

MINUTES

**Eugene City Council Work Session
Harris Hall, 125 East 8th Avenue
Eugene, Oregon 97401**

**November 20, 2017
5:30 p.m.**

Councilors Present: Emily Semple, Betty Taylor, Alan Zelenka, Jennifer Yeh, Mike Clark, Claire Syrett, Chris Pryor

Councilors Absent: Greg Evans

Mayor Vinis opened the November 20, 2017, Work Session of the Eugene City Council.

A. WORK SESSION: Auditor Discussion

City Attorney Glenn Klein gave an overview of the major sections of the City Auditor initiative and the changes it would establish. Norma Grier, Marty Wilde, and John Barofsky spoke about the work of the Mayor's study group and the City Auditor models that they studied.

Council Discussion

- The auditor could only spend their budget on things related to the duties and responsibilities of the office.
- If auditor could face criminal charges if money was used unlawfully, however, there would be no checks and balances on inappropriate-but-not-unlawful spending. It would be at the auditor's discretion to determine what materials and supplies are needed to perform their duties
- Concerned that auditor would have ability to audit operations of EWEB.
- The City would be liable for any unlawful activity by the auditor. The auditor's office would still need to comply with State and Federal rules.
- If initiative passes in May, the first election for auditor would be in November and whoever got the most votes would win, regardless of how many candidates are in the field or whether a majority is achieved.
- Concerned about the lack of a residency requirement for the potential auditor.
- More information about subpoena power for other city auditors requested.
- More information requested about where on the scale of elected officials' salaries the proposed auditor's salary falls.
- When reviewing the purpose of having an auditor – improving and saving as well as identifying and exposing – consider whether this initiative encompasses everything the City in an auditor.
- Comparing other cities' audit function and needs to Eugene's is difficult, because there are many differences.
- The manner with which an auditor's office is set up may have an influence on the outcomes and whether there is better accountability or transparency.
- The information gathered by the study group was the result of internet research, phone calls, and email.

- Feedback from constituents about the support and efficacy of the auditor in jurisdictions that have an auditor would be instructive.
- The budget would cover all of the auditor's expenditures including salary, rent, materials, etc.
- Clarification requested about State election law around running for re-election and promoting their work.
- Clarification requested on whether auditor would have to uphold Council's Protections for Individuals ordinance.
- Investigate if there are jurisdictions where the auditor caused problems rather than exposed them.
- If there is interest in putting an additional measure on the ballot, City Attorney would draft a measure with council's input.
- Auditor would be able to subpoena any documents unless pre-empted by state of federal law.
- Auditor would be able to encourage constituents to engage in political activity and contact their councilor to address a problem.
- Auditor can take no action on policy, would be able to illuminate more information and make recommendations
- Request made for lists of what different services cost that come out of the general fund.
- There is no effective way to evaluate whether auditors generally earn back their costs/salary in savings to the organization.
- Recall process is the only way to remove elected auditor; some cities have implemented an audit committee.

MOTION and VOTE: Councilor Zelenka, seconded by Councilor Pryor, moved to extend the meeting by 10 minutes. **PASSED 7:0.**

- Auditors have been held accountable by auditor committees, but many elected auditors are only subject to recall.
- There may be differences in evaluating benefits when comparing cities that had an auditor from the beginning vs. established later in time.

MOTION and VOTE: Councilor Zelenka, seconded by Councilor Clark, moved to extend the meeting by five minutes. **PASSED 7:0.**

- Further clarification requested on the following: EWEB operations, comparative salaries of other elected auditors, number of audits the City currently does, whether auditor staff would be covered by adopted Council policy in the form of an ordinance, and list of cuts proposed in years past.

The meeting adjourned at 7:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Elena Domingo
Deputy City Recorder