

Norman Board of Parks Commissioners
March 7, 2024

The Norman Board of Parks Commissioners of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met on the 7th day of March 2024 at 5:32 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 Sheriff and Commissioners Isacksen, Moxley, Ross, Sallee, and Wright

Absent: Commissioners Davison, Usry, and One Vacancy

City Officials

Present: Jason Olsen, Director of Parks and Recreation
James Briggs, Park Development Manager
Mark Claude, Westwood Tennis Professional
Michele Loudenback, Environmental & Sustainability Manager
Veronica Tracy, Recreation Manager
Wade Thompson, Parks Manager
Mitchell Richardson, Recreation Supervisor
Karla Sitton, Administrative Technician IV

ITEM 1, being:

CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL, REJECTION, AMENDED AND/OR POSTPONEMENT OF MINUTES FROM THE JANUARY 11, 2024 PARK BOARD MEETING

Commissioner Isacksen made the motion, and Commissioner Moxley seconded to approve the Park Board minutes on January 11, 2024. The vote was taken with the following results:

YEAH: Chair Sheriff and Commissioners Isacksen, Moxley, Ross, Sallee, and Wright

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 as follows:

- Declaration of an Emergency to Repair the Norman Transit Center at 320 E. Comanche Street with Cavins Construction and Environmental Group in the amount of \$124,033.46.
- Amendment One to Contract K-2324-14 between the City and Norman Affordable Housing Corporation, Inc., in the amount of \$100,515.23 for a total contract amount of \$200,515.23 for the acquisition of property for affordable housing.
- Contract K-2324-121 between the City and Norman Arts Council for a 2024 Artful Inlets Project Service Agreement.
- Resolution R-2324-113 transferring \$125,000 from the Parks Administration Division Minor Equipment and Tools Account to the NEET Easement Vegetation Replacement Project to be used for the planting of trees in various parks.
- Resolution R-2324-117 with ODOT approving the payment of \$1,611,683 for the Flood Avenue Multimodal Path along Tecumseh Road and Flood Avenue from 24th Avenue NW, east to Flood Avenue and South to Robinson Street.
- Proclamation P-2324-23 Proclaiming Monday, April 22, 2024, as Earth Day and March 22 through May 19, 2024, as Green Norman Eco month in the City of Norman.
- Ordinance O-2324-45 amending Article 20-XXX Special Events of the City Code to include a film or television production event as a type of special event, establish a film permit and associated fee, allow

complete street closures for limited durations, make corrections to grammar, section references and formatting.

- Contract K-2324-92 between the City and Pitzer's Lawn Management Inc. for Emergency Snow Treatment Services.
 - Contract K-2324-130 between the City and MTS Brushhogging, Dozer & Lawn LLC for Emergency Snow Removal.
 - Resolution R-2324-125 is conducting and closing a public hearing to determine appropriate action for abatement or condemnation of 3104 Woodcrest Creek Drive as a public nuisance and order city services to be disconnected for a period of six months.
 - Contract K-2324-124 between the City and High Flyer Holdings, Inc., in the amount of \$940,000 for the purchase of real property located at 5451 Huettner Drive.
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ITEM 3, being:

DISCUSSION REGARDING THE ARTFUL INLETS PROGRAM

Ms. Michele Loudenback, Environmental & Sustainability Manager, said the City of Norman Utilities Department has partnered with the Norman Arts Council for the Sixth Annual Artful Inlets Program, an art-based initiative to educate and raise awareness about the importance of local water quality. She said research began in 2017 to do something similar to what Northwest Arkansas and others are doing for storm drain art. She said a Memorandum of Agreement with the Norman Arts Board was approved by the Council and had an initial budget of \$5,000 with \$2,500 contributed by each (NAB and City of Norman). Ms. Loudenback said all the materials and supplies are provided to the artist(s), and the original stipend was \$400 for each artist, but it is currently \$750 per artist.

Ms. Loudenback said this year's theme is "Think Blue, Act Green," six new installations and three renovations are scheduled. She said all are located within the Blue Neighborhood Pilot Project area (between Tecumseh Road and E. Rock Creek Road and between N. Porter Avenue and 12th Avenue NE) and at three City Parks (Vineyard Park, Sequoyah Trail Park, and Chisholm's Cattle Trail Park). Ms. Loudenback said the Blue Neighborhood Pilot Program is a cost-share initiative to improve water quality in the Lake Thunderbird watershed, i.e., water conservation, soil health, and wildlife habitat. She said past Artful Inlet locations include Main Street (2019 and 2020), Legacy Trails (2021), Lions Park (2022), and Colonial Estate Park (2023).

Ms. Loudenback highlighted the timeline is as follows:

- February 15: Call for artists
- March 15: Submission deadline
- March 29: Artist selection
- April 11-12: Art installation
- April ??: Celebratory walk-through

The Board thanked Ms. Loudenback for her presentation and continued efforts to educate the public about the importance of Norman's water quality.

ITEM 4, being:

ANNUAL REPORT FROM WESTWOOD TENNIS

Mr. Marc Claude, a Westwood (WW) tennis professional, said WW Tennis's mission is to serve the public and promote the game of tennis to all ages and levels. He told WW Tennis that it had another great year in 2023 and continues to be one of the busiest tennis centers in Oklahoma. Mr. Claude' said WW Tennis hosted 12 junior and high school tournaments, bringing in over 300 kids from the Missouri Valley region; hosted over 55 adult USTA league matches; practices for both Norman middle-school teams and Terre Verde (who started their program last year and WW Tennis provided a coach). He said WW Tennis has 14 teaching pros or instructors and has a waiting list for lessons.

