

Norman Board of Parks Commissioners
December 7, 2023

The Norman Board of Parks Commissioners of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met on the 7th day of December 2023 at 5:30 p.m., and notice and agenda of the meeting were posted at 201 West Gray Street - 24 hours prior to the beginning of the meeting.

ROLL CALL

Present: Chair Wright and Commissioners Davison, Isacksen, Ross, Sallee, Sheriff, and Usry

Absent: Commissioners Moxley and One Vacancy

City Officials

Present: Jason Olsen, Director of Parks and Recreation
James Briggs, Park Development Manager
Veronica Tracy, Recreation Manager
Wade Thompson, Parks Manager
Bethany Grissom, Park Planner
Mitchell Richardson, Recreation Supervisor
Karla Sitton, Administrative Technician IV

ITEM 1, being:

CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL, REJECTION, AMENDED AND/OR POSTPONEMENT OF
MINUTES FROM OCTOBER 5, 2023, PARK BOARD MEETING

Commissioner Isacksen made the motion, and Commissioner Ross seconded to approve the October 5, 2023, Park Board minutes. The vote was taken with the following results:

YEAH: Chair Wright and Commissioners Davison, Isacksen, Ross, Sallee, Sheriff, and Usry

NAY: None

ITEM 2, being:

CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL, REJECTION, AMENDED AND/OR POSTPONEMENT OF
PREVIOUSLY APPROVED COUNCIL ACTIONS

Mr. Jason Olsen, Director of Parks and Recreation, highlighted the previously approved Council actions pertaining to the Parks and Recreation Department.

The previously approved Council actions are as follows:

- Rebate payment in the amount of \$348 from Pepsi Bev Co to the City for the exclusive sale of Pepsi products at Westwood Golf and WWFAC
 - Contract K-2324-74 is between the City & Center for Children and Families to operate the Boys & Girls Club Programming at the Reaves Park Center.
 - Resolution R-2324-80, transferring \$37,609.76 from Reimbursements-Refunds-Miscellaneous General Account to be used for the Senior Wellness Center Project.
 - Resolution R-2324-52, creating an Ad Hoc Steering Committee to work with consultants in the creation of the City's Area and Infrastructure Master Plan (AIM Norman) to name a replacement for a Steering Committee Member, acknowledging the addition of Parks and Recreation Plan, adding the list of partners, clarifying the process of selection of subcommittee members and setting attendance requirements
 - Proclamation P-2324-17, commending City Employees and Department Coordinators for their generosity and leadership in the 2023 United Way of Norman Charity Campaign
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ITEM 3, being:

CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL, REJECTION, AMENDED AND/OR POSTPONEMENT OF LAND OR FEE IN LIEU OF PARKLAND FOR THE UNIVERSITY NORTH PARK ENTERTAINMENT DISTRICT PUD ADDITION

Mr. James Briggs, Park Development Manager, said the University North Park Entertainment District (UNPED) Addition PUD is located north of Rock Creek Road, between I-35 and 24th Avenue NW. This preliminary plat includes a large sports arena and many associated commercial developments in the southern half of the property. The northern half comprises a mix of residential uses, totaling 97 single-family lots and 750 multi-family housing units. At this density, the addition would generate a public parkland dedication of 3.9541 acres, and private park development would be twice the public amount, or 7.9082 acres. A private park decision would generate \$63,525 in Community Park Fees.

Mr. Briggs said the developer would like to pursue a private park decision and has asked the City to consider only the open space available throughout the residential northern half of the development to satisfy this requirement. These spaces total 7.94 acres, including the open area around the neighborhood clubhouse property and the land shown as open/green in several large traffic islands, undeveloped odd-shaped lots, easements, and walking spaces around the proposed ponds.

The developer's proposal includes walking trails, landscaped seating areas, picnicking spaces, and the clubhouse mentioned above, with usable land around that amenity. The developer also proposed an additional 9.1 acres of green space in the development's southern half, including shade seating, walking paths (around the ponds and connecting to the different use zones), and outdoor urban-style festival spaces around the arena.

Staff recommends a private park decision for the UNPED Addition PUD, provided that a combination of active and passive space is included in the planning of the private parkland. Commissioner Isacksen asked for clarification on whether only the north part of the land/plat is being considered for parkland. Mr. Briggs said the south part of the land/plat is not driving the parkland decision, and no residential area is being proposed south of Radius Way.

