

CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL SESSION MINUTES

January 31, 2012

The City Council of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met in Special Session at 5:30 p.m. in the City Council Chambers of the Norman Municipal Building on the on the 31st day of January, 2012, and notice and agenda of the meeting were posted in the Municipal Building at 201 West Gray and the Norman Public Library at 225 North Webster 48 hours prior to the beginning of the meeting.

PRESENT: Councilmembers Dillingham,, Gallagher, Griffith, Kovach, Lockett, Spaulding, Quinn, Mayor Rosenthal

ABSENT: Councilmember Ezzell

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Rosenthal.

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Discussion of this item was interrupted in City Council's meeting of January 24, 2012, due to a medical emergency and the meeting was adjourned. The item will continued this evening to allow Council and the citizens further discussion.

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Item 3, being:

CONTINUED DISCUSSION REGARDING REPORTS ENTITLED "COMPREHENSIVE ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT FOR FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2011," AND THE "NORMAN TAX INCREMENT FINANCE AUTHORITY FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2011" AS PREPARED BY THE CITY OF NORMAN FINANCE DEPARTMENT AND "THE CITY OF NORMAN SINGLE AUDIT REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2011," AS PREPARED BY THE FIRM OF COLE AND REED, P. C., FOR THE CITY OF NORMAN, OKLAHOMA, NORMAN UTILITIES AUTHORITY, NORMAN MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY, AND NORMAN TAX INCREMENT FINANCE AUTHORITY AND ACKNOWLEDGING THE RECEIPT THEREOF.

Councilmember Dillingham having moved in City Council's meeting of January 24, 2012, that the reports be discussed, which motion having been duly seconded by Councilmember Kovach and the item having been unanimously approved by City Council, discussion was continued.

Items submitted for the record

1. Text File No. RPT-1112-21 dated December 28, 2011, by Anthony Francisco, Director of Finance
2. Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2011
3. The City of Norman Single Audit Report for the Year Ended June 30, 2011
4. Norman Tax Increment Finance Authority Financial Statement for the Year Ended June 30, 2011
5. Memorandum dated January 4, 2012, from Steve Lewis, City Manager, to Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers with Attachment A, Memorandum dated August 30, 2001, from Anthony Francisco, Director of Finance, to Honorable Mayor and Councilmembers; Attachment B-1, Resolution No. R-0708-78; Attachment B-2, Resolution No. R-0506-151; Attachment B-3, Sewer Sales Tax Capital Fund Summary, Fund 323; Attachment B-4, Attachment C, Planning Level Costs for Little River Wastewater Treatment Plant (from 2001 City of Norman Wastewater Master Plan); Attachment D-1, Pertinent Excerpts from Wastewater Oversight Annual Report 2011; Attachment E-1, City Council Finance Committee minutes of May 15, 2008; Attachment F-1, Excerpt from letter dated July 19, 2011, from the City Attorney's office to Mr. Don Holyfield

Participants in discussion

1. Mr. Anthony Francisco, Director of Finance
2. Mr. Mike Gibson, auditor from Cole and Reed
3. Mr. Bert Fletcher, auditor from Cole and Reed
4. Mr. Steve Lewis, City Manager
5. Mr. Jeff Bryant, City Attorney
6. Mr. Ken Komiske, Director of Utilities
7. Mr. Steve Lucas, 804 Fairway Drive, asked questions
8. Ms. Joy Hampton, The Norman Transcript, 225 East Comanche Street, asked questions
9. Ms. Judith Wilkins, 1100 West Symmes Street, made comments
10. Mr. Jim Stanley, 3922 Pine Tree Circle, asked questions
11. Mr. Bobby Stephens, Post Office Box 6226, made comments
12. Mr. Zac Abbott, 106 Castro Street, asked questions

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MISCELLANEOUS DISCUSSION

Landlord Registration Program. Ms. Jayne Crumpley, 423 Elm Avenue, asked Council to consider creating a landlord registration program. She said this program has been discussed in the past and asked that the idea be reviewed again because it is a health and safety issue. She said the Police Department is presently looking at bringing forth a crime free multi-housing program and landlord registration could tie into this program very well.

Mr. Stephen Tyler Holman, 1020 South College Avenue, said he agreed and that there was a problem in Norman with slumlords and there was no solution at present.

Mayor Rosenthal said she would ask Councilmember Ezzell and the Business and Community Affairs Committee to look at the issue of landlord registration.

