

## CITY COUNCIL PUBLIC MEETING ON NORMAN FORWARD PROPOSAL

May 21, 2015

The City Council of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, attended a public meeting at 6:00 p.m. in the Municipal Building Council Chambers on the 21st day of May, 2015, and notice of the public meeting were posted at 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. Although this meeting was not a regularly scheduled meeting of the Council a quorum was present; therefore, a summary of the meeting was recorded as required by the Open Meeting Act.

PRESENT:

Councilmembers Allison, Castleberry, Holman, Jungman, Lang, Miller, Williams, and Mayor Rosenthal

ABSENT:

Councilmember Heiple

### DISCUSSION REGARDING A CITIZENS' QUALITY OF LIFE INITIATIVE ENTITLED "NORMAN FORWARD" AS WELL AS ADDITIONAL QUALITY OF LIFE PROJECTS AND FINANCING OPTIONS DISCUSSED.

Mayor Rosenthal said City Council holds meetings every Tuesday evening and for the last month and a half, Council has been meeting on Thursdays as well to review Norman Forward proposal. She said tonight is the second formal opportunity for members of the public to weigh in. She encouraged everyone to visit the City of Norman's website and provide input on the survey questions regarding Norman Forward. Further into the process, the City will be conducting a statistically valid survey of the public to assess the community's interests and priorities. She said no formal proposal has been determined, no specific method of financing has been selected, and no term of a temporary tax or oversight mechanism has been determined. Council would welcome thoughts and comments from the public as they make these determinations. She said Staff will provide an overview of the projects discussed to this point and will answer questions to the extent the information is available. She asked the public to limit their comments to five minutes or less and said the purpose of the time limit is not to cut off discussion, but to allow reasonable space and time for all who wish to speak.

Mr. Steve Lewis, City Manager, said Norman Forward is a proposal that includes a number of quality of life projects designed to renovate, expand, and construct a number of facilities consisting of park facilities, recreational facilities, cultural facilities, and tourism facilities. He said the initiative came to the Council from a number of community groups, stakeholders, and Norman residents. It was originally prepared by the community groups backed by well-respected recreational planning professionals as well as research firms. The proposal was brought to Council in March 2015, and since that time Council has been working with Staff to review these projects and explore details that need to be addressed. He said the proposed projects are estimated to cost \$143 million. He highlighted the projects that include an indoor basketball/volleyball facility; James Garner Avenue extension; Griffin Park land acquisition; Canadian River Park; central branch library; east branch library; indoor aquatic center competition pool; Expo Center; various park projects; and Sports Complex projects for Reaves Park, Griffin Park, and a new Adult Softball/Flag Football Complex. He said these projects have long been envisioned in the community and are part of the Park Master Plan (PMP). He said the Canadian River Park was recently added to the list as well as integrating public art into the projects.

Mr. Lewis said Council has spent approximately 16 hours of meeting time to understand and refine the projects. Tonight Staff will be presenting the various projects to the public to give them a good understanding of the extensiveness of the projects. He said all the projects are listed on the City's website under Norman Forward. A copy of tonight's presentation will be available on the website in the morning and will be aired on Channel 20 periodically each day for a number of days going forward.

### **Central and East Branch Library Projects**

Mr. Lewis said the Central Library Branch Project was considered by the community in 2008, but was rejected by the voters. Council requested an update of the Library Master Plan (LMP), which was completed in 2014, and the updated plan recommended the construction of a new Central and East Library Branch. The proposed central library will be 82,000 square feet envisioned to be constructed north of Andrews Park at an estimated cost of \$39 million. The update estimated a central library with a parking lot at a cost of \$39,177,428 and if a parking garage is needed, the estimated cost will be \$48,135,278. The proposal envisions a three level library with surface parking of 349 spaces. The central library would include meeting rooms, collections, electronic work station, children's programming, and training/classroom space. He said additional land would need to be acquired to assemble all the parcels needed at that location.

