

MINUTES

**Eugene City Council
Harris Hall, 125 East 8th Avenue
Eugene, Oregon 97401**

**January 22, 2020
12:00 p.m.**

Councilors Present: Betty Taylor, Emily Semple, Alan Zelenka, Jennifer Yeh, Mike Clark, Greg Evans

Councilors Absent: Claire Syrett, Chris Pryor

Mayor Vinis opened the January 22, 2020, meeting of the Eugene City Council.

1. Work Session: Eugene Water & Electric Board Water Storage and Transmission Improvements Projects

City Manager Pro Tem Sarah Medary introduced EWEB General Manager Frank Lawson who presented background information to supplement future bond authorization requests for EWEB capital improvements.

- Councilor Zelenka – said that EWEB water is the best tasting water on the West Coast; asked if Hawkins Reservoir has the same issues as the College Hill Reservoir; asked about the timeline for projects and the status of the plan for creating a second/back-up source of water; asked about the 89 million gallons of water in storage and how many days of water that would provide; talked about spreading out sides for emergency water; asked for an explanation of how many gallons of water per person per day are recommended in an emergency; reported that Salem had an outbreak in their water supply that forced people to not drink the water and asked if Eugene was at risk for the same type of event.
- Councilor Taylor – reminded the council to account for emergency water for dogs; asked about the 40th Avenue site, including what is there, what will be there and whether it will still provide open space for the public to use; asked if stored emergency water should be changed periodically; said that her sisters in Illinois pay less for water than her, but the quality is poor; asked how Eugene’s prices compare to others; asked if she should leave the water running for a few minutes before drinking; asked about the aesthetics and trees at the Potter and 36th street location; said she’s glad EWEB is looking at ways to get water closer to where people live during emergencies.
- Councilor Clark – said he’d like to the City Council and the EWEB Board to meet for a conversation; talked about how this item was pulled form the Consent Calendar to get more information and have further conversation about it; said most people don’t think about the jurisdiction of the City versus EWEB when it comes to serving them and asked to know what the City can do to make their mutual plans work better together; reminded the council that EWEB and the City serve the same folks; talked about grouping issues together during negotiations; said as time goes on there will be more community questions and wanted to discuss the importance of shared goals.
- Councilor Evans – asked how EWEB handles issues related to people putting waste in the river and how that affects the system; asked what agency enforces dumping along the river; asked about EWEB’s customer assistance program and if there are other measures being taken to make sure costs are held down for people who don’t have the resources to keep pace with their bills; asked how EWEB works with the City around these issues; asked for an update about smart meters and any information about the health of this technology.

- Mayor Vinis – said that council leadership, EWEB leadership, the City Manager, and EWEB general manager are all meeting on a quarterly basis.
- Councilor Evans – asked if there was a price difference in having standard meters versus smart meters.

2. WORK SESSION: City Council Process Session

City Recorder Beth Forrest summarized the recent actions council took related to public forum changes and the potential actions for council to take.

- Councilor Semple – asked for clarification about the fifth Wednesday meeting; asked if council could add walking in addition to bicycling for mileage reimbursement; asked for staff to keep the timer going after councilors have used their three minutes.
- Councilor Clark – asked if there was anything statutory preventing council from including walking reimbursement and expenses; said he was looking for the legislative intent when bicycling was added and what the implications might be if they changed it to alternative modes of transportation.

MOTION: Councilor Semple, seconded by Councilor Yeh, moved to update Section 1.02 Work Sessions to reflect that work sessions will be scheduled on the second, third, fourth, and fifth Wednesdays of the month. Additional 5:30 p.m. work sessions will be scheduled on the third Monday of the month, as needed.

- Councilor Semple – asked for clarification about if it was only third the Monday meeting “as needed”.
- Councilor Clark – asked who determined whether a meeting is needed and what would happen if the Mayor and City Manager disagreed about if a meeting was needed.
- Councilor Taylor – asked if City Council ever formally decided to have the third Monday work session.

VOTE: PASSED 6:0.

