

**MINUTES**  
**Eugene City Council**  
**Virtual Workshop**  
**Eugene, Oregon 97401**

**February 27, 2021**  
**9:00 a.m.**

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

Executive Staff Present: Sarah Medary, Kristie Hammitt, Kathryn Brotherton, Mia Cariaga, Fire Chief Chris Heppel, Police Chief Chris Skinner, Renee Grube, Denny Braud, Matt Rodrigues

Mayor Vinis opened the February 27, 2021, workshop of the Eugene City Council.

**1. Introduction and Values**

City Manager Sarah Medary welcomed Council, reviewed the agenda, and set context for the day; she seeded the discussion by asking Council to respond to the following prompt:

The Values that Drive Us: Share your top one or two values and an example of a time when they really drove a decision you made or an effort you launched or a vote you made, and how you see this value being a strength you bring to the 2021 Eugene City Council.

Discussion

- Councilor Syrett – Fairness and Integrity; shared two examples of work that demonstrated these values; stated regret was voting to implement the dog ban downtown; stated pride in work with Human Rights staff for reducing data collected on people that engage in City programs as a response to protecting the immigrant community; expressed belief that Council and City staff can make sound policy and keep those values in the forefront.
- Councilor Groves – Integrity and Making a Difference; expressed deep caring for the community and desire to help it; shared example of time when had to make an unpopular decision as Fire Chief regarding a program aimed at increasing women in fire service, but one that fit with integrity and was the right decision to make.
- Councilor Keating – Service; shared experience of wanting to give back to community after 9/11; discussed that his service is a role in ensuring others will not be in harm's way and helping community; stated that other values that are important are Making a Difference, Trust, Love and Loyalty; stated his core value is service to his community in a way that utilizes his skillset for the greater good.
- Councilor Yeh – Future Generations and Family; stated the value of Future Generations gives a responsibility that the planet will be better from her having been there and the impact of decisions beyond one's lifetime; shared that her two values can be at odds with each other and a struggle to balance.
- Councilor Clark – Integrity, Justice, Kindness and Unity; stated that people come together based off a unified value; shared that Integrity is most important to him, and the significance of words; stated importance of saying what you mean to do, committing to a promise and meaning what you say – especially with Council decisions and actions.
- Councilor Evans – Perseverance and Success; stated these are two values and themes in his life that come from his family; shared that his parents had to overcome racism and difficulties as African Americans in the 1950s, and instilled in him that one has to do better

than the generation before you; stated one must understand this to be successful; shared that one must persevere through difficult times, keep going and move forward.

- Mayor Vinis – Gratitude, Community, and Clarity; shared that she likes to create clarity in murky places; stated she ran for office because she is grateful to this community; shared gratitude for the amount of community members working to create and build something better; mentioned the Mayor’s Youth Advisory Board, and amount she’s learned from them.
- Councilor Zelenka – Giving Back through Leadership and Making a Difference; shared value of Making a Difference as having an impact or getting something done through pragmatism and persistence versus an approach that does not compromise; stated the shift in this country in discourse to extremes is bad for democracy; referenced Giving Back to a leadership example and how the goal was accomplished by being persistent and pervasive, listening, compromise and moving incrementally towards a goal.
- Councilor Semple – Kindness (personal), Fairness and Making a Difference; stated Fairness was the value that made her run for Council and requires compromise; stated Making a Difference requires perseverance; shared that Fairness is in every decision she makes and gave as an example a recent compromise on public forum time limits.
- Councilor Evans – stated Faith is an important value to him, and is believing in things you cannot see and using that to shape and accomplish things in the future; stated this is the time when we need to serve our community and country.
- Councilor Zelenka – Travel; stated that although each council member has wanted to get away at some point, they all stay and persist.
- Councilor Keating – Sacrifice; shared this value is very telling and powerful to him.
- Councilor Syrett – Sacrifice; stated that this value describes her feelings of being on Council, that it is a privilege and a burden; shared that as an introvert some things as an elected official take a toll on her personally, such as being out in public space.
- Mayor Vinis – Affiliation; stated this value is a part of working with Council and being in the circle of people striving to do this work well; this value is motivating.
- Councilor Semple – Gratitude; stated this value is not one she is good with but grateful for everyone on Council and staff.
- Councilor Evans – thanked Councilor Syrett for being the councilor of her ward.
- Councilor Clark – expressed appreciation for this discussion as it helped him to understand Councilor Zelenka more.

The City Manager shared her values: Authenticity, Making a Difference, and Stewardship.

