

Norman Forward Senior Center
Ad Hoc Advisory Group
October 9, 2019

The Norman Forward Senior Center Ad Hoc Advisory Group of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met in the Municipal Building City Council Chambers on the 9th day of October, 2019 at 4:00 p.m. and notice and agenda of the meeting were posted at 201 West Gray Street, 24 hours prior to the beginning of the meeting.

ITEM 1, being:

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Present: Chairperson Hobson and Members Jewell, Knudsen, and Terry

Absent: Members Bailey, Bonner, and Vaughn

Others Present: Paul Arcoli, Dave Boeck, Art Chapman, Ann Marie Eckart, Montgomery Johnston, Bette Maffucci, Phyllis Murray, William Murray, and Judy Smith

Staff Present: Jud Foster, Director of Parks and Recreation, Randy Hill, ADG, and Karla Sitton, Administrative Technician IV

ITEM 2, being:

REVIEW OF MINUTES SEPTEMBER 17, 2019 MEETING

Member Knudsen made the motion seconded by Member Jewell to approve the minutes. The vote was taken with the following results:

YEAH: Chairperson Hobson and Members Jewell, Knudsen, and Terry

NAY: None

ITEM 3, being:

DISCUSSION OF FUNDING CONCERNS FOR THE NORMAN SENIOR WELLNESS CENTER PROJECT

Chairperson Hobson said today's meeting was scheduled because some people have told her they are concerned about the budget for the Norman Senior Wellness Center project, specifically whether or not the project should be put on hold until more funding is available. Member Jewell spoke about the Norman Forward Initiative; specifically when the Senior Citizens Center became a Norman Forward Project and has a \$10 million budget. She felt Council made changes to the ballot language after seniors helped promote the Norman Forward election. Member Jewell said the senior citizens have lived and worked in Norman and deserve a new Senior Center. She felt the City of Norman should stand up and find the money needed to build a full facility, not one that has to be built in phases. Member Knudsen agreed with Member Jewell and felt the City did not care about its senior citizens. She read some email excerpts aloud that she had received from seniors stating none of them had any positive comments regarding the Senior Center Project.

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Mr. Dave Boeck agreed with Members Jewell and Knudsen \$5.2 million is not enough to build a Senior Center and felt the City lied to the seniors. He said the City has been discussing spending \$3.3 million for a new hospital project and wondered if that money could be spent on a new Senior Center instead.

Mr. Montgomery Johnston agreed with the comments and said at least \$10 million is needed to construct a new and nice Senior Center. Mr. Paul Arcoli said he supports the seniors and felt everyone needed to be positive about the Senior Citizen Project. He said a new Senior Center is in everybody's best interest and said Council has changed over the years. He asked if a promise was made and was a promise delivered.

Member Terry said he did not know what other funding options were available for the Senior Center and felt another bond issue will be voted down. He said if this Senior Center plan is rejected, the seniors may not get anything. Member Terry said Norman Forward was voted on the totality of the Norman Forward package, not just a Senior Center.

Mr. Jud Foster said he was not familiar with the \$10 million budget and is not sure where that figure came from. Ms. Bette Maffucci said that Mayor Rosenthal sent out Norman Forward information that stated the Senior Center would have a \$10 million budget. She said if the City can build a \$10 million Library then the City can also build a \$10 million Senior Center. Ms. Maffucci felt the seniors should stay in the old/current Senior Center until there is more money available to build a new Senior Center. Mr. Foster said the budget for a new Senior Center is \$7.6 million; \$1.6 million for site costs and \$6 million to build.

Mr. Johnston asked whether the Senior Ad Hoc Group could request more money from Council and Mr. Foster said the Ad Hoc Group and/or Senior Association can make a request to stop the Senior Center Project or submit a request/statement that there is not enough funds to build a Senior Center until more money is found. He said the Senior Center Survey has already been sent out for public input and the project is underway. Mr. Foster suggested the Ad Hoc Group wait to see what the survey results are as well as see what the current budget can get constructed/done on the project. Mr. Montgomery agreed with Mr. Foster. Mr. Boeck felt a complete design for the facility (of what is wanted by the seniors) is needed. Mr. Foster said the scope of work is based on the budget and if a full scale design is wanted, it will cost more money and come out of the project budget.

