

MINUTES

Eugene City Council Virtual Work Session Eugene, Oregon 97401

April 22, 2020
12:00 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 22, 2020, work session of the Eugene City Council.

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

Interim Fire Chief Chris Heppel provided an update on the COVID-19 situation including statistics, site visits, outreach efforts, long-term community recovery, and plans for reopening economies on the federal, state and local levels.

Council Discussion:

- Councilor Syrett – asked staff to encourage White Bird to enter data into the HMSI.
- Councilor Semple – inquired about the perimeters about camping; asked about the status of COVID testing abilities locally; advocated for more testing and resources.
- Councilor Clark – asked about the County’s capacity for antibody testing; spoke about large-scale antibody test results; inquired about the timetable of reopening the local economy; asked about the capacity of medical facilities in Eugene and Springfield.
- Councilor Syrett – talked about local hospital beds and testing capacity; spoke about finding related to antibodies and reinfection rates; encouraged officials to not reopen in haste.
- Councilor Zelenka – spoke about testing and encouraged not reopening too soon; reported on the positive effects of vehicle caravans spreading messages of camaraderie and joy.
- Councilor Clark – discussed reopening timelines, testing, hospital capacity, and the enormous economic toll on community members and businesses; encouraged reopening decisions based on data driven numbers.
- Councilor Taylor – voiced agreement with Councilor Clark about reopening criteria.
- Mayor Vinis – spoke about county, state and west coast plans for reopening; asked about outreach to the Spanish-speaking community.
- Councilor Pryor – expressed gratitude and appreciation for the incident command system and staff.
- Councilor Yeh – expressed confidence in the incident command system; spoke about hospital capacity and persons in recovery from infection.
- Councilor Evans – asked about contingency plans if second wave occurs; encouraged direction from officials to the community about wearing masks; inquired about local restriction of activities if the state reopens.
- Councilor Clark – expressed faith in the incident command system; spoke about the economic suffering of the community and the costs associated with the restrictions.

2. **WORK SESSION: Bethel Community and Economic Prosperity**

Economic Development Planner Anne Fifield and Planning Director Alissa Hansen provided information regarding the Bethel Community and Economic Prosperity work, including neighborhood priorities and tools to encourage community and economic development.

Council Discussion:

- Councilor Evans – thanked staff; spoke about the projects in the Bethel community; inquired about the timeline for the University area neighborhood plan, which precedes work on the Bethel plan; asked about interim steps and capacity building projects that can be taken now.
- Councilor Syrett – recognized staff; spoke about keeping the momentum with the neighborhood priorities; discussed how the House Bill 2001 and other infrastructure concerns will affect the community; asked about landbank possibilities in Bethel for future affordable housing development.
- Councilor Yeh – expressed support for the plan and looking for ways to begin some steps now.
- Councilor Zelenka – expressed thanks to staff; spoke about the plan process and adding resources, thanked the neighborhood for their patience.
- Councilor Clark – thanked staff; spoke about the neighborhood groups’ hard work and allocating monies to the groups for communication with their community; discussed transportation and zoning development issues.
- Councilor Pryor – spoke about good communication between neighborhood residents and staff and the importance of continued outreach.
- Councilor Evans – talked about the residents’ desire to collaborate with the City; encouraged engaging with the Bethel school district; supported moving forward with interim steps and continued collaboration between the City and the County on the plan.

MOTION: Councilor Semple, seconded by Councilor Yeh, moved to direct City Manager to develop a comprehensive planning, implementation, and funding strategy to achieve community and economic prosperity in Bethel. The strategy shall include (1) continued neighborhood engagement and capacity building; (2) a neighborhood planning process; (3) the evaluation of the use of Urban Renewal and other tools, including MUPTE and affordable housing development, to implement the neighborhood plan.

MOTION AND VOTE: Councilor Taylor, seconded by Councilor Semple, moved to separate the elements of the motions 1, 2, and 3 **FAILED: 2:6**, councilors Taylor and Semple in favor.

- Councilor Zelenka – asked questions about including the MUPTE element in the motion and about the Trainsong neighborhood’s inclusion in the MUPTE program.
- Councilor Taylor –expressed opposition to the motion as a whole if the items were not separated into discrete motions.
- Councilor Semple – expressed agreement with Councilor Taylor and Zelenka regarding the inclusion of the MUPTE option; spoke about supporting the motion for Bethel development but not the MUPTE.
- Councilor Evans – spoke about the need to evaluate all of the different tools listed in the motion; suggested amending the motion to be more general.
- Councilor Syrett – opposed amending the motion from its original language.

VOTE ON MOTION: PASSED: 7:1, Councilor Taylor opposed.

The meeting adjourned at 1:36 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](#).