Mr. Lewis said the LMP envisioned an east library branch at an estimated cost of \$5,111,294 million. That project consists of a 12,500 square foot building proposed to be constructed east of Fire Station No. 9 (intersection of Alameda and Ridge Lake Boulevard). He said the City of Norman owns that site so no land acquisition would be needed. The east branch library would include meeting rooms, collections, and electronic work stations.

### **James Garner Avenue Extension Project**

Mr. Shawn O'Leary, Director of Public Works, said James Garner Avenue was formerly known as Front Street, but was renamed in honor of the now deceased actor, James Garner, who grew up in Norman. The James Garner Avenue Extension Project will create a new two lane roadway extending from Acres Street to Robinson Street tying into Flood Avenue. He said this is essentially a connection to Downtown Norman and ultimately to the Campus Corner area. Staff would utilize an existing bridge substructure built with the Robinson Street Underpass. He said there are a number of side streets what will not be connected to the roadway in order to keep it more fluid for traffic and a more arterial type roadway. He said the cost is estimated to be \$6 million. He said Legacy Trail would also loop over the underpass on the bridge structure and tie into the north side of Robinson Street. Currently bicycles and pedestrians have to cross Robinson Street to get back onto the existing Legacy Trail. The southern portion of the project ties into Acres Street, which has been identified as the proposed central library site so the road would be parallel or adjacent to the library.

### **Westwood Pool Project**

Mr. Jud Foster, Director of Parks and Recreation, said the Westwood Pool Project estimated at \$12 million involves razing the existing pool facility (built in 1966) and replacing it with a new family aquatic center. The proposed project includes water slides and a plunge pool; a free form recreation pool with zero depth entry and play/spray features; a lazy river; a 25 yard x 25 millimeter lap pool and diving area; large shaded deck and special events area; new bathhouse; concession facilities; and additional parking.

Mr. Foster said three pool designs were presented to Council and the design being presented tonight is not necessarily the one that has been chosen, it is simply being used to depict the types of activities that would fit on the site.

### **Parks Projects**

Mr. Foster highlighted the various park projects in the Norman Forward Proposal at an estimated cost of \$25 million as follows:

- **Ruby Grant Park** (\$6 million)  
Develop initial phase of Ruby Grant Park to include utility improvements, signage, parking, walking and running trails, practice fields, pavilion and pedestrian lighting.
- **Saxon Park** (\$2 million)  
Develop Phase II of Saxon Park to include additional parking, decorative fencing, site furnishings, children's play area, restroom facilities, and event shelter.
- **Existing Neighborhood Park Renovations** (\$6.5 million)  
Renovations to existing neighborhood parks to include items such as new signage, decorative funding, site furnishings, walking trails, trees and playground shade structures, additional playground equipment, picnic pavilions, additional soccer goals, and backstops.
- **New Neighborhood Development** (\$2 million, approximately \$325,000 per park)  
Develop new parks for the Cedar Lane, Southlake/St. James, summit Valley/Bellatona, Redlands, and Links neighborhoods.
- **Andrews Park** (\$1.5 million)  
Renovations to include splash pad enhancement, shade for amphitheater seating, skate park expansion, and additional tree planting.
- **Westwood Tennis Center** (\$1 million)  
Convert two existing courts to indoor facility and construct two new outdoor courts with lighting and site furnishings.
- **New Trail Development** (\$6 million)  
Complete Legacy Trail loop, connecting segments from Ruby Grant Park, east along the Little River Corridor, and south to the existing Robinson Street trail.

