

NORTH OGDEN CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

November 1, 2022

The North Ogden City Council convened in a work session meeting on November 1, 2022, at 6 p.m. at the North Ogden City Office at 505 East 2600 North and electronically through Zoom.

Recording can be found on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCriqbePBxTucXEzRr6fclhQ/videos>. Notice of time, place, and agenda of the meeting was posted on the bulletin board at the municipal office and posted to the Utah State Website on October 27, 2022. Notice of the annual meeting schedule was published in the Standard-Examiner on December 16, 2021.

CITY COUNCIL:	S. Neal Berube	Mayor	
	Ryan Barker	Council Member	
	Blake Cevering	Council Member	(excused)
	Jay D Dalpiaz	Council Member	(via Zoom)
	Charlotte Ekstrom	Council Member	
	Phillip Swanson	Council Member	(via Zoom)
STAFF:	Jon Call	City Manager/Attorney	
	Susan Nance	City Recorder	
	Dave Espinoza	Public Works Director	
	Justin Rasmussen	Aquatic Center Manager	
	Becca Godfrey	Recreation Supervisor	
	Dirk Quinney	Chief of Police	
	Zella Richards	North View Senior Center Director	
VISITORS:	Susan Clements	Christina Lomaquahu	Cathy
	Dallin Barker	AH	Crysta
	Brenda Ashdown	Brian Soloman	David Erickson
	Christine Stegen	Kevin Burns	Mary Allen
	Larry Allen	Buck Frost	Margaret
	Ken white	Sandy Cochran	Christina Watson
	Gordon Robson	Marilyn Harris	(not legible name)
	Leann	Chris Pulver	Margaret Schvanerldr
	Chris Griffen	Dotty Burke	Loren Jepsen
	Randy Winn	Jeff Brady	Joyce VanTassell
	Kelly Anderson	Julie Anderson	Stef Casey
	Sheryl Ward	Tommy Montoya	Jill Montoya
	Meg Sanders	Nary Carter	

Mayor Berube called the meeting to order. Council Member Barker offered the invocation and led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. CALL FOR CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURE

Mayor Berube asked if any member of the Council had a conflict of interest to declare. No declarations were made.

ACTIVE AGENDA

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Debbie Burke, North Ogden resident, stated that she is new to the City and she has worked in the healthcare field. She feels it is extremely important to support the senior population in the community and she was surprised to learn of how few senior programs were available in North Ogden. She noted the senior center is very important to the community. She hopes the City will continue to dedicate resources to the facility to ensure that it provides a positive environment for aging residents; this will help them to have a good quality of life in their later years.

David Erickson, Pleasant View resident, echoed the comments made by Ms. Burke; he is the Vice Chair of the Senior Center Board, and he has supported providing increased funding to the Senior Center. He understands that the majority of the individuals who visit the Senior Center are North Ogden residents, but there are some from Pleasant View who visit it as well; he feels that any contribution to preventative measures for seniors is money well spent. Many activities can help to preserve a senior's balance and help with fall prevention. Much of the programming and service provision at the Senior Center is handled by volunteers or supported by private donors. He feels that Pleasant View would be willing to contribute more funding to the Center.

Mayor Berube noted that Pleasant View has agreed to pay 20 percent of the operating costs for the Center. That contribution will eliminate Pleasant View's \$5,000 contribution to the 501(c)3 entity that support the Senior Center. He added that City Administration will be providing presentations regarding the Senior Center and other parks amenities this evening.

Julie Anderson, North Ogden resident, stated she is the Chair of the Weber Communities that Care (CTC), which focuses on suicide and drug prevention as well as promoting mental health. There are many kids in the community that struggle with these issues and sports, or recreation programs give them many opportunities to combat negative things that impact them. She stated that it would be great to get the youth involved in discussions about the future of the City's parks and recreation programs. She has spoken with many teenagers and they have communicated to her that there are not enough amenities or programs that cater to them as there seems to be a great focus on programming for younger children. She suggested the City provide parks that are attractive to teens so that they will disconnect from cell phones and visit with friends in person

and avoiding dangerous activities. She then noted she is a member of the Board for the Senior Center, and she echoed the comments about the importance of taking care of the community's aging population. She discussed opportunities for increasing programming at the Senior Center and suggested that the youth become more involved in supporting activities that are held at the Senior Center. She added that involving senior residents in the discussion about the future of the Senior Center would also be helpful.

