

CITY COUNCIL CONFERENCE MINUTES

September 27, 2016

The City Council of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met in a conference at 5:35 p.m. in the Municipal Building Conference Room on the 27th day of September, 2016, and notice and agenda of the meeting were posted at the Municipal Building at 201 West Gray, and the Norman Public Library at 225 North Webster 24 hours prior to the beginning of the meeting.

PRESENT:	Councilmembers Allison, Castleberry, Chappel, Clark, Heiple, Hickman, Holman, Karjala, Mayor Miller
TARDY:	Councilmember Castleberry (6:24 p.m.)
ABSENT:	None

Item 1, being:

DISCUSSION REGARDING CHANGE ORDER NO. TWO TO THE CONTRACT WITH MCKEE UTILITY CONTRACTORS, INC., INCREASING THE CONTRACT AMOUNT BY \$233,198.71 FOR A REVISED CONTRACT AMOUNT OF \$1,849,427.21 FOR THE BERRY ROAD WATER LINE REPLACEMENT PROJECT, PHASE 2.

Mr. Ken Komiske, Director of Utilities, said the 14-inch cast iron waterline along Berry Road from Robinson Street to Lindsey Street was installed in the early 1940's. On March 15, 2015, the Norman Utilities Authority (NUA) approved Contract K-1516-43 with Central Contracting Services, Inc., for the construction of Phase 1 of the Berry Road Waterline Replacement Project and construction was completed in August, 2015. On September 22, 2015, the NUA approved Contract K-1516-43 with McKee Utility Contractors, Inc. (McKee) for Phase 2 of the Berry Road Waterline Replacement Project. The project originally planned to remove and replace approximately two-thirds (2/3) of the west lane of Berry Road for the installation of two 16-inch waterlines. The University of Oklahoma (OU) operates one of the waterlines and planned to replace their waterline along the same route so the City coordinated with them to replace both waterlines making this project cost beneficial for both entities.

On January 26, 2016, Change Order No. One was approved to add the rehabilitation of the full west lane of Berry Road to the project. Since NUA is a separate entity from the City, Change Order No. One included an amendment to add the City of Norman to the contract to provide a funding source for the road construction project.

Change Order No. Two will reconcile as-bid to as-built quantities and incorporate several items of new work. The new work major increases relate to adding 84 small diameter bends to avoid underground obstacles when re-connecting to 25 existing waterlines on both sides of Berry Road, removal and replacement of additional concrete pavement, and driveways and curbs, which was due to extending the work approximately 310 feet to the north of Main Street to minimize future

construction activities for businesses in that area. Other major cost items also include miscellaneous fittings for the 25 intersections and directional drilling in lieu of open-cut trenching on 380 feet of the project to minimize disruption to east-west traffic along Main Street as well as minimizing the duration of road closures at the intersection of Berry Road and Main Street.

Councilmember Hickman asked how the total contract cost compares to what was budgeted and Mr. Komiske said it is approximately \$600,000 over the original contract amount, but there is money in the budget to cover the additional costs.

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Item 2, being:

**DISCUSSION REGARDING THE DOWNTOWN MAIN STREET STREETSCAPE PROJECT,
PHASE II. (PARK DRIVE TO JAMES GARNER AVENUE)**

Mr. Shawn O'Leary, Director of Public Works, introduced Mr. Robert Shears, Project Architect, R.L. Shears Company, P.C. Mr. O'Leary said in 2004, the Downtown Main Street Streetscape Project, Phase I, from Jones Street to Porter Avenue, was selected by the Oklahoma Department of Transportation Department (ODOT) for Transportation Enhancement Grant Funds and that project was completed in early 2005.

The City applied for an ODOT Transportation Enhancement Grant for FYE 2007-2008, but the project was not selected. In FYE 2011-2012, the City applied again and the project was selected; however, all projects were later suspended by ODOT because the State was discussing eliminating the Transportation Enhancement Grant Program. That did not happen and the Program was reinstated. In FYE 2015-2016, the City reapplied for the grant and was selected for Transportation Enhancement Streetscape Funds in an amount up to \$600,000 with the City paying 20% and ODOT paying 80%. The City was also successful in acquiring an Association of Central Oklahoma Governments (ACOG) grant for signal and lighting safety in the amount of \$594,000 that requires no matching funds from the City. Mr. O'Leary said the money must be spent in 2017, so there is some urgency to the construction schedule.

