



CITY OF NORMAN, OK CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION

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

Tuesday, February 21, 2023 at 5:30 PM

MINUTES

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 contact the ADA Technician at 405-366-5446, Relay Service: 711. To better serve you, five (5) business days' advance notice is preferred.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Heikkila called the Meeting to Order at 5:30 p.m.

PRESENT

Mayor Larry Heikkila
Councilmember Ward 2 Lauren Schueler
Councilmember Ward 4 Helen Grant
Councilmember Ward 5 Rarchar Tortorello
Councilmember Ward 6 Elizabeth Foreman
Councilmember Ward 7 Stephen Holman
Councilmember Ward 8 Matthew Peacock

ABSENT

Councilmember Ward 3 Kelly Lynn

AGENDA ITEMS

1. PRESENTATION OF THE NORTH BASE FACILITIES MASTER PLAN.

Mr. Shawn O'Leary, Director of Public Works, introduced Ms. Sarah Margaret Hendrickson with ADG, Inc., and Mr. Tony Blatt from ADG/Blatt Architects. He said multiple City departments share the North Base property. He said the North Base Facility is a 70 year old facility constructed in 1952 by the United States (U.S.) Navy.

Item 1, continued:

Mr. O'Leary highlighted the timeline of the project that included a Request for Proposal in July 2021; contract awarded to ADG/Blatt Architects in October 2021; information gathering in December 2021; Operational Analysis in January 2022; Program Development in March 2022; Conceptual Design in May 2022; Feasibility Study in August 2022; Final Report Development in December 2022; and final report and presentation tonight. He said North Base consists of 25.8 acres and is home to Line Maintenance; Fleet Maintenance; Traffic Division; Sanitation Division; Transit Division; Fire Department Training Facility; Parks Maintenance; and the Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) Fuel Facility. During the North Base Facilities Master Plan (NBMP) discussion phase, Staff was asked if the Lindsey Street Yard, that consists of 5.2 acres on Lindsey Street, could be moved onto North Base, which Mr. O'Leary said is possible; however, more land would be needed as well as a clever phasing plan. He said the Lindsey Street Yard houses Staff from the Street and Stormwater Divisions as well as Information Technology (IT) (fiber network building).

Mr. O'Leary said the current Fleet Maintenance Facility has no insulation, poor ventilation, is not energy efficient, and contains asbestos. The Fleet Maintenance Facility is about one-half the size it needs to be (according to a third party Fleet Management Study conducted in 2015), has no drive-thru bays, has inadequate vertical clearance, and although it has had multiple modifications by the City it has insufficient storage and a need for systemized organization. North Base has a hodge-podge of storage facilities from the Navy Base (Quonset huts) and storage needs overlap into different programmed spaces. He said there is inadequate space for large tools, construction materials, and bulk storage and material storage is a concern especially for equipment staging during weather events as well as salt barn capacity.

There is also inefficient circulation of vehicles; limited employee parking; need for parking of staged or work-in-progress (WIP) vehicles; need for secure parking of vehicles; need for systemized circulation of vehicles; lack of adequate employee spaces; lack of gathering areas; lack of properly sized meeting spaces; and employee growth is limited to space.

Mr. Black said the goal of the NBMP is to develop a sound, actionable, and fiscally responsible facilities master plan that supports all aspects of multiple City of Norman departments' operational needs existing now and over the next 30 years. He said there is additional land south of North Base (13.3 acres) with an appraised value of \$1.7 million currently owned by the University of Oklahoma (OU) that could possibly be acquired. He said if Lindsey Street Yard is relocated to North Base then that land could be sold for the appraised value of \$1.4 million. The North Base land acquisition would allow for entry/exit points off Goddard Avenue and Da Vinci Street onto Flood Avenue. Currently, Goddard Avenue is a private road owned and maintained by OU and the City does not have permission from OU to access that road so that is why it is not being utilized today. Mr. O'Leary said even if the City acquired this property, they would still need permission from OU to utilize portions of Goddard Avenue and Staff would be happy to enter into negotiations with OU regarding the land and street access.

Item 1, continued:

Mr. Black said smaller vehicles would be relocated to the perimeter of the property to include covered parking for fleet vehicles as well as electric vehicle (EV) charging stations. There will also be space for larger vehicle parking and storage for vehicles going to auction.

