

MINUTES

Eugene City Council Virtual Meeting Eugene, Oregon 97401

April 26, 2021
7:30 p.m.

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

Mayor Vinis opened the April 26, 2021, meeting of the Eugene City Council in a virtual format.

1. COMMITTEE REPORTS AND ITEMS OF INTEREST

Council Discussion

- Councilor Syrett – shared, as chair of the Intergovernmental Relations (IGR) Committee, earlier today she sent to Council the City of Eugene state and federal legislative policy statements with the addition of a section on equity and inclusion, and asked councilors if they would like to have a work session on what has been added.
- Councilor Yeh – shared that next month is Asian and Pacific Islander Heritage Month, and there will be several activities and events in Eugene to celebrate.
- Councilor Semple – shared the Sustainability Commission met last week and thanked Council for the \$5,000 in funding for incentives for sustainability-related activities; encouraged all to get vaccinated against COVID-19; shared the local blood supply is extremely low and encouraged donations; shared she recently visited the Mission to tour the pro bono facilities and clinic for veterinary care; encouraged all to practice kindness.
- Councilor Keating – shared that legislators in Salem passed nine bills today regarding police reform; encouraged all to get the COVID-19 vaccination and continue to support hand washing, social distancing, mask wearing and limiting size of gatherings.
- Councilor Zelenka – echoed encouragement for all to get vaccinated; stated he supports a work session on the IGR policy statements; shared he initiated a work session poll to investigate a combined dedicated on-going funding source for climate change and homelessness; asked if Wednesday's work session on 1059 Willamette can be extended or a second work session date be added; asked if Police Chief Skinner can communicate with Council regarding catalytic converters; asked if it is known what states vehicles camping throughout the city are from; shared that Wednesday begins the City's budget process which continues through May.
- Councilor Semple – shared the Sustainability Commission passed along to Council its Energy in Buildings and Sustainability Funding recommendations.
- Mayor Vinis – asked Council if it would like to have a work session regarding the IGR language.
- Councilor Zelenka – stated he feels disconnected from what the IGR Committee does and feels strongly that Council should review topic.

MOTION AND VOTE: Councilor Zelenka, seconded by Councilor Evans, moved to hold a work session on Councilor Syrett's Item 4 from IGR. **PASSED 7:1**, Councilor Keating opposed.

Council Discussion

- Councilor Keating – stated the current members of the IGR Committee have been intentional about the language and the work and he does not feel there is a need for this to be discussed in

a work session; asked Councilor Zelenka if work sessions are the model by which he would prefer to receive check-ins, or more regular e-communication shared by the IGR Committee.

- Councilor Zelenka – shared that Council used to have work sessions on IGR items as the session progressed and he was able to keep track of the work that way when not serving on the Committee; stated his interest in having a work session is to inform the full council and public; shared he misses not having work sessions on topics throughout the legislative session, and receiving a periodic memo does not work for him.
- Councilor Syrett – shared her understanding that IGR items go to the full council when there is not a 3-0 vote by the IGR Committee members and, in the past, there was often not much agreement so more items were referred to the full council; suggested this could be discussed further at the upcoming work session.
- Councilor Clark – stated he would support work sessions because it is most often the case that the IGR Committee represents a point of view of the majority but not all the councilors or the community.

2. CONSENT CALENDAR 1

- A. Approval of City Council Minutes
 - February 22, 2021, Meeting
 - April 19, 2021, Meeting
- B. Approval of City Council Tentative Agenda
- C. Eugene-Springfield 2021 One-Year Action Plan for Affordable Housing and Community Development
- D. Substantial Amendment to the Eugene-Springfield 2020 Action Plan – CDBG-CV3 Fund Allocation

Council Discussion

- Councilor Groves – requested corrections to the minutes for the February 22, 2021, Meeting.
- Councilor Zelenka – requested that Items C and D be pulled from Consent Calendar 1.

MOTION AND VOTE: Councilor Yeh, seconded by Councilor Syrett, moved to approve the amended Minutes and the Tentative Agenda from Consent Calendar 1. **PASSED 8:0.**

Council Discussion

- Councilor Zelenka – regarding Item C, inquired into the funding allocation and how the One-Year Action Plan fits within the Consolidated Plan; asked what the Item D funds are being allocated for and what will be accomplished.