Christina Watson, North Ogden resident, stated that she appreciates everything that the City has done to provide opportunities to the youth of the community through the programming of the Parks and Recreation Department; she has five children and they have all been involved in programs offered by the City and she agreed that these activities provide endless benefits for youth and their families. Sports programs teach youth lifelong lessons that can only be learned through being part of a team. She added that it is her understanding that the Department generates more revenue than it spends; however, if funding is a concern, she would suggest that the City increase participation fees rather than eliminate programs. She wished that more residents were present tonight to advocate for preservation of the Department, but she feels that the increased registration should be interpreted as the community's support for various programs. In the 2021 census, the City's population was 21,528; almost 2,000 of those are under five years old and 7,000 are under 18. It is her belief that at least half of the community would be interested in and supportive of preserving parks as well as recreation amenities.

Mayor Berube stated that Ms. Watson has made some great points; one of the things the City needs to consider is how to respond to the increased population in the community; the City has never thought there was a lack of interest in recreation programming, but it is important to maintain a level of service expectations and grow programs and facilities in a way that mirrors the community growth.

Kelly Anderson, North Ogden resident, stated that when she received an email from the City regarding parks and recreation programming, she was unsure of the purpose of the email. She noted that she grew up playing sports and some of her first jobs were with her local recreation department and she has found that sports programs are very important for children because it teaches them responsibility, the importance of commitment, and being part of a team. She stated that in Utah, many sports programs are very expensive, and it is difficult for families to pay to participate with competitive teams and clubs. Recreational sports provide another opportunity and is meant to be fun and give each child the opportunity to be part of a team. She is concerned about the possibility of eliminating recreational programs; she hopes the City prioritizes preservation of current programming and increasing capacity where possible.

Mayor Berube stated that the City understands that participating in sports programs can be very expensive; costs for the City to provide recreational programming is also increasing and the City is interested in hearing suggestions from the public about opportunities for addressing those increased costs.

3. **TOWNHALL DISCUSSION REGARDING PARKS, RECREATION, SENIOR CENTER, AQUATIC CENTER, AND COMMUNITY EVENTS**

a. Presentations by departments

Public Works Director Espinoza stated he was asked to discuss parks maintenance; a few months ago, parks maintenance was combined with public works maintenance due to similarity in service requirements. There are 14 facilities being maintained, 9 of which are parks that make up 57 acres of ground; there are also another 25 acres of undeveloped park ground that must be maintained. Facilities or structures being maintained include the Senior Center and the Aquatic Center. He described the amenities included in the City's parks and noted that many of the amenities – bathrooms specifically – have been vandalized, which has increased the demand on the maintenance employees. Some playgrounds are aging, and he is working to develop a maintenance and replacement schedule to ensure that they are accessible. He then noted that all but one City park is used for sports programs; also all but one double as a storm detention facility. In the future as the City continues to develop parks, he would recommend that the City avoid the storm detention dual use facilities.

Mayor Berube stated that a playground rotation schedule is very important as most of the City's parks and structures are aging. He then stated that the experiment to consolidate maintenance functions has been positive thus far and he thanked Mr. Espinoza for his Department's support of the concept.

Recreation Director Godfrey then listed the sports programs offered by the City and she touched on the participation levels in each program as well as the facilities that are available to the City; she believes that the basketball program is currently at capacity and in order to accommodate more participants, the City needs more gym space.

Council Member Barker noted that the basketball registration period is only open for two weeks before all spaces are filled; in the past, the registration period was left open much longer, but due to demand, it has been decreased. The same is true for other programs, such as baseball and football. Ms. Erickson stated that is correct; she has made her best effort to accommodate everyone.

North Shore Aquatic Manager Rasmussen provided an explanation of the operations at the Aquatic Center, including nine sessions of swim lessons, fitness programs, lap swimming, group reservations, and open swimming. The Center employs 65 to 80 youth of the community each year; lifeguards participate in ongoing training to maintain certifications. He then listed the special events hosted at the Center, which are all well attended.

