

Norman Board of Parks Commissioners  
May 5, 2022

The Norman Board of Parks Commissioners of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met on May 5, 2022, at 5:36 pm at the Park Maintenance Conference Room, and notice and agenda of the meeting was posted at 201 West Gray Street, 24 hours prior to the beginning of the meeting.

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ITEM 1, being:

ROLL CALL

Present: Chair Wright and Commissioners Davison, Favors, Isacksen, May, Moxley, and Sallee

Absent: Commissioner Salmond

Tardy: Commissioner Ross

City Officials

Present: Jason Olsen – Director of Parks and Recreation  
James Briggs, Park Development Manager  
Mitchell Richardson, Recreation Supervisor  
Wade Thompson, Parks, and Facilities Manager  
Veronica Tracy, Recreation Manager  
Colin Zink, City Forester  
Karla Sitton, Admin Tech IV

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ITEM 2, being:

APPROVAL OF THE APRIL 7, 2022 - REGULAR PARK BOARD MINUTES

Commissioner Isacksen made the motion, and Commissioner May seconded to approve the April 7, 2022, Regular Park Board minutes. The vote was taken with the following results:

YEAH: Chair Wright and Commissioners Davison, Favors, Isacksen, May, Moxley, and Sallee

NAY: None

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ITEM 3, being:

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Commissioner Sallee made the motion, and Commissioner Moxley seconded to approve the agenda. The vote was taken with the following results:

YEAH: Chair Wright and Commissioners Davison, Favors, Isacksen, May, Moxley, and Sallee

NAY: None

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Commissioner Ross arrived at the meeting at 5:40 pm.

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ITEM 4, being:

**CONSIDERATION OF PARKLAND REQUIREMENT FOR THE VILLAGES PUD ADDITION**

Mr. James Briggs, Park Development Manager, said The Villages PUD Addition is located on the north side of Imhoff Road and the west side of Oakhurst Avenue. The addition is located across the street from the Hitachi Corporation and contains 109 units of PUD single-family residential zoning. Mr. Briggs said when it develops; there will be a total required parkland dedication of .7139 acres. He said this development would also yield \$8,175 in Neighborhood Park Development Fees and the same in Community Park Development Fees once all building permits have been issued.

The development wraps around existing commercial development. The Villages will be located at the south end of the neighborhood that contains Oakhurst Park, just a few blocks north of the site. It is less than a mile away from Woodcreek Park. The Developer has indicated a desire for a fee-in-lieu of land decision, and they will also provide common space in the neighborhood. That area will be available for residents but not counted toward parkland dedication. Any fees collected, plus all the building fees collected at the time of final build-out can be used to help continue development in either of the public parks identified above. The sidewalks along Oakhurst Avenue, which will be built as part of The Villages PUD, will connect to the neighborhood parks that lead to Oakhurst Park. Oakhurst Park was the first park renovated as part of the Norman Forward Neighborhood Park Improvement Project, and Woodcreek Park still has yet to receive its improvements from this program.

Mr. Briggs said that based on this information, City Staff recommends that the Park Board accept a fee-in-lieu of parkland decision for The Villages PUD.

Mr. Sean Rieger, Developer Representative for The Villages, PUD, introduced himself to the Board and asked if anyone had any questions. Chair Wright asked whether the common area would have trails and/or sidewalks, and Mr. Rieger said sidewalks would be constructed. Mr. Rieger said platting code requirements state a sidewalk will have to be built in the front of every home. Commissioner Moxley asked if there was an existing pond on the proposed site, and Mr. Rieger said that it was a detention pond.

Commissioner Sallee made the motion, and Commissioner Davison seconded to approve the Fee-in-Lieu of Park Land for The Villages PUD. The vote was taken with the following results:

YEAH: Chair Wright and Commissioners Davison, Favors, Isacksen, May, Moxley, Ross, and Sallee

NAY: None

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ITEM 5, being:

**NORMAN FORWARD UPDATE**

Mr. Jason Olsen, Parks and Recreation Director, asked if the Norman Forward Update could be given to the Board during the Park Tour, as most of the park sites being toured after the meeting are current Norman Forward Project sites. The Board agreed that would be fine.

ITEM 6, being:

**MISCELLANEOUS COMMENTS**

Mr. Jason Olsen, Parks and Recreation Director, introduced Colin Zink, the new City Forester, to the Board. Mr. Zink said he is a Certified Arborist and earned his bachelor's degree in Urban and Community Forestry at OSU in 2014. He said he has been an OG&E contractor for the last 3 ½ years and was in the Navy for nine years.

Mr. Veronica Tracy, Recreation Manager, highlighted the May events beginning with the Jason Young Band playing at the @Legacy event on Friday, May 6 starting at 8 pm, and the Mother and Son Dance is scheduled for this Saturday, May 7, from 6:30-8:30 pm., at Embassy Suites. She said the Outdoor Movies Series would kick off on Friday, May 20, at Lions Park with the movie "Encanto." This event is free, activities will begin at 7 pm, and the movie will start at sundown. Ms. Tracy said, in 2020, Norman residents selected Monroe Park as "Norman's Best" during a March Madness-type social media vote, and Norman's Best Park Celebration is scheduled for May 21 at Monroe Park from 1-3 pm. Activities include story-time with the Pioneer Library, bounce houses, Nerf battles, inflatables, free face painting, snow cones from Beanstalk Coffee and Sno, Norma's Food Truck, music, games, and more!