Commissioner Usry made the motion, and Commissioner Isacksen seconded approving and accepting a private parkland decision with 7.908 access for the University North Park Entertainment District Addition PUD. The vote was taken with the following results:

YEAH:	Chair Wright and Commissioners Davison, Isacksen, Ross, Sallee, Sheriff, and Usry
NAY:	None

ITEM 4, being:

CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL, REJECTION, AMENDED AND/OR POSTPONEMENT OF LAND OR FEE IN LIEU OF PARKLAND FOR THE SOONER VILLAGE ADDITION PUD

Mr. James Briggs, Park Development Manager, said the Sooner Village Addition PUD is located at the southwest corner of the intersection of State Highway 9 and Jenkins Avenue. He said this preliminary plat includes a variety of uses, including a gas/convenience store at the highway intersection, areas of mixed commercial space, self-storage units, office/warehouse area, a hotel, and some residential properties that are a mix of townhomes, apartments, and duplexes. A total of 211 units is proposed, generating a public parkland dedication requirement of 0.9337 acres at this density. A private park development would be twice the public amount, or 1.8674 acres, and generate \$15,825 in Community Park Development Fees.

Mr. Briggs said the developer would like to pursue a private park decision and has shown several acres of open space and/or private parkland on the preliminary plat that could satisfy this request. These areas will have walking trails, outdoor sports, playgrounds, and picnic areas. The developer will be required to provide proof of all park development costs equal to or greater than that which the City would have collected in park fees when

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building permits are issued in the future. This PUD is in an area isolated from other public parks to a large extent. The nearest park is Eagle Cliff; however, no sidewalk or street leads to that neighborhood without traveling along Highway 9 for most of the route. Any funds used to improve Eagle Cliff would not be readily accessible to the Sooner Village Addition PUD residents.

Mr. Briggs said staff favors a private park decision for the Sooner Village Addition PUD, provided that a combination of active and passive space is included in the planning of private parkland. Commissioner Ross asked whether the tree line could be cut down along Bishop Creek, and Mr. Briggs said no, it would stay as is. Commissioner Isacksen asked who would ensure the developer complies with proof of all park development cost requirements. Mr. Briggs said the developer will provide a plan and submit bonds (maintenance and statutory bonds), and staff will inspect and return the bonds once they are completed. He said the developer/builder cannot obtain Certificates of Occupancy for residential building permits if they do not comply with the requirement(s).

Commissioner Davison made the motion, and Commissioner Saltee seconded to approve and accept a private parkland decision for the Sooner Village Addition PUD. The vote was taken with the following results:

YEAH: Chair Wright and Commissioners Davison, Moxley, Ross, Saltee, Sheriff, and Usry

NAY: None

Chair Wright requested to move to item #6 as a courtesy to applicants who are present.

ITEM 6, being:

CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL, REJECTION, AMENDED AND/OR POSTPONEMENT OF A WILDWOOD COMMUNITY CHURCH BRIDGE REQUEST IN THE HALL PARK GREENBELT

Mr. Mark Robinson, Pastor at Wildwood Community Church (Wildwood), introduced himself and Toni Bragg with the McKinney Partnership Architects to the Board. Mr. Robinson said in 2007, Wildwood entered a land exchange with the City of Norman Parks and Recreation Department. The Church transferred property located on the east and south sides of the church property that abuts up to the existing greenbelt (totaling 102,176 sq. ft.), and in return, the City transferred City property north of the existing church building and greenbelt area (totaling 49,580 sq ft). This exchange would allow the City to expand the existing greenbelt and allow Wildwood Community Church to build a much-needed parking lot. In 2008, Wildwood built a wood pedestrian bridge that connected their new parking lot to the church campus. Mr. Robinson said Wildwood would like to construct a second pedestrian bridge to connect a new parking lot area to the Wildwood campus better. He said the proposed bridge would be built over the existing greenbelt trail and have double columns to minimize impact to waterflow. Mr. Robinson noted Wildwood would also like permission to construct a new sidewalk along 24th Avenue from the parking lots to the south that would connect to the trail/walk and continue north to Wildwood Campus. He showed the Board a site plan of the existing bridge, proposed a new bridge, and proposed a new sidewalk. Mr. Bragg said the new sidewalk will connect the neighborhood to the trail systems in Hall Park. Commissioner Davison asked who would maintain the bridge, and staff said Wildwood would be responsible. Commissioner Isacksen asked if the newly proposed bridge would be twice the size of the existing bridge, and Mr. Robinson said yes.

