

CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION MINUTES

September 29, 2020

5:30 p.m.

The City Council of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met in a virtual study session at 5:30 p.m. in the Municipal Building Council Chambers on the 29th day of September, 2020, and notice and agenda of the meeting were posted in the Municipal Building at 201 West Gray 24 hours prior to the beginning of the meeting.

PRESENT:

Councilmembers Bierman, Foreman, Hall, Holman, Nash, Peacock, Petrone, Mayor Clark

ABSENT:

None

Item 1, being:

DISCUSSION REGARDING RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE MAYOR'S TASK FORCE ON THE USE FUNDS SET FOR COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND PROGRAMS.

Mayor Breea Clark said the Mayor's Task Force (Task Force) is similar to the Mayor's Roundtable where she receives feedback and ideas from community partners on various topics. She said the Task Force on Social Services and Community Outreach was created in response to local conversations about how to provide optimal police and social services. She said the City engaged Management Partners, a local government consulting firm, to facilitate five sessions and conduct research with representation from local non-profit organizations supporting mental health and social service agencies.

Mayor Clark said Management Partners researched a variety of alternative service delivery methods from around the country; held focus groups via Zoom that included small and large group discussions; discussed service delivery issues and opportunities heard from representatives of the Norman Police Department (NPD) and University of Oklahoma Police Department; and learned about local and national best practices for outreach based on partnership and collaboration.

The participating agencies and organizations on the Task Force included Absentee Shawnee Tribal Health System; Bridges of Norman; Center for Children and Families, Inc.; Central Oklahoma Mental Health Center; City of Norman; Cleveland County Health Department; Crossroads Youth and Family Services, Inc.; First Christian Church of Norman; Food and Shelter, Inc.; Iglesia Pueblo de Dios; Islamic Society of Norman; Legal Aid Services of Oklahoma; Moore Norman Technical Center; Native Alliance Against Violence; Norman Next; NPD; Norman Public Schools; Norman Regional Health System; PFLAG of Norman; Pioneer Library System; Salvation Army; Virtue Center; Transition House, Inc.; United Way of Norman; University of Oklahoma; Women in Action for All; and Women's Resource Center.

Recommendations from the Task Force include creating a physical hub for social service agency collaboration; publicizing existing service options for community members; expanding services

using multilingual resources; expanding the hours of current mobile crisis service units; identifying resources to expand telemedicine services and other mobile resources; augmenting police services with a range of social service providers; identifying policing approaches for officer in “soft” uniforms; identifying resources to reinstitute the Juvenile Intervention Center; highlighting and facilitating greater interagency collaboration; and expanding outreach through involvement and/or expansion of programs, such as the Neighborhood Alliance of Central Oklahoma and Mosaicos.

Ms. Teresa Capps, Children’s Director at Central Oklahoma Community Mental Health Center (COCMHC), said the Mobile Response Services occurred in the adult and children’s division, but the children’s services have been very robust for a few years. She said two years ago COCMHC was awarded a grant from the Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (ODMHSAS) that required COCMHC to respond to calls placed from any community member in Cleveland or McClain Counties. She said those community members get to define their own mental health crisis and call COCMHC regarding issues and COCMHC can immediately respond if needed. She said services include minor behavioral disruptions to serious overdoses with children service ages ranging from zero to 24 years due to federal language for adolescents stemming at age 24 years because of the transition age for young people. She said the adult division has a similar program and accepts calls and assistance from law enforcement and consumers from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., but hopes to soon expand to 24 hours per day, seven days a week to be the same hours as the children service division. The adult division serves all adults over the age of 24 years.

Ms. Capps said during the pandemic, everything is virtual and COCMHC has been very fortunate to have donations of iPads to distribute to agencies throughout the community for that purpose. Mayor Clark said COCMHC just received another grant for additional devices and asked Ms. Capps to expand on that grant. Ms. Capps said COCMHC received a grant for 409 devices and are reviewing what type of devices are most needed, i.e., cell phones, iPads, hotspots, etc., and who would benefit the most from receiving the devices. She is hoping that having these devices in place will lessen some of the burden of law enforcement officials within the community. She said citizens can call 833-885-CARE (2273), which is the one-stop number for children services.

Ms. Capps said the University of Oklahoma (OU) is a partner for data evaluation and helps COCMHC with infrastructure between the caller and mobile response team. She said this data analysis provides a lot of information especially the outcome of cases because COCMHC does not let go of cases until they are stabilized in an appropriate setting whether that is a hospital, outpatient services, or whatever the need. Mayor Clark said she hopes the City will be able to partner as well because resources exist, but more funding is needed.

Councilmember Hall asked how long COCMHC has been in existence and Ms. Capps said the COCMHC on Alameda Street was established in 1969 and is owned and operated by the ODMHSAS. She said COCMHC is required to bill for services and payment can be made through Medicare, Medicaid, and third party insurance providers; however, COCMHC can waive fees for families that have no insurance so no one is denied service.

Councilmember Hall asked how many children are treated and Ms. Capps said approximately 700 children per year are treated and 300 mobile response crisis calls are received. She said COCMHC has 20 outpatient staff that carry about 50 caseloads each.

