

MINUTES

Eugene City Council Work Session Eugene, Oregon 97401

June 26, 2024
12:00 p.m.

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

Mayor Vinis opened the June 26, 2024, Eugene City Council Work Session in a virtual format.

1. **WORK SESSION: Emergency Management and Preparedness**

City Manager, Sarah Medary, introduced Employee Resource Center Co-Director AIC, Jennifer Lleras Van Der Haeghen, and Fire Chief Michael Caven who provided information about Council's and Mayor's role and responsibilities as elected officials in emergency situations.

Councilor Discussion:

- Mayor Vinis – noted the City navigated and learned from the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, ice storm, and wildfires; noted Eugene is better equipped to handle emergencies than it was during the 2019 Summit for Mayors in Lane County.
- Councilor Keating – stated interest in participating in emergency preparedness trainings; requested an in-person walkthrough of the new City Hall for staff and elected officials for emergencies; asked what percentage of the community is signed up for the Lane Alert system; stated interest an automatic opt-in option through the local utility for Lane Alert to reach community members facing technological hurdles or for those who are unaware of Lane Alert system's importance.
- Councilor Groves – asked when the emergency plan was last updated; noted interest in accessing additional resources during an emergency; asked how to access resources through the Stafford Act; asked about the process for declaring a fire emergency versus preparing a general declaration of emergency; asked if there is a role for elected officials when declaring a disaster; stated the importance of having clear processes during an emergency.
- Councilor Leech – asked if Council has a communication channel to use in emergencies to communicate with constituents; noted interest in Emergency Preparedness trainings; interested in Eugene running emergency simulations similar to those held at the Belize US Embassy where she interned; asked if running simulations would be possible; noted interest in having a conversation about the Egan Warming Center staffing during an emergency.

- Mayor Vinis – noted interest in having more information on the Egan Warming Center plans before cold weather.
- Councilor Semple – noted interest in the Emergency Preparedness trainings and potential simulations; interested in expanding the use of City buildings for Egan Warming Centers and times of heat and smoke; noted the City has many resources it does not use due to staffing; interested in the City considering emergency responses for rain; interested in helping increase staff for the Egan Warming Centers; hopes to expand the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) as it enables neighbors to meet each other.
- Councilor Clark – asked what degree the school districts are involved in the emergency planning process; asked staff to discuss integrating school district facilities into emergency response plans.
- Councilor Groves – noted the Emergency Management Institute, partnered with the National Fire Academy Executive Fire Officer Program, has a federally funded week-long course for managing major emergencies with a multi-million dollar simulator; noted the course could be useful in developing a core level of skill and understanding at a departmental head level that could serve the City in an emergency event.
- Councilor Keating – noted he is unaware of a platform for Council to communicate with constituents during non-emergencies; asked if the County has a platform to communicate to constituents for emergencies or non-emergencies.
- Mayor Vinis – noted interest in using neighborhood schools as food pantries to help support those living close to the poverty level who cannot store lots of food; noted interest in utilizing simulations.

Mayor Vinis adjourned the meeting at 12:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Katie LaSala
City Recorder

(Recorded by Natalie Venhuda)

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