



CITY OF NORMAN, OK CITY COUNCIL CONFERENCE

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

Tuesday, May 26, 2026 at 5:30 PM

MINUTES

The City Council Conference 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, May 26, 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 24 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 4 Helen Grant
Councilmember Ward 5 Trey Kirby
Councilmember Ward 6 Joshua Hinkle
Councilmember Ward 7 Kimberly Blodgett
Councilmember Ward 8 Scott Dixon

ABSENT

Councilmember Ward 2 Matthew Peacock

AGENDA ITEMS

1. DISCUSSION REGARDING DATA CENTERS AND A POSSIBLE MORATORIUM.

Council discussed data centers and whether the City should consider a temporary moratorium while staff evaluates potential land use regulations and other policies applicable to such facilities. Staff from the City Attorney's Office, Planning and Community Development Department, and Utilities Department were available to respond to questions.

Ms. Jane Hudson, Planning and Community Development Director, explained that data centers are not currently identified as a prohibited use within the City's I-2 zoning district. Because the I-2 district generally permits uses not specifically prohibited, a data center locating on appropriately zoned property could potentially develop by right without first obtaining approval from the Planning Commission or City Council. Council discussed whether data centers should instead require Special Use approval, which would allow the City to evaluate individual proposals and impose appropriate requirements.

Council and staff discussed the significant infrastructure and resource demands associated with data centers, particularly water and electricity. Mr. Chris Mattingly, Utilities Director, advised that a large data center proposed in Stillwater was projected at full buildout to use approximately 8.1 million gallons of water per day, or approximately three billion gallons annually, which is comparable to Norman's annual use from Lake Thunderbird. Mr. Mattingly indicated that Norman does not currently have infrastructure in place to readily accommodate a facility with comparable demands.

Discussion included whether treated wastewater effluent could potentially be used for cooling rather than potable water. Mr. Mattingly advised that the City's Water Reclamation Facility currently discharges approximately 11 million gallons of treated effluent per day and that the City has previously considered selling effluent for industrial purposes. Council requested additional information regarding the feasibility of such use, regulatory requirements for discharge following industrial use, and the potential ecological impacts of reducing the amount of treated effluent discharged into the river.

Council also discussed electrical demand and the potential impact of large data centers on utility infrastructure and ratepayers. Concerns were raised regarding the amount of electricity required by these facilities, construction of additional generation and transmission infrastructure, potential reliance on on-site generation, and associated environmental impacts.

Additional discussion focused on the economic benefits of data centers compared with their resource demands. Council questioned the number of permanent jobs typically created, potential sales tax or franchise fee revenues, use of valuable industrial property, and whether properties along Interstate 35 would provide greater community benefit if developed for uses generating employment or sales tax revenue.

Item 1 continued,

Council discussed approaches taken by other Oklahoma municipalities and communities throughout the country, including temporary moratoriums and additional zoning restrictions. Mr. Rick Knighton, City Attorney, advised that regulations should be carefully structured to avoid potential regulatory-taking concerns and explained that a temporary moratorium could provide staff time to evaluate appropriate regulations. Staff also discussed making data centers a Special Use within applicable zoning districts so future proposals would require Planning Commission and City Council consideration.

Council expressed general support for pursuing a temporary moratorium while staff researches the potential impacts of data centers and develops recommendations regarding zoning and other regulatory requirements. Areas identified for further evaluation included water supply and wastewater use, electrical infrastructure, environmental impacts, appropriate locations, economic and employment benefits, Special Use requirements, and other conditions that could be applied to future proposals.

Council discussed a moratorium of up to approximately one year, with the understanding that Council could lift the moratorium earlier once appropriate policies and regulations were developed. Staff advised that a moratorium should be temporary and tied to specific work being undertaken by the City.

Council directed staff to prepare a proposed moratorium for consideration at the June 9, 2026 City Council meeting, including consideration of an emergency clause that would allow the moratorium to become effective immediately upon adoption. During the moratorium, staff would further evaluate data centers and return with recommendations regarding appropriate zoning, Special Use requirements, and other regulatory measures.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6:19 p.m.

ATTEST:

City Clerk

Mayor