

MINUTES

Eugene City Council Virtual Meeting Eugene, Oregon 97401

November 22, 2021
7:30 p.m.

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

Mayor Vinis opened the November 22, 2021, meeting of the Eugene City Council in virtual format.

1. COMMITTEE REPORTS AND ITEMS OF INTEREST

- Councilor Keating – shared that Saturday was an event honoring the victims of violence against the transgender community across the country and thanked Mayor Vinis for her proclamation declaring Saturday as a day of remembrance and requested it be shared widely throughout the community; thanked volunteers for their activism in this cause and noted he was wearing a ribbon in support of the victims; led a moment of silence in their memory .
- Councilor Yeh – announced that on November 18, a renewable natural gas was injected from the Wastewater facility into Northwest Natural’s pipeline; thanked staff for all of their research and work to make this new technology possible and noted that it benefits both the City’s climate goals and the economic health of the community.
- Councilor Zelenka – thanked councilors Keating and Yeh for their comments; reported on a joint effort between Parks and Open Space and neighbors to plant over 500 plants and trees in a neglected right-of-way at the end of Spring Boulevard.
- Councilor Clark – reported on his attendance at the Cal Young Neighborhood Association meeting and discussion around the lawsuits that deal with salmon restoration and the removal of dams and the impact on clean hydroelectric energy production; encouraged further discussion about these impacts with NW Natural and EWEB.
- Councilor Syrett – recognized the Whiteaker Community Council for receiving a Center for Disease Control grant to build vaccine confidence through arts and culture; announced that the City and its intergovernmental partners secured a federal grant to complete the Franklin Boulevard transformation project, including bicycle and pedestrian improvements, a second run of the EmX, and overall traffic flow improvements; noted the potential for additional transportation funding through the recently passed federal infrastructure bill.
- Councilor Evans – thanked Eugene Springfield Fire personnel for their service and professionalism.
- Councilor Groves – thanked Councilor Evans for his recognition of Eugene Springfield Fire and said he was glad that Councilor Evans was present and healthy; reported on his attendance at an event to recognize transit workers for their efforts

during the COVID pandemic noting they are the essential workers behind the essential workers who keep the life of the community moving forward;

- Mayor Vinis – said that in addition to the events recognizing transit workers, the Eugene Springfield Fire graduates, and supporting the transgender community, she also attended a fundraiser for the Refugee Resettlement Coalition and reported on the recent resettlement of an Afghani family; announced the upcoming meeting of the Youth Advisory Committee with its new members and said they are eager to begin tackling important issues; reported that her business advisory council met and discussed accountability related to behavior at homeless encampments and the potential of impacts of natural gas restrictions.
- Councilor Clark – asked for clarification about the status of the homeless camp at Washington Jefferson Park and whether it is considered a sanctioned camp; asked staff to clarify with Register-Guard staff how it should be referred to in reporting.

2. CONSENT CALENDAR 1

A. Approval of City Council Minutes

- May 24, 2021, Work Session
- June 14, 2021, Work Session
- June 28, 2021, Meeting
- September 13, 2021, Work Session
- October 13, 2021, Work Session

B. Approval of City Council Tentative Agenda

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

3. PUBLIC FORUM

1. Tim Morris – thanked council for considering the Housing Policy Board recommendations.
2. Lou Christian – spoke about the need for redundant energy systems.
3. Danny Noonan – urged council to move quickly with ordinances to end natural gas use.
4. Tom Peck – said an energy transition plan should be based on a community solar project.
5. Zach Mulholland – spoke about the City's climate goals to reduce carbon emissions.
6. Patty Hine – urged council to move quickly with ordinances to end natural gas use.
7. Chad McCarty – shared concerns over 5G wireless and its impact on public health.
8. Debby McGee – urged council to move quickly with ordinances to end natural gas use.
9. Anne Pernick – urged council to move quickly with ordinances to end natural gas use.
10. Sean O'Rourke – spoke about the need for redundant, complementary energy systems.
11. Aimée Okotie-Oyekan – expressed support for reducing fossil fuel use.
12. Kyle Purdy – urged council to move quickly with ordinances to end natural gas use.
13. Monique Hall – opposed the proliferation of 5G technology in the community.
14. William Smith – shared concerns over wireless broadband's impact on public health.

Council Discussion

- Mayor Vinis – thanked all who testified and shared community concerns.
- Councilor Zelenka – clarified that offsets are direct additional measurable and verifiable reductions to greenhouse gas emissions that would not happen without funding the offset purchase.

- Councilor Keating expressed appreciation for the people who spoke in favor of council's recent actions to address the climate crisis and cease new fossil fuel expansion; thanked first responders and emergency personnel for their response to a serious public safety incident in his ward.
- Councilor Yeh – explained the process used at the Wastewater Treatment Plant to handle biogas; thanked the community for supporting Council in its decision-making.

4. ACTION: An Ordinance Granting to BNSF Railway Company a Non-Exclusive Franchise to Use the Public Way to Construct and Maintain Private Commercial Facilities Within the City of Eugene

MOTION AND VOTE: Councilor Yeh, seconded by Councilor Syrett, moved to adopt An Ordinance Granting to BNSF Railway Company a Non-Exclusive Franchise to Use the Public Way to Construct and Maintain Private Commercial Facilities Within the City of Eugene. **PASSED 8:0**

5. ACTION: An Ordinance Concerning the Crime of Intimidation by Display of a Noose and Increasing the Maximum Penalty for Violating Section 4.731 of the Eugene Code, 1971 (Bias Crime in the 2nd Degree); Adding Section 4.732 to the Eugene Code, 1971; and Amending Section 4.990 of that Code

MOTION AND VOTE: Councilor Yeh, seconded by Councilor Syrett, moved to adopt Attachment A to this AIS, An Ordinance Concerning the Crime of Intimidation by Display of a Noose and Increasing the Maximum Penalty for Violating Section 4.731 of the Eugene Code, 1971 (Bias Crime in the 2nd Degree); Adding Section 4.732 to the Eugene Code, 1971; and Amending Section 4.990 of that Code. **PASSED 8:0**

Council Discussion

- Councilor Clark – noted that he had requested the original work session to consider stronger penalties for hate crimes in response to local incidents and was pleased to see this effort come to fruition.
- Mayor Vinis – wished everyone a happy Thanksgiving and acknowledged that the holiday represents a sad history for many; encouraged efforts to illuminate historical inaccuracies.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Brooke Freed
City Recorder (AIC)

(Recorded by Beth Forrest)
Webcast of meeting available [here](#).