Mayor Berube inquired as to upcoming maintenance burdens at the Center; the facility is approaching its 20th year. Mr. Rasmussen stated it is 20 years old and the playground structure has reached its useful life and should be replaced; the slide should be resurfaced, and the splash pad should be improved, or a new feature added to it. He stated that everyone loves to come to the Center because it is well maintained and clean; this is due to the maintenance staff at the

Center as they do a great job of taking care of the structures. However, as things age, proper maintenance is not enough, and the City will need to take measures to replace certain amenities.

Mayor Berube stated that in the past, any shortfall in Aquatic Center operations funding was covered by the Redevelopment Agency (RDA), but in the future, this will become a general obligation for the City. City Manager/Attorney Call stated that is correct; he noted that the Aquatic Center has generated enough revenue in the last two years to cover its operational costs and have a balance at the end of the year.

Mr. Call then discussed community events planning; the City has contracted with an events coordinator that will begin providing service to the City in a few weeks and they have agreed to produce 10 special events: Movies in the Park, Fright Night, Glow Run, Tree Lighting, North Pole, Arbor Day, Children's Entrepreneur Market, Food Truck Thursdays, Flick N Float at North Shore, and Santa visits. Additionally, a volunteer committee has committed to producing events involved in the Cherry Days celebration. City employees have volunteered to take ownership of a few of the remaining special events, but there are four events that will not be handled going forward: kids art camp, Music Mondays, Weber County Fair booth, Santa letters, special request events, school stomp, Chalk It Up, Kiwanis Club, RAMP Summer Days, Veteran's Day program, park reservations, and mass gathering permits.

North View Senior Center Director Richards presented the upcoming newsletter for the Center, which included information about upcoming special events and activities as well as important announcements. She also presented a graph illustrating participation rates at various activities at the Center; she stressed that the Center is a great place in the community for the seniors. Many of them have made great friends and socialize outside of Center events; they also look forward to the events and programming at the Center. Many elderly people struggle with depression and the Center is an outlet for them that is lifechanging.

Parks and Trails Committee Member Watson discussed the efforts of the Committee to evaluate parks and trails throughout the City to determine what improvements or changes need to be made. They are currently working to locate a playground at Wadman Park, and the City has allocated funding that should be sufficient for the previously planned project, but the Committee would like to expand the scope to make the playground accessible to all individuals, which may require some additional funding; she hopes to have the playground installed by mid-March. One goal of the Committee is to also include a playground at the Lomond View park; they would like to create a playground that is different from all the others in North Ogden, and they have envisioned an adventure park that will be attractive to youth of older ages. Unfortunately, the \$100,000 in the City budget will not cover this type of project and the Committee is working to determine a budget and seek funding for the project. She stated this goal is responsive to feedback the Committee has received from the community.

Mayor Berube asked if the Committee is reaching out to private donors or potential sponsors of such a project. Ms. Watson stated that work has not yet begun, but the Committee has started to assemble a list of people who could be contacted about possibly assisting in funding the project. Mayor Berube stated that a citizen has volunteered to donate cement needed for pickleball courts and the City is

considering an appropriate location for that type of improvement. He added that there is a focus on the need to develop City-owned park space that has sat raw for several years, specifically the undeveloped property at Barker Park.

b. Public comments and questions (note- not all questions will be able to be answered in the meeting)

Mary Carter, North Ogden resident, stated she has lived in North Ogden for 52 years and has paid her taxes to the City that entire time. She stated the North View Senior Center is a great asset for the elderly residents in the City and it has given her and many others access to exercise, therapy, medical services, and social activities. She asked that the City continue to support the Senior Center.

Jeannie Booth, North Ogden resident, addressed the topic of needing to increase funding for the Parks and Recreation Department; she suggested increasing participation rates for non-residents who are participating in North Ogden's programs. She then asked why t-ball and baseball games are not played at North Ogden park. She added that beautification of the City would be appreciated by residents; she referenced a parcel of ground at the top of Washington Boulevard, and it would be nice to locate a trail, benches, a reading area, a rose garden, pickleball courts, or even a zip line there. She wondered if the City has ever considered placing a dome over the Aquatic Center during the winter months to make it accessible all year.

Randy Winn, North Ogden resident, stated it will be very costly to develop Baker Park, but he suggested locating the pickleball courts there as it is the only flag piece of park ground left in the City.

