

MINUTES

Eugene City Council Work Session Eugene, Oregon 97401

July 13, 2022
12:00 p.m.

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

Mayor Vinis opened the July 13, 2022, work session of the Eugene City Council in a hybrid format at 101 W 10th Avenue, Eugene OR 97401.

1. **WORK SESSION: Street Bond Renewal**

City Manager Sarah Medary introduced City Engineer Jenifer Willer, who presented information on a proposed street bond renewal.

Council Discussion:

- Councilor Zelenka – noted that this is an important topic; stated that he is pleased that the amount dedicated to active transportation has been increased; noted that previous bonds had project accountability mechanisms built in with a project list and review process; noted that the bike/pedestrian portion of the resolution does not have these accountability mechanisms in place; stated he intends to make motions to establish accountability mechanisms; noted that there is a \$2 million unprogrammed funds portion for future grants or other items.
- Councilor Groves – asked how much flexibility exists in the street pedestrian/bike mix that would allow for traffic calming and safety as well as street lighting; asked staff what flexibility exists within the wards to shift funding to higher priority streets; noted that he would like Council to have input on the street project list.
- Councilor Yeh – asked staff to confirm that the street project list is generated on scientific data collected by staff; asked how staff is planning to balance the equity of distribution of projects; noted the importance of trying to make projects equal between the wards; encouraged staff to be thoughtful in how the terms equality and equity are used; noted a study that showed painted bike lanes can be more dangerous; asked staff to clarify if infrastructure refers to physical structure or if it could include a painted bike lane; asked if the \$2 million flexible funds that Councilor Zelenka referred to would remain flexible if the motion he intends to make passes; asked staff to clarify that if a grant or other opportunity arose, staff could act on it with the flexible funds without needing Council approval.
- Councilor Clark – asked the City Manager to clarify information sent in an email about the public process and if the business community would be a replacement for or addition to neighborhood associations; asked if the term “business community” was intended to mean the Chamber of Commerce.

- Councilor Keating – asked if there are any roundabouts in the proposed projects; asked if there was conversation around the impact of the increased assessed value on residents; asked if staff considered lowering the rate to counteract the increased assessed property value; asked if a more eco-friendly asphalt is being used and if the lifespan of that product is greater or less than traditional asphalt; noted that he has concern about proposing a bond at this time but will vote with his colleagues to stand united.
- Councilor Zelenka – noted that Eugene was a national leader in green asphalt usage; noted that many projects on the list are maintenance projects that are meant to prevent rebuilds which is more cost-effective; noted that the rate was discussed and agreed upon during previous Council discussions on this renewal.
- Councilor Evans – stated he is pleased with the proposed project list; noted that he will need to exit the meeting early; volunteered to work on proponent committee.
- Councilor Groves – stated he appreciates that McLean Boulevard is being repaired from Chambers to Graham; stated that he has concerns about the condition and safety of McLean Boulevard from Graham to Lasater, as well as Blackburn and Kenmore Streets.
- Councilor Semple – noted that she is concerned the \$2 million unassigned funds may appear like a slush fund to the public.
- Councilor Zelenka – noted that any councilor can suggest a friendly amendment to require that Council approve the projects that will use the \$2 million unassigned funds; noted that the bike and pedestrian funds were much smaller than the proposed bond in previous bonds and a project list was not necessary; stated the increased bike and pedestrian funding makes a project list more important.

MOTION: Councilor Syrett, seconded by Councilor Keating, moved to adopt Resolution 5364, a resolution referring a GO Bond Measure to the November 2022 ballot to fund street preservation projects, walking projects, biking projects, safety projects, and street tree projects with the word ‘annually’ deleted from the first sentence of paragraph C.

MOTION TO AMEND: Councilor Zelenka, seconded by Semple, moved to amend paragraph I of the resolution so that the final two sentences of that paragraph read ‘the final project list adopted by the City Council will be completed by June 30, 2023, and will consider community feedback and guidance from the three identified committees and commissions, and any change to the adopted project list will be made by the City Council in accordance with a Council prescribed process which, depending on the scope of the change, could include soliciting feedback from the community and/or the three identified committees and commissions.

Council Discussion:

- Councilor Zelenka – noted that the intent of his motion is to put forward a deadline; asked when work would begin on the first projects to be funded; asked whether any of the proposed projects will have started if the project list deadline was changed to

November 1, 2023; stated he would like to change the date in his motion to November 1, 2023.