### **Sports Complex Projects**

Mr. Foster gave an overview of Norman Forward's proposal for sport complexes at an estimated cost of \$23.5 million as follows:

- **Reaves Park** (\$10 million)  
Remove six existing adult softball fields and existing park maintenance facility and construct fourteen youth baseball/softball fields with lighting, restrooms, concession facilities, and additional parking. (Optimist youth baseball complex, Kidspace, Veterans Memorial and existing festival and picnic areas to remain as currently constructed)
- **New Adult Softball and Flag Football Complex** (\$2.5 million)  
Purchase and develop new 25 (more or less) acre site to accommodate a five field adult softball complex and a four field flag football complex with lighting, restrooms, concession facilities, and parking.
- **Griffin Park** (\$11 million)  
Remove fourteen existing youth baseball/softball and four adult flag football fields and construct nine new outdoor soccer fields with lighting and convert one soccer field to indoor soccer facility (one indoor and twenty outdoor fields) and construct a new Park Maintenance Facility in northeast portion of park site.

### **Canadian River Park**

Mr. Foster said proposed development of Canadian River Park (260 acres), south of Lindsey Street and west of I-35, at an estimated cost of \$2 million would include an entrance with roads, bridge, and parking lots; Trailhead Facilities with restrooms, picnic tables, and pavilions; Trail System with paved and primitive trails, benches, and signage; enhancements such as water features; observation deck. It would also include land acquisition, which is uncertain at this time.

### **Indoor Aquatic Competition Pool**

Mr. Foster said Norman Forward proposes an Indoor Aquatic Competition Pool (\$12 million) and Indoor Basketball/Volleyball Facility (\$8.5 million). The proposed site is adjacent to the existing YMCA and would consist of a 50 meters by 25 yards competitive pool and 15 meters by 25 yards teaching/aerobic/recreation pool. He said operational costs are expected to be \$750,000 annually to be paid through proposed contribution agreements with YMCA, Sooner Swim Club, City of Norman, Norman Public Schools, Norman Regional Hospital System, and swim meet revenues.

The Indoor Basketball/Volleyball Facility is proposed to replace the existing five-court facility (hanger), operated by the Optimist Club, located east of the existing YMCA.

### **Griffin Land Acquisition**

Mr. Foster said \$5 million has been earmarked as a “place-holder/down payment” to cover a portion of the acquisition of Griffin Park, Sutton Wilderness Park, and Francis Cate Park property currently owned by the State and leased to the City. The State has informed the City that all long term leases are invalid and will not be renewed; therefore, the City will need to acquire property currently being leased. In 2014, Legislation authorized the Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (ODMHSAS) and the City of Norman to discuss disposition and redevelopment of the properties. He said the City has no idea what the final costs will be and ODMHSAS is currently reviewing those costs. Mr. Lewis said the City needs to act sooner rather than later to purchase the land before the leases expire.

### **Senior Citizens Center**

Mr. Foster said in 2008, the renovation of the current library building to include a Senior Citizens Center was authorized by the voters; however, the renovation required a successful vote for a new central library that failed. He said the proposal for a Senior Citizens Center includes improved parking; office space; Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) restrooms; multipurpose rooms; game rooms; fitness room; computer lab/classroom; ceramics; reading and television areas; arts and craft area; and kitchen and dining areas. He said final design for the project has not been decided and will include extensive public input, especially from senior citizens.

### **Expo Center**

Mr. Lewis said \$7 million is included in the Norman Forward proposal for an Expo Center is being proposed at a construction cost of. The Expo Center could act as an economic generator and public resource for the local community. The City could host conventions and tradeshows; public and consumer shows; amateur sports tournaments and competitions; and it would also be available for other local and non-local events. The goal of the facility would be to attract non-local events that presently cannot be accommodated by existing local facilities to provide new visitation and local economic impact. Norman has a number of smaller and specialized meeting and event venues, but lacks a convention facility that offers traditional concrete floor space.

### **Expo Center, continued:**

Mr. Lewis said in 2015, the Norman Convention and Visitors Bureau (NCVB) retained Convention Sports and Leisure International (CSL) to conduct an Expo Center Phase I and II analysis. The analysis studied the need for a large exhibition space to accommodate tradeshow, conventions, amateur sports tournaments/competitions and other events. The analysis outlined a market supportable program that consists of a 35,000 square foot facility. Three preferred sites were identified and recommended along with three construction scenarios ranging from \$15 million to \$42 million. Any needed operating subsidies would need to be negotiated.