MOTION: Councilor Semple, seconded by Councilor Yeh, moved to add Section 3.06 Action Items to reflect that, in general, action on ordinances and councilor-introduced resolutions will be placed on regular meeting agendas and will be scheduled after the Public Forum. *(Note: This motion does not preclude taking action on items during work session or other portions of the meeting.)*

- Councilor Semple – asked who decides if an action item occurs during a work session or after a forum; said she would not support this motion.
- Councilor Clark – asked Councilor Semple why she was not going to vote in favor of the motion; asked if this motion would still allow councilors to raise items at the 5:30 p.m. work sessions.
- Mayor Vinis – welcomed councilors to share their preferences about timing on items with her.
- Councilor Clark – said councilors can always make a motion to move specific items to a certain time if they have a majority, which could provide a remedy.

VOTE: PASSED 5:1, Councilor Semple opposed.

MOTION: Councilor Semple, seconded by Councilor Yeh, moved to update Section 7.02 Meeting Guidelines to clarify that, whenever possible or practicable, every effort is made to contact other members of the council to inform them of an intent to make a motion at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting.

- Councilor Taylor – asked what “every effort” means; says she objects to saying councilors have to make every effort.
- Councilor Clark – said “whenever possible” helps the idea of no surprises and gives people time to think about it; said he will vote in favor because the motion also includes “practicable,” noting that it may be politically impractical to give notice in advance and the way the motion is worded still provides flexibility.

VOTE: PASSED 6:0.

MOTION: Councilor Semple, seconded by Councilor Yeh, moved to update Section 10.03 Local Expenses to reflect the current bicycle mileage reimbursement rate of \$.26/mile.

- Councilor Semple – said she thinks alternative methods of transportation deserve a reimbursement and that the intention is to encourage alternative forms of transportation; said without including the alternative forms, there is an incentive for people to drive.
- Councilor Clark – offered a friendly amendment to update Section 10.03 Local Expenses to reflect that alternative forms of transportation, including walking and biking, have a mileage reimbursement rate of \$.26/mile (*friendly accepted*).
- Councilor Zelenka – asked for clarification about how the mileage rate is determined.
- Councilor Yeh – asked about bus transportation; said councilors already get a free bus pass and it wouldn’t be right to also get paid to ride the bus that they’re riding for free.
- Mayor Vinis – suggested using active transportation, which would cover biking and walking, instead of alternative forms of transportation.
- Councilor Clark – said he was not okay with active transportation wording because it leaves out a few modes of transportation; proposed language that says reimbursement for alternative forms of transportation that are not otherwise subsidized or reimbursed.
- Councilor Semple – said she thought it was appropriate to explicitly exclude buses from the original motion.
- Councilor Evans – asked for clarity on how the rate per mile amount is calculated and if it is tied to the federal rate for automotive transportation and if cost of living is built into it; asked if the IRS has a standard for bike mileage.
- Councilor Semple – noted that the bicycle/walking rate had not been adjusted for years like the automobile rate, so the big jump reflects this gap.

MOTION (with friendly amendments) AND VOTE: Councilor Semple, seconded by Councilor Yeh, moved to update Section 10.03 Local Expenses to reflect that alternative forms of transportation, including walking and biking and excluding buses, have a mileage reimbursement rate of \$.26/mile. **PASSED 6:0.**

MOTION: Councilor Semple, seconded by Councilor Yeh, moved to update Section 10.04 Spouse/Guest Expenses to replace all references to “spouse” with “partner.”

- Councilor Taylor – asked what current expenses are covered for spouses; suggested it say companion instead of partner; said there are many things that are not fair to single people.
- Councilor Semple – asked how this would be interpreted without a definition for partner; said she thought it would be more appropriate to say guest.

MOTION *(with friendly amendment)* **AND VOTE:** Councilor Semple, seconded by Councilor Yeh, moved to update Section 10.04 Spouse/Guest Expenses to replace all references to “spouse” with “spouse, partner, or guest.” **PASSED 6:0.**

The meeting adjourned at 1:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Beth Forrest
City Recorder

(Recorded by Elena Domingo)

Link to the webcast of this City Council meeting [here](#).