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Mr. Claude' explained how the tennis center operates and said the league and tournament fee structures for the events hosted at WW Tennis are set by USTA Oklahoma. This organization decides where the leagues and tournaments will be played. He said WW Tennis has to bid on the events every two years, as they run in a 2-year cycle. Mr. Claude said that in 2023, the court fees and court passes totaled \$12,572. He highlighted the annual programs to include Junior Clinics, Junior Team Tennis, Cardio Tennis, Junior Cardio Tennis, Home School Clinics, Norman Middle School and Private School Tennis Practices, Tennis on Campus, Pickleball, Adult (and Senior) local leagues, social events and weekly adult drills. He said WW Tennis currently has a junior junior player who is excelling rapidly in wheelchair tennis.

Mr. Claude' thanked the Parks and Recreation Staff for all their help growing WW Tennis. He said he is excited about 2024 plans for court resurfacing and landscaping.

The Board acknowledged the report.

ITEM 5, being:

NORMAN FORWARD UPDATE

Young Family Athletic Facility (YFAC)

Mr. Jason Olsen, Director of Parks and Recreation, said a ribbon cutting and art dedication for the YFAC was held on February 19, 2024. He said at 10:30 a.m., City Staff, Norman Arts Council, and artist Vito DiBari dedicated the Norman Forward art "Elevate the Game," and a ribbon cutting was held at 3:30 p.m.; Mr. Olsen said there were 600+ people in attendance, and there was excellent news coverage. He told participants to watch a short video and hear from Mayor Heikkila and other notable speakers. Mr. Olsen said the Norman Regional Health System - Ortho Central space was fully operational, and the swimming pools should open up by the end of next week.

Bentley Park

Mr. Olsen said work continues on the basketball court, tennis and pickleball court, walking trail, sidewalks, playground, and signage. He said a plaque and bust of Lionel Bentley would be set soon and dedicated at a late spring ribbon cutting.

Falls Lakeview Park and Sunrise Park

Mr. Olsen said bids are out for new playgrounds for Sunrise Park and Falls-Lakeview Park and will be agenda items for consideration at a future City Council meeting. He said the park renovation projects also include improvements to park trails, furnishings, signage, and landscaping. Mr. Olsen said we will continue to make park improvements at other parks throughout the city while we plan for significant renovations in the next fiscal year.

Saxon Park

Mr. Olsen said the NF Saxon Park Ad Hoc will start meeting in April to get the project into final format so we can move forward with the final design and construction documents. He said a neighborhood survey was completed, and a Saxon Park Plan was done in March 2011, which included additional parking spaces, shelters, restroom building, and playground equipment.

Adult Wellness and Education Center (AWE)

Mr. Olsen said the AWE membership has grown to 2,300, and they serve 60 (the maximum) people daily. He said there has been a budget request to expand parking using the neighboring Norman Regional Hospital parking lot, as NRH has moved to a new location. Chair Sheriff asked when the art piece would be placed, and the staff said it had been shipped from Australia and a footing was scheduled to be poured next week. Commissioner Sallee said she had contacted AWE Staff to get a piano placed next to the stage area.

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ITEM 6, being:

DIVISIONAL UPDATES

Ms. Veronica Tracy, Recreation Manager, said the YFAC has opened the community hours for pool lap walking. The staff is working to schedule pickleball and basketball community hours. She said memberships will be available for purchase in April, and a bid is out to construct six outdoor pickleball courts. Ms. Tracy noted a swim meet is scheduled for April 5, 2024, and Embassy Suites has agreed to allow YFAC parking without a formal written agreement for the first year. The Eggstreme Hunt 5K is scheduled for March 23, 2024, at Ruby Grant Park. The Annual Egg Hunt is on March 29, 2024, at Andrews Park, the Mom Prom is on May 5, 2024, at the Noun Hotel, and Summer Camp registration is open.

Mr. James Briggs, Park Development Manager, said staff continues working simultaneously with the AIM Norman Comprehensive Plan design team to review and discuss city parks, trails, and open spaces to update our Park Master Plan. He invited the Commissioners to participate in the park survey on the AIM website. Mr. Briggs said work continues at the Cleveland County Historical House to replace several baluster pieces and railing on the front porch. He told City Staff that he is reviewing Davey Resource Group's proposed Norman's Tree Ordinance and that the contractor has begun working on an urban tree inventory to help produce an Urban Forest Master Plan for Norman. Mr. Briggs said staff received proposals from design firms for work on a Westwood Park Master Plan for the golf clubhouse, maintenance, cart barn, tennis pro shop, and parking areas. He said staff would begin interviewing firms next week.

Mr. Wade Thompson, Parks Manager, said staff has been transitioning from winter to spring projects, beginning with working on the Reaves Park Kidspace playground, irrigating two flag football fields at Ruby Grant Park, and repairing the pedestrian bridge at Castlerock Park. He said staff is also assisting the Public Works Department with their project on the Jenkins Expansion near Reaves Park.

MISCELLANEOUS DISCUSSION

None.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Sheriff adjourned the meeting at 6:33 p.m.

Passed and approved this _____ of _____ 2024

Sherrel Sheriff, Chair