Dallin Barker, North Ogden resident, asked if the City has reached out to neighboring communities to determine if their recreation programs are at capacity; if not, the City should discuss partnering with them to utilize their field and facility space. He also suggested getting more youth groups involved in planning activities because they have a lot of fresh ideas.

Mayor Berube asked Ms. Erickson to discuss current partnerships with Pleasant View pertaining to specific recreation programs. Ms. Erickson stated that Pleasant View City administers a flag football league and North Ogden's league is tackle; she uses Pleasant View fields for practices, however. She added that the two cities share gym space with each other for indoor sports. They have a very good working relationship and work well together to make their programs successful.

Cathy Batey, North Ogden resident, stated she works with the AARP tax group, and she spoke to the value of the North View Senior Center; it is a great asset and a wonderful place for seniors to visit and engage in activities with their friends.

Kevin Burns, North Ogden resident, stated the problem the City is facing is self-inflicted; so many people have been invited to live along the Wasatch Front and the area has become

overbuilt. It is a decent problem to have, but one that everyone must work together to solve. Tonight's meeting has been one of the most encouraging that he has attended, and he suggested the Mayor and Council allow the City's Department Directors to speak on their behalf more often. He understands that youth programs are at capacity; he has heard developers commit to dedicating green space for future park development, but it seems the problem is not a lack of green space, but a lack of facilities such as basketball gyms. It may be time to figure out how to address those problems with developers. He suggested the City work with private donors and developers to help address the problems the community is facing. He then stated that he is supportive of the senior programs being provided in the North View Senior Center. He stated that his mother is 80 years old, and she and a group of her friends have benefited from senior services in the community they live in. He concluded that in his current job he spends a lot of time interacting with youth who are struggling; recreation programs provide children with an outlet to help combat the stressors they are dealing with.

Loren Jepsen, North Ogden resident, stated he represents an organization that was originated in 2018 – the North Ogden Community Band. This has provided cultural enhancement for many North Ogden and Pleasant View residents as well as residents from other communities. The band gives an opportunity for people to share their musical talents with others. He discussed the various events the band participates in and noted that he feels the band greatly benefits the City. He stated the funding for the band is very limited and the only support the band has sought from the City is a place to practice as well as access to the Barker Park Amphitheater for performances. The band has managed to survive on very limited funding – namely grant awards – and he hopes that City will continue to support the band as it does at present.

Sandy Cochran, North Ogden resident, stated she has only lived in North Ogden for a short time, and she is unsure she understands what the original intent of the Barker Park Amphitheater was she feels that it is grossly underutilized, and it could possibly be an area that the older youth of the City could meet to participate in various activities to keep them out of trouble.

Meg Sanders, North Ogden resident, stated that she understands the issues the City is facing relative to limited funding; however, cities must figure out how to get the money to provide the services and amenities that residents desire. She discussed parks in other cities and indicated that they have been completed via a private/public partnership. She stated that she coaches soccer teams and is constantly vying for field space for practices because the programs are overflowing. Most important is that recreation programs are bringing families together and she feels that is the role of government. She concluded by asking if the senior center is being threatened; if that were the case, that would be very terrible. The City's senior center and parks are taking care of the community's most vulnerable residents: the elderly and the youth. It would be a travesty to ever consider taking away the senior center.

Mayor Berube stated that he is unaware of any threat of closure of the North View Senior Center. Council Member Delpias stated he is a member of the senior board, and he is also unaware of any threat to the facility.

Brock Watson, North Ogden resident, stated that he loves playing football and other sports and it would be great if the City could provide more football fields.

Jeff Brady, North Ogden resident, stated he has lived in the City for seven years and he has enjoyed park spaces. He suggested the City consider dual purpose parks or facilities that could accommodate several different types of programs or activities. If there are services the residents desire, perhaps the City should increase taxes or fees to cover the costs of those services.

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no additional public comments.