Mr. Black highlighted proposed phasing of the project that includes Phase I: fuel island relocation, Goddard access, and additional fueling island at Fill Station – 2023, \$4.3 to \$5.6 million – 2033, \$11 to \$14.5 million – 2053, \$51.7 to \$67.8 million; Phase II: address overhead power – 2023, \$670,000 to \$895,000 – 2033, \$1.7 to \$2.3 million – 2053, \$8.1 to \$10.8 million; Phase III: Fleet Maintenance Bays and maintaining daily operations - 2023, \$7.5 to \$12.2 million – 2033, \$19.4 to \$31.8 million – 2053, \$90.4 to \$148 million; Phase IV: partial building demolition, additional maintenance bays for Traffic Division, and sign shop – 2023, \$5.1 to \$8.3 million – 2033, \$13.3 to \$21.6 million – 2053, \$62.1 to \$101 million; Phase V: final facility build-out, covered parking, and EV charging stations – 2023, \$13 to \$18.9 million – 2033, \$33.7 to \$49 million – 2053, \$157 to \$229 million; Phase VI: administration construction and employee parking construction – 2023, \$11.2 to \$15.4 million – 2033, \$29 to \$40 million – 2053, \$135 to \$187 million; Phase VII: fire training tower demolition/relocation and Facility Maintenance building – 2023, \$10.5 to \$14.4 million – 2033, \$27.2 to \$37.3 million – 2053, \$127 to \$174 million; Phase VIII: fire training tower relocation, Fire Department expansion, and additional department maintenance and storage – 2023, \$7.9 to \$10.3 million- 2033, \$20.5 to \$26.7 million – 2053, \$95.4 to \$124 million; Phase IX: secure auction parking lot, supplemental fleet and employee parking, salt barn/brine production, bulk material storage, and equipment staging/light pole storage – 2023, \$12.2 to \$17.5 million – 2033, \$36.9 to \$54 million – 2053, \$184 to \$271 million; and Phase X: additional work area/maintenance bays and covered parking with EV charging – 2023, \$15.4 to \$22.9 million – 2033, \$40.1 to \$59.3 million – 2053, \$187 to \$277 million. Total project costs in 2023, are estimated to be \$75.6 to \$109 million, in 2033, will be \$196 to \$282.5 million, and 2053, will be \$913.9 million to \$1.3 billion.

Next steps include adoption of plan, acquisition of land, and exploring financing options.

There was consensus to move forward with adoption of the Plan.

Councilmember Peacock asked if National Infrastructure Plan funds could be used for infrastructure portions of the NBMP and Mr. Darrel Pyle, City Manager, said he has not seen the federal infrastructure plan, but it may be possible that some infrastructure within the NBMP could be eligible for federal money. Mr. O’Leary said General Obligation (G.O.) Bonds (requiring an election) are common uses for these types of projects, but believes the plan will need a hybrid of financing options.

Ms. Brenda Hall, City Clerk, said she would email the election calendar to Council to update them on what issues are coming forward regarding water/sewer rates, bridges, etc.

Item 1, continued:

Items submitted for the record

1. PowerPoint presentation entitled, "North Base Facilities Master Plan," dated February 21, 2022

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Mayor Heikkila said Item 3 will be discussed prior to Item 2.

3. DISCUSSION REGARDING APPOINTMENTS FOR THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AD HOC COMMITTEE AND STRONG TOWN AD HOC COMMITTEE.

Mayor Heikkila said Mary Elizabeth Mock with Garver Engineering (Garver) said Garver was selected to lead Norman's 2045 Comprehensive Plan along with their partnering team from RDg Planning and Design (RDg). She said the RDg team is experts in comprehensive planning. She said Garver understands the local dynamics since they are local to Norman and have a lot of ideas on what is happening in Norman while RDg brings a wonderful national perspective. She said Norman's 2045 Comprehensive Plan is truly expansive and includes a housing market and affordability strategy; a Comprehensive Transportation Plan; Stormwater Master Plan; Sanitation Master Plan; Water Hydraulic Modeling update; and Wastewater Master Plan. She said together, Garver and RDg will put together a playbook that provides a win for the community and its future.

Goal One is to produce something realistically visionary, Goal Two is to build consensus, and Goal Three is to create a useful plan. Ms. Mock said to accomplish these goals, an effective steering committee is critical to success. She said the comprehensive plan will be managed by the Core Management Team as well as City Staff, City Council, and a Steering Committee made up of community members. The Steering Committee will consist of a Committee Chair with ten to 13 members that will be the voting body of a strategic Council that will oversee 24 to 30 subcommittee members. The Steering Committee will ensure the flavor and feel of the Comprehensive Plan reflects desires of the community by reviewing Master Plans' recommendations; ensure the master plans work as a family of documents, reinforcing and supporting the 2045 Comprehensive Plan vision and representing the diversity and variety of Norman's citizens.

Ms. Mock said the Steering Committee will consist of two City Councilmembers and two Planning Commission members as well as a representatives from economic development; OU; major employers; young professionals; human services; developers; builders; tradeworkers; and advocacy groups. The subcommittees are meant to provide guidance at the Master Plan level and give input on subject matters for which they have experience, expertise, or a particular passion. At Staff's request, the subcommittees will be divided into groups that include utilities, transportation, stormwater, and housing all to be managed by Staff employed within those fields.

Item 3, continued:

Ms. Mock said the Utilities subcommittee members could consist of Utilities Staff; an OU Professor knowledgeable about water, wastewater, sanitation, etc.; representatives from the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality (ODEQ); Oklahoma Water Resources Board (OWRB); Homeowner Association (HOA) Officers; developers; and builders. The Transportation subcommittee members could consist of Public Works Staff; OU Professor knowledgeable about transportation issues; representatives from ODEQ; OWRB; HOA Officers; developers; and builders. The Stormwater subcommittee could consist of Public Works Staff, representatives from the disability community; bicycle/pedestrian advocates; Association of Central Oklahoma Governments (ACOG); Cleveland County; and Westheimer Airport. The Housing subcommittee could consist of Community Development Staff and representatives for realtors; builders; developers; landlords; non-profit developers; Norman Housing Authority; and providers for the homeless.

