

MINUTES

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

**May 22, 2019
12:00 p.m.**

Councilors Present: Betty Taylor, Emily Semple, Jennifer Yeh, Michael Clark, Alan Zelenka, Claire Syrett

Councilors Absent: Chris Pryor, Greg Evans

Mayor Vinis opened the May 22, 2019, Work Session of the Eugene City Council.

1. WORK SESSION: Northwest Natural's Low Carbon Pathway for Eugene

Intergovernmental Relations Manager, Ethan Nelson, Northwest Natural Senior Vice President of Operations, Kim Heiting, and Senior Director of Environmental Policy and Sustainability, Bill Edmonds, presented an update on climate and energy related policies, programs and planning efforts.

Council Discussion

- Councilor Zelenka – expressed appreciation to NWN staff for presentation; discussed decarbonization study done by NWN; discussed potential plans and ideas to work with NWN on decarbonization and methods for achievement; expressed eagerness and discussed work with NWN to create a model other cities could use to meet environmental goals; inquired how regulations on NWN imposed by the public utilities commission be affected as NWN and Eugene go beyond “business as usual”.
- Councilor Yeh - inquired about the current supply of renewable energy and goals towards renewable natural gas; asked what barriers exist that make 25 percent of current supply towards renewable natural gas the goal by 2050; discussed how the 25 percent is affected by energy efficiencies; asked how power to gas affects the development of renewable natural gas; asked about smart energy participation costs for customers; asked if NWN has discussed RNG with the police force or LTD.
- Councilor Syrett - expressed skepticism about collaborative relationship with NWN; expressed appreciation for work being done by NWN considering climate change but supported greater efforts, considering what NWN is capable of achieving rather than compared to other utilities and expressed desire to know more about what NWN is doing; inquired how they are defining “healthcare facility”; asked if NWN has set goals for participation in energy efficiency; inquired about goals for participation in smart energy program and expressed desire for NWN to increase efforts in development; asked if NWN is engaged with transformation away from diesel at state level; reiterated Councilor Yeh’s belief that 25 percent reduction by 2050 is not strong enough considering the urgent nature of climate change and the City’s goals.
- Councilor Taylor - inquired if NWN gas comes from fracking procedures; asked if NWN believes there is a limitless supply of natural gas; inquired about methane production from cows and garbage sites; discussed population growth and energy efficiencies; asked if NWN replaced pipes in Eugene and concern about dangers for explosions; inquired how deep pipes are placed.

- Councilor Zelenka – inquired of staff of how much of the community greenhouse gas inventory in Eugene accounts for gas; discussed Fairmont community meeting discussion around system leaks and inquired if NWN could discuss this further; asked staff to provide a pie chart about where emissions come from; discussed that transportation is a higher emission producer with greater challenges to address reductions, compared to gas.
- Mayor Vinis – noted time constraints and asked to reschedule the second agenda item.
- Councilor Yeh – discussed equity around volunteer smart energy participation; discussed development of renewable energy options over time and the need for NWN to increase renewable natural gas (beyond 25 percent) to meet climate needs.
- Councilor Syrett – inquired about the Metropolitan Wastewater Management Commission project and timeline for development.
- Mayor Vinis – thanked the presenters for the information; inquired about power to gas project and expressed excitement about partnership; discussed infrastructure of project.
- Councilor Clark – requested further clarification related to Councilor Zelenka’s question.

The meeting adjourned at 1:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Beth Forrest
City Recorder

(Recorded by Samantha Roberts)

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