5. MAYOR/COUNCIL/STAFF COMMENTS

Council Member Swanson referenced the many emails he has received from residents over the past few weeks; he believes that perhaps the unspoken message from the Council is sometimes louder than the spoken message and he believes that the Council may have inadvertently and unintentionally created a feeling that the City's Parks and Recreation Department is at risk. Perhaps the Council can do better at communicating the City's position to the residents. He has heard repeatedly about the importance of providing programs that help to support mental health and he has also heard suggestions to invest in programs and facilities needed to provide a quality Parks and Recreation Department. He was struck by the message that recreation programs give youth, seniors, and even everyday adults, the opportunity to be successful; he had never thought of recreation in that way and those comments were meaningful to him. He assumes that the City's Police Chief could provide data displaying the correlation between a good parks and recreation system and public safety. As the City continues to grow, the Mayor and Council need to consider how to improve or increase the capacity of programs and amenities to meet that growth. He referenced the suggestions to partner with other communities to address the capacity issues of some programs; he has been hesitant to pursue partnerships in the past because when the City has partnered with others in the past, the City has covered the majority of the costs of doing so. However, the City has a senior center that most other cities do not have, but that their residents may utilize. He wondered if there may be an opportunity to negotiate reciprocal use of other recreational facilities in other communities to cover the cost of residents of other cities using the North View Senior Center. He concluded that tonight he is grateful for the participation of the community; it is now the role of the Council to move forward with identifying priorities and determining how to fund those priorities.

Council Member Ekstrom stated she is so grateful for those who have participated in tonight's meeting and offered creative suggestions for dealing with the issues the City is facing. It is important to be very clear about service expectations and priorities for the community and she asked that residents continue to provide their input and even become involved in fundraising endeavors to cover the cost of the desires of the community.

Council Member Barker stated that it is important to stress that the City has no intention to close the North View Senior Center; he has observed that the Center opens at 8:00 a.m. and closes at 8:00 p.m. and it is busy all day, every day. It is a facility that is very important to the community. He stated he feels the same about recreation programs in the community. He noted that some programs may appear to be costly, but the City makes money on these programs through participation fees. He stated recreation does support itself.

Police Chief Quinney addressed Council Member Swanson's comment about the correlation between recreation and public safety; quality programs do help to keep crime rates low, especially among the youth. Many children live in homes where both parents work outside of the home and there are times that they are left on their own; if they do not have recreational programs as an outlet, they can become engaged in less desirable behavior. These other behaviors can be very costly for the City.

City Manager/Attorney Call addressed Ms. Watson's comments about the Parks and Trails Committee's desire to build an all-abilities playground in the City; he noted that a discussion on that item has been scheduled for November 22. Mayor Berube stated he feels strongly about making all parks accessible.

Mayor Berube then concluded that for years there has been a debate about the proper role of government; he thinks the Council has received a lot of great input about the citizenry's feelings about that issue. He stated that he agrees that recreation programs help to support mental health and this is something that should be considered heavily when making all decisions about parks and recreation. He stated the City needs to plan for the future and increase its funding to maintain expected levels of service and to properly maintain public amenities and facilities. Some facilities have fallen into disrepair, and this is not a good representation of the community. He stated that of the excess funds generated in the City, 20 percent should be set aside for City parks; he is a proponent of pursuing partnerships with developers and other private entities to help improve open spaces. Additionally, the City needs to try to find a way to mitigate vandalism in City parks because this activity is very costly and hinders growth. He stated that one way for the City to catch up and provide amenities and programs responsive to growth would be to issue a general obligation bond; this would be put on a ballot for a vote of the citizens and would be repaid with taxes. He stated he does not like to incur too much debt, but it is impossible to save enough money to provide desired levels of service. He stated there is a wide spectrum of desires and the Council will need to consider these issues in upcoming budget discussions. He can attest to the fact that the Council cares very much about making North Ogden a great place to live and they will continue to work toward that end.

City Recorder Nance announced that there will be no Council meeting next week in observance of Election Day; the next meeting will be held November 22.

6. **ADJOURNMENT**

Council Member Ekstrom motioned to adjourn the meeting. Council Member Barker seconded the motion.

Voting on the motion:

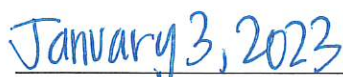
Council Member Barker	aye
Council Member Dalpiaz	aye
Council Member Ekstrom	aye
Council Member Swanson	aye

The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 7:56 p.m.


S. Neal Berube, Mayor


Susan L. Nance, CMC
City Recorder


Date Approved