



CITY OF NORMAN, OK CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION

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

Tuesday, August 29, 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 1 Austin Ball
Councilmember Ward 2 Lauren Schueler
Councilmember Ward 3 Bree Montoya
Councilmember Ward 4 Helen Grant
Councilmember Ward 5 Michael Nash
Councilmember Ward 6 Elizabeth Foreman
Councilmember Ward 7 Stephen Holman
Councilmember Ward 8 Matthew Peacock

ABSENT

None

AGENDA ITEMS

1. UPDATE FROM THE NORMAN POLICE DEPARTMENT REGARDING ACTIVITY AND STATISTICS.

Mr. Kevin Foster, Chief of Police, said offense data comes from multiple sources that include calls for service, offense reports, and collisions. A compilation of this data is reported annually to the Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation (OSBI) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) following the Standard of National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS).

Item 1, continued:

Chief Foster said each offense collected in NIBRS belongs to one of three categories, 1) Crimes Against Persons, 2) Crimes Against Property, and 3) Crimes Against Society. He said Crimes Against Persons include murder, rape, and assault and victims are always individuals; Crimes Against Property include robbery, bribery, and burglary; and Crimes Against Society include gambling, prostitution, and drug violations representing society's prohibition against engaging in certain types of activity and are typically victimless.

Chief Foster said data can be found in multiple sources that includes FBI Crime Data Explorer; OSBI Annual Statewide Crime Reporting; Benchmark Cities Survey; Norman Police Department (NPD) Daily Activity Reports (data only available for 30 days); NPD Weekly and Monthly Department Overview Reports; NPD Five-Year Crime Data Reports; and NPD Open Data Portal. He said Norman is the only City in the State of Oklahoma that participates in the data portal and only one out of 120 nationwide.

Chief Foster said each offense reported is either a Group A or Group B offense type and there are 23 Group A offense categories composed of 52 Group A offenses and 10 Group B offense categories. Law enforcement agencies report Group A offenses as part of a NIBRS incident report, but only report arrest data for Group B offenses. The categorization of an offense is significant because law enforcement uses it to determine how to report it to the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program. For counting purposes, agencies should count one offense for each victim of a Crime Against Person, one offense for each distinct operation of a Crime Against Property, and one offense for each Crime Against Society.

Overall, the number of reported offenses are up 3% with 8,455 in 2021, 8,781 in 2022, and 9,036 in 2023, which reflects all reported offenses from January 1 through July 31, 2023. Overall reported offenses are down 3% with 4,809 in 2021, 4,761 in 2022, and 4,609 in 2023. He said aggravated assault is up 18%; kidnapping is up 40%; fraud is up 27%; sexual assault is down 8%; vandalism is down 14%; larceny/theft is down 17%; and motor vehicle theft is down 7%. Overall, Group A – Crimes Against Persons is up 11%, Group A – Crimes Against Property is down 9%, and Group A – Crimes Against Society is up 16%.

Group B overall reported offenses are up 22% with 1,440 in 2021, 1,700 in 2022, and 2,070 in 2023. He said Driving Under the Influence (DUI) is up 27%, public intoxication is up 9%, and runaways are up 71%. He said most of the runaways stem from juvenile group homes in Norman.

Councilmember Holman asked who operates the group homes and Chief Foster said outside entities, such as the Department of Human Services (DHS).

Councilmember Holman asked why DUI's are up and Chief Foster said NPD is doing more enforcement and there are more alcohol related accidents across the nation. He said during COVID, there was a lot of education to the public on not driving while intoxicated. He said marijuana falls under the same rules as alcohol. He said coming out of COVID, more people are driving and NPD will continue to push enforcement and educational events will continue through multiple sources.

Item 1, continued:

Councilmember Schueler said there has been discussion regarding a Sobering Center in Norman because it would be better for people to be in a Sobering Center than in jail for four hours then released with no type of services to prevent future incidents. She said a Sobering Center could provide wrap around services to prevent future incidents.

Chief Foster said overall reported collisions are up 4% with 1,071 in 2021, 1,147 in 2022, and 1,199 in 2023. Non-injury collisions are up 3%, injury collisions are up 8%, and fatal collisions are down 44%. He said collisions in 2023 included persons with no or unknown injuries – 2,651; persons with serious or minor injuries – 560; persons fatally injured – 5; and total persons injured – 565.

Councilmember Holman said he would be interested in seeing a map of intersections in Norman that have the most accidents.

Chief Foster said Call for Service data increased 7% with 44,719 in 2021, 46,937 in 2022, and 50,311 in 2023.

In benchmark cities comparisons, Norman had a higher Rate of Persons Crimes per 1,000 citizens at 12.65 compared to Broken Arrow at 9.71 and Edmond at 8.76. Norman is also higher on Rate of Property Crimes per 1,000 citizens at 43.69 compared to Broken Arrow at 25.64, and Edmond at 31.08. Chief Foster highlighted comparisons with Norman having a population of 131,896 with a percentage of change increase of 3% and 180 authorized sworn officers that cover 190 square miles; Edmond has a population of 95,341 with a percentage of change of 1% and 126 authorized sworn officers that cover 88 square miles; and Broken Arrow has a population of 117,947 with a percentage of change increase of 5% and 161 authorized sworn officer that cover 63 square miles.