Mr. O'Leary said Phase II is basically finishing what was started in Phase I, which was well received and generated great interest in Downtown Main Street, but the City has been unable to finish the remaining portions of Main Street. He said aesthetics are a big part of any streetscape project and highlighted proposed improvements that include landscaping with an irrigation system; sidewalks with cobblestone paving band; curbs; street furniture; decorative light emitting diode (LED) lighting upgrade; traffic signal fiber optic interconnect upgrade; illuminated street signs; pavement mill and overlay with pavement markings; stamped and colored asphalt at intersections; American with Disability Act (ADA) ramps and landings; stepped curbs; waterline main upgrade from 12-inches to 16-inches and service connections; and minor drainage improvements.

Mr. O'Leary said when Phase I was completed the positive energy and positive development that happened in the three blocks was nothing short of remarkable and the success of the Second Friday Art Walk Event is partly due to the streetscape project. He said accidents were reduced significantly

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due to traffic safety improvements and the night time environment became safer with upgraded decorative lighting features. He said the problems with Phase I were due to problems with the contractor that resulted in project delays; lack of coordination of schedules with sub-contractors and business owners; lack of coordination with access to buildings; and parking issues. Many lessons were learned and the City plans to carry over the good things and make sure Phase II goes more smoothly.

Mr. Shears said landscaping will be comprised of low maintenance, low growing plant material, and some evergreen material. The trees will be the same type as those planted in Phase I to keep continuity along Main Street. The site amenities such as trash receptacles and benches will be similar to those in Phase I as well. Illuminated street signs will be installed, which will be mounted on the mast arms of the traffic signal poles. There will be decorative pedestrian and roadway LED lighting that will be installed intermittently down the block. He said the project will also include stamped and colored intersections with crosswalk edges as well as ADA accessible curbs.

Councilmember Holman said painted, colored pavement and concrete tends to fade after a few years whereas on Campus Corner, the concrete is actually red, not painted, so it does not fade and asked if the City could do something similar on Main Street and Mr. Shears said that was discussed and may be incorporated into this project. Mr. O'Leary said the City used concrete on Campus Corner, but Main Street is using asphalt, which makes that a challenge because asphalt does not hold color as well as concrete. The roadway on Main Street cannot be converted to concrete, but Staff is looking at ways to make the dye last longer and the asphalt can be re-dyed or re-stained every few years if needed.

Councilmember Holman asked if the street signs from Phase I will be upgraded to be illuminated like the ones being proposed in Phase II and Mr. O'Leary said yes. Mr. Angelo Lombardo, Transportation Engineer, said the City will also be upgrading the interconnect for all traffic signals within Phase I and Phase II with underground fiber optics.

Mr. O'Leary highlighted four funding sources as \$2,208,823 from City Capital funds, \$600,000 provided by ODOT Grant, \$594,036 provided by ACOG Grant, and \$75,000 provided by private funds. He said during Phase I, Council felt it important to have private contributions from property owners or property tenants to have "skin in the game." Councilmember Clark asked if the \$75,000 is designated for certain items or does it go into the total fund and Mr. O'Leary said the theory is the \$75,000 will be considered half of the City's 20% match of the grant. He said in Phase I, Council entered into an agreement with the private group who raised the funds and deposited the funds into the project account and that is what Staff expects to happen in Phase II. Mr. Chuck Thompson, President of Republic Bank, said the Norman Community Foundation created an account so the property owner can write the check to the Foundation and receive a tax deduction for their contribution. He said the business owners will truly benefit from the improvements that will provide more economic opportunities.

Councilmember Hickman said that while he likes the black style traditional benches on East Main Street, he would like the City to consider installing solar powered benches that allow people to charge their mobile devices while sitting at the bench. He would like the City to be more innovative

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in its thinking about street furniture since Norman is a university town. He also suggested recycling containers be installed as well as trash receptacles.

Councilmember Holman asked if any driveways will be eliminated and Mr. O'Leary said not to his knowledge. Councilmember Holman asked if the design will accommodate two-way traffic as well as one-way and Mr. O'Leary said absolutely.

Councilmember Hickman said, in regards to traffic light sequencing, could the pedestrian button be set to be automatic instead of having to be manually pushed? Is there a law that says the buttons have to be manual because many people do not realize they need to push the button. Mr. Lombardo said if the pedestrian walk light is automatic that would mean it would accommodate pedestrian crossing whether there was a pedestrian there or not, which could slow traffic. Mr. O'Leary said Staff will be timing the traffic signal cycles to the needs and if the need is not there for pedestrians then vehicles would move unimpeded so the buttons are manual for that reason. Mr. Lombardo said the pedestrian push buttons will be upgraded to be ADA compliant so there will be an audible signal to the pedestrian to push the button in order to activate the pedestrian cross walk signal. Mr. O'Leary said, currently, traffic signals in Downtown Norman are not adaptable to deaf or blind citizens, but they will be after the project is complete.

