

## MINUTES

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

February 8, 2023  
12:00 p.m.

**Councilors Present:** Greg Evans, Matt Keating, Jennifer Yeh, Mike Clark, Randy Groves, Alan Zelenka, Lyndsie Leech and Emily Semple

Mayor Vinis opened the February 8, 2023, work session of the Eugene City Council in a hybrid format at 101 W 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Eugene OR 97401.

#### 1. **WORK SESSION: Parks and Recreation Funding**

City Manager, Sarah Medary, introduced Finance Director, Twylla Miller, Parks and Open Space Division Manager, Craig Carnagey, and Recreation Services Director, Craig Smith, who presented the information on proposed Parks and Recreation funding options.

##### Councilor Discussion:

- Councilor Semple – note that a fixed amount means revenue would be the same each year but inflation would increase costs; asked how the City will handle increased costs from year to year; asked which option would keep service at the current level.
- Councilor Groves – is concerned about service levels and safety of parks; does not want to renew a levy and then reduce service levels with budget cuts; wants to improve public trust in Council; noted that the budget deficit will have impacts on overall service levels.
- Councilor Clark – asked if any part of the levy would be used to backfill services that could be impacted by budget cuts; asked if Council has the authority to pass the levy without public vote.
- Councilor Zelenka – noted that Eugene parks are valued by residents and service levels should not be reduced; asked if park services would be subject to cuts due to the budget deficit; noted that public safety is a top concern for constituents; noted that he intends to move to amend the proposed motion to include funding for two additional police officers for parks.
- Councilor Keating – asked if cost increases in the presentation are inflationary adjustments for public safety; is concerned about the timing of this levy renewal competing with Lane County’s public safety jail levy renewal and increase; supports increased public safety presence in parks; supports the recommended motion.
- Councilor Yeh – noted that past levies have kept the promises that were made; asked about budget deficit impacts on future park plans and their maintenance; supports the recommended motion.
- Councilor Leech – supports the addition of two public safety officers for park safety.
- Mayor Vinis – asked to clarify if Mattie Reynolds, Downtown Riverfront, and Stryker Parks would be covered by the current package and the proposed levy renewal; asked staff to outline what is covered in the facilities program options.

- Councilor Groves – asked if the Amazon Canal maintenance would continue to be included in the budget.
- Councilor Keating – indicated he is interested in a work session about park ambassadors; noted that the park ambassador program needs a campaign to provide public education on what services the ambassadors provide.

**MOTION AND VOTE:** Councilor Groves, seconded by Councilor Keating, moved to direct the City Manager to prepare a resolution for Council action to refer to Eugene voters on the May 2023 ballot, a \$5.330 million per year operations and maintenance levy to fund at a minimum level of maintenance within parks, trails, rivers and recreation facilities, including increased park safety and security services, and increased recreation programming at community centers.

Councilor Discussion:

- Councilor Zelenka – asked for a friendly to amend the motion to enhance the safety portion of the levy to add two parks police officers outlined in the safety and service plus level levy described of \$6.1 million.

**MOTION TO AMEND:** Councilor Zelenka, seconded by Councilor Keating, moved to amend the motion to add two parks police officers outlined in the safety and service plus level levy described of \$6.1 million.

Councilor Discussion:

- Councilor Clark – asked for clarification on how amendments to a motion can be amended.

**MOTION TO SUBSTITUTE:** Councilor Clark, seconded by Councilor Groves, moved to substitute the amendment to the motion to the current .19 rate (\$3.9 million gross amount).

Councilor Discussion:

- Councilor Clark – does not believe that the increased levy will pass.
- Mayor Vinis – asked to clarify that the current rate would not support the service levels, leading to reduced services.
- Councilor Keating – asked for clarification of the main motion amount.
- Councilor Semple – asked about the difference between the proposed motions and how they fit into the presented charts; asked about the actual costs of each police officer.
- Councilor Groves – is hopeful that constituents will see the value of aspiring for what is needed to maintain the parks; noted that the proposed motion is a reasonable compromise considering the budget deficit.
- Councilor Clark – asked if the additional cost proposed by Councilor Zelenka is for police officers; asked how the proposed budget cut of eight percent in park services budget would impact the services; is concerned about asking for an increased levy and then potentially cutting services; would prefer to not increase the levy and find a way to make parks budget work with the current funding.

- Councilor Yeh – feels that the main motion is a good compromise and is the best option.
- Councilor Zelenka – does not support a cut in services; noted his amendment would add two additional sworn police officers to increase safety; noted that increased safety creates an increase in approval of constituents.
- Councilor Semple – noted concern over the having the levy proposal before the budget deficit work is done; asked what the proposed two additional police officers would do daily to increase safety in parks; feels that the main motion is a good compromise; does not support adding additional funding in the parks levy for police officers.

**VOTE ON MOTION TO SUBSTITUTE: 2:6 FAILED** (opposed by Councilors Groves, Keating, Leech, Semple, Yeh and Zelenka)

**VOTE ON MOTION TO AMEND: 3:5 FAILED** (opposed by Councilors Clark, Groves, Keating, Semple, and Yeh)

**VOTE ON MAIN MOTION: 7:1 PASSED** (opposed by Clark)

Mayor Vinis adjourned the meeting at 12:59 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Katie LaSala  
City Recorder

*(Recorded by Sara McKinney)*  
Webcast of meeting available [here](#).