Councilmember Schueler felt Council needed more time to discuss who should serve on these committees because this is an important task that cannot be rushed and Mayor Heikkila agreed. He said he chose applicants based on their skill and expertise, but Council needs to discuss which applicant is best suited for each committee. Councilmember Schueler volunteered to serve on the Steering Committee.

Councilmembers felt the Strong Town Ad Hoc Committee applicants were appropriate and few changes were needed.

Ms. Hall said the Planning Department will not be bringing the contract with Garver forward to Council until the last meeting in March or first meeting in April so this gives Council an opportunity to meet one more time to discuss the appointments. Staff suggested meeting March 17, 2023, for further discussion and Council concurred.

Items submitted for the record

1. PowerPoint presentation entitled, "Delivering Norman's Plan for 2045: Your Playbook for the Future," dated February 21, 2023

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2. DISCUSSION REGARDING THE NEIGHBORHOOD ALLIANCE PROGRAM.

Ms. Lisa Krieg, Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Manager, said Neighborhood Alliance is an organization that coordinates the development of neighborhood associations in central Oklahoma through training, networking, organizational support and information services to improve active participation in building sustainable neighborhoods. She said the City of Norman has been funding its local Neighborhood Alliance for 15 years and they have been an amazing resource for their CDBG Program. She introduced Ms. Georgiane Rasco, Executive Director of Neighborhood Alliance, and Mr. Leo Zombolo, Norman Community Program Organizer.

Item 2, continued:

Ms. Rasco said the Neighborhood Alliance's mission is to create safe, attractive, and healthy neighborhoods. Ms. Rasco said Neighborhood alliance believes in protecting property values and creating great places to live, work, and play. Neighborhood Alliance also believes in knowing neighborhood police and fire officers by their first names; believes in front porches, sidewalks, and neighborhood parks; and believes people do not have to move in order to live in a better neighborhood. She said the number one crime prevention tool is to create a more social neighborhood and Neighborhood Alliance encourages citizens to educate themselves to be better, more involved, and more informed citizens. Neighborhood Alliance believes neighbors, City Council, and municipal employees all want a great City filled with great neighborhoods. She said Neighborhood Alliance believes that with support and training, all citizens have the power to be great neighborhood leaders and lead neighborhood change.

Ms. Rasco said Neighborhood Alliance is a non-profit organization with a diverse Board of Directors. The Neighborhood Alliance supports approximately 600 different neighborhoods, which equals about 225,000 households with 350 crime watch patrol programs in Oklahoma City and Edmond. Mayor Heikkila asked about Norman's statistics and Ms. Rasco said there are none because the Neighborhood Alliance does not have a contract with the Norman Police Department (NPD) and that has to be done in cooperation with the NPD.

Mr. Zombolo said the Neighborhood Alliance identified four stages of the neighborhood life cycle that includes growth, stability, decline, and renewal. He said it is inevitable for a neighborhood to go through decline because volunteer associations are just that, volunteers. He said that is when the Neighborhood Alliance steps in to find those officers and leaders to create the next phase of renewal, which is growth. He said when strangers start acting like neighbors, communities are transformed. He said it is very important that residents know the City is a partner with them and the Neighborhood Alliance wants to create that partnership. The Neighborhood Alliance has held some community workshops in Norman to teach residents how to maintain private roads and waterways.

Ms. Rasco said when the Neighborhood Alliance contracted with the CDBG Department in Norman, they immediately developed focus groups that made it clear Norman is not Oklahoma City and did not want to be Oklahoma City. She said the Neighborhood Alliance understands that Norman is a unique City so their goal is to learn more about what residents in Norman want in their neighborhoods and provide the tools to make that happen.

Ms. Rasco said the Neighborhood Alliance's biggest job is teaching neighborhood leaders how to advocate for themselves and to empower residents through an organization in their neighborhood to compile needs and better emphasize those needs to City leaders. She said many times, citizens do not know who to contact for various issues within their neighborhood or are unaware of their responsibilities as a property owner.

Item 2, continued:

Councilmember Holman said a partnership with NPD is vital to help NPD make better connections with the community they serve, get information out about what the NPD is doing to address issues, and provide a better avenue for the neighborhoods to talk directly to NPD about issues. He would like to see a partnership with NPD moving forward. He said the reason he supported the contract with Neighborhood Alliance was to help neighborhoods that did not have a HOA or had a defunct HOA to figure out how to address problems in their neighborhood.

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4. DISCUSSION REGARDING THE APPOINTMENT TO FILL THE VACANT WARD ONE COUNCIL SEAT.

Mayor Heikkila said Mr. Austin Ball was elected as Ward One Councilmember to be sworn in the first meeting of July; however, the people have spoken and he will be sworn in next Tuesday to complete the current term for the vacant Ward One seat. He will take the oath again in July to serve his two-year term.

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ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:48 p.m.

ATTEST:

City Clerk

Mayor