Commissioner Usry made the motion, and Commissioner Davison seconded to recommend granting the easement to Wildwood Community Church to allow the construction of a new pedestrian bridge to their campus and a new sidewalk along 24th Avenue that will connect the neighborhood to the Hall Park trail system. The vote was taken with the following results:

YEAH: Chair Wright and Commissioners Davison, Moxley, Ross, Saltee, Sheriff, and Usry

NAY: None

Chair Wright went back to Item #5.

ITEM 5, being:

CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL, REJECTION, AMENDED AND/OR POSTPONEMENT OF AN UPDATE REGARDING THE YOUNG FAMILY ATHLETIC CENTER (YFAC) POLICY AND FEE SCHEDULE

Mr. Jason Olsen, Director of Parks and Recreation, said the Council Business and Community Affairs Committee (BACA) recently discussed the Young Family Athletic Center (YFAC) Policy; however, discussions continue regarding the hours of operation and fee schedule. He said BACA requested staff removal or planning from policy, and the board agreed. Mr. Olsen said recent discussions regarding the YFAC hours of operation prompted the City to consider opening the facility on Sundays. He highlighted the proposed hours of operation to include the following:

Monday – Friday: 7:00 am – 9:00 pm
Saturday: 8:00 am – 6:00 pm
Sunday: 12:00 pm – 4:00 pm

Mr. Olsen said recent discussions also suggested the YFAC will have a minimum of one hundred (100) hours of community open gym/swim annually for Norman residents at no cost by opening the facility to the public during non-regular operating hours. Commissioner Ross asked whether the 100 hours would be random or somewhat regular, and staff said the YFAC would be scheduled well ahead of time so that the random hours would be scheduled monthly.

Mr. Olsen updated the Community Partners agreements with the Norman Optimist Club, Norman Public Schools, and Sooner Swim Club Rise Volleyball. He said the Council will consider a contract on December 12th with Beanstalk Coffee and Sno (Beanstalk) as the exclusive Food and Beverage provider inside the YFAC. He said Beanstalk's hours of operation will match the hours of operation for the YFAC, and they will have complete control of the menu. Mr. Olsen said the City has also been discussing a contract with the Trae Young Family Foundation to operate the Adidas store located in the YFAC.

Commissioner Sallee made the motion, and Commissioner Davison seconded to recommend the Operating Hours and Serviceability of the YFAC Policy to state the Parks and Recreation Department commits to having the center available for passive activities at an average of 70 hours per week (removing *or planned* per BACA request) and include a minimum one hundred (100) hours of community open gym/swim annually for Norman residents at no cost by opening the facility to the public during non-regular operating hours. The vote was taken with the following results:

YEAH:	Chair Wright and Commissioners Davison, Moxley, Ross, Sallee, Sheriff, and Usry
NAY:	None

ITEM 7, being:

ANNUAL PRESENTATION FROM THE WESTWOOD FAMILY AQUATIC CENTER

Ms. Veronica Tracy, Recreation Manager, highlighted the annual Westwood Family Aquatic Center (WWFAC) annual report. She said attendance for the 2023 season was as follows: 14,538 Aquatic Programs, 2,372 Special Events, 112,942 Open Swim, and 790 Rentals for a total season attendance of 130,642, just up from last year's 129,879. Ms. Tracy said 7,546 Season Passes were purchased, 2,322 Swim Lessons were bought, and WWFAC provided 2,120 scholarships.

Ms. Tracy said the 2023 WWFAC revenue was \$1,022,583.08, up slightly from 963,214.77 in 2022. She said the revenue includes season pool passes, swim lessons, gate admission, concession sales, special events, lockers, rentals, classes, and merchandise. Ms. Tracy said the staff is considering giving season pass holders free lockers for 2024. Chair Wright asked where the WWFAC revenue goes, and Staff said it goes to the Westwood Fund.

Ms. Tracy said the City hires over 140 seasonal employees at the WWFAC each summer. She said WWFAC has a fantastic team; most are rehires from previous seasons. She highlighted the aquatic program and said the Teen Aquatic Safety Program was new and worked very well. She said teens, 13 to 15 years old, participate in the Aquatic Safety Program, and then they can enter WWFAC without an adult; otherwise, they cannot enter WWFAC without a parent/adult. Ms. Tracy said WWFAC offers several different events for families and adults and noted that over 2,000 participated in the summer of 2023, including Free Scuba Lessons in partnership with Warriors for Freedom and Blue Water Dive Shop and an Inclusive Swim in partnership with Sooner Success.