- Councilor Semple – accepted the change to the motion.
- Councilor Syrett – asked staff to clarify if Council would also be approving where trees are planted with the motion proposed by Councilor Zelenka; stated she does not want to approve where street trees go; noted concern for overreach in having Council decide minute details of all projects; said she would be more comfortable with the motion if it stated that Council approves a fundamental project list but additional projects can be approved by consent calendar.
- Councilor Zelenka – noted that his motion creates more flexibility than is allowed with street projects; stated his intention is for the project list to outline the number of trees and general area, not particular tree locations or curb cuts.
- Councilor Syrett – asked staff if the motion would still allow enough flexibility to take advantage of grants or other opportunities that arise; asked the City Attorney if she agrees with staff's opinion on the flexibility and interpretation of the motion.

VOTE ON MOTION TO AMEND: PASSED 8:0

MOTION TO AMEND: Councilor Zelenka, seconded by Councilor Semple, moved to amend paragraph L of the resolution to add the following sentence at the end of the paragraph: To ensure accountability and citizen involvement in walking, biking, safety and street tree projects, the City Manager will either include these projects in the work of the Citizen Street Repair Review Panel or convene a separate citizen review panel for these projects that will prepare an annual report documenting the City's use of the bond proceeds for walking, biking, safety, and street tree projects and noting whether the bond proceeds were used in compliance with the terms of this resolution.

Council Discussion:

- Councilor Clark – asked for a friendly amendment to include the business community in the motion.
- Councilor Keating – asked to clarify if the motion is creating a second oversight committee; asked staff to clarify if the existing review panel would not review biking, walking, safety, and street tree projects funded by this bond.
- Councilor Syrett – noted that the existing review panel was not directed to review biking, walking, safety, and street tree projects, and the motion would make the review process known to public and increase trust and confidence.
- Councilor Zelenka – noted that paragraph L does not explicitly mention biking, walking, safety, and street tree projects, and the motion would clarify that.

VOTE ON MOTION TO AMEND: PASSED 8:0

MOTION TO AMEND AND VOTE: Councilor Clark, seconded by Councilor Groves, moved to amend criteria B of paragraph H of the resolution to add the business community after neighborhood groups. **PASSED 8:0**

VOTE ON MAIN MOTION AS AMENDED: PASSED 8:0

MOTION AND VOTE: Councilor Syrett, seconded by Councilor Keating, moved to direct the City Manager to prepare a neutral information tabloid for the GO bond measure, and request that the City Manager include the cost for the tabloid on supplemental budget #1 in December. **PASSED 8:0**

2. ACTION: Approval of Motions Relating to Production of a Voter's Pamphlet for the November 8, 2022, Election

City Manager Sarah Medary introduced the topic.

MOTION AND VOTE: Councilor Syrett, seconded by Councilor Keating, moved to direct the City Manager to publish and distribute a local voters' pamphlet for the election scheduled for November 8, 2022, on a GO bond to fund street preservation, and to authorize the expenditure of funds from the General Fund council contingency account that are required to produce that voters' pamphlet. **PASSED 7:0**, Councilor Evans absent

MOTION AND VOTE: Councilor Syrett, seconded by Councilor Keating, moved to appoint councilors Evans, Zelenka, Groves and Keating to the voters' pamphlet proponent committee for the Street Preservation GO Bond ballot measure. **PASSED 7:0**, Councilor Evans absent

3. WORK SESSION: City Manager Compensation

Mayor Vinis introduced Associate Director of the Employee Resource Center, Keri Beraldo, who presented information regarding options to consider for increasing City Manager, Sarah Medary's compensation.

Council Discussion:

- Councilor Groves – noted that Sarah Medary is a great city manager; stated it is important to remain competitive in the market; noted that City Manager Medary should be making more than the people she supervises.
- Councilor Clark – asked to clarify the range information given; noted that he is not in favor of establishing a range; reminded Council that City Manager Medary led the organization through the Covid pandemic, fires, and incredible new obstacles within her first six months as the interim manager.
- Councilor Zelenka – noted that the salary range would provide structure that is used for all other staff of the City of Eugene; stated that a range gives the City Manager room to grow into; stated that the range could be changed in the future; asked if the range would be indexed or set.
- Councilor Keating – noted that there is a natural range in comparable municipalities; stated he is in favor of making an investment in City Manager Medary; stated elected officials should be fairly compensated for the work they do; noted a desire to re-examine Council stipends in the future; stated he would like there to be an electric vehicle incentive attached to the automobile allowance in the City Manager's contract.

