

## MINUTES

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

May 25, 2022  
12:00 p.m.

**Councilors Present:** Claire Syrett, Matt Keating, Jennifer Yeh, Mike Clark, Randy Groves, Emily Semple, Alan Zelenka

**Councilors Absent:** Greg Evans

Mayor Vinis opened the May 25, 2022, work session of the Eugene City Council in a hybrid in-person/virtual format.

#### 1. **Work Session: Civilian Oversight System**

Interim Police Auditor Leia Pitcher presented information regarding the Civilian Oversight System roles and processes.

##### Council Discussion:

- Mayor Vinis – recognized that this is a complicated issue to present in short format; reminded Council that this session is a lead-in to look at recommendations that came from an ad hoc committee for deeper conversations in the future.
- Councilor Groves – asked if the term ‘use of force’ refers to any type of physical contact; inquired how the Auditor’s Office perceives body cameras to be working; asked if a Civilian Review Board member can ask for a community impact case if it has not been brought forward; asked what the biggest challenge is to the auditor role.
- Councilor Zelenka – stated there were Civilian Review Board members on the ad hoc committee; said that the ad hoc committee did not get a full presentation of what the Civilian Review Board and Police Auditor do in their roles; noted that the origins of the Civilian Review Board and Police Auditor process were a hard-fought battle and he feels it is important to recognize that history; mentioned the Police Auditor Ordinance Review Committee (PAORC) came up with 18 recommendations from their work; asked staff to outline the 18 items that the committee recommended and the ordinance changes that came as a result of that work; noted that the oversight model that Eugene developed and currently uses is leading other jurisdictions; noted that the work done by the Police Auditor Ordinance Review Committee between 2006-2008 was very thoughtful and helpful.
- Councilor Syrett – said that she appreciates meetings with the auditor and the work the auditor is doing; said she appreciated the emphasis on the investigatory power of the auditor’s office; said she is proud of the Civilian Oversight System; noted that she will send questions to the auditor about the ad hoc committee and changes to the role of Civilian Review Board; inquired if the Civilian Review Board was created by an ordinance; asked if Council can make changes to Civilian Review Board role or whether changes would be made through a public vote.

- Councilor Yeh – noted the importance of looking back at the origins of programs; said that she does support the motion in the packet for staff to return with more information; acknowledged that a lot of time has passed since the creation of this program and it may need updates; noted public feedback on this item was not as diverse, equitable, and inclusive as it could have been; asked staff to include how to involve community input in changes; noted the unanimous vote regarding public input.
- Councilor Keating – asked how the auditor’s office is handling complaints about policy violation and fear of retaliation; noted his appreciation for the community connection and invited the auditor to attend neighborhood association meetings.

**MOTION and VOTE:** Councilor Syrett, seconded by Councilor Keating, moved to direct the Police Auditor to return to Council for a follow-up work session to discuss her recommendations for potential improvements to the current civilian oversight system including, if appropriate, potential code amendments. **PASSED: 7:0**

## 2. **Work Session: City of Eugene/Lane Community College Partnership**

City Manager Sarah Medary presented information about the City of Eugene partnership with Lane Community College and leased building space.

### Council Discussion:

- Mayor Vinis – expressed her appreciation for the conversation surrounding the permanent City Hall location.
- Councilor Groves – noted the importance of dialog around the topic of a permanent City Hall location; asked if the City of Eugene can purchase the Lane Community College building; asked staff what the cost range to buy the Lane Community College building is; said he is interested in an executive session to discuss the cost of purchasing the Lane Community College building; noted that the location in relation to transit lines and other infrastructure makes the Lane Community College building a good option; stated he is interested in the potential acquisition of the housing in the building as well; said that he is concerned about the cost of construction for a new City Hall.
- Councilor Syrett – said that she has the same questions as Councilor Groves around costs; stated she thinks a lease with the option to purchase is advantageous; stated the benefits of the current location include ease of public transit as well as being near the library; asked if the staff working on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor of the library can be moved to the 4<sup>th</sup> floor of the Lane Community College building in the future.
- Councilor Keating – stated that he wishes Councilor Evans was in attendance for this conversation and noted his excitement for the City of Eugene to possibly buy the Lane Community College building as it is a LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) building, and would save money and resources; noted the housing opportunity in acquiring Lane Community College building and welcomed a larger conversation about this matter; noted the importance of keeping an educational aspect of the building; said he would prefer that the building name be kept in honor of Mary Spilde.
- Councilor Clark – asked what the lease currently costs the City of Eugene; said that buying an existing structure is more affordable than building new; noted his objection to the current location because it is not geographically central and is less accessible for north Eugene residents.

- Councilor Zelenka – stated that his preferred choice for City Hall is its original location, with his second choice being the Butterfly Lot; stated he is interested in discussing long-term plan for the Lane Community College building because it is a LEED Platinum building centrally located to other City of Eugene services; noted that making a decision prior to a Lane Community College leadership change is important; asked staff to bring back information regarding the Lane Community College building compatibility with City of Eugene needs, Lane Community College’s needs in the building going forward, a lease-to-purchase option, and information about the housing portion of the property; said buying the Lane Community College building for City Hall makes sense but noted that leasing is often more cost effective than purchasing.
- Councilor Semple – said she is disappointed that the building did not work for Lane Community College; noted that the COVID pandemic had a negative impact on Lane Community College’s use of the building; stated she has concerns about the building location and access for all Eugene residents; asked if the City of Eugene is considering buying the housing portion of the building; noted that the building has great sustainability features but that the building is not great for office space; said she is willing to explore the option of purchasing the Lane Community College building; noted the building would require upgrades to improve usability.
- Councilor Yeh – said that she is curious about future growth into the 4<sup>th</sup> floor of the building or if Lane Community College would want permanent access to that space; said that she is in support of a central location; stated she has concerns about the housing side of the property; noted she would seek clarity about the housing aspect; asked how the space is working for staff in the building now.
- Councilor Groves – noted the housing portion of the Lane Community College property could be targeted toward specific income and run by a partner agency; stated that the building’s relation to other services, including county, state and federal offices, is more important than its geographic location; said he is open to entertaining any good existing building option for City Hall.
- Councilor Keating – noted that he has recently spent time canvassing Eugene and the geographic center of Eugene was not an issue of concern mentioned; stated that historically, the Downtown area has been considered the center of Eugene.
- Councilor Syrett – stated she does agree with Councilor Semple’s concern about the current location and upgrades that would be needed to create a more welcoming and workable permanent City Hall location; explained that it was Eugene Skinner and the founders of the City of Eugene that laid out the town and the location of local government offices and that the growth of Eugene to the north and west does not change the historic location of downtown; noted that downtown does not mean ‘centrally located’; expressed appreciation for the concerns that Councilor Clark brought to the table about accessibility for all Eugene residents.
- Councilor Clark – thanked Councilor Syrett for her clarifying remarks regarding downtown.
- Mayor Vinis – noted that the conversation regarding City Hall’s location has been long discussed and she is eager to see a decision made; stated that in her opinion the current location makes sense based upon the other services located close to the Lane Community College location.

Mayor Vinis adjourned the meeting at 1:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Katie LaSala  
City Recorder

*(Recorded by Sara McKinney)*

Webcast of meeting available [here](#).