Ms. Tracy said future WWFAC projects that could be funded through a capital project and/or bond project include installing eight Private Cabanas and a Flow Rider. She told me the cabanas could accommodate half-day or whole-day rentals, and the Return on Investment (ROI) would be about two seasons. The Flow Rider is a surf simulator that would be an investment for the WWFAC and not an ROI; however, it is the only attraction that revenue can be built around, i.e., Flow Rider birthday parties, private lessons, and/or special events.

The Board acknowledged the report.

ITEM 8, being:

NORMAN FORWARD UPDATE

Mr. Jason Olsen, Director of Parks and Recreation, gave an update on the Norman Forward Projects.

Young Family Athletic Center

Mr. Olsen said the second asphalt layer was added to the parking lot, parking stripes will be painted soon, and landscaping has begun. He said the pool would be quickly plastered, and the electricity was being finished. Mr. Olsen said the basketball courts have been installed and look fantastic, and the scoreboards will be mounted soon. He showed pictures depicting the progress and said the ribbon cutting is still scheduled for February 19, 2024.

Adult Wellness and Education Center

Mr. Olsen said the ribbon cutting was held on November 13th at the Adult Wellness and Education Center (AWE) and exceeded all expectations. He told the AWE already has 900 members, and the 1,000th member will get a prize.

Reaves Park

Mr. Olsen said the latest Norman Forward quality-of-life initiative through public art was unveiled at Reaves Park on December 5. He said "Mechan 14", a 15-foot robot sculpture by artist Tyler Fuqua, is the first giant robot in Norman and offers a dynamic presence in the park. He said the giant robot has interchangeable parts that allow it to transform from a Home Run Mechan with a baseball bat to a Bold Knight Mechan with a sword.

ITEM 9, being:

DIVISIONAL UPDATES

Ms. Veronica Tracy, Recreation Manager, said the Andrews Park Community Tree Lighting is tomorrow, December 8th. She said festivities would begin at 5:30 pm, and participants could enjoy hot cocoa and holiday music while waiting on the tree lighting at dark. Winterfest at Legacy Park is on December 9th at 5:30 p.m. Talk of the Town will perform holiday classics, little ones can have their picture taken with Santa and a fireworks extravaganza will take place at 7:00 p.m. Ms. Tracy said the Annual Ugly Sweater Run is on December 10th at Legacy Park. Runners can run or walk the 3K and are encouraged to wear their favorite seasonal sweater.

Commissioner Sallee left the meeting at 7:02 p.m.

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Ms. Tracy said the YFAC basketball registration is open, and the Daddy Daughter Dance (DDD) and Mom Prom tickets are on sale. The DDD is on February 10th at Embassy Suites, and the Mom Prom is on May 4th at The Noun.

Mr. James Briggs, Park Development Manager, said work continues on the pickleball courts at Bentley Park. He said playground bids for Sunrise and Falls Lakeview Parks and a new restroom building at Reaves Park had gone out. Mr. Briggs said staff will present the Andrews Park Master Plan at a Council Study Session on December 6th, and the Council will consider approving the Master Plan at a January Council meeting.

Mr. Wade Thompson, Parks Manager, said Park Maintenance Staff has been assisting with projects at the YFAC, helping with all the upcoming holiday events, removing trees on City property, replacing a tin horn at Saxon Park, and doing fence maintenance at the Andrews Park Skate Park.

Mr. Wade Thompson, Parks Manager, said staff is helping assist with the Parks and Recreation Division events and continue to install the annual Christmas Lights throughout the City.

MISCELLANEOUS DISCUSSION

Mr. Jason Olsen, Director of Parks and Recreation, said the Norman Public Library Central branch closed November 13th after officials were made aware that mold was found at the facility. After investigating, contractors discovered several areas of mold on each library floor from water intrusion potentially stemming from roof and envelope issues. Mr. Olsen said the Central Library will remain closed for five months while Cavins Group (a company specializing in disaster response) assists with mold remediation. He said the City is hiring a building envelope consultant to help determine the underlying cause of the mold growth.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Wright adjourned the meeting at 7:10 p.m.

Passed and approved this _____ of _____ 2024

Sherrel Sheriff, Chair