”

Chair Hinkle stated that Council will continue to review what the funding will look like.

2. DISCUSSION REGARDING PROPOSED INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT ESTABLISHING AND PARTICIPATING IN THE OKLAHOMA COOPERATIVE LIQUID ASSETS SECURITY SYSTEM AND RELATED CHANGES TO THE CITY'S INVESTMENT POLICY.

Assistant City Attorney Kathryn Walker led the discussion. Walker discussed the opportunity to make an amendment to the City's investment policy. “A State Senate bill was passed recently that allows municipalities to start investing in qualified pooled investments with other municipalities, public trust, political subdivisions, etc.,” Walker said. Because this bill was passed, the City has an opportunity to join the Oklahoma Cooperative Liquid Assets Security System. However, Walker stated, “To do that, we would need to amend our investment policy first, to match the new state statute and authorize this kind of investment; and then, we would need to do a resolution for the City and each public trust, approving and joining the interlocal agreement.”

City Manager Darrel Pyle added, “Typically such pools are utilized for liquidity management, daily cash management, and the equivalent prior to this tool being made available would be a money market account in a local bank. In a pooled scenario, you're able to potentially invest with a little more clout. It's actually a much more important tool for smaller communities in the state of Oklahoma.”

According to Pyle, participation in the agreement would not cost the City anything and it would generate returns like that of a money market account. “It provides a stable investment platform for all municipalities in the state of Oklahoma,” Pyle said. “We see it as an additional tool in our toolbox. It doesn't remove any tools, and we think it is really a solid benefit.”

With no objections to amending the City's investment policy to allow for joining the Oklahoma Cooperative Liquid Assets Security System, Kathryn Walker will move forward by putting the appropriate documents on Council's consent agenda.

3. DISCUSSION REGARDING MONTHLY REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE REPORTS.

Kim Coffman gave the report. February sales tax revenue was 13.6% higher than the sales tax revenue received in February of 2025. The year-to-date City revenue is 2.13% above the projected sales tax budget.

There is a proposed 2% increase in both the police and fire pensions circulating in the legislature. If this passes, Darrel Pyle believes it will be another \$600,000 or \$700,000 “hit” to the General Fund. Additional cuts to the City's General Fund will have to be made if this increase is approved.

Coffman closed with, “Our top two priorities right now, as we work on the fiscal year '27 budget, are figuring out how to make the General Fund expenditures meet the revenue that's coming in each year and not dipping into fund balance; and then, figuring out how to bring the Risk Management Fund back to a positive figure.”

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Hinkle adjourned the meeting at approximately 5:35 PM.

ATTEST:

City Clerk

Stephen Tyler Holman, Mayor