Member Knudsen said she had heard that the Design Team (FSB) said the Senior Center would not be getting a swimming pool during the Norman Forward Indoor Aquatic and Multi-Sports Facility Ad Hoc meeting. Mr. Foster said no, nothing has been decided yet. He said the Design Team has heard the pool is the most popular to seniors. Member Knudsen said she would like to see the same pool that was built in the South Oklahoma City Senior Center be built at our new Senior Center and Ms. Maffucci said it is the most popular program at that Senior Center. Member Jewell said seniors do not want an Olympic size pool but rather a warm water pool that can be used with resistance walking.

Mr. Art Chapman asked the status of the Canadian Park and asked whether or not the \$2 million budget for the park can be moved over to the Senior Center Project. Mr. Foster said Council would need to make that decision. Mr. Chapman felt the Senior Center Project should not be put on hold; instead, the City needs to find additional money/funding for the project.

Chairperson Hobson said she is opposed to putting the Senior Center Project on hold since the City has a Design Team hired and the survey process has already started. Member Jewell asked whether the Ad Hoc Group can speak to Council about this issue. Mr. Boeck said the Senior Center Project needs the full design; not a \$5.2 million design but a \$10 million design. He felt like the vision needs to be completely designed; however, the project does not need to be put on

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hold. Ms. Ann Marie Eckart said she is a member of the Norman Forward Reaves Park Ad Hoc Group and spoke about the different building phases of the park plan project. She said it is not uncommon for large projects to be built in phases and improved upon as additional funding becomes available.

Member Jewell agreed with Mr. Boeck stating that the entire vision for the new Senior Center needs to be designed, but she felt the project needs to stop until more funding is available. Chairperson Hobson said a Design Team has been hired; now do we want to tell them to stop? She said the Design Team has never indicated that certain programming cannot be done, i.e., pool, etc., but rather the Ad Hoc Group will need to prioritize the needs/wants/desires for the new Senior Center.

Member Knudsen made the motion that this Ad Hoc Group needed to send Council a message stating the senior citizens are not happy with the budget available but it is important that the Senior Center Project continues and we encourage Council to seek more funding for the Senior Center Project seconded by Chairperson Hobson. The vote was taken with the following results:

YEAH: Chairperson Hobson and Member Knudsen

NAY: Members Jewell and Terry

The motion failed.

Member Terry said he opposed the motion as proposed. He said the next Senior Center Ad Hoc meeting is scheduled for November 12, 2019 and we need to wait for survey feedback.

Mr. Foster said the survey closes on October 25, 2019 and will be discussed at the Senior Center Public Meeting scheduled on October 30, 2019.

Member Jewell this Ad Hoc Group should meet with Council because they do not know what we are wanting and Chairperson suggested those present today can contact their Councilmember. Mr. Arcoli asked whether another Ad Hoc meeting can be scheduled and invite Council to attend OR whether this Ad Hoc Group could request a Council Study Session to voice their concerns.

Member Jewell made a motion that this Ad Hoc Group requests a Council Study Session be scheduled to discuss concerns regarding the Senior Center Project budget and the willingness to move forward with the project, seconded by Member Knudsen. The vote was taken with the following results:

YEAH: Chairperson Hobson and Members Jewell, Knudsen, and Terry

NAY: None

Staff said they would work with the City Clerk's Office to get a Study Session scheduled and inform the Ad Hoc Group of the date as soon as possible.

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ITEM 4, being:

MISCELLANEOUS

None.

ITEM 6, being:

ADJOURNMENT

Member Terry made the motion seconded by Member Knudsen to adjourn. The vote was taken with the following results:

YEAH: Chairperson Hobson and Members Jewell, Knudsen, and Terry

NAY: None

Passed and approved this 30th of October 2019

Gale Hobson
Gale Hobson, Chairperson