### **Public Art**

Mr. Lewis said public art was a dimension of the Norman Forward proposals brought up by City Council. He said public art can include art components as part of public construction projects and/or art placed in public areas. Examples of public art include outdoor sculptures/art pieces; indoor paintings; murals; unique architectural elements; and gateways. In many instances, municipal ordinances include one percent funding as part of their capital projects dedicated for public art. Qualifying projects could include public buildings expected to be visited by the public, large renovations of public buildings, major additions or renovations to public parks, and projects with funding over a certain dollar threshold.

### **Potential Project Funding**

Mr. Anthony Francisco, Director of Financing, said the total package the Norman Forward projects is approximately \$143 million. As it was presented to the City, the costs would be paid through a one-half percent, fifteen year sales tax. The City believes Norman Forward's costs are sound and could be paid off in fifteen years. Norman Forward did not want the City to use a pay-as-you-go scenario because it would be ten to thirteen years before the projects were even started. He highlighted sales tax rates for other cities and said Norman is currently on the low end of average for sales tax rates and if the one-half percent sales tax were to pass Norman would be at the high of average, but still in the average range and affordable.

### **Potential Governance Options**

Mr. Lewis said Council used the Oklahoma City (OKC) MAPS Projects as a comparison for governance options. During the course of a 20 year period, OKC utilized three difference types of oversight 1) a Trust, 2) an appointed Oversight Committee, and 3) an appointed Advisory Board that could make recommendations to City Council. He said Norman currently utilizes citizen advisory board oversight for the University North Park Tax Finance Increment District, the Citizen's Public Safety Sales Tax Oversight Committee, and the Citizen's Wastewater Oversight Committee.

### **Additional Project Considerations**

Mr. Lewis highlighted other project considerations that include additional infrastructure costs for traffic and utility improvements associated with expanded facilities; budgetary impacts for ongoing operation and facility maintenance; length of tax, i.e., number of years; project financing versus pay-as-you-go; operational agreements needed, e.g., YMCA, Sports Associations, Norman Public Schools, OU, and Norman Regional Health Systems; property acquisition, e.g., central library and Griffin land; and approval needed from governmental entities and agencies, e.g., OU, Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality (ODEQ), and ODMHSAS.

### **Public Comments/Questions**

Ms. Chloe Mitchell, 704 Trisha Lane, plays volleyball for Oklahoma Premier Volleyball nine months out of a year, traveling out of town six of those months. Her volleyball club has trouble finding gym space to practice and there is no space available for tournaments. She said bringing tournaments to Norman would generate revenue and hopes Council will bring Norman Forward to a vote of the people.

**Public Comments/Questions, continued:**

Ms. Claudia Swisher, 7550 Nutmeg Drive, said there is only one project in Norman Forward that will address the needs of east side citizens and that is the east side library branch. She supports the entire package, especially the east side library branch. She said east side residents have a right to the services provided by a public library and they need the same library programs central and west Norman receives including meeting facilities. She felt the proposed site on Alameda is an ideal location and urged Council to keep that piece in the Norman Forward package.

Ms. Terri Bell, 1025 McNamee Street, is a volunteer for Friends of the Norman Library and supports the library portions of the Norman Forward proposals. She said Norman is supposed to be a quality City to live in, but the current central library is very old and outdated and many other communities have much nicer library facilities than Norman. She said Norman has talked about constructing a new central library since 1998, so it is time to move forward with that. She said library staff does a great job with what they have to work with.

Ms. Lexi Thompson, 4305 Warrington Way, plays volleyball for Oklahoma Premier Volleyball and Norman North High School (NNHS). She said playing volleyball has provided the best experiences of her life and has taught her to be accountable and confident. She asked Council to bring Norman Forward to a vote.

A student at Norman High School (NHS) said she swims on the high school team. Her team has to go off campus to practice, but there are times when they are not able to practice due to maintenance or equipment failure at the facility. Norman really needs facilities where swimmers can practice more and compete.

