



CITY OF NORMAN, OK CITY COUNCIL BUSINESS & COMMUNITY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE MEETING

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

Thursday, September 01, 2022 at 4:00 PM

MINUTES

The City Council Business & Community Affairs Committee of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met in Regular Session in the Executive Conference Room on the 1st day of September, 2022, at 4:00 p.m. and notice of the agenda of the meeting were posted at the Municipal Building at 201 West Gray and on the City website at least 24 hours prior to the beginning of the meeting.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Peacock called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Councilmember Ward 8 Matthew Peacock (Chair)

Councilmember Ward 4 Helen Grant

ABSENT

Councilmember Ward 5 Rarchar Tortorello

OTHERS PRESENT

Mayor Larry Heikkila

Councilmember Ward 1 Brandi Studley

Councilmember Ward 2 Lauren Schueler

Councilmember Ward 7 Stephen Holman

Ms. Jane Hudson, Planning and Community Development Director

Ms. Kathryn Walker, City Attorney

Ms. Elisabeth Muckala, Assistant City Attorney

Mr. Shawn O'Leary, Public Works Director

Ms. Lora Hoggatt, Planning Services Manager

Ms. Jamie Meyer, Administrative Technician IV

AGENDA ITEMS

1. DISCUSSION REGARDING THE STRONG TOWNS COMMUNITY ACTION LAB PROPOSAL

Presenter: Ms. Jane Hudson, Planning and Community Development Director

Ms. Hudson introduced a proposal from Strong Towns inviting the City of Norman to participate in its 2023 Community Action Lab—a two-year initiative designed to help cities build financial resiliency and sustainable development strategies.

Highlights of the Presentation:

- Strong Towns Mission: Promote financially strong, resilient communities; support local governments in collaborative growth; and guide development with sustainability in mind.
- Program Overview: Norman would be one of only five cities nationwide selected for this intensive, two-year program beginning January 2023.
 - Year One: In-person community engagement, public kick-off events, curriculum sharing, and regular coaching for local teams.
 - Year Two: Continued support via remote access, tools, and training for sustained progress.
- Five-Phase Plan: Preparation, Launch, Capacity Building, Action, and Ongoing Support.
- Benefits to Norman:
 - Support during the City's upcoming Comprehensive Plan process.
 - Access to expert content and guidance on infrastructure and development.
 - Enhanced collaboration among elected officials, staff, and community stakeholders.
- Cost: \$149,875. Funding sources are yet to be finalized.

Ms. Hudson emphasized the timing aligns well with the City's comprehensive planning timeline. The program's overlap could strengthen the planning process by integrating fiscal sustainability principles.

Council Discussion:

- Chairman Peacock expressed strong support, noting the initiative comes at a critical time with significant opportunities and challenges ahead for Norman.
- Councilmembers Holman, Grant, Foreman, Schueler, and others echoed support, citing:
 - Familiarity and respect for Strong Towns' expertise and approach.
 - Benefits of long-term fiscal responsibility and infrastructure planning.
 - Opportunity to engage major stakeholders including the university, county, and large employers.
 - Potential for complementary support in developing the east side of Norman.
- Multiple members mentioned prior experience with Strong Towns' training and resources, emphasizing the program's quality.
- Consensus: Strong interest in moving forward with the proposal. Staff will work with the City Manager and Finance Department to finalize funding sources and bring the revised agreement to Council for approval.

Item 1, continued:

Timeline Note: Staff hopes to finalize the agreement by November 2022 to begin implementation by January 1, 2023.

Meeting adjourned at 4:25 p.m.

ATTEST:

City Clerk

Mayor