## 2. Vision and Goals

City Manager Sarah Medary revisited the last Council Workshop areas of focus, such as homelessness, financial concerns, and COVID-19 impacts. She shared worries councilors had on area in which we might lose focus, such as climate goals, opportunity to build back better, downtown and housing; spoke about the COVID-19 survey shared with the community and the results, including top urgent concerns and what makes Eugene special.

Survey results for the community’s most urgent concerns include homelessness, business/economic concerns, housing concerns and COVID-19 concerns.

### Discussion

- Councilor Syrett – noted some survey responses indicated Eugene is not special; stated that when she moved to Eugene it didn’t take her long to realize how special the community is with caring and creativity.
- Councilor Keating – noted those respondents haven’t heard the Dolly Parton song about Eugene.

- Councilor Zelenka – shared similar experience as Councilor Syrett; noted that looking at local papers in other cities, everyone has exact same issues as Eugene.

City Manager Sarah Medary revisited Eugene goals and visions with Council, to revise them from 2010.

#### Vision and Values statement:

- Councilor Syrett – wanted to add “and values” to the statement and change it to “thrive in Eugene” in last sentence as financial security can be limiting; stated the goal is to create a sense that Eugene is a place for everyone; wanted to add “for the whole community” in Vibrant Downtown section.
- Councilor Clark – stated belief that not everyone feels welcome that has differing points of view; stated the beauty of Eugene is what unifies us, and we need to improve civility when we disagree.
- Councilor Groves – stated safety concerns and West Eugene feeling discounted; said safety is a stability piece; stated this is a preamble and sets the stage for Visions and Values.
- Councilor Semple – stated downtown belongs to everyone and doesn’t want to take it out, but wants to see the inclusivity of all the other areas of Eugene; stated the need to be more equitable to all parts of the City, including with safety, to bring more unity.
- Councilor Evans – wanted to add “inclusion, social justice and social wellbeing” in first paragraph; stated Council needs to think about access issues to all City services and needs to send a strong message of access as a foundational value.
- Councilor Keating – agreed with Councilor Evans; stated the arts, education, outdoors and TrackTown USA as concepts that bring Eugene together; suggested a larger interpretation of “as a source of our strength” in second sentence.
- Councilor Yeh – agreed with Councilor Keating, and Councilor Groves’ addition of the word “safe”; acknowledged that civility means different things to different people; cautioned that civility should not be used as a way of shutting people down in our community.
- Mayor Vinis – agreed with all the suggestions thus far; acknowledged a goal of an accountable government is transparency; suggested adding a statement on open discourse and transparency.
- Councilor Clark – discussed Councilor Yeh’s point on civility, and that how differences are resolved was his main point; stated there need to be new and creative ways to address conflict and outrage.

#### Goal – Fair, Stable and Adequate Financial Resources

- Councilor Groves – wanted to add innovation to goal of Financial Resources and encourage it as part of the solution.
- Councilor Syrett – agreed with Councilor Groves to add innovation to the text.

#### Goal – Accessible and Thriving Culture, Parks and Recreation

- Councilor Groves – pointed out that “grow our green infrastructure” and “grow our outdoor space” should be stated clearly if it is Council’s intent.
- Councilor Syrett – agreed on need to be specific with green infrastructure; stated there is a need to be culturally sensitive and smart on how all members of the community interact with these services; emphasized services must be accessible to all.
- Councilor Zelenka – stated disagreement with phrase “green infrastructure” due to differing meanings; suggested “grow our parks and open space” and “enhance our natural systems” instead; pointed out parks plan success.
- Councilor Evans – suggested addition of “accessible, inclusive, equitable to our diverse community” to first bullet, and eliminate income piece; stated that casting the net wider

brings in the elements of incomes, racial diversities, gender diversities, and all the things that make up Eugene, which need to be in the first bullet.

- Councilor Keating – suggested “accessible to all persons of all income levels” but liked Councilor Evans’ suggestion better; supported “enhance our natural landscape” instead of “green infrastructure”.
- Councilor Yeh – agreed with Councilor Evans’ suggestion and that “green infrastructure” is unclear; stated dislike of phrase “available to all”, as that does not mean it is welcoming.
- Councilor Syrett – agreed with Councilor Evans’ suggestion; agreed that “welcoming” could replace “available”.