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Changes to Ward Boundaries. Mr. Stephen Tyler Holman, 1020 South College Avenue, said the City Council Election would be in April and many ward boundaries had changed recently affecting many people who were unaware of the situation. He had sent out mass emails and left messages on Facebook to those he knew to inform them of the upcoming election. He said he did not know if there had been enough notice given to people in the affected neighborhoods but he would like to see as many people participate as possible. He ran for City Council for Ward Seven and was dismayed to see such a low voter turnout. He urged the City and the newspapers to work on notifying the citizens of the changes.

Councilmember Gallagher said after the wards changed he lost Royal Oaks Addition. He said Mr. Holman had an excellent point and he has talked to several citizens who said they had not been notified where to vote. He asked if it was possible to print out a brief postcard to be sent out to all citizens whose wards had changed or to print the information on utility bills.

Mr. Steve Lewis, City Manager, said there good comments were made this evening about the changes to the ward boundaries and he and the City Clerk would consult with the appropriate person at the County Election Board to bring together some information to send out to citizens who had been moved to a different ward.

Councilmember Dillingham said she has been trying to take care of the changing ward boundaries in her own ward and would appreciate any help from staff.

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City Money in Local Banking Establishments. Ms. Jacy Crosbie, 204 Mountain Oaks Drive, said she was not a member of the Occupy Group but this group had respectfully addressed the City Council a few weeks ago and suggested that all of the City finances be transferred to a local Oklahoma bank or credit union. She said she had worked at a credit union for 20 years and their certificate rates are really good. She said credit unions are non-profit; member-owned; exist solely to serve their membership; have a wide range of services; and have federally insured funds. She suggested that the next time the City has a certificate ready to mature to check with a credit union. She said if the City of Norman does not meet the eligibility of a credit union, there were several local banks that could be used. She said someone would have to do some research and the transfer could not be done all at one time but it would be worth trying.

Councilmember Gallagher said it would be beneficial for the City to look at Ms. Crosbie's idea because if we were going to "Shop Norman," the most critical part is the keeping of our money. He said he knew this could not be done overnight but would like to make a gradual shift to some of local financial firms to strengthen the City of Norman.

Mr. Steve Lewis, City Manager, said Mr. Gallagher was discussing a more long-term option but in the immediate issue, in terms of the banking service agreement, Staff is going through the process of reviewing the proposals that had been received and costing out the services because the City pays on a transaction basis for these services. He said the discussion about the location of our investments would be properly framed after the Finance Committee reviewed the City's investment policies because those policies outline the types of institutions to invest in, their location, and the balancing of the portfolio.

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Animal Welfare. Ms. Jacy Crosbie, 204 Mountain Oaks Drive, said a very nice brochure about pet licensing had been presented with an application included. She suggested that this brochure be put on the City's website to remind citizens that pet licenses are due. Additionally, she said low cost vaccinations for animals would be provided at the Animal Welfare Center on Saturday, February 11, 2012, from 12:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. She suggested this information be put on the City's website as well.

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Miscellaneous Discussion, continued:

Budget Information. Mr. Bobby Stephens, Post Office Box 6226, said he wished the City would spend more time explaining to the public when they make budget appropriations and transfers.

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Wrecker Services. Mr. Bobby Stephens, Post Office Box 6226, said he owned part of a wrecker company on the east side of town and would be glad to be of service to the City. He thanked Chief Humphrey, Deputy Chief Maisano, and Lieutenant Arnold for providing information about our wrecker policy at the recent study session and looking into issues with wrecker services. He said it was hard to work in Norman as a small Wrecker business because an impoundment yard must be located on property zoned I-1, Light Industrial District, and a wrecker business could not get on rotation unless they owned six trucks.

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Comprehensive Annual Finance Report (CAFR). Councilmember Kovach provided an organizational chart of the City of Norman on a PowerPoint slide. He explained that at the top of the chart is the citizens, second is the City Council and third is City Staff. He said it is too bad we have gotten to a place where asking questions is looked at with a jaundiced eye. He said Council is supposed to ask those questions as elected representatives of the people and it was important to do this in an open forum. He suggested the CAFR documents be submitted to City Council a few weeks earlier to allow Council time to review the documents in a timely manner and ask questions before they accept it and then holding a study session to allow discussion. He said he was disappointed that Council was not told about the questions from the State Auditor's Office.