Mr. Scott Saul, 613 Summit Bend, appreciates the opportunity to get behind a program like Norman Forward to improve the community. He does not like paying more taxes; however, the Norman Forward proposals are definitely an investment in the community. These proposals could dramatically improve the Norman area leading to economic prosperity, world class recreation facilities, and a world class Expo Center. He said this in a unique opportunity to take advantage of low interest rates, which will only increase in the future making the projects more costly.

Mr. Rob Norman, 4604 Greystone Court, supports Norman Forward projects as a whole. Norman is behind other communities for these types of amenities. He is concerned about projects being removed from the proposals because one constituency thinks the project is not important. He is unhappy that a number of youth sports have been removed from the proposals, particularly a stadium for youth football and other outdoor sports that will ultimately bring in tourism dollars.

Mr. Norman said the Optimist Club is signing an agreement with a larger sports entity to bring additional people to Norman for youth football. For so many years citizens have relied on the University of Oklahoma (OU) and Norman Public Schools (NPS) to provide sport facilities, but these facilities are over capacity, outdated, and OU and NPS have priority to the facilities. He hopes Council will add some projects back into the proposals. The Norman Forward proposals are all very important and need to remain one package so there is something for everyone.

Ms. Jayne Crumpley, 423 Elm, is concerned with the push for a September election. She said more time is needed to acquire more specifics regarding costs, etc. She is also concerned about funding for future projects if this election passes. She said only \$5 million is slated for Griffin property, which is not enough because the State will be selling the property to the highest bidder so where would the balance come from? The one project she is really opposed to is the Expo Center as she feels it should be paid for by the private sector in partnership with the Norman the Chamber of Commerce (NCC) and Norman Convention and Visitors Bureau (NCVB). She has seen no data to support the idea that an Expo Center would provide a lot of revenue for the general citizenry.

Mr. Anil Gollahalli, 3816 Canonbury Road, said it is time to move the City forward. Norman has the same facilities he used as a child, which is a little shameful. He said children matter, seniors matter, citizens matter, and vision in this town matters. He asked Council to give citizens the opportunity to invest in themselves.

**Public Comments/Questions, continued:**

Ms. Sally Schrems, 1107 Woodland Drive, is a mother of three swimmers. She said “swim parents” have been working well before 2005, to get a pool built for the high school swim program and other competitive and athletic swimmers. She is very passionate about swimming and its benefits just as everyone in the room feels very strongly about the various proposals and no one wants to be left out. She loves this ambitious project where everyone gets to enjoy the amenities. She said other communities have these amenities and Norman deserves to have them as well, it is time to move Norman forward.

Mr. Michael Douglas, 1501 Goldfinch Court, supports the Griffin land purchase, library, park improvements, and some of the sports improvements. He said Norman's median income is lower than Edmond, Jenks, and others where premier facilities are located. He believes high involvement in athletics takes away from other educational opportunities so there needs to be something more in the proposals than athletics because there is more to life after high school and college than competitive athletics.

Ms. Sandra Otte, 809 Russell Circle, supports all the projects, but does not see anything in the proposals regarding an east side pool. She said the east side deserves to have a pool as well as a library.

Dr. Eric Thompson, 6151 Blue Hills Lane, said when he became a father he became more involved in his son's school system through athletics. He was involved in all types of athletics from an early age and still managed to get an education to become a doctor. He has seen all the good things that happen when kids are involved in athletics and fully supports youth sports. He said sporting events and tournaments have a big economic impact to communities. He said Norman Forward is an important investment in our children's future and urged Council to move forward with the proposals.

Mr. Landon Bruce, 3719 Red Oaks Drive, said he and his football teammates want to win a state championship in the future. He asked Council to make that happen by building these projects.

Mr. Alba Brockus, 1228 Leslie Lane, said Norman has a wonderful school system and sports will not supplant education. Some children need sports to advance in other areas of their lives. Although she mainly supports sports programs because sports matter, she supports all of the Norman Forward proposals.

