



COUNCIL RESOLUTION NO. 5372

A RESOLUTION CALLING A CITY ELECTION ON MAY 16, 2023, FOR THE PURPOSE OF REFERRING TO THE LEGAL ELECTORS OF THE CITY OF EUGENE A MEASURE AUTHORIZING A FIVE-YEAR LOCAL OPTION LEVY FOR THE FUNDING OF OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE OF PARKS, TRAILS, NATURAL AREAS, WATERWAYS AND RECREATION FACILITIES, INCLUDING INCREASED SECURITY MEASURES AND ILLICIT ACTIVITY CLEANUP.

PASSED: 5:1

REJECTED:

OPPOSED: Clark

ABSENT: Evans, Zelenka

CONSIDERED: February 13, 2023



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The City Council of the City of Eugene finds as follows:

A. Great cities have great parks and recreation systems. For over 100 years, Eugene residents have demonstrated strong support for parks and recreation services by donating land, raising funds, and approving measures that expanded parks and recreation facilities. The results of this support can be seen from the establishment of Hendricks Park in 1906 and Spencer Butte Park in 1914, to the passage of a series of levies in the 1950s and 1960s that built more parks, pools, and community centers. In 1972, a bond measure created the 12-mile riverfront path system, and in 1976, voters passed a \$5 million levy for park improvements and acquisition. By the 1980s, Eugene's growing population of 100,000 enjoyed 1,500 acres of parks that included developed playgrounds, swimming pools, sports fields, and community centers. In 1998, voters passed a \$25.3 million parks and open space bond that significantly increased the number of parks, turf fields, and land for future parks and natural areas. The bond also renovated 12 existing parks, and made the expansion and renovation of Amazon Pool possible. In 1999 and 2002, local option levies passed that provided more funding for after-school recreation programming. In 2006, voters approved a \$27.5 million bond focused primarily on acquiring land for future neighborhood and community parks in growing areas, as well as the expansion of Eugene's natural areas including the Willamette riverfront system and Ridgeline Park. In 2018 Eugene voters passed a Parks and Recreation \$39.5 million capital bond and \$3.15 million five-year local option levy. The 2018 capital bond approved by the voters was aimed at building and renovating parks, pools and community centers. The 37 bond projects included building the Downtown Riverfront Park and Striker Field Park, renovating Berkley and MLK Jr. Park, renovating and expanding the Campbell Community Center, Echo Hollow and Sheldon Pools and Fitness Centers, and improving lighting across the system. The 2018 five-year local option levy approved by the voters has funded increased levels of park safety and illicit activity cleanup, general park maintenance, habitat and natural area maintenance, and the new maintenance requirements of bond projects as they were completed.

B. The City of Eugene Parks and Open Space and Recreation Divisions provide opportunities for recreation, wellness, a healthy environment, volunteerism, learning and growing. Today, Eugene enjoys and benefits from over 5,000 acres of parks which includes: playgrounds, sport fields, sport courts, trails, pathways, gardens and natural areas, as well as 6 community centers, 3 swimming pools and 6 additional recreation facilities that extend services by leveraging

local partnerships. These assets provide essential social, environmental, and economic services that contribute to the overall health, safety, prosperity and well-being of the community. However, in order to sustain these values and benefits, adequate maintenance and operations for this system are necessary.

C. Starting with the voter-approved 2018 capital bond and 5-year operating levy, the bond projects and levy-funded operations have focused on realizing the vision of the Parks and Recreation System Plan. More than 12,000 Eugene residents helped shape the 30-year strategic plan during an extensive outreach process between 2015 and 2018. The plan included recommendations for the first 10 years of implementation and encompassed new parks and trails, improved access to the Willamette River, increased security and camping response, revitalized pools and community centers, and more recreation opportunities in underserved areas. Throughout the creation of the system plan and implementation of projects, discussions with the community included the ongoing funding of parks and recreation to care for this expanded system.

D. The Capital Bond and Five-Year Operating Levy approved by the voters in 2018 both expanded the parks and recreation system and helped address an ongoing \$2.4 million operations and maintenance gap that stemmed from a combination of: 1) a doubling of parkland in twenty years associated with the 1998 and 2006 park bonds; 2) reductions in general fund revenues for parks and recreation facility maintenance; 3) a significant increase in the need to mitigate the impacts to parks from illegal camping and other illicit activities; and, 4) the deferred maintenance of an aging park and recreation infrastructure.

E. A Citizen Advisory Board provides oversight of the City's spending of the 2018 capital bond and operating levy revenues. This oversight work includes reviewing fiscal reporting to ensure spending complies with the intent of the ballot measures. At the end of each fiscal year, a Bond and Levy Annual Report is created to document the accomplishments made during the year and provide spending details. The report is reviewed by the board and shared with the community.

