CITY OF NORMAN, OK
CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING - AMENDED

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

Tuesday, June 30, 2026 at 5:30 PM

MINUTES

The City Council Special Meeting of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met in Regular Session in the Executive Conference Room in the Municipal Building, on Tuesday, June 30, 2026, at 5:30 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 48 hours prior to the beginning of the meeting.

It is the policy of the City of Norman that no person or groups of persons shall on the grounds of race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, age, place of birth, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, familial status, marital status, including marriage to a person of the same sex, disability, relation, or genetic information, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise subjected to discrimination in employment activities or in all programs, services, or activities administered by the City, its recipients, sub-recipients, and contractors. In the event of any comments, complaints, modifications, accommodations, alternative formats, and auxiliary aids and services regarding accessibility or inclusion, please call 405-366-5424, Relay Service: 711. To better serve you, five (5) business days' advance notice is preferred.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Holman called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

PRESENT
Mayor Stephen Holman
Councilmember Ward 1 David Gandesbery
Councilmember Ward 3 Robert Bruce
Councilmember Ward 5 Trey Kirby
Councilmember Ward 7 Kimberly Blodgett
Councilmember Ward 8 Scott Dixon

ABSENT
Councilmember Ward 2 Matthew Peacock
Councilmember Ward 4 Helen Grant
Councilmember Ward 6 Joshua Hinkle

AGENDA ITEMS

1. UPDATE AND DISCUSSION REGARDING THE LINDSEY STREET WATER TOWER.

   Mr. Chris Mattingly, Utilities Director and Mr. Nathan Madenwald, Utilities Engineer, presented an update regarding the Lindsey Street Water Tower and options for its future use. Staff discussed alternatives including demolition of the tower or preserving and repainting the structure, potentially in conjunction with a third-party marketing agreement.

   Council discussed anticipated costs associated with demolition and preservation of the tower, including the potential salvage value of materials removed during demolition. Discussion included whether salvage rights and the value of scrap materials should be specifically addressed in bid documents to ensure contractors appropriately account for those materials when preparing bids. Staff indicated that bid specifications could be clarified regarding the disposition of salvage materials.

   Staff presented the concept of preserving and repainting the tower and incorporating lighting and a third-party logo or other advertising. The tower could potentially serve as a recognizable landmark and tourist attraction due to its proximity to the University of Oklahoma football stadium. Lighting could also allow the tower to be illuminated in different colors for holidays, community events, University events, and other occasions.

   Staff discussed a potential 10-year marketing agreement under which a third party would make an initial payment of approximately $75,000 followed by nine annual payments of approximately $50,000, for a total of approximately $525,000. Council discussed the appropriate length of the agreement, renewal options, and the importance of receiving additional compensation if the agreement is extended beyond the initial term. Staff advised that any third-party agreement would be brought to Council for approval and would identify the participating entity and proposed design before implementation.

   Council also discussed potential future reuse of the tower for non-potable water storage, including irrigation of Reeves Park or other nearby facilities. Staff explained that such reuse would require additional infrastructure but could remain a future possibility if the structure is preserved.

   Council reviewed preliminary financial comparisons of the available alternatives. Staff explained that preserving, painting, and utilizing the tower through a third-party agreement could ultimately result in a lower net cost to the City than demolition, depending upon the bids received and final terms of the agreement. Council noted that the City would incur costs under any of the alternatives and discussed the additional community value that could result from retaining the structure as a landmark.

   Council expressed interest in reviewing actual bid amounts and additional information regarding the proposed third-party agreement before making a final determination. Staff indicated that the information could be brought back for discussion with the full Council, including the incoming Councilmembers, prior to consideration of a resolution authorizing the City Manager to proceed with the preferred alternative.

Staff anticipated returning to Council with additional information in July. If preservation and painting of the tower are ultimately approved, the work is anticipated to take approximately 60 days following authorization, with efforts made to coordinate construction impacts with University of Oklahoma football activities.

2. UPDATE AND DISCUSSION REGARDING THE GRAY STREET SHELTER.

Mr. Jason Olsen, Parks and Recreation Director and Lance Harper, Facility and Construction Program Manager presented an update regarding the Gray Street Shelter and improvements necessary to continue operating the facility until completion of the permanent shelter.

Staff explained that the existing shelter occupies portions of three interconnected buildings that have been modified numerous times over the years, resulting in challenges related to fire separation, building materials, fire suppression, and other life-safety requirements. After reviewing the property with an architect, staff determined that relocating shelter operations into the westernmost building, referred to as the Couch Building, would provide a more feasible and cost-effective interim solution.

The Couch Building contains an existing firewall and can accommodate approximately 55 beds, maintaining approximately the same capacity as the current shelter. Staff explained that the proposed improvements would include architectural and construction plans, installation of a fire sprinkler and alarm system, limited interior modifications, lighting, HVAC improvements, restroom access modifications, and other work necessary to meet applicable requirements. Several improvements could be completed by City building maintenance staff to reduce costs.

Staff emphasized that the State Fire Marshal established firm deadlines for demonstrating progress toward compliance. Construction drawings were required by July 15, 2026, followed by additional fire suppression and alarm system documentation. Failure to meet the required deadlines could result in closure of the existing shelter and displacement of approximately 54 individuals. The proposed relocation would allow the existing shelter to remain operational while improvements to the Couch Building are completed, providing for a transition without interruption of shelter services.

Council discussed the proposed project cost and the amount of contingency included for unforeseen construction conditions. Staff indicated that approximately $214,000 was being considered as a not-to-exceed amount, with anticipated actual costs expected to be lower. Funding could be provided from an existing capital project previously established for planning and engineering associated with the future permanent shelter, rather than requiring a new funding source.

Council discussed whether City Care could contribute toward the cost of the improvements, particularly the fire suppression system. Staff agreed to discuss the possibility with City Care and provide Council with an update.

Item 2, continued

Council also discussed the limited nature of the proposed improvements, including the inability to economically add showers because of existing plumbing and utility limitations. Staff emphasized that the intent was to make only those improvements necessary to safely maintain existing shelter capacity until the permanent facility is completed, which is anticipated to remain approximately 18 to 24 months away.

Alternative interim shelter options were also discussed, including a proposal associated with White Buffalo Alliance and other temporary structures or facilities that could potentially serve a larger number of individuals. Staff advised that preliminary research into some temporary shelter structures indicated substantially higher costs and additional requirements for a suitable site, restroom and shower facilities, and other infrastructure. Council requested that staff continue evaluating alternative options.

Council expressed general support for proceeding with the immediate architectural work necessary to meet the State Fire Marshal's July 15, 2026, deadline and maintain operation of the existing shelter. Staff indicated that the architect would be engaged immediately to begin preparing the required construction drawings and that Council would continue to receive updates as the project progresses.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

ATTEST:

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City Clerk Mayor