Mr. John Woods, 4104 Castlerock Road, Norman Chamber of Commerce Executive Director, said the Chamber Board voted unanimously to promote, in its entirety, the projects Council has studied and presented tonight and to pay for those projects via a sales tax increase. As a citizen, he is excited to have the opportunity to transform Norman and give citizens what they deserve. There are so many reasons to move forward with these projects, e.g., aging facilities, senior needs, sports growth, etc., and waiting only increases the cost of the projects so now is the time to invest in our community. He said sports and physical activities allow for opportunities for adversity; trust building; learning to take direction; perseverance; resilience; determination; spirit of teamwork; physical conditioning; and for some kids it is their only opportunity to be an equal, to participate in something and be involved. He urged Council not to underestimate the value of camaraderie to our developing youth.

Mr. Woods said many people have talked about these proposals being wants over needs. He said City government always has a pressing issue before it, the next big project to tackle, the next crisis, the next issue. He said it is exceptionally long past time to invest in ourselves and our community.

Mr. Woods said there have been questions about the planning that is necessary, the unanswered questions, and the unanswered issues. He said these are legitimate concerns, but Council can pass language creating a Citizen Oversight Committee for these projects or add language mandating that before a shovel is put into the ground operation agreements are in place, real estate contracts are in place, management agreements are in place, etc. If those details are not addressed Council can limit budget expenses or stop projects from moving forward.

**Public Comments/Questions, continued:**

Ms. Breea Clark, 433 Waterfront Drive, is a member of Library Advisory Board and a big fan of libraries. She supports the library proposals, especially the east side branch. She said an east side library branch is not just about equity it is about opportunity because if the City ignores the socio economic differences on the west and east side, that is a problem. She lives on the east side and wants those children to have a place where they can have the same educational experiences she had growing up visiting the downtown library. The library staff is doing a really good job of meeting the needs of the citizens, but Norman needs to reach more people and have better facilities. She said Norman is growing in the east and that is where new schools will be located and while the automated library at Irving Middle School is great, it does not offer the wonderful experiences for children that the downtown or west side libraries offer. She has used the meeting spaces at the downtown library and would like to be able to do that on the east side as well.

Ms. Roberta Pailes, 2319 Louise Lane, supports Griffin land acquisition and the Canadian River Park. She said it would be unthinkable to lose Griffin Park or Sutton Urban Wilderness Park and we do not want to lose what we already have. She said Canadian River Park may be an abstract concept to some people in terms of its use, but for over 25 years she ran nature programs at the river using access through private property with the property owner's permission. She said the nature classes were very popular and parents stood in long lines to sign their children up. Nature Parks can teach skills in science, record keeping, observation, using senses, map reading, and math. She said with open access, nature programs can be expanded and would be valuable to children.

Mr. Mark Campbell, 517 North University Boulevard, said until business groups can come together to create an agreement to maintain and operate the Expo Center it should not be included in Norman Forward vote.

Mr. Randy Laffoon, 2009 Wickham Place, serves on the NCVB Board representing sports. He supports all the projects in the Norman Forward proposals including the Expo Center. He believes the Expo Center would bring a lot of revenue to Norman by holding events that cannot currently be held due to space issues.

Mr. Laffoon said baseball and softball need to be together and centralized for tournaments. He said soccer cannot expand if baseball and softball do not move and basketball and volleyball are currently located in the worst building in Norman. Soccer is the fastest growing sport and in order to hold tournaments 14 full sized fields are needed, but no tournaments will be held in Norman if these changes are not made. He said the need exists today and only 16% of the money in the Norman Forward proposals go towards sports.

Mr. Peyton McMann, State Highway 77, plays for Norman Youth Tiger Cubs and asked Council to please improve the fields.

Ms. Lexa Sparks, 2013 Delaware Lane, supports the Norman Forward proposals and asked Council to let the people vote.