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ITEM 7, being:


**ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Moxley made the motion, and Commissioner May seconded to adjourn. The vote was taken with the following results:

**YEAH:** Chair Wright and Commissioners Davison, Favors, Isacksen, May, Moxley, Ross, and Sallee

**NAY:** None

Passed and approved this 2<sup>nd</sup> of June 2022

  
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Kristi Wright, Chair

**PARK TOUR**

The Board begins the Park Tour by touring the new Park Maintenance Facility. The meeting was held in the Employee Breakroom, and Mr. Wade Thompson, Facility and Parks Manager, gave the tour, showing the Board the new offices, conference room, and new garage/bay areas.

Commissioner Moxley left the Park Tour. The Commissioners boarded the bus and toured the following sites:

The Board first went to the Norman Forward Young Family Athletic Center (YFAC) building site located on the north side of Embassy Suites. The YFAC will be an approximately 122,000 square foot facility built on a 12-acre site. The facility will include two pools with adequate spectator seating for swim competitions; a Multi-Sport gymnasium that will have eight basketball courts with 12 volleyball courts (which overlay the basketball courts), including a regulation-size basketball court. Norman Regional Health System is developing a 2-story, 25,000 sq foot space between the natatorium and multi-sports area of the building to serve as a sports and human performance center and physician clinic. Mr. Olsen said recent earth moving in the room turned up some ancient pipes from the old Norman Navy base with asbestos. Mr. Olsen said once the asbestos is removed, the project will resume.

The next stop was at the Norman Forward Griffin Park project, located at 1000 E. Robinson Street. Mr. Wade Thompson, Facility and Parks Manager, said Phase 5 of the project includes demo and rough grading (completed), water tower paint refreshing (completed), new irrigation is being installed, and soil amendments will be applied in the upcoming weeks. He said the fields would be sprigged mid-June, allowing for use for play in late fall. Mr. Thompson said for Phase 6 of the Griffin Park project, approximately 65% of the Construction Documents are being reviewed, with expected 100% CDs completed in early June.

The Board was taken to the Norman Forward Senior Wellness Center building site at the Norman Regional Health System Porter Campus, 901 W. Porter. Mr. Jason Olsen, Parks and Recreation Director, said the Nearly New Building was recently demolished, and the parking lot is scheduled to be demolished later this month. He said final bids for the Senior Wellness Center were opened in April and showed that the construction market at this time is indicating significantly higher prices than the City and its designed team anticipated. Currently, the Senior Wellness Construction budget is \$10.4 million, with the cost of constructing the current center without an indoor multiuse gym at \$12 million. Mr. Olsen said Staff does think we have a path going forward! Some will remember in the land exchange with Norman Regional Hospital on the Porter Campus that the City is getting \$426,000 in cash from the land swap plus a building across the street located at 718 N. Porter. The Cleveland County Health Department is now interested in purchasing the 718 N. Porter property from the City, and that sale would be for \$1.2 million. He said the delta in construction just about lines up with sales and land exchange almost perfectly (\$1.626 million).

Creekside Bike Park, located at 2217 E. Lindsey, was the next Park Tour destination. Mr. James Briggs, Park Development Manager, said the park was constructed in the fall of 2019 and is a 12- acre site of multi-terrain land fitted with various bike skills amenities for all skill levels. While touring the park, the Park Board and Staff watched a bike rider in action on one of the trails!

The next stop on tour was the Norman Forward Reaves Park Project, located at 2501 W. Jenkins Avenue. Mr. Briggs said work continues constructing the new youth baseball/softball fields and new park road, and interior parking lots. In contrast, the Ball Clubs of Norman continue to operate their nightly league schedule and busy weekend tournaments successfully. He said the dirt used for this significant project is being generated on-site by digging a new detention pond on the park's east end. Mr. Briggs said the pond would also serve as a recreational wet pond feature in future phases, but for now, it is functioning as detention only, which was put to use with the heavy rain this week. He said several feet of water filled the pond, which then slowly released to continue flowing out of the park in the exact location it always has on its way east across the Jimmy Austin OU Golf Course. The project will be completed next winter— ahead of the 2023 sports leagues and events.

The Park Board was taken to the site of the future Bentley Park located in the Summit Valley/Bellatona Neighborhood. Mr. Briggs said the future park is a 7.254-acre tract of land and the parkland predicted for this area was one of those identified in the 2015 Norman Forward Proposal as a "New Neighborhood Park Development" Project. He said at April 2022 Park Board meeting, the Park Board approved naming this new park in honor of Mr. Lionel Bentley, former Parks and Recreation Director. Unfortunately, he passed away very suddenly in March 2022. Mr. Briggs said Mr. Bentley recently made a substantial donation to the Norman Park Foundation to, among other things, fund a renovation of the sand traps at the Westwood Golf Course, with any remaining funds from his family's donation to be used "as the department saw fit" to make improvements to the parks system. He said Staff is starting to survey the neighborhoods for their feedback on what they would like to have in their new park, and from that input, we will produce a park design for consideration at a future Park Board meeting. Once approved, the final design will be bid-out and constructed during the next Fiscal Year. Mr. Briggs said Norman Forward funding and funds from the original donation from Mr. Bentley in life and those funds pledged in his memory (as requested by his family) will be used to construct the neighborhood park.

The final stop on the Park Tour was Saxon Park, located at 2700 36<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE. Mr. Briggs said Saxon Park opened in 2015 with a winding, crushed granite path designed for cross country runners and local hikers, walkers, and nature enthusiasts. He said a half-mile wheelchair-accessible fitness trail opened in the fall of 2017. Mr. Briggs said this is a 67-acre park with many features and undeveloped acres. The fitness trail is a 10-foot wide concrete sidewalk with stops at various fitness stations, including a chest press, designed for people in a wheelchair. Additional equipment includes chin-up bars, leg lifts, a captain's chair, a sit-up bench, and a roman chair. Each piece of equipment has an illustrative label that shows how it is supposed to be used and a QR code that links to a video to show how the exercise should be done.