



CITY OF NORMAN, OK
CITY COUNCIL FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING
Municipal Building, Executive Conference Room, 201 West Gray, Norman,
OK 73069
Thursday, May 15, 2025 at 4:00 PM

MINUTES

The City Council Finance Committee of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met in Regular Session in the Executive Conference Room in the Municipal Building, on Thursday, May 15, 2025 at 4:00 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.

CALL TO ORDER

PRESENT

Mayor Larry Heikkila
Councilmember Ward 3 Bree Montoya
Councilmember Ward 4 Helen Grant
Councilmember Ward 6 Joshua Hinkle

ABSENT

None.

OTHERS

Councilmember Ward 5 Michael Nash
Councilmember Ward 7 Stephen Holman
Anthony Francisco, Director of Finance
Dannielle Risenhoover, Admin. Tech IV
Darrel Pyle, City Manager
Jacob Huckabaa, Budget Technician
Kim Coffman, Budget Manager
Rick Knighton, City Attorney
Scott Sturtz, Director of Public Works
Shaakira Calnick, Internal Auditor
Shannon Stevenson, Asst. City Manager

AGENDA ITEMS

1. DISCUSSION REGARDING MONTHLY REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE REPORTS.

Anthony Francisco gave the report. The monthly sales tax revenue was down approximately 3.5%. Francisco said, "I think that the overall attitude or consumer confidence in Norman is lower than most (cities) and I think that's because of our dependence on governmental employment. There's been a lot of layoffs at Tinker, there's been a lot of layoffs at OU. The fear of layoffs are kind of causing people to 'pull in their horns' if you will. I fear that's not a blip or an

anomaly, I think that's a trend. As far as Norman is concerned, we historically have tended to lag entry into recessions and emergence from national recessions (our governmental employment base has always been a buffer from national economic trends); but, this one, I think we're kind of a lead indicator. I think that nationally speaking, we're moving into a recession if we're not in one now." Francisco believes that this also has to do with the uncertainty surrounding the national economy and the tariffs.

"Economists believe that we are going into a period of stagflation which means that we're both in a recession during a time when prices are inflating. Inflation at the time of recession – that's very bad for the national economy but it's not that bad for sales tax. As it relates to sales tax, inflation is good; so, to the extent that that's true, the prices are going to be going up over the next six months or so and that could have a positive impact on our sales taxes. Again, this is just my observation based on a lot of history of what happens in Norman," Francisco said.

Councilmember Grant asked if the state of Oklahoma's version of Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) was "whittling away at any jobs in Norman". City Manager Darrel Pyle will see if there is census data that can help track that. "This is where the rubber hits the road for us. It just comes down to paychecks and disposable income, so I think that's an absolutely worthwhile exercise for us. It could really paint a very clear picture."

Councilmember Grant stated, "I would be mostly keen to keep (support) the outside agencies that would address some of these issues that we're seeing throughout the City with potential job loss and benefits loss. I know some of the outside agency requests had extra therapists and whatnot." Pyle conveyed that news outlets have reported that the Department of Mental Health may not be reimbursing some nonprofits. "If the revenue doesn't show up, there's going to be a local crisis," Pyle said.

"To the extent that state government, federal government is cutting back, Norman will be disproportionately affected by that; so, that's what we have to be mindful of. Just stay mindful of the volatility," Francisco said.

Councilmember Holman stated, "Any ways that we're able to increase population density in Norman without expanding our physical footprint and service area, that is one of the most proven ways to increase wealth in a city."

Councilmember Hinkle stated, "As consumer confidence wanes, you're going to see a lot more people spending more on adventures so if we can provide that avenue, I think it's really time for us to lean into the tourism and not just for conferences and sports contests. Let's create some excitement around Norman."

The Committee would like updates at the next City Council Finance Committee meeting regarding the following:

- A Sports Commission update regarding how they've spent their portion of the hotel-motel tax
- An update on the number of Airbnb's in Norman that includes a "heat map", permit trends, revenue totals, and housing types
- An update on if the state of Texas is discontinuing it's funding of the Heartland Flyer due to budget cuts

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Heikkila adjourned the meeting at approximately 4:40 PM.

ATTEST:

City Clerk

Mayor