Councilmember Dillingham said tonight was a culmination of what has been going on with this Council for at least five years. She said there is a high commitment of citizen participation and transparency in Norman. She said Council had asked Mr. Francisco to make the budget a little more user friendly and he had responded with one of the best introductions to a municipal budget that she had seen and the website had increased communication with the citizens. She said Council had wanted to make a larger commitment to citizen understanding of the budget process and staff had devoted extra time to do this by conducting a Municipal Budget Series. She hoped this would be done again in the near future. She said the City has a staff that is very open and accessible. She said with this discussion, Council and Staff had taken the time to make sure the public understands the difference between our budget process that is based on assumptions and the CAFR and audit which is a backward look. She said the City of Norman is lucky to have citizens who participate for many years on committees like the Wastewater and Public Safety Oversight Committees and she thanked everyone for their input and participation. She said City Council is the citizens' representatives and citizens have to rely on Council to make good decisions with their vote.

Councilmember Griffith expressed his gratitude to Mr. Francisco and the Finance Department for an incredibly thorough response to the questions posed to them. He said the answers have helped him immensely in understanding some very complex issues dealing with the budget.

Councilmember Quinn wished Mr. Francisco well after the issue at the last Council meeting and recognized it is hard to please all of Council and the citizens and said he did a great job this evening.

Mayor Rosenthal said there is no question that the citizens are front and center in City of Norman government and representation is an educational process. She said Council is often called upon to make a decision based on the knowledge they obtain from experience in this position. She quoted Councilmember Ezzell who said "We are elected to exercise our good judgment on how funds are to be used on behalf of the citizens." She said it is important to recognize that many of these funds have long histories and some of that will be reviewed at the Finance Committee meeting where past representatives had to make good decisions with the citizens' money to keep us moving forward and accountable to the citizens.

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Food and Shelter for Friends. Councilmember Kovach said City Council approved emergency funding for Food and Shelter for Friends on January 24, 2012, to be used to provide emergency shelter to the homeless. He read an email from a thankful homeless citizen. He said the \$8,500 was immediately put to use, lives were changed, and people were helped. He said this was the public's money and he wanted the public to know their money was very well spent.

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Miscellaneous Discussion, continued:

Loss of Father. Councilmember Quinn said he had recently discovered his father had passed away at home and had contacted 9-1-1 with the Fire Department being the first responders. He commended the firemen for being extremely sensitive and professional followed very closely by the Police Department and because this death was an unattended death, an investigation had been conducted. He said this investigation had been performed by two police officers in the midst of a very stressful situation and he commended them. He said he is sure they are representative of everyone in the department and they were extremely professional.

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Shop Norman. Councilmember Quinn reminded citizens to "Shop Norman."

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Robinson and Interstate 35 Interchange. Mr. Steve Lewis, City Manager, said bids had been opened by the Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) a few weeks ago for the I-35 and Robinson Street Interchange Project and the bid had come in at approximately \$2.7 million which was \$373,000 lower than the engineer's estimate. He said the ODOT Board would be voting on this item on February 6th. He said the I-35 and Interstate Drive intersection carries 46,000 cars per day and held a Level of Service F. He said this improvement should raise the Level of Service to a Level C. He said the project is also being funded by the Association of Central Oklahoma Governments (ACOG) and Tax Increment Finance (TIF) funds. He said this project was a partnership between the Public Works Department and officials who serve on the ACOG Board to put together the financial resources needed to bring the improvements forward.

Mayor Rosenthal said she appreciated this news about lowering the level of service for this intersection.

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Federal Funding. Mr. Steve Lewis, City Manager, said over the next five years, the City will receive approximately \$30.8 million from federal sources which is very important because the City cannot meet our local needs without these funding sources. He said in the February 7, 2012, Study Session, City Council will be discussing these recent funding decisions made by ACOG and the possibility of submitting a ballot and proposition to our voters some time this year.

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Drought Conditions. Mr. Steve Lewis, City Manager, said recently drought specialists reported a normal November and a very average December; however, you have to go back 44 years to find a drier year in the central Oklahoma area. He said the 2011 calendar year came in as the seventh driest year ever. He said many of our citizens have never experienced a drought of this severity and it is important to think about the future. He said this has been described as "water anxiety" and we are trying to move forward to "water security."

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ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Councilmember Quinn moved that the meeting be adjourned, which motion was duly seconded by Councilmember Griffith; and the question being upon adjournment of the meeting, a vote was taken with the following result:

YEAS:	Councilmembers Dillingham, Gallagher, Griffith, Kovach, Lockett, Spaulding, Quinn, Mayor Rosenthal
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NAYES:	None
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The Mayor declared the motion carried and the meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

ATTEST:

City Clerk

Mayor