

MINUTES

Eugene City Council Virtual Meeting Eugene, Oregon 97401

January 25, 2021
7:30 p.m.

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

Mayor Vinis opened the January 25, 2021, meeting of the Eugene City Council in a virtual format.

1. COMMITTEE REPORTS AND ITEMS OF INTEREST

- Councilor Groves - shared information about the newly formed Eugene Wildfire Coalition to address the threat of wildfire in the community.
- Councilor Semple - shared the City's new guidelines for allowing unhoused people to stay in their encampments; asked if printed educational material could be distributed by outreach teams; asked whether planned sweeps of homeless camps were still happening.
- Councilor Keating - appreciated the collaborative and creative strategies for addressing the campsites at Washington Jefferson Park; thanked the Council for standing united in condemning white supremacy.
- Mayor Vinis – shared information about the goals and mission of the Mayors and CEOs for Housing Investment group.

2. CONSENT CALENDAR 1

A. Approval of City Council Minutes

- December 9, 2020, Work Session
- December 16, 2020, Work Session
- January 6, 2021 State of the City
- January 11, 2021 Work Session
- January 11, 2021, Meeting

B. Approval of City Council Tentative Agenda

C. Resolution Approving Low-Income Rental Housing Property Tax Exception for Property Located at North Garfield Street, Eugene, Oregon (Assessor's Map 17-04-25-23; Tax Lot 3800; Assessor's Property Account Nos. 0440618, 4067482, 4278063, 4278071, 4278089, 4282651, 4282669,) (Applicant St. Vincent de Paul Society of Lane County, Inc.)

D. Appointment to the Metropolitan Wastewater Management Commission

Council Discussion

- Councilor Zelenka - asked to pull Item C.

MOTION AND VOTE: Councilor Yeh, seconded by Councilor Syrett, moved to approve items A, B and D on Consent Calendar 1. **PASSED 8:0.**

- Councilor Zelenka - asked staff to briefly highlight the benefits of the low-income property tax exemption on the N. Garfield project; shared his enthusiasm for the project and for this type of property tax exemption.

- Councilor Syrett – in response to a suggestion that these types of actions be scheduled separately from the Consent Calendar, agreed that the LIRHPTE actions should be highlighted and made known to the community.
- Councilor Keating - asked if the City can waive restrictions so people can have their pets with them at these new affordable housing developments.
- Councilor Zelenka - suggested that scheduling these actions during regular Monday meetings is important and the appropriate placement would be immediately before or after Consent Calendar.

MOTION AND VOTE: Councilor Yeh, seconded by Councilor Syrett, moved to approve Item C on Consent Calendar 1. **PASSED 8:0.**