Ms. Marguerite Larson, 1432 Huron, supports bike trails and parks. She does not know what may or may not be cut from the Norman Forward proposals, but asked Council to keep the trails and park improvement projects in.

Mr. Steven Frazier, 104 W. Dale, has been involved in Boy Scouts since 1974. He said Norman needs swim facilities and the Optimist Club's gym (hanger) is a horrible place to play basketball. Norman does not have good facilities for football either and football groups generally play on the baseball fields after that season is over. He thinks the reason soccer is growing is because the City provided facilities for that so it is only fair that Norman provide facilities for kids that play other sports.

Mr. Russ Lowery, 3700 Dalston Circle, is the President of the Norman Optimist Club and supports the entire package of Norman Forward. He said OU is growing and allows use of their facilities less and less and the hanger the Optimist Club uses is held together with bubble gum, duct tape, love, and a handful of volunteers. He said infrastructure, asbestos abatement, paint, etc., add up and the Optimist Club does not have the money for any of these things so please let the public vote on the entire Norman Forward proposal.



**Public Comments/Questions, continued:**

Mr. Clay Spears, 606 Southern Hill Drive, former Norman Optimist Club President said football gets a bad rap and he personally knows two kids that benefited from football. One was a low income kid he took under his wing when he coached football and that kid grew up to play for OU and the Detroit Lions. That kid now owns 30 properties in Norman and he supports Norman Forward. The other kid was overweight who wanted to play football and became a good citizen of Norman. It is not just about kids having facilities it is about coaches having the opportunity to work with these young men to make them better men for others. Whether it is soccer, football, or baseball citizens have to invest in Norman.

Mr. Pete Mills, 4014 El Cerito, said his first job in 1970's, was at the Irving Recreation Center, which was new at that time and no other recreation facility has been built since that time. He said it is time to build new facilities. The Norman Forward proposals are a great opportunity to make Norman a better community for everyone and he supports the entire Norman Forward package.

Mr. Joe Paslay, 1709 Windham Court, said he is Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the YMCA. He said Norman is blessed to have one of the best YMCA's in Oklahoma. It is exciting to see a Norman Forward proposal like this that involves something for the entire community. The YMCA is about helping people and strengthening communities so the YMCA partners with the cities and other organizations in order to do this. He is excited about opening collaboration with the City and other organizations for an aquatic and gym facility. He thanked Council for giving the community the opportunity to discuss these proposals.

Mr. Will Decker, 311 South Webster Avenue, said one of the projects taken out of the original Norman Forward proposal was a free standing Senior Citizen Center. The senior community wants a stand-alone facility and it would be great if it could be located along Legacy Trail next to the proposed central library. He said to stay in shape, many seniors ride bicycles and this would give them the opportunity to ride their bicycles to the new facility and having the library next door would be a plus for seniors.

Mr. Steve Ellis, 633 Reed Avenue, said a number of advocates for Norman Forward are touting the investment value of Norman Forward proposals, but there is no evidence that sporting events pay off for the cities that host them. It is true that some local firms will do better because of the visitors to Norman while some local firms will lose business because locals will shift consumption patterns. He said these net values are hard to see. In fiscal terms, the City will not make enough in taxes to pay for their initial investment. He said build the sports facilities and aquatic center because they may be good for other things besides economic return, but we should not pretend they are investments. He said the Expo Center does not pay off for Norman and is not a consumption activity for the kids, seniors, etc., it is essentially for the hospitality industry.

Mayor Rosenthal thanked everyone for attending the meeting, especially those who spoke. She said one of the next steps will be a statistically valid survey of the community on these proposals.

Items submitted for the record

1. PowerPoint presentation entitled, "NORMAN FORWARD - Overview of Projects, Potential Project Financing Options, Potential Governance Options," Public Meetings May 19-21, 2015
2. Letter dated May 21, 2015, from Michael W. Douglas and Rosario Douglas to Mayor, City Councilmembers, and City of Norman Staff

The meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

ATTEST:

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City Clerk

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Mayor