



CITY OF NORMAN, OK CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION

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

Tuesday, June 21, 2022 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, retaliation, 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 405-366-5424, Relay Service: 711. To better serve you, five (5) business days' advance notice is preferred.

CALL TO ORDER

PRESENT

Mayor Pro-Tem Stephen Holman
Councilmember Ward 2 Lauren Schueler
Councilmember Ward 3 Kelly Lynn
Councilmember Ward 4 Lee Hall
Councilmember Ward 6 Elizabeth Foreman
Councilmember Ward 8 Matthew Peacock

ABSENT

Mayor Breea Clark
Councilmember Ward 1 Brandi Studley
Councilmember Ward 5 Rarchar Tortorello

AGENDA ITEMS

1. DISCUSSION REGARDING A RESOLUTION TO FORMALIZE THE PROCESS TO FILL VACANT COUNCIL SEATS.

Ms. Kathryn Walker, City Attorney, said the Charter Review Committee (CRC) discussed Section 22 of the Charter including vacancies in office, but ultimately proposed clean-up language be added. She said Council wanted to formalize a process for filling Council vacancies that included a Selection Committee.

Ms. Walker said vacancies on Council have been approached a number of ways and it can be challenging to get an election scheduled to fill a vacancy in a timely manner, so prior Council's have typically filled the vacancy by majority vote. Some years, names were submitted and voted on by City Council at a public meeting with voting ties being broken by pulling a name out of a hat. Most recently, Council has appointed a selection committee made up of residents of the ward in which the vacancy exists and once the

committee made its selection, Council would vote on that person selected. With one exception, Council has selected a candidate recommended by the committee for appointment. Council has expressed a desire to formalize the selection committee process in the context of addressing the second Ward 2 vacancy on April 8, 2021, and again on May 12, 2022.

The Council Oversight Committee discussed the vacancy in office item during the April 2021, meeting and made recommendations that included:

- A five member Selection Committee made up of residents from the Ward being vacated;
- Application to fill the vacancy should ask questions about voting history, City specific activities, and potential conflicts with Council position;
- Limiting the number of interviews to ensure they can all be conducted on the same day;
- Utilize the same questions for all candidates - Selection Committee can add ward specific questions;
- Selection Committee to send one name forward to Council; and
- Deliberations and selection should occur on the same day as the interviews.

Ms. Walker said Council amended Article II, Section 22, language to read:

“Any vacancy occurring in the City Council shall be filled by a majority vote of the remaining members of the City council for ~~a period extending until the next regular municipal election, at which time an election, conducted as provided by this Charter and applicable State law, shall be held to fill any~~ the balance of the unexpired term; provided, however, if the City Council does not fill the vacancy by appointment within sixty (60) days after the same occurs, it shall be mandatory on the part of the City Council to call and schedule a special election to fill the vacancy for the unexpired term, which election shall be held for the election of a City Councilmember, only, and said election shall be conducted in the same manner as a regular municipal election.”

The process outlined in the policy would not supersede the Charter, so Council would still be required to call a special election to fill any vacancy if it is not filled by appointment within 60 days of the vacancy.

In May 2022, the Council Oversight Committee reached consensus on the above stated items to be included in a resolution setting forth the process for filling Council vacancies. Staff was asked to prepare a resolution covering these key points of the process for Council discussion and consideration. Additionally, Staff was tasked with reviewing and modifying the application to be consistent with the discussion.

Councilmembers thanked Ms. Walker for the information presented.

Items submitted for the record

1. Staff report dated June 21, 2022, from Kathryn Walker, City Attorney, to City Council Oversight Committee
2. Draft resolution
3. Draft application

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 5:59 p.m.

ATTEST:

City Clerk

Mayor