

## MINUTES

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

October 10, 2022  
5:30 p.m.

**Councilors Present:** Emily Semple, Matt Keating, Jennifer Yeh, Mike Clark, Greg Evans, Randy Groves

**Councilors Absent:** Alan Zelenka

Mayor Vinis opened the October 10, 2022, 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: Alternative Response Study**

City Manager, Sarah Medary introduced Assistant City Manager, Kristie Hammitt, Michele Weinzetl from Berry Dunn Consulting and Community Safety Initiative Project Manager, Jeremy Cleversey, who presented a progress update on the Alternative Response Study.

##### Council Discussion:

- Mayor Vinis – stated her excitement for the results of the alternative response study; noted her interest in hearing about the gaps and interrelationships between services; stated that the 70 interviews conducted about CAHOOTS is significant.
- Councilor Groves – stated the report should help to improve the existing system of community safety; asked if there was an analysis on where service calls for CAHOOTS initiated from; noted the importance of getting better data; asked how CAHOOTS resources could be used most effectively; stated the importance of making CAHOOTS as efficient as possible.
- Councilor Evans – noted that the contract for CAHOOTS is with a nonprofit organization that struggles with funding; stated his concern over the pay and retention of CAHOOTS workers; talked about efforts of CAHOOTS workers to unionize and how it will increase the cost of services; spoke about the government’s disinvestment from mental health services; asked how the City can best provide services with the resources available.
- Councilor Keating – stated concern over the 80 percent annual turnover of CAHOOTS workers; spoke in favor of worker’s unionizing; asked about the percentage of police officers deployed when CAHOOTS workers are deployed; asked about a response model similar to 911; asked if mental health professionals or EMTs could provide reports that would be accepted by a court of law.
- Councilor Yeh – noted the wide support in this community for CAHOOTS and alternative responses; asked about the consultant’s law enforcement background and their ability to evaluate alternative responses in an equitable way; noted the importance of having the community’s trust in this process.
- Mayor Vinis – noted that inefficiencies with the current system are causing inadequate responses from CAHOOTS; stated the importance of recognizing CAHOOTS as one part of a network of services; asked if there are opportunities for partnerships outside of the

City to fill gaps in alternative responses; noted her concern about inadequate mental health services; stated the importance of advocating to other entities to improve the network of services.

- Councilor Evans – asked if there are practices from other cities that would be useful to improve the City’s model.
- Councilor Keating – stated support for a behavioral health stabilization center; noted that Lane County is responsible for public health and delivering health and human services; asked for clarification on the differences between Community Service Officers, Neighborhood Service Officers, Resource Officers, and outreach teams.

Mayor Vinis adjourned the meeting at 6:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Katie LaSala  
City Recorder

*(Recorded by Olivia Clark)*  
Webcast of meeting available [here](#).