MOTION AND VOTE: Councilor Yeh, seconded by Councilor Syrett, moved to approve Items C and D from Consent Calendar 1. **PASSED 8:0.**

3. PUBLIC FORUM

1. Zach Mulholland – said the Sustainability Commission is looking forward to an opportunity to present its annual report and end-of-year recommendations.
2. Dylan Plummer – Cascadia Wildlands, opposed use of fossil fuels and natural gas by the City.
3. Ben Christensen – spoke against Community Safety Initiative (CSI) funds going to the police.
4. Eric Jackson – stated proposed parking ordinance will not accomplish anything.
5. Nancy A. – supported a moratorium on new natural gas infrastructure.
6. Jacob Trewe – spoke against CSI funds going to police; rejected 1059 Willamette proposal.
7. Deborah McGee – 350 Eugene, spoke to need for climate action leadership and fossil fuel reduction.
8. Carolyn Partridge – concerned that Eugene will not meet carbon reduction goals by 2030.
9. Madelyn Cowan – FUSEE, urged the repowering of buildings and the end of fossil fuel use.
10. Maria – demanded an end to police brutality, supported Ad Hoc Committee on Police Policy work.

11. Amanda – said she is a small business owner dealing with the impacts of the unhoused at WJ Park.
12. Wiley Nelson – said his West Eugene business is dealing with impacts of car camping and unhoused.
13. Eli – spoke against the criminalization of homelessness, reallocate CSI funds to homelessness.
14. Zondie – urged Council to reject the 1059 Willamette proposal.
15. Mia Nelson – said her West Eugene business is dealing with impacts of car camping and unhoused.
16. Shia – spoke to a possible conflict of interest regarding Ad Hoc Cmte. on Police Policy and CSI.
17. Kahlil Meyer – said his West Eugene business is dealing with impacts of car camping and unhoused.
18. Rob Fisette – spoke to a possible conflict of interest regarding Ad Hoc Cmte. on Police Policy and CSI.
19. Nate – concerned the City is proposing additional laws against the unhoused.
20. Tyler Stewart – urged an independent investigation into the fatal shooting of Eliborio Rodrigues.
21. Alatheia Letaw – concerned about reliance on fossil fuels, urged ban of new natural gas infrastructure.
22. Chuck Areford – supported labor and workers’ rights, wants industry jobs to reduce climate impacts.
23. Jen Hornaday – asked City to enforce restrictions for homeless camps along natural river areas.
24. Matthew Yook – would like the City to create easier access for reporting hate and bias crimes.
25. Sara Lamog – spoke to a possible conflict of interest regarding Ad Hoc Cmte. on Police Policy and CSI.
26. Ethan Klein – concerned that FY22 budget does not reflect reallocation of funds away from police.
27. William Smith – spoke to his concern over the dangers of 5G wireless technology.
28. Kory Northrop – spoke to how proposed parking changes disproportionately impact the unhoused.
29. M. Rink – spoke to a possible conflict of interest regarding Ad Hoc Cmte. on Police Policy and CSI.
30. Brooklyn – spoke to housing barriers faced by the unhoused and extremely-low income people.

Council Discussion

- Councilor Syrett – asked staff to speak to meeting timer operation; asked the Public Works Director to give a brief update on management of the camp at Washington Jefferson (WJ) Park and if there are any plans to have sanctioned camping in Maynard Park; expressed appreciation for all who give testimony in this virtual meeting format and the accountability it requires; condemned individuals who use email to engage in personal attacks and uncivil discourse.
- Councilor Zelenka – thanked Councilor Syrett for her comments and thanked those who provided testimony; asked the City Attorney to provide a brief explanation of what constitutes a conflict of interest.
- Councilor Evans – thanked those who provided testimony; asked if the Request For Proposals (RFP) for 1059 Willamette can be modified to include a percentage of Area Median Income (AMI); regarding CSI funding, stated he would be supportive of making substantive changes to provide more funding for social services.
- Councilor Keating – requested a report from the Police Chief about police reforms passed by the legislature today and costs that may be associated with implementation; suggested it may be time for a review of the CSI given the happenings of the last year; expressed appreciation for the explanation of real and perceived conflicts of interest; thanked Councilor Syrett for her comments.
- Councilor Groves – acknowledged Councilor Syrett for her comments and expressed appreciation for those who gave testimony; stated in regard to the CSI and the start of the budget process, it would be helpful for him to know what was said or promised to the community when the CSI was first presented.
- Councilor Yeh – reminded the public the City is in the process of talking to BIPOC and other under-represented communities regarding the CSI and possible changes to be made, and there will be a work session on May 10 to further discuss the results of this community engagement.
- Councilor Clark – stated he voted against the payroll tax to fund the CSI not because he did not approve of the expenditure but because he did not approve of the way to do it; stated the sole reason this tax was passed was to fund additional police officers and to now change how the funds will be used is a bad decision.