- Councilor Semple – asked who the highest paid executive is; asked staff to provide information on who the executives are and what their salaries are; asked what City Manager Medary’s total compensation is; stated that the salary range seems unnecessary and limiting; asked staff why a salary range is being proposed.
- Councilor Syrett – asked if City Manager Medary has received a merit increase since being appointed Interim City Manager; asked what the percentage increase is of the proposed increase from \$232,169 to \$252,013; stated that an 8.6 percent increase would right-size the salary and provide a merit increase; supported setting a salary range as an administrative tool; asked the City Attorney if she can separate the proposed motion into two separate motions; noted that a nearby organization with significantly fewer full time employees and smaller annual budget pays their general manager much more than City Manager Medary is paid.
- Councilor Yeh – stated that wage ranges are helpful; asked that staff provide information on average employee salary when this topic comes up again in the future; noted concern over pay equity issues; noted it would be helpful to have information on similar public sector jobs.
- Councilor Groves – noted that Eugene has top notch executives; noted that the City of Eugene tends to be low on the salary market.
- Councilor Zelenka – announced that he will have to leave the meeting at 1:30 p.m.

MOTION: Councilor Syrett, seconded by Councilor Keating, moved to authorize the Council President to execute an amendment to City Manager Sarah Medary’s employment contract setting Medary’s compensation at \$252,013 effective July 17, 2022, updating market adjustment pay (or MAP) references to read “cost of living allowance” (or COLA) for purposes of annual salary.

Council Discussion:

- Councilor Semple – noted that when City Manager Medary was hired, Council looked at Salem’s pay scale as it is roughly the same size as Eugene; stated that managing Eugene is harder and supported an amendment to change the compensation in the motion to \$260,000.

MOTION TO AMEND: Councilor Semple, seconded by Councilor Syrett, moved to amend the City Manager’s compensation to \$260,000 per year.

Council Discussion:

- Councilor Keating – stated that an 8.6 percent adjustment right-sizes the salary and provides a merit increase; noted that the main motion would increase City Manager’s salary by more than the annual stipend of Council members; noted that the time to discuss an additional merit increase is at the next performance review.
- Councilor Semple – reminded council that this is a competitive market and it is important to send a message that City Manager Medary’s work is appreciated; stated that an 8.6 increase would place Medary’s salary where it belongs and a 10 percent increase would provide a merit-based increase.
- Councilor Syrett – noted that she seconded the motion to amend because it is a competitive market and City Manager Medary’s performance has been exemplary.

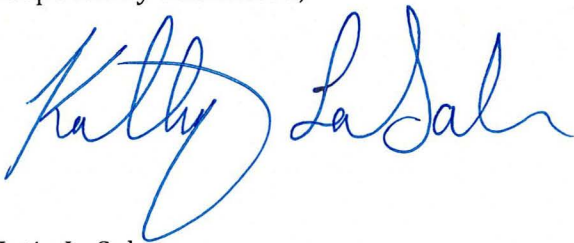
- Councilor Clark – reiterated that City Manager Medary led the city through a pandemic, fire and massive turmoil; stated that the proposed compensation is a lot of money but still less than some smaller municipalities are paying their city managers; stated that Sarah Medary loves Eugene and leads with passion.
- Councilor Keating – noted that an 8.6 percent increase is significant; noted that City Manager Medary has changed his previous opinions of a manager/council/mayor style of government; noted that it is important to be fiscally prudent in this compensation adjustment.
- Councilor Groves – noted that he is concerned about the sticker shock to the public in approving Medary’s compensation at \$260,000; stated that he does believe that the proposed number is a good goal to work towards but has concerns about moving to that number right now.

VOTE ON MOTION TO AMEND: FAILED 3:3, opposed by councilors Keating, Groves and Yeh; councilors Evans and Zelenka absent.

MOTION: Councilor Syrett, seconded by Councilor Keating, moved to table until the Monday, July 18 work session. **VOTE: PASSED 6:0**, councilors Evans and Zelenka absent.

Mayor Vinis adjourned the meeting at 1:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Katie LaSala
City Recorder

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