Mr. Brett Cabiness, Cabiness Engineering, said it is important to minimize impact on businesses and keep access open as much as possible and highlighted construction sequencing as follows:

- Goals
 - Minimize impact to businesses
 - Parking disruption minimized
 - No impact to deliveries
- Always keep two lanes open, three when possible
- Coordinate work to accommodate downtown events and parades
- Restrict most work to one side of one block at a time

The project will be constructed in nine phases, eight phases of streetscape with the ninth phase being the mill and overlay. Each phase will constitute one half of a block and there will be minimal disruption. The biggest disruption being the installation of the waterlines because part of the sidewalk will have to be removed for installation of the water meter. The existing bump-outs will remain in place so access can be created from one bump-out to the other. The contract directs the contractor to leave a five foot section of sidewalk adjacent to the building all the way down the block while doing utility work, which is the most time consuming part of the project that includes underground work of installing electrical lines, plant drainage system, irrigation system, fiber optics, etc. Some concrete work will be done after business hours to accommodate businesses. The contractor will be required to submit a schedule of work each week to each business owner and City Staff explaining what exactly will be happening during that week. A representative of the City will be meeting with business owners to discuss issues that may arise and explain what will be taking place in their area.

Mr. O'Leary said Staff is seeking guidance on the next proposal. He said Staff talked briefly with Council during the One-Way to Two-Way Main and Gray Street presentations regarding the concept of a "road diet" on Main Street. A road diet would convert three one-way lanes to two one-way lanes to allow for a buffer zone behind angled parking. In May 2014, the Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) adopted by Council recommended a lane reduction, which would have a calming effect on traffic and lower vehicular operating speeds. A road diet would be more consistent with the surrounding downtown environment, would lower vehicle speeds making it safer for pedestrians, and allow better visibility for vehicles backing up from angled parking spaces thereby lowering the frequency of vehicle collisions. He said the reason a road diet was included in the CTP was because a lot of downtown businesses wanted to either convert to two-way or find some other method to calm traffic they thought was aggressive. He said modeling was done to prove two lanes could handle the traffic and there is no better time to do that than now when striping is part of the project. He asked for Council direction regarding striping, should it be done for two lanes with a buffer or leave the street three lanes?

Councilmember Holman felt a road diet would help with aggressive traffic. He said one of the biggest complaints he hears from citizens about Downtown Norman is how difficult it is to back out of a parking space. He believes a road diet would remedy that situation by giving drivers a six foot buffer zone to back out instead of having to back out into a lane of traffic.

Councilmember Hickman asked the cost for the road diet and Mr. O'Leary said it is really minor in the context of this project because the City is doing pavement striping anyway and, if anything, it would be cheaper because there is one less centerline. Mr. O'Leary said the cost issue is the least of the concerns. Councilmember Hickman said he has heard arguments from both sides whether they are business owners or citizens and he would like to see more public discussion to engage the community before making a decision. Mayor Miller agreed the City definitely needed to talk with the downtown businesses as well as have an open public discussion. Personally, she loves the idea, but past discussions with downtown businesses have been sort of sketchy on what they actually think of the idea. She said a lot of people drive through downtown because there are a limited number of east and west arterial roads.

Mr. O'Leary said Staff would be happy to schedule public meetings because a lot of people do not know this project is about to take place or that a road diet is an option of that project.

Councilmember Hickman said if the City decides on two lanes, how prudent or imprudent would it be to allow bicyclists to travel in the buffer zone? Mr. O'Leary said the Bicycle Advisory Committee (BAC) has taken a position on that and does not recommend bicycles ride in the space where vehicles are backing out; however, the buffer space does provide a space for those who want to do that and that is part of the project benefits. Mayor Miller felt further discussion would be needed with BAC since they obviously do not believe a bicycle lane would be a good idea.

Items submitted for the record

1. PowerPoint presentation entitled, "City of Norman Downtown Main Street Streetscape Project – Phase II (Park Drive to James Garner Avenue)," presented by Shawn O'Leary, Director of Public Works, and Robert Shears, Project Architect, R.L. Shears Company, L.L.C., dated September 27, 2016

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The meeting adjourned at 6:26 p.m.

ATTEST:

City Clerk

Mayor