Councilmember Bierman asked how many calls for assistance does COCMHC receive from NPD each year and Ms. Capps said COCMHC may have contact with NPD multiple times per week regarding children in crisis. She said COCMHC usually calls NPD for support in instances of issues such as overdoses or threats of self-harm where they are refusing to cooperate or their parents are refusing to cooperate with the mobile crisis unit Staff.

Mayor Clark said reopening the Juvenile Intervention Center was brought up several times by several social service agencies and many of the recommendations involve addressing issues with children, families, and neighborhoods as a way to strengthen the community.

Mayor Clark asked Mr. Kevin Foster, Police Chief, to talk about the recommendations to augment police services with a range of social service providers and identifying policing approaches for officers in “soft” uniforms.

Chief Foster introduced Lieutenant Cary Bryant, Crisis Intervention Officer Team (CIT) Coordinator for NPD, and Lt. Bryant said NPD has 55 CIT Officers and eight CIT Dispatchers. He said NPD has worked hard to collaborate with social service agencies over the years. He said the CIT was created by the Memphis Police Department in 1987, Oklahoma City brought the program to Oklahoma in 2001, and NPD has used the Memphis Crisis Intervention Program since 2004. He teaches crisis intervention for COCMHC and the program basically gives officers additional training in mental health disorders, mental health law, substance abuse disorders, and co-occurring children’s disorders. He said the mobile crisis unit is a game changer for NPD because it gives officers more direct access to mental health providers to allow them to bring services directly to those that need them. Last year NPD began looking at a model of multidisciplinary team (Behavioral Health Response and Treatment Team) and have had several meetings with the various providers on adult level crisis, but have not really delved into the juvenile issues yet. He said although this has been put on hold due to the pandemic, it is still needed within any community because any time law enforcement, mental health consumers, and mental health providers work collaboratively there can be great outcomes. He said collaboration is key to a successful program. He said recovery is the goal and that is what needs to be focused on.

Chief Foster said “soft” uniforms can consist of polo shirts and khaki pants without the standard police utility belt so officers are not openly carrying weapons. He said CIT Officers will still be identifiable as a police officer.

Lt. Bryant said the Cleveland County Mental Health Task Force was started years ago as a program with the Oklahoma Department of Health talking about obesity, substance abuse, tobacco use, and mental health. He said partnerships formed out of that program have been invaluable and encouraged Councilmembers to attend the October meeting, second Friday of every month, to find out more about the program.

Mayor Clark asked if NPD works with social workers as well as social agencies and Lt. Bryant said any social workers he works with are licensed mental health professionals rather than specific social workers.

Councilmember Holman said he would definitely like to see expanded CIT training efforts for NPD Officers.

Councilmember Petrone asked how the overlap of homeless issues and mental health issues are handled by NPD and Lt. Bryant said if a person meets specific criteria to be taken to a hospital for mental health treatment, officers can take them into protective custody for hospital treatment; however, if they do not meet criteria, but officers know by their behavior that mental health treatment is needed, the officer can call the mobile crisis unit who has clinicians that can diagnose in the field. The clinician can write the diagnosis paperwork on site and officers can take the person into protective custody at that time for treatment. He said the only drawback is the adult mobile crisis unit is not yet fully funded and is only available from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. while the children's mobile crisis unit is available 24/7 to those 24 years and under.

Mayor Clark said she is not familiar with the Juvenile Intervention Center (JIC) and asked for background as to what it was and why it went away. Chief Foster said the JIC was created around 1997, through a three year grant from Oklahoma Juvenile Affairs (OJA) and around 2009, the State began cutting funds so the City began supplementing the program. She said JIC was a central place where a police officer could bring juveniles with criminal violations and drop them off for their parents to pick up rather than taking them to the police department, detention facility, or tying up officer's time by having to wait for parents. He said in the beginning, hundreds of juveniles were taken to JIC and as time passed fewer juveniles were being taken to the facility. He said around 2015, NPD contracted with Crossroads Youth and Family Services to operate the facility using seizure funds (approximately \$60,000 annually); however, this became impractical because funds were no longer coming in from any other source and seizure funds were dwindling. He said it was more practical to take juveniles at no cost to Point of Pivot in Oklahoma City where juveniles are evaluated and given the services needed (approximately four juveniles per year).

Mayor Clark said Norman is the third largest city in Oklahoma and thought Norman should work with the surrounding communities to collaborate on a JIC closer than Oklahoma City. Chief Foster said Moore, Oklahoma, contributed to the JIC for a while, but they now take their juveniles to Pivot because it does not cost anything and juveniles get the help they need whether that is a place to sleep, job assistance, resources for stability, etc. Mayor Clark said she would like more information on the number of juveniles served as well as costs for further discussion because it did come up frequently in the meetings by several agencies.

Councilmember Holman said he would be interested in bringing JIC back and suggested collaborating with Cleveland County as well as surrounding communities.

Mayor Clark said a central hub is needed because many of the Task Force members did not realize that many services being discussed are available and many people do know where to find the

services they need. She said there needs to be a way for agencies to collaborate or communicate services to residents so services are not being duplicated.

