

VISIT NORMAN

Board of Directors Meeting
Wednesday, Nov. 16, 2022
424 W. Main St., Commerce Building

Board Attendance

- (P) James Howard, Baked Bear, Chair
- (P) Scott Kovalick, Embassy Suites Hotel & Conference Center, Vice Chair
- (A) Amish Zaver, Comfort Inn, Past Chair
- (P) Angelia Green, The Chickasaw Nation, Treasurer
- (A) Kyle Allison, Sharkey's Cuts for Kids
- (P) Cameron Brewer, The Standard
- (P) Carol Dillingham, private attorney
- (A) Caitlin Fornier, OU Athletics Community Relations
- (A) Steve Gillis, Norman Youth Soccer Association
- (A) Helen Green, OU Public Affairs
- (P) Jerry M. Hatter, Balfour of Norman
- (P) Mandy Haws, Sooner Bowling Center
- (P) Amy Million, Norman Arts Council designee
- (A) Wes Moody, Norman Public Schools
- (P) Jeff Stewart, O'Connell's Irish Pub and Grille
- (P) Helen Grant, City Council designee, ex-officio
- (A) Brenda Hall, City of Norman, ex-officio
- (P) Scott Martin, Chamber of Commerce, ex-officio
- (A) Lawrence McKinney, Norman Economic Development Coalition, ex-officio

Board Chair James Howard called the meeting to order at 11:38 a.m.

Minutes

Schemm highlighted that Amy Million's attendance from the October meeting was missing and will be corrected for the official minutes. Hatter moved that with the correction that the minutes be approved which was seconded by Dillingham and the motion carried.

Financial report

Board Treasurer Angel Green reported that the cash position was good in October. She reported that the Armstrong account will be closed.

About \$100K will move to the present account at First United Bank and about \$300K will be moved to a CD. Million mentioned that there is a cap of \$250K for a bank's CD and Schemm will follow up with her to ensure that there will be the best possible interest rate and supplier.

Green pointed out that the October financials carried items related to Fall Fest including the deposits for sponsorships. Bills are being paid now related to expenses in presenting the event so by the January meeting, the financials will reflect the breakdown of revenue and expenses related to it.

Guest Tax

Schemm discussed the potential of a 3 percent guest tax increase vote in March or April. The increase would be a 75/25 split between VisitNorman and Norman Arts Council. Parks and Recreation would forgo the 25 percent it currently receives. The money from the increase would fund a Norman Sports Commission which would have its own sub-board or committee directing it. The March ballot would have recreational marijuana on it while the April ballot would be school board and possibly city council runoffs.

He presented a preliminary budget of \$7,550 for publicity outreach that would need to be privately raised. Brewer asked if the Norman Sports Commission would only focus on youth sports and Schemm said that would not be the case, there would be instances of older tournaments and events including Beep Baseball and the Korn Ferry Tour. Stewart inquired about Bicycle League of Norman's annual event and Schemm said that the commission would be involved in growing that event to include a larger participation pool from farther away, for example.

The board voted affirmatively to pursue a March election; Stewart made the motion with a second by Green.

SEC Readiness

Schemm updated the board that three committees with which he is involved have started. The hospitality committee includes Scott Kovalick from Embassy Suites, Amish Zaver from Comfort Inn/Country Suites and Ronnie from the NOUN Hotel. They are working with OU about their process to better identify needs and wants. No updates about the Marriott Delta. The events committee includes Amy Million, Shari Jackson representing The Depot and Norman Music Festival and

Erinn Gavaghann. They are supportive of an increase in the hotel/motel tax and are especially interested in a multipurpose venue for the arts. Schemm will be meeting with the Norman Arts Council exec soon. The attractions/hospitality committee will include Kyle Allison. One potential attraction would be enhancement to the National Weather Museum which is only open on Saturdays. The group may be looking at how Sam Noble Museum was able to raise funds as about \$75 million could be needed to build a facility.

Scott Martin led the group through a presentation of recent city-to-city visits that stakeholders have recently taken to SEC campuses including Fayetteville, Ark.; Tuscaloosa, Ala. And Lexington, Ky. Joe Castiglione suggested the trips and mentioned six cities, the above along with Oxford, Miss.; Athens, Ga. and Columbia, Mo. Along with pictorial and anecdotal reports, Martin highlighted that Norman is unique from the three cities as far as size, stadiums and amenities. More RVs will be traveling to Norman for longer stays and Friday Game Eves are quite festive and lively.

Website update

Brickman shared that the next steps are taking place with the new website, currently the Simpleview art team is designing the skin of the site.

Light pole banners

Schemm said that although the banners were not approved by OU in time for installation alongside the holiday wreaths, OU officials have said approval will take place in time for printing and installation in January as the wreaths are removed.

Staff reports

With a longer board meeting, staff reports were brief. Brown highlighted sales has sent out 17 qualified leads to date with 14 definites and 1,000 room nights booked while Wagner "killed it" with Fall Fest and that Turkey Day 5K will be Nov. 24 with which he has been volunteering. Brickman mentioned Small Business Saturday collaborations. Smith presented his first year-to-date digital media report and emphasized the year-to-year growth in Instagram followers.

Meeting adjourned at 1:01 p.m., Stewart made the motion with a second by Dillingham.