F. To determine whether to ask the voters to renew the 2018 five-year operating levy, in December 2022 the City polled Eugene voters. That polling showed the community's interest in maintaining the services from the 2018 Parks and Recreation Operating Levy. Additionally, the polling showed support for additional funding to address the ongoing public safety and security issues within the parks and open space system and to increase recreation programming in community centers. Specifically, the polling found:

- Eugene Parks and Open Space has a strong 78% approval rating and Recreation Services has a strong 70% approval rating.
- 62% of respondents said they would support renewing the current 2018 levy to continue parks and recreation services.
- 75% of respondents are more positive about supporting additional funding when it is targeted towards additional staff to address and clean up parks and waterways affected by camping and dumping in parks.

- 61% of respondents are more positive about supporting additional funding when it is targeted towards night-time security patrols for high-risk parks.
- 55% of respondents are more positive about supporting additional funding when it is targeted towards additional staff to manage the programming of services at the community centers.

G. The 2023 levy would be a renewal of the 2018 levy allowing for a continuation of parks, natural areas and recreation facility maintenance. Specifically, the 2023 levy funds would provide a continuation of the following services that are currently funded by the 2018 levy:

- Park safety and security
 - Dedicated Police Park Resource Officers
 - Park Ambassadors
- Illegal activity cleanup response
 - Cleanup associated with park rule violations
 - Graffiti removal
 - Vandalism response
- General park maintenance
 - Keep restrooms open
 - Litter and trash pick-up
 - Turf mowing
 - Landscape bed and tree maintenance
 - Infrastructure maintenance (irrigation, lighting, furnishing, fences, portable restrooms etc.)
 - Weekend/after-hours maintenance
- Habitat and natural area maintenance
 - Trail maintenance
 - Invasive weed management
 - Wildfire risk abatement
 - Infrastructure maintenance (roads, parking lots, fences, signs, portable restrooms, etc.)
- Maintenance of the following 2018 bond-funded projects as well as some, but not all future constructed bond-funded park improvements.:
 - Echo Hollow Pool improvements
 - Sheldon Pool improvements
 - Campbell Community Center improvements
 - Downtown Riverfront Park
 - Striker Field Park
 - Santa Clara Park

H. The 2023 levy would also increase services for park safety, park rule violation cleanup response, and recreation programming. Specifically, the 2023 levy would include the following additions to the services funded by the 2018 levy:

- Additional Park Ambassadors focused on safety and park rule violations.

- Additional funding for illicit activity clean-up response
- Additional recreation staff and additional seasonal staff for program operations

I. The City is committed to working towards securing sustainable funding for parks and recreation operations and maintenance, including exploring the implementation of a parks and recreation facilities fee. A renewal of the 2018 levy is needed to continue funding these important services while sustainable solutions are sought.

J. On February 8, 2023, the City Council agreed that a five-year Local Option Levy of \$5,330,000 per year should be placed on the May 16, 2023 ballot. This amount will continue the services provided under the 2018 levy and increase funding for park safety and associated cleanup, and recreation programming.

K. The typical Eugene taxpayer is estimated to pay an average of \$67 per year (about \$5.58 per month) over the five-year period of the levy, with an estimated tax rate of \$0.26/\$1000 of assessed value.

L. In order to ensure accountability in the use of levy funds, several components will be included in the levy implementation:

- a. Levy funds will be budgeted and accounted for in separate funds that are easily identifiable by members of the public, in accordance with state law.
- b. Staff will prepare an annual summary of levy spending. The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board will annually review the report to determine whether spending complied with the intention of the ballot measure.
- c. The City Manager will provide an annual memorandum to the City Council about parks and recreation operations and maintenance levy spending. The memorandum will include the staff report and any comments from the Citizen Advisory Board after their review.

NOW, THEREFORE, based upon the above findings,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EUGENE, a Municipal Corporation of the State of Oregon, as follows:

Section 1. A city election is called for the purpose of referring to the legal electors of the City of Eugene a measure authorizing a five-year Local Option Levy in the amount of \$5,330,000 per year, beginning July 1, 2023, to fund the continued operations and maintenance of parks, trails, natural areas, waterways and recreation facilities, and increase park safety and illicit activity cleanup in parks and natural areas, and recreation programming.

Section 2. The City Council orders this city election to be held in the City of Eugene, Oregon, concurrently with the election on May 16, 2023, in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 254 of the Oregon Revised Statutes, and the ballots shall be counted and tabulated, and the results certified as provided by law.

Section 3. The City Recorder is directed to give not less than ten days' notice of the city election by publication of one notice in the Register Guard, a newspaper published in the City and of general circulation within the City.

Section 4. This Resolution shall become effective immediately upon its adoption.

The foregoing Resolution adopted the 13th day of February, 2023



City Recorder