

CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION MINUTES

January 7, 2020

The City Council of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met in a study session at 5:30 p.m. in the Municipal Building Conference Room on the 7th day of January, 2020, and notice and agenda of the meeting were posted at the Municipal Building at 201 West Gray 48 hours prior to the beginning of the meeting.

PRESENT: Councilmembers Bierman, Hall, Petrone, Scanlon, Scott, Wilson, Mayor Pro-Tem Holman

ABSENT: Councilmember Carter, Mayor Clark

Item 1, being:

DISCUSSION REGARDING THE CLEVELAND COUNTY HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN UPDATE.

Ms. Lori Beth Marshall, Deputy Director of Emergency Management for Cleveland County, said the Cleveland County Hazard Mitigation Plan (Plan) is basically a condensed version of what was produced in the 2014 to 2019 Plan. She said the updated Plan has the same hazards, such as ways tornados affect Oklahoma and still affect Oklahoma. She said the goals are the same, such as improving resiliency, identifying and creating new action projects over the next few years, implementing new action plans, etc. She said the previous Plan was 600 pages long and the current Plan is around 154 pages, but that does not mean the updated Plan has less substance. She said the Plan is more concise and, hopefully, more accessible to each jurisdiction. She said the previous Plan had a few inaccuracies, which have been corrected.

Ms. Marshall said Cleveland County Emergency Management and City of Norman Emergency Management conducted surveys for public input which served as an asset during the updating process. The surveys solicited information from the public regarding natural hazards experienced in order to draft a more universal Plan making it more versatile for the all jurisdictions. She said people were asked what type of hazards they have personally experienced in the past five years versus what hazards they are afraid might happen. She said some people may be afraid of tornadoes, but have experienced wildfires or drought so identifying the difference between perceptions versus realities help the cities and County to be more effective in long term hazard mitigation. She said going forward, she hopes the County will continue to be the driving force of annual updates so that when there is a more active storm season the repetitive loss areas, damaged areas, flooded areas, etc., can be identified. She said when these events happen, they can be added to the Plan so the five year updates will not take the County as long to contact each jurisdiction and expedite the mitigation process.

Ms. Marshall said if the City of Norman identifies any future project that could mitigate flooding or any other hazard identified in the Plan, the County can submit an addendum so the Plan can be updated before the next five update.

Mr. Shawn O'Leary, Director of Public Works, said one of the things that drove this meeting is the opportunity for a Hazard Mitigation Grant through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and/or other federal agencies. He said the City and/or County is not eligible to apply for a grant without an adopted Plan.

Mayor Pro-Tem Holman asked why the City of Moore is not involved in the County's Plan and Ms. Marshall said the City of Moore was part of the previous Plan, but decided they would like to write their own Plan.

Councilmember Scanlon said there are assessments of likelihood identified in the Plan and asked what the assessments were based on and Ms. Marshall said they are based on information provided by the Oklahoma Chronological Society or another organization similar to that. She said there is a handbook that has compiled all of the chronological related data and that is what she used as a springboard. When she placed information in the Plan she was very clear that it was based on information available to date.

Councilmember Scanlon said several weeks ago he was involved in a tabletop exercise on disaster preparedness and reactions. He asked if more tabletop exercises would be scheduled, particularly for Staff. Mr. Darrel Pyle, City Manager, said yes, with new assets coming online, including the new Emergency Operations Center (EOC), the opportunity is there for Staff to review and refresh all their skill sets as it relates to the Standardized Emergency Management (SIM) protocol. He said Staff can participate in tabletop exercises prior to the EOC construction and Councilmember Scanlon said he would encourage that.

Councilmember Wilson asked if the Plan includes items other than weather/climate events or does it include acts of war/terrorism since Norman is so close to Tinker Air Force Base and Ms. Marshall said, as written, the updated Plan addresses natural hazards only. She said once current FEMA approval has been obtained, the County can work with all jurisdictions to discuss the pros and cons of adding items, such as cyber security, hazardous materials, etc. She said public interest can also be garnered through another survey.

Councilmember Bierman asked if there is an action plan for train derailments and Mr. Kevin Foster, Police Chief, said the City has an emergency plan that would deal with train incidents. He said police and fire personnel regularly perform joint drills based on these types of incidents. Mr. Travis King, Fire Chief, said the Emergency Operations Plan has a blanket approach to train incidents that includes what departments would handle incidents based on the type of incident, i.e., fire, chemical spill, evacuations, etc. He said police and fire are confident working together using a unified approach.

Councilmember Petrone asked if the Plan takes into account flooding from the river and Ms. Marshall said yes, when consulting with the various jurisdictions, she was careful to include any hazard incident they provided into the Plan. She said the City of Norman provided inundation maps of areas that have potential for flooding, including dams. Mr. O’Leary said the City of Norman’s Floodplain Management Program is imbedded and referenced in the Plan and the Canadian River would be one of many floodplains mentioned in the Plan.

Mr. David Grizzle, City of Norman Emergency Management Coordinator, said the Hazard Mitigation Plan is not a response plan, it is a pre-emergency plan that covers what the City and County can do to mitigate future natural disaster hazards.

Mr. Grizzle said future actions include FEMA approving the Plan, jurisdictions approving the Plan at their City level, submitting those approvals to FEMA, and receiving final approval from FEMA.

Items submitted for the record

1. PowerPoint presentation entitled, “Cleveland County Hazard Mitigation Plan Update”

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The meeting was adjourned at 6:05 p.m.

ATTEST:

City Clerk

Mayor