- Councilor Zelenka – stated he thought Council had agreed it would not have a conversation regarding police reform funding, CSI allocation or the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds during the budget process and instead would amend in the supplemental budget.
- Mayor Vinis – as a reminder to the public, shared that a few years ago the City Council identified three areas (Public Safety, Housing and Homelessness) where it wanted to do more work and make concurrent additional investment; stated it is an important framework to understand as all three are valuable and have years of decision-making already put into them; stated things have changed in the past year but not so much that these three areas are not still of importance.
- Councilor Evans – clarified that when he speaks of moving more money to social services, he is considering this from a public safety standpoint.

4. PUBLIC HEARING and POSSIBLE ACTION: An Ordinance Allowing for the Temporary Establishment of “Safe Parking” and “Safe Tent” Sites That Are Larger Than Allowed Under Section 4.816 of the Eugene code, 1971; Declaring an Emergency; Providing for an Immediate Effective Date; and Providing a Sunset Date

Mayor Vinis opened the Public Hearing.

1. Erin Grady – said proposed sites should be in addition to, not instead of WJ Park and 13th & Chambers.
2. Eric Jackson – said people living on the street should be hired to manage their own camps.
3. Heather Merrick – Lane Co. Legal Aid, said proposed sites are not enough, need more options.
4. Brittany Quick-Warner – said the Eugene Chamber of Commerce supports the proposed ordinance.
5. Sabra – echoed comments of last two speakers and urged doubling the number of spaces.
6. Eli – concerned water will not be provided to sites; supported intent but not the ordinance as is.
7. Zondie – concerned there will be increased enforcement of camping.
8. Nate – stated water to be provided to sites; proposed plan is not adequate in number.
9. David and Jessica Campbell – asked about long-term transition plans for those living at microsites.

Mayor Vinis closed the public hearing.

Council Discussion

- Councilor Zelenka – stated homelessness is the symptom and the problem is lack of affordable housing, lack of mental health services and access to substance abuse services; said he believes the City needs to move faster and think bigger and is supportive of allowing larger, organized sites with rules spread out over the city; asked staff why language in the ordinance does not include the term “RVs”; inquired into providing water at sites.
- Councilor Clark – asked staff if drug use will be allowed on these sites; asked if or when campers at WJ Park and 13th & Chambers will be mandated to leave; stated he wants to be supportive of incremental efforts with more places to help more people, but is concerned we are making it worse by not requiring people to take advantage of the opportunity to get well.
- Councilor Keating – asked that electricity and potable water be added as site provisions in the proposed ordinance; stated he would like the words “illicit camping” removed from the ordinance language, and the words “those camping” changed to “unhoused residents”.
- Councilor Syrett – asked to postpone action on this item to Wednesday and not vote tonight; stated folks at microsites are connected with case management and it is not meant to be a long-term living situation; stated the 1059 Willamette redevelopment was not envisioned to be housing for very low-income people but to fill a gap in workforce housing; agrees there should be some capacity for self-management for these sites.
- Councilor Groves – encouraged Council to act and not delay a vote; hoped that WJ Park and 13th & Chambers can be returned to their original uses and not continue to be occupied; acknowledged the need to return the community to as normal as it can be while at the same time providing safe locations for people to locate to; shared that at the microsites he visits he

sees order, safety and security whereas along the streets of West Eugene he sees no order or semblance of safety and this is part of the problem; stated a city is organized society that has rules that all must comply with to keep it organized and safe; stated he looks forward to moving this in a direction that provides safety, security and certainty for the entire community.

- Mayor Vinis – proposed that action for this item take place at Wednesday’s work session due to the changes proposed by Councilor Keating and the lateness of the hour.

5. ACTION: A Resolution Amending “*Picture. Plan. Play. A Vision and Implementation Plan for Eugene’s Parks and Recreation System*” to Re-designate Striker Field Park a Community Park

MOTION AND VOTE: Councilor Yeh, seconded by Councilor Syrett, moved to adopt the resolution attached as Attachment C to the AIS entitled: “A Resolution Amending ‘*Picture. Plan. Play. A Vision and Implementation Plan for Eugene’s Parks and Recreation System*’ to Re-designate Striker Field Park a Community Park.” **PASSED 8:0.**

The meeting adjourned at 10:49 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Beth Forrest
City Recorder

(Recorded by Jessica Gebb)

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