#### Goal – Effective, Accountable Municipal Government

- Councilor Yeh – suggested addition of “Equitable” and “Accessible” in the title.
- Councilor Keating – suggested using “welcoming” in last slide and putting “accessible” in this title.
- Councilor Clark – agreed with Councilor Keating and Mayor Vinis on addition of “effective, accountable, transparent municipal government”; stated he does not want to use “equitable” as people have different views of it.
- Councilor Syrett – appreciated Councilor Yeh’s suggestion but thinks that “Equitable Services” would be better in terms of grammar.
- Mayor Vinis – suggested “Responsive” as a goal or bullet to express Council’s interactions and responses to community needs.
- Councilor Evans – agreed that “responsive” is accurate for Council’s work; described Council’s process of listening to community and making decisions; noted difference between listening and agreeing with community members statements.
- Councilor Zelenka – stated that when people say “you didn’t listen to me or hear me”, they really mean to say is, “you didn’t do what I wanted”; stated that he does not want people to think every issue brought up will be pursued by Council.
- Councilor Syrett – recalled a time in public forum when Councilor Clark suggested a work session, and was accused of being reactive when he was being responsive, and stated it was a lose-lose situation.
- Councilor Keating – asked question regarding Council’s role in responsibility for e-communication; questioned if highlighting “responsiveness” would serve or behoove Council for each councilor’s responsibilities to their respective wards.
- Councilor Zelenka – acknowledged high volume of email and impossibility of responding to each one; gave example of past Uber controversy and the use of template emails to Council.

#### Goal – Sustainable Development

- Councilor Evans – suggested “responsible development” as assurance to community that Council is responsible with decisions using taxpayer funds on new development projects.
- Councilor Clark – disagreed with Councilor Evans as “responsible” can have different meanings but agreed with his premise; stated need to add “increase to housing” to address need for increase in access and options.
- Councilor Groves – agreed with Councilor Clark’s suggestion for housing section; suggested adding “transit corridors” to first bullet, as it helps with how people are moved and the convenience of mass transit.
- Councilor Syrett – agreed with Councilor Clark’s comments; suggested “Eugene” instead of “EUG”, as that is the designation for the airport.
- Councilor Evans – stated need to use an equity lens, to stress accountability when it comes to sustainability; suggested “accountable” to replace “responsible”.
- Councilor Yeh – agreed with edit of “increase” and changing “EUG” to “Eugene”.

- Mayor Vinis – stated need to add in “transportation corridors” and how it fits into the whole community; suggested programs and plans focused on that should be reflected.
- Councilor Syrett – expressed uncertainty of equity lens being used in place of sustainability lens; pointed out long-term use of sustainability lens and need to recognize that.
- Councilor Zelenka – stated equity lens was replacing triple bottom line bullet and expressed confusion over Councilor Evan’s suggestion.
- Councilor Evans – stated that equity covers the areas of economic and environmental, and an equity lens factors in those two other parts; gave examples on using an equity lens for situations with the environment and economy.
- Councilor Zelenka – stated that fairness and inclusion need to be ensured in the analysis, and the need to be fair and equitable in all things.
- Councilor Semple – stated she likes the Triple Bottom Line (TBL), and if abandoned, it looks like Council doesn’t care about it; suggested refreshing TBL, by putting in social, environmental, and equitable sustainability.
- Councilor Clark – agreed with the points made by Councilors Semple and Zelenka; stated the need to be considerate of economic development in a responsible way, and to do it with the TBL analysis.
- Mayor Vinis – liked Councilor Semple’s analysis as it keeps familiar language while clarifying Council’s strong investment in an equitable economy.
- Councilor Zelenka – disagreed and stated that TBL has meaning for people and has been used for years; stated social equity, economy and environment are three separate analyses used to get to a more robust decision.
- Councilor Clark – suggested another bullet point, and that a focused equity lens can be used on particular areas of the local economy through the TBL.
- Councilor Yeh – stated the TBL is not an equity lens and what she believes she hears from Councilor Evans is that it needs to be bolstered or separate.
- Councilor Evans – clarified his meaning that equity crosses all boundaries; stated there are current societal economic barriers that keep people out of certain jobs and professions.
- Councilor Yeh – stated “Eugene way” is not accurate, as there is not just one way in Eugene; stated problems with Eugene lens.
- Councilor Zelenka – stated the part that needs to be refreshed is the equity portion; stated racial equity and justice, class and social equity, environmental equity, economic equity – all that gets put in the equity portion of TBL, which needs focus on it but is short thrifted.

#### Goal – Safe Community

- Councilor Groves – appreciated “increased resilience for natural disasters” but stated need to add natural and “human”-caused disasters; stated there are all kinds of things humans can create that would also be disasters for the community.
- Councilor Syrett – spoke to the call out of “downtown” as potentially causing friction in the community and questioned if that call out is needed.
- Councilor Semple – agreed that the entire City needs to be safe and the emphasis of downtown is somewhat divisive right now.
- Councilor Zelenka – stated he supports removing downtown.
- Councilor Keating – liked Councilor Groves comment and thinks “human-caused” is important to put in, in addition to natural.
- Councilor Clark – suggested cyber security and concerns about susceptibility of the electrical grid; stated in the realm of community safety, technological systems need to be included.
- Councilor Semple – suggested “increased resilience” before disaster in wording.

