

## MINUTES

### Eugene City Council Virtual Work Session Eugene, Oregon 97401

April 13, 2020  
5:30 p.m.

**Councilors Present:** Betty Taylor, Emily Semple, Alan Zelenka, Jennifer Yeh, Mike Clark, Claire Syrett, Chris Pryor, Greg Evans

Mayor Vinis opened the April 13, 2020, work session of the Eugene City Council.

#### 1. **WORK SESSION: COVID-19 Update**

City Manager Pro Tem Sarah Medary provided an update on the COVID-19 situation, including the work of City of Eugene staff, timelines, remote working accommodations, social distancing at work, ongoing projects and services, fire and police statistics and revenue funds downfalls.

##### Council Discussion:

- Councilor Clark – asked for a Lane County Public Health update and inquired about when the peak is projected to happen.
- Councilor Syrett – expressed appreciation to staff and others involved in emergency operations efforts.
- Councilor Zelenka – thanked staff and asked about the availability of test kits.
- Councilor Semple – spoke about the Monroe Park and similar camping situations; reported that constituents are concerned about the area surrounding the fairgrounds; asked for an update on efforts regarding the unhoused.
- Councilor Evans – spoke about the Peterson Barn camp site and the concerns of his constituents.
- Councilor Syrett – spoke about the homeless camps in right-of-way locations around the city.
- Councilor Taylor – spoke about her constituents’ reactions to the camp at Amazon Park and asked when the camps will be closed.
- Mayor Vinis – talked about the unhoused community and the need to keep everyone in place during this emergency.
- Councilor Evans – discussed other locations for the camp sites in lieu of residential neighborhoods such as the Peterson Barn location.
- Councilor Yeh – asked if the City is still in need of locations for homeless camp sites.
- Councilor Zelenka – asked for a list of the factors or criteria for choosing camp sites in the city.
- Councilor Clark – asked about coordinating with the University of Oregon to identify sites for homeless, including the use of campus facilities.
- Councilor Pryor – expressed caution about the use of large arenas for homeless camp sites; supported emergency operation staff’s knowledge and expertise regarding siting decisions.

#### 2. **WORK SESSION: Council Agenda Planning Process Session**

Assistant City Manager Kristie Hammitt discussed council agenda planning and building a vision for success through community resilience and safety, business recovery, financial stability, and maintaining momentum.

Council Discussion:

- Mayor Vinis – discussed the focus areas and changing priorities resulting from recovery efforts.
- Councilor Clark – spoke about the timeline for recovery, public safety, homelessness efforts, and rebounding economically.
- Councilor Pryor – talked about response versus recovery; spoke about the wellbeing and stability of citizens in the context of safety, economics and infrastructure.
- Councilor Semple – outlined her priorities as business rehabilitation, caring for the unhoused, community and individual wellbeing, climate, and affordable housing.
- Councilor Syrett – said her list of preferences for agenda focus include implementation of the TAC recommendations, riverfront project, town square and farmer’s market, and climate action plan.
- Councilor Evans – talked about being self-quarantined; expressed thanks to staff and emergency responders; supported addressing economic impacts, climate and riverfront projects, and natural gas regulations.
- Councilor Taylor – said her priorities are climate actions, short term rentals, and the need for a homeless shelter.
- Councilor Yeh – noted a lot of agreement among councilors on priorities; supported keeping the council goals in focus while addressing emergency needs; encouraged good stewardship of financial resources.
- Councilor Zelenka – expressed his concurrence with the priorities listed, with emphasis on flattening the curve, recovery, rental protections, economic recovery efforts, local and federal stimulus, climate work, and projects that create jobs.
- Councilor Evans – talked about the increase in racist incidents as a result of the crisis and the need to respond effectively; cautioned about the need for clarity about natural gas availability in development plans.
- Councilor Clark – agreed that racist incidents were concerning and that the Human Rights Commission should be engaged and involved in any response; said clear direction on the council’s natural gas policy is needed for the Riverfront development and housing plans.
- Councilor Zelenka – spoke about the Riverfront project; noted that COVID-19 has brought out the best and worst in people, and it is important to maintain civility.
- Councilor Yeh – talked about racism and the underreporting of hate speech.

The meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Beth Forrest*

Beth Forrest  
City Recorder

*(Recorded by Carolyn Dimick-Kronberger)*

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