Mayor Clark said she was aware of the Neighborhood Alliance of Central Oklahoma (NACO), but knew very little about their purpose. She said some older neighborhoods do not have a Property Owner Association (POA) and NACO provides training, tools, workshops, coalition building, etc., and is a fantastic organization. She asked Ms. Lisa Krieg, Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Grants Manager, to talk about the program and costs.

Ms. Krieg said she has had several meetings with representatives of NACO about how they could take their Oklahoma City program and size it to fit Norman. She said NACO has a few objectives they would like to work on with Norman that includes organizing neighborhoods so local people can solve local problems. She said a Neighborhood Association helps with organization and communication within a neighborhood so that people within the neighborhoods know how to react to issues within their neighborhoods without the City being involved. A Neighborhood Association would work with the City to help Norman citizens find out what they want out of their neighborhood and are educated on what the City can and cannot provide. She said NACO would provide dedicated Staff support, overhead, etc., to begin to engage the citizenry of Norman.

Councilmember Hall said she is extremely interested in pursuing this program, especially in core Norman where it is highly unlikely neighborhoods have a POA. She said there are a lot of formal and informal Neighborhood Associations operating within core Norman and she has seen the direct value of neighborhoods that are organized and communicate with one another. Councilmember Holman agreed with Councilmember Hall regarding pursuing this program.

Mayor Clark asked if NACO has given Staff a ballpark cost and Ms. Krieg said approximately \$100,000 annually that would include three to four workshops on how to organize your neighborhood, education on responsibilities of the City, focus group meetings, community gatherings, etc. She said as the program takes off, NACO could pull back once neighborhoods become a little more self-sufficient.

Councilmember Bierman said many rural POAs have fallen apart and private roads are not being maintained so it is very difficult for neighborhoods to figure out how to resolve those issues when there are not any good ties that bind these neighbors. She said anything the City can do to help neighbors connect with one another and solve problems would have her support. She said creating better neighborly connections would help in situations such as the pandemic, natural disasters, etc.

Mayor Clark said the Task Force included information on the MOSAICOS Program, which is a fascinating program that is a collaboration between Latinos Win (in Norman), University of Oklahoma (OU), and Norman Public Schools (NPS). She said MOSAICOS' mission is to empower and strengthen students, families, and communities through leadership opportunities in a safe and enriching environment. She said the program begins in elementary school to help Hispanic or Latino children and their parents to connect with the community.

Mayor Clark said MOSAICOS enhances the sense of community, enhances academic and social enrichment, and strengthens the bond between home and school. At a glance, MOSAICOS provides academic support; positive relationship building; leadership skills; global learning; visual and performing arts; and STEAM focused enrichments. STEAM is an approach to learning that uses science, technology, engineering, the arts and mathematics as access points for guiding student inquiry, dialogue, and critical thinking. She said the community collaboration partnership also includes Girl Scouts; Center for Children and Families; Moore Norman Robotics; Farooq Karim Arts; Sonic Corporation; Norman Police Department; Norman Public Library; and South Central Climate Science Center.

Councilmember Holman said he appreciates the recommendations from the Task Force and would like to including them in the upcoming FYE 2022 budget discussions. He would like to find a way to fund a majority of the recommendations, if not all of them. He would also like to reduce the burden on the NPD.

Mayor Clark said the City can work on some recommendations now by attending meetings of the Cleveland County Mental Health Task Force and looking at better communication regarding City services through the City's website and between agencies, etc.

Councilmember Foreman said she has not heard of the Mayor's Task Force and did not receive information regarding recommendations until last week so she has concerns that the general public has not heard the recommendations or been able to give input. She said this topic needs a lot of public involvement and input so she cannot move forward without that.

Mayor Clark said this topic was never seen as a "done deal" and is simply information for Council's review moving forward. She said Council can choose what they want to do or not do, but she hopes the information tonight adds a well rounded approach to the conversation.

Councilmember Bierman said she would like to see the Task Force minutes if possible because it is hard to move forward on recommendations without the perspective of the Task Force members, such as what value they used to judge the information being presented to them. She said how information is presented and discussed and how a topic is framed is important, and centralizing marginalized communities within the City is important, etc. She said tonight she did not hear anything discussed regarding "race" and that is one of the big motivating factors that led Council to amend the budget and re-appropriate funds from NPD in June. She would like all City committee meetings to be recorded in the future so Council will have these visual/audio details to make quality assessments. She would also like to move forward with more publicly for feedback.

Mayor Clark thanked everyone participating in the Task Force meetings for their time and input.

Items submitted for the record

1. PowerPoint presentation entitled, “Mayor’s Task Force on Social Services and Community Outreach, Overview and Recommendations,” dated September 29, 2020
2. Summary results of Mayor’s Task Force on Social Services and Community Outreach with Attachment A, Participating Agencies and Organizations; Attachment B, Police, Mental Health, and Social Services Program Models; Attachment C, Summary of Participant Organizations; Attachment D, Neighborhood Alliance of Oklahoma City Presentation; and Attachment E, MOSAICOS Program Presentation

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ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

ATTEST:

City Clerk

Mayor