

MINUTES

Eugene City Council and Urban Renewal Agency Special Meeting Eugene, Oregon 97401

January 30, 2023
5:30 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 January 30, 2023, special meeting of the Eugene City Council and Urban Renewal Agency in a hybrid format at 101 W 10th Avenue, Eugene OR 97401.

1. **SPECIAL MEETING: Outline of terms – EWEB HQ Purchase**

City Manager, Sarah Medary, presented information regarding the proposed purchase of the EWEB Headquarters building.

Councilor Discussion:

- Councilor Zelenka – noted that the EWEB building was the most expensive option for City Hall when it was considered previously; supports the proposal with the reduced cost, building updates, creative financing, parking, and Riverfront development; noted that this property purchase would stretch the downtown area to the Riverfront; noted that existing City buildings and park blocks could be redeveloped to bring vibrancy to downtown.
- Councilor Semple – is concerned with City offices leaving downtown; thinks the old City Hall building was an iconic structure and a great loss; noted that the cost of the property has changed significantly; is concerned about the building layout and functionality; asked about the building's seismic stability; is concerned about accessibility for people that ride the bus; supports having City offices being open to public five days a week; is concerned with loss of workers daily in the downtown core.
- Councilor Groves – noted this purchase makes sense in many ways; is concerned about keeping downtown safe and accessible; will support the suggested motion; noted that the old city hall building was falling down and was not sustainable; asked if the EWEB building was built to a higher seismic standard as an operations center; asked City Manager to speak to efforts for safety and accessibility of downtown.
- Councilor Clark – will support the motion; thanked EWEB and City staff for the combined work on this project.
- Councilor Keating – noted that the price and location are right and is interested in the opportunities the EWEB property offers; asked what housing or other special projects are possible with the property surrounding the EWEB headquarters; will support this motion.
- Councilor Evans – stated support for the project.
- Councilor Yeh – stated appreciation for staff being open to discussing and considering the property with the change in circumstance; noted that accessibility for bus riders will be important.

- Councilor Leech – noted that the proposed purchase is a great investment; noted that bus access will be important; has concerns for ensuring that downtown safety and accessibility are addressed.
- Councilor Zelenka – noted that the old city hall lost its heating system when the steam plant closed and the costs to improve the building were too steep; noted the importance of continuing to improve downtown safety and development.
- Councilor Semple – noted that innovative ways to improve downtown have not been brought forward prior to this proposed purchase; will not support the motion.
- Councilor Groves – noted that it is up to Council to ensure there is a pathway to downtown safety.

MOTION AND VOTE: Councilor Groves, seconded by Councilor Keating, move to authorize the City Manager to execute a Purchase and Sale Agreement for the acquisition of the EWEB headquarters buildings and property consistent with the terms outlined in Attachment A and to authorize the City Manager to close on the property purchase once due diligence is complete and all conditions of closing are satisfied.

VOTE: 7:1 PASSED (opposed by Councilor Semple)

MOTION AND VOTE: Councilor Groves, seconded by Councilor Keating, move to include recommendations for the area near Olive and 10th and the Park Blocks as part of the transition planning for City services and to keep City Council informed about the overall transition process. **VOTE: 8:0 PASSED**

Mayor Vinis adjourned the meeting at 6:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Katie LaSala
City Recorder

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