



CITY OF NORMAN, OK CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING

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

Tuesday, February 27, 2024 at 5:00 PM

MINUTES

The City Council of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met in Special Session in the Council Chambers of the Norman Municipal Building on the 27th day of February, 2024, at 5:00 p.m., and notice and agenda of the meeting were posted at the Municipal Building at 201 West Gray 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 6 Elizabeth Foreman
Councilmember Ward 7 Stephen Holman
Councilmember Ward 8 Matthew Peacock

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Mayor Heikkila.

AGENDA ITEMS

1. UPDATE AND DISCUSSION OF THE MICROTRANSIT PILOT PROGRAM.

Mr. Taylor Johnson, Transit and Parking Program Manager, provided an overview of what microtransit is and how it is used. While working with the consultant on the Go Norman Transit Plan, microtransit was discussed initially being considered for northwest and/or southeast Norman. He said in the Go Norman Transit Plan planning horizon, approximately ten years, it was identified there were greater needs, particularly with frequency, in areas already served by fixed route service. Due to cost constraints, this program was not explored any further. However, over the past couple of years, Council has been discussing the possibility of microtransit.

In the FYE 2023 \$750,000 was budgeted for the implementation of a Microtransit Program. A contract was awarded to HNTB on September 15, 2022, to study and narrow down goals for a pilot program. After a series of workshops and study sessions, request for proposals was issued on March 17, 2023, with an April 21st submission deadline. Three proposals were received and ultimately the contract was approved by Council on June 27, 2023, with River North Transit a subsidiary of VIA Transportation. The contract was not to exceed \$639,413 and the initial launch date was set for August 21, 2023.

Item 1, continued

In Spring 2023, the University of Oklahoma (OU) was looking to begin a similar process for the SafeRide Program, which offers students free rides Thursday through Saturday from 10:00 p.m. to 3:00 a.m. Council approved a contract with OU on August 8, 2023, which expanded the service hours Thursday through Saturday; expanded the microtransit zone map; increased the number of vehicles from four to five; increased the overall costs of the program \$121,130, which would be funded by OU; and provided free rides to OU students during SafeRide hours.

As part of the initial marketing campaign, with the intent of incentivizing potential riders to download the app and try out the service, every new account has a built in promotion that provides the first six rides free of charge. The first six rides free discounted trips made up 77% of all completed trips, some of which were also eligible for the SafeRide discount. As of January 31, 2024, approximately 80% of all completed trips qualified for one or both of the previously mentioned promotions and were provided without charge to the rider. The total farebox revenue through December 31, 2023, was only \$2,218.34.

Mr. Taylor said Staff and OU have been in discussions regarding expansion of the program as a result of a survey from riders. Additional costs for expansion of the program beginning March 1, 2024, through the end of the contract period is \$51,216.77 and to lower wait times would be an additional \$102,433.54. He said the initial pilot program is scheduled to end August 21, 2024, and asked for Council's direction on next steps.

Councilmember Grant said she is supportive of the expansion and its continued funding through FYE 2025. However, she is concerned about how the City will continue to fund it. She also suggested reaching out to Moore Norman Technology Center (MNTC) to see if there would be a potential partnership.

Councilmember Holman asked how much it would cost to add a route that would go to MNTC. Mr. Taylor said without buying another bus, \$400,000 to \$500,000. Councilmember Holman asked if it would be cheaper to add the microtransit city wide or expanding Embark Plus.

Councilmembers Holman and Schueler supported the expansion and the continued service in FYE 2025. Mr. Taylor said funding is not included on the current FYE 2025 budget so his Staff would have to get with Finance to obtain funding. Councilmember Holman suggested looking at changing the rate currently being charged.

2. DISCUSSION REGARDING TIME CHANGE FOR CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS.

Ms. Brenda Hall, City Clerk, said at the request of Council, Staff changed Council's meeting time for the February 13th conference to 4:00 p.m. and the Council Regular meeting to 5:30 p.m. due to the City Council election. Afterwards, Staff heard from several members of Council interested in doing it long term. As a result, this topic was scheduled on tonight's agenda to get Council input on how they wish to move forward.

Item 2, continued

Several members of Council did not support the change since they work full time jobs and would have difficulty doing it on a permanent basis. Concerns were also raised about accessibility for the public and their ability to participate in meetings.

Council consensus was not achieved so the proposed changes will not be done. Councilmember Grant suggested discussing it again at the annual retreat.

3. 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 IN RE: AQUEOUS FILM-FORMING FOAMS PRODUCTS LIABILITY LITIGATION, MDL NO. 2:18-MN-2873, UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT, DISTRICT OF SOUTH CAROLINA.

Motion made by Councilmember Ward 8 Peacock, Seconded by Councilmember Ward 2 Schueler.

Voting Yea: Mayor Heikkila, Councilmember Ward 1 Ball, Councilmember Ward 2 Schueler, Councilmember Ward 3 Montoya, Councilmember Ward 4 Grant, Councilmember Ward 5 Nash, Councilmember Ward 6 Foreman, Councilmember Ward 7 Holman, Councilmember Ward 8 Peacock

The City Council adjourned into Executive Session at 5:55 p.m. Mr. Darrel Pyle, City Manager; Ms. Kathryn Walker, City Attorney; Mr. Chris Mattingly, Director of Utilities; Mr. Nathan Madenwald, Utilities Engineer; and Ms. Shaakira Calnick, Internal Auditor, were in attendance at the Executive Session.

Motion made by Councilmember Ward 4 Grant, Seconded by Councilmember Ward 8 Peacock.

Voting Yea: Mayor Heikkila, Councilmember Ward 1 Ball, Councilmember Ward 2 Schueler, Councilmember Ward 3 Montoya, Councilmember Ward 4 Grant, Councilmember Ward 5 Nash, Councilmember Ward 6 Foreman, Councilmember Ward 7 Holman, Councilmember Ward 8 Peacock

The Executive Session was adjourned out of and the Special Session was reconvened at 6:21 p.m.

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 foams products Liability Litigation, MDL No. 2:18-MN-2873, United States District Court, District of South Carolina was discussed in Executive Session. No action was taken and no votes were cast.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:22 p.m.

ATTEST:

City Clerk

Mayor