Chief Foster said Downtown Norman Crime Data total calls for service increased 9% with 2,644 in 2021, 3,411 in 2022, and 3,721 in 2023. He said total offenses reported increased 17% with 338 in 2021, 479 in 2022, and 562 in 2023.

Councilmember Peacock said he would like to see a data map depicting five years prior to 2021, and Chief Foster said the current Program data is limited to three years due to the age of the software.

Data related to unhoused persons include the most common call for service type, which are suspicious person, welfare check, disturbance, assault, and fights. He said as of August 10, 2023, the Salvation Army made 111 calls for service, Food and Shelter for Friends made 337 calls for service, and A Friends Place made 99 calls for service. The total number of calls for service involving an unhoused individual is 2,736 with most offenses consisting of trespassing – 24%, welfare check – 19%, and disturbance - 15%. Chief Foster said tracking homeless issue data is new and there is no prior year's data to compare it with, but cities across the nation are beginning to track calls for service related to the unhoused community.

Item 1, continued:

According to NPD Case Report data, the most common calls for service related to unhoused persons involved drug violation, warrant service, public intoxication, assault, theft, and robbery and as of August 10, 2023, the Salvation Army – 23 calls for service, Food and Shelter for Friends – 85 calls for service, and A Friends Place – 29 calls for service. He said 15 arrests have been made at the Salvation Army, 70 arrests have been made at Food and Shelter for Friends, and 20 arrests have been made at A Friends Place with the most common arrest types consisting of drug violation, warrant service, public intoxication, and theft. Chief Foster said he did not know the percentage of these calls for service.

Councilmember Peacock said he would like to see data on the Comanche and Gray Street Warming Shelters as well as the old Central Library before it became the Development Center.

Chief Foster highlighted current actions underway that include staffing level rebound and reallocation; investigations use of wrap around services; utilization of community outreach and partnerships; and increased focus on strategic proactive enforcement efforts.

Councilmembers thanked Chief Foster for the presentation.

Items submitted for the record

1. Copy of Uniform Crime Reporting Program – National Incident-Based Reporting System – Crimes Against Persons, Property, and Society from the United States Department of Justice and Federal Bureau of Investigation
2. PowerPoint entitled, “Norman Police Department Crime Data Presentation” dated August 2023

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2. DISCUSSION REGARDING AN AVIGATION EASEMENT AT WESTWOOD PARK FOR THE MAX WESTHEIMER AIRPORT.

Mr. Darrel Pyle, City Manager, said Max Westheimer Airport (Max Westheimer) is in the process of being considered for federal funding in the approximate amount of \$35 million for construction of a new tower, runway improvements, runway extension, taxiway improvements, and opportunities for additional hangar space as well as improving the viability of the airport. He said Max Westheimer is the future home of the Oklahoma Aviation Academy, which will train high school students on flying and maintenance of airplanes. He said this particular instance, the City was working with the University of Oklahoma (OU) on right-of-way (ROW) acquisition on the Jenkins Avenue Widening Project. He said the City needed a considerable amount of ROW from OU for the project and the ROW needed would cost \$1.2 to \$1.3 million, which was not included in the project. He said OU was amenable to working with the City because in order for Max Westheimer to construct the runway extension, they will need additional aviation zones from the City since their runway airspace crosses Westwood Golf Course.

Item 2, continued:

Mr. Pyle said with a runway extension, larger aircraft could use Max Westheimer, which could be a necessity when OU joins the Southeastern Conference (SEC). He said Staff is bringing this information to Council because as Staff discusses ROW acquisition to OU, they will be discussing ROW needed from the City for the improvement project.

Ms. Kathryn Walker, City Attorney, said OU is asking for the deed of the property needed, which they will lease to the City for 50 years at one dollar per year (\$1.00). She said Max Westheimer can qualify for the federal funding under Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) guidelines, but they have to be really careful to make sure the needed property is protected. The property may also include some re-zoning and ensuring the property remains recreational only and is not subject to development.

Councilmember Schueler asked for clarification on the lease and Ms. Walker said OU wants to acquire the property and lease it back to the City for \$1.00 per year for 50 years so long as the property is used as a golf course and does not interfere with operation or development of Max Westheimer Airport. Mr. Pyle said the City will need to define the area and create a legal description through a survey.

Councilmember Schueler said Council is having some challenges around other areas the City has invested money in and currently leasing, i.e., Griffin Park, Sutton Wilderness, etc., so she would not want to sell the property and lease it back.

Councilmember Holman agreed and said he would not be amenable to turning the property completely over to OU and leasing it back, but would agree on keeping the property for recreational use and not developing. He said the Jenkins Avenue project will be a tangible benefit to the University and it was OU's idea to construct a roundabout so they are getting something from the project. What is the City's benefit of selling the property near the airport? Mr. Pyle said the long-term viability of a west side fixed base operator that would provide access through University North Park (UNP) as a place to drive right into the airport. He said this could be a huge economic generator for the entire City bringing in quality jobs and adds value to the Oklahoma Aviation Academy as well as providing additional programming opportunities for the OU Aviation School, which has been rapidly growing.

Mr. Pyle said Staff will continue conversations with Max Westheimer/OU and provide regular reports to Council.

Items submitted for the record

1. Map of Recommended Development Plan – Max Westheimer Airport – The University of Oklahoma

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ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:37 p.m.

ATTEST:

City Clerk

Mayor