

MINUTES

Eugene City Council Virtual Work Session Eugene, Oregon 97401

June 30, 2021
12:00 p.m.

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

Mayor Vinis opened the June 30, 2021, work session of the Eugene City Council in virtual format.

1. WORK SESSION – Independence Day Community Safety Efforts

Eugene Fire Department Deputy Chief Chris Heppel and Police Chief Chris Skinner provided information on enforcement lines and community safety concerns about fireworks usage and other considerations surrounding Independence Day celebrations.

Council Discussion

- Councilor Keating – thanked staff for the information; asked in what ways fireworks vendors, particularly those in South University area where new ban is in effect, can be of support the City's restrictions on fireworks usage, such as sharing information or literature with their customers; asked what local neighborhood associations can do to be helpful in spreading information throughout the community; asked how complaints are being managed and tracked from the Eugene Fireworks Alert mobile application, and if there is a preference for using it rather than residents calling the City's non-emergency line.
- Councilor Groves – thanked staff for their work and attention to this matter; asked that fire and police officers also monitor and respond to illegal bonfires during this dry season.
- Councilor Zelenka – thanked staff for the presentation; asked if anyone had spoken with the Eugene Emeralds management staff to ensure they are not planning an unpermitted display this year.

2. WORK SESSION – City of Eugene Naming Policy

Policy Systems Analyst Jason Dedrick presented a review of the City's Naming Policy, which guides the naming of City-owned facilities and said the work session would provide City Council with an opportunity to receive an update on relevant staff efforts and ongoing review of the City's Naming Policy.

Council Discussion

- Councilor Syrett – thanked staff for the presentation and appreciated their team engaging this process on multiple fronts; stated some concern over the status of the request to rename Washington Jefferson Park, which has been on hold while the City finalizes its naming policy.
- Councilor Yeh – thanked staff for the report; stated her belief that the naming process be used to tell the story of the community, not just where it has been but where it wishes to go, its values, all while retaining the ability to tell the full story; stated many in the community deserve recognition, in numbers likely far beyond the facilities in need of naming, and perhaps candidates should be considered with respect to their legacy and their impact within the community.

- Mayor Vinis – asked about timelines and when council will hear more on this topic later in the year as there are ongoing requests; seconded Councilor Yeh’s comments that there are many who could be recognized but not all rise to the level of having facilities named after them; asked Council to consider other opportunities for recognition of an individual’s contributions to the community through a wall of acknowledgement prominently displayed in a place of significance; noted that the naming policy currently states street names should not be “too foreign sounding,” language which should be reviewed more closely from a cultural responsiveness standpoint.
- Councilor Evans – asked if there is a comprehensive history on the process of how streets and landmarks were named in the past, noting a series of streets in Ward 6 named after former Chief Justices of the Supreme Court, for whom it is unclear whether they had significant contributions (or even negative impacts) at the local and/or national level.
- Councilor Keating – echoed Mayor Vinis’ comments on a wall of acknowledgement for high-level community contributors, noting there may be an opportunity to do so within the riverfront development project.

3. **WORK SESSION – Intergovernmental Relations and 2021 Legislative Update**

Intergovernmental Relations Manager Ethan Nelson, joined by Tess Milio and Zack Reeves of CFM Advocates (consultants to the City based out of Salem, OR), and Councilor Syrett, provided City Council with an overview of the City’s 2021 legislative process and accomplishments from the 2021 Oregon State Assembly and federal legislative efforts, as well as proposed Intergovernmental Relations (IGR) Committee efforts.

Council Discussion:

- Councilor Keating – thanked staff for diligent and engaging work.
- Councilor Clark – thanked staff for their hard work; said now that COVID restrictions are slowly lifting, he hopes to see the return of options to confer with legislators during in-person visits, as well as additional opportunities for City Council and state legislators to discuss priorities during the legislative session.
- Councilor Zelenka – thanked staff for the presentation; stated that it feels Council has gone from previously too much time discussing IGR efforts to now too little; said he understands the speed and priorities of legislative sessions but nonetheless has recently felt disconnected to the process and policies/bills under committee discussion; asked for clarification about timelines for discussion on proposed bills with Council; said he thinks the Council engagement proposal discussed today should be a minimum starting point, and in particular updates to Council during active legislative sessions should be more frequent.
- Councilor Syrett – committed to taking Councilor Zelenka’s feedback to the IGR Committee and working to find a better balance between their priorities and the way in which information is relayed to Council.
- Councilor Groves – thanked staff for the presentation; stated he understands Councilor Zelenka’s frustrations, and while they are also interested in more discussion and updates from the IGR Committee, he remains wary of creating a duplicate process to that of the IGR Committee.
- Councilor Clark – stated they are also interested in more input on IGR Committee activities, and though he recognizes his viewpoint on many issues may be in the minority to those of the council and state legislators, he hopes those viewpoints can still be heard.
- Councilor Zelenka – suggested that there be a pre-session prior to any work session on priority bills or issues of significance to the City; cited protocol that all non-unanimous positions from the IGR Committee are presented to City Council for review; stated that this process should be more informative and receive more input from Council.

- Councilor Semple – requested that information from the IGR Committee meetings be presented to Council in a timely manner, are more accessible, and with more opportunities for feedback and discussion.
- Councilor Syrett – agreed with others regarding the need for more communication between the IGR Committee and Council; stated the committee will follow requirements that all items which receive a vote at the IGR Committee will be forwarded to Council for vote, and that they will continue to explore ways to create further opportunities for discussion on priority items.

Mayor Vinis adjourned the meeting at 1:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Brooke Freed
City Recorder AIC

(Recorded by Jay Ferris)

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