- Councilor Groves – stated large-scale incidents affect the entire community; stated with cyber and electrical safety, the City is responsible for responding when large swaths of the community are without power.
- Councilor Syrett – distinguished that it doesn't need to be a designated disaster, but if it feels like a disaster to our community.
- Councilor Evans – suggested campaign, “if you see something say something”, for the City to support; described barriers on reporting hate and bias crimes and the need for the community to be aware and sensitive of hate and bias crimes.
- Councilor Clark – asked about the scheduling of the work session for the hate and bias crimes and wanted to wait to do edits until after that work session.
- Councilor Keating – inquired about what metrics will be used to measure the final two bullet points.
- Councilor Groves – stated these goals drive Council's work; stated there have been discussions in Eugene Police and Fire departments on transitioning certain calls more towards CAHOOTs and other similar organizations.
- Councilor Zelenka – stated having the appropriate level of response on the type of call is something the Police Commission is working through.
- Councilor Keating – shared responsibility with public health, at the height of a pandemic, in the safety community bucket; asked if community health and mental health solutions should be mentioned as part of safe community values.
- Mayor Vinis – stated that Councilor Keating's comment is a bigger conversation, more of a structural conversation than a values conversation; stated the City is not a public health agency; stated it is complicating to know how to express that in a value without opening a door.
- Councilor Zelenka – stated in addition to the pandemic, mental health and substance abuse are part of that conversation and an even bigger conversation about the City's role in it.
- Mayor Vinis – stated that it relates to some of the work the Ad Hoc is doing on de-escalation and could be fit in that way.
- Councilor Syrett – stated it's the County's role to do health and human services; stated some of things mentioned are strategies to achieve some of these goals; stated stronger partnerships with public and private entities is where Council can seek that outcome.

### 3. Progress and Process

City Manager Sarah Medary prefaced this item by asking Council to think about the metrics and ways to easily measure and implement things that actually achieve what Council is asking for. What is going to be important for Council to communicate out to the community – metrics, words, narrative, numbers. Question prompt, “How do I know we're making progress?”

#### Discussion

- Councilor Groves – stated need to measure what is possible; need to be clear and give the community updates.
- Councilor Syrett – stated need to be intuitive and measure things in a meaningful way; stated importance of communication with the public and taking advantage of new communication modes.
- Councilor Clark – stated the ability to tell the City's story, of connecting the dots and goals of Council that are aimed to create an overall more livable environment for the community; stated need to convey “When we do ‘X’, it will have ‘Y’ impact on other goals.”
- Councilor Keating – described the Engage Eugene transparent interactive dashboard as public-facing and showing quantitative metrics.
- Councilor Yeh – concerned about communication and needing to know when metrics are released to the community; stated need for these metrics to be collected in an authentic way.

- Councilor Zelenka – stated using the metrics is extremely important to guide how to move forward on issues and measures of success; stated perception that Council and the City don't tell their story very well and need to spend time communicating what is being done and ability to point out successes.
- Councilor Evans – agreed with Councilor Zelenka; gave examples of stories about Eugene that need clarified, such as how the City government works, the reality of Eugene as a community, and how Eugene and it's communities have transformed over the years; stated need to highlight impact of local government on community changes at decade intervals to show progress and change.
- Councilor Keating – stated need to recognize that not everyone in community is online; stated town hall post-pandemic conversations will allow for everyone to tell their story; suggested using an effective email list for councilors to communicate out to constituents.
- Councilor Semple – stated desire for data to be used and shared; stated helpfulness of knowing the incremental steps in the processes, to show evolution of work; stated feeling short on information for telling their story; questioned how to communicate with people that aren't online or read the newspaper.
- Mayor Vinis – stated usefulness of easily gathered metrics that are reportable and that show alignment with other goals; stated value of a work session poll and being specific about if it will lead to measurable outcomes; stated that Council can frame input more specifically and what that means for staff; mentioned previous dashboard project that did not get many visits from community; stated that if Council wants to be supported differently, then to say it; stated City publicity cannot be as "edgy", but that Councilors are able to be.
- Councilor Clark – stated belief that the City does a great job creating videos to tell stories and wants more community members highlighted for showing outcomes of City work and its impact; suggested staff have a running list and tagging previous Agenda Item Summaries and council discussions so people can see the history of that topic.

City Manager Sarah Medary thanked everyone for their feedback, which will be used on future talks about process.

The meeting adjourned at 2:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Julie Adams  
Deputy City Recorder

*(Recorded by Julie Adams)*

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