3. PUBLIC FORUM

1. Dylan Plummer- shared information about the negative health impacts of natural gas in homes.
2. Brendan Fingal – shared concerns about climate change and opposed expansion of natural gas.
3. Ben Christensen - said Councilor Clark’s statements from a previous meeting were unacceptable.
4. Olivia Ross - urged Council to transition to 100 percent renewable energy and stop fossil fuel use.
5. Peter Ralph – encouraged Council to let the NW Natural Gas franchise agreement expire.
6. Jim Neu - shared information about the impacts of fossil fuels on the planet; opposed NW Natural.
7. Maddie Blum - said the well-being of all generations is at stake if the City fails to act on climate change.
8. Devin Kesner - supported a ban all new fossil fuel infrastructure and transition to renewables.
9. Eloise Parish Mueller - supported the demands of the Fossil Free Eugene Coalition movement.
10. Sahara Valentine - shared the negative health impacts from natural gas use.
11. David Monk – supported a Council work session on wildfire planning and community preparedness.
12. Danny Noonan – supported the Fossil Free Eugene demands and shared OSU’s climate assessment.
13. Natalie Cowan - advocated for bold action and leadership to meet climate recovery goals.
14. Ozy – expressed frustration with rules that disproportionately affect homeless people.
15. Avery McRae - supported the demands of Fossil Free Eugene and asked for the City Council’s backing.
16. Heidi Osaki - supported and repeated the three demands for transitioning the renewable energy.
17. Sophie Weir - shared data about how climate change affects low-income and minority communities.
18. Dana Kiernan - requested amending proposed code language to let the unhoused keep their pets.
19. Hayley Case-Scott - sought Council support for climate goals and for communities of color.
20. Jesse - asked Council to enact what is needed to meet the City’s climate recovery goals in 2030.
21. Sarah Lamog - raised concerns about white supremacy activities in Eugene and requested action.
22. Alex Wood - advocated for the City to move away from using fossil fuels to protect the planet.
23. Tom Peck – supported the goals of the wildfire coalition to reduce the threat of wildfire.
24. Debra Tanner - shared that her vehicle was impounded after it was wrongly reported as abandoned.
25. Xiawang - asked that local EPD officers be investigated for supporting white supremacy.
26. Aimee Okotie-Oyekan - spoke about the impacts of racism, white supremacy, and health issues.
27. Sophia Trotter – supported the demands of the Fossil Free Eugene Coalition.
28. Deb McGee - shared a poem about stopping fracked gas and moving to sustainable energy.
29. Mike McFarlane - asked to prohibit camping in the riparian zone as it is unsafe for people and land.
30. Kelsey Zlevor - asked Council to take all necessary action to stop greenhouse emissions.
31. Maddie Karduna - asked Council to envision a new future without fossil fuels and greenhouse gas.
32. Selena Blick - testified about the ongoing use and expansion of fracked gas and encouraged action.
33. Lydia Valentine – asked Council to pass an ordinance that supports the demands of 350 Eugene.

Council Discussion

- Councilor Syrett - commented on the proposed changes to criminal code and noted that public comment is still being sought; appreciated the feedback received so far; appreciated the testimony

requesting Council support for House and Senate bills; informed those who made remarks about councilors' conduct that elections are the appropriate avenue for change.

- Councilor Keating - said he looked forward to learning about proposed legislation and how it aligns with City values; appreciated the willingness of the next generations to speak up.
- Councilor Yeh - asked for clarification about how the new rules around pet ownership align with State law; appreciated all the feedback and the youth involvement in the forum and acknowledged how the new virtual platform makes possible for more people to participate.
- Councilor Evans - commented on the remarks about racial tensions in the community and nation; shared some of his and his family's negative experiences in Eugene.
- Councilor Zelenka - commented on the remarks made about white supremacy and shared his support for Councilor Clark.
- Councilor Clark - addressed the people who called him a racist and invited them to watch the January 20 work session to hear what he said and understand how he feels in his heart.
- Councilor Evans - addressed his relationship with Councilor Clark and said that conservative doesn't equal racist, noting that there are liberals who are racist in the community; shared that Councilor Clark has the right to speak about the concerns of his constituents; encouraged people to get along with others who have different views.
- Mayor Vinis - thanked everyone for participating and said the City is facing many difficult issues, including racism, climate change, and homelessness, that will not be solved overnight.

4. **ACTION: Appointment to the Toxics Board**

Toxics Program Manager James Lenhart provided background on the status of the Toxics Board membership.

MOTION AND VOTE: Councilor Yeh, seconded by Councilor Syrett, moved to re-appoint Crystal Abrams to the right-to-know advocacy position on the Toxics Board effective immediately for the remainder of the three-year term ending June 30, 2023. **PASSED 8:0.**

MOTION AND VOTE: Councilor Yeh, seconded by Councilor Syrett, moved to direct the City Manager to create a recruitment process for the Toxics Board for the remaining open seats. **PASSED 8:0.**

The meeting adjourned at 9:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Beth Forrest
City Recorder

(Recorded by Niyah Ross)

Link to the webcast of this City Council meeting [here](#).