

MINUTES

**Eugene City Council and Eugene Urban Renewal Agency
Harris Hall, 125 East 8th Avenue
Eugene, Oregon 97401**

**October 28, 2019
5:30 p.m.**

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

Councilors Absent: Mike Clark

Mayor Vinis opened the October 28, 2019, work session of the Eugene City Council.

1. Committee Reports and Items of Interest

- Councilor Syrett – shared an update from the Sustainable Schools Network.
- Councilor Pryor – reported that he’s participating in the Complete Count Committee for the U.S. Census; said it’s important to get a good count this year because federal funding is tied to population count and Oregon could also get an additional federal representative; said participating in the Census will collect data on where you are on April 1, 2020.
- Councilor Taylor – shared a few constituent concerns about 5G, e-scooters, and Airbnbs/short-term rentals; said she would like to look at Corvallis’ regulations for short-term rentals to possibly use as a template in Eugene.
- Councilor Evans – announced that he went on a League of Oregon Cities trip to meet with officials in Washington D.C., including the FCC; said that the three asks from the congressional delegation were for affordable housing, broadband, and infrastructure and they will continue to lobby congress for local resources.
- Mayor Vinis – announced two upcoming events: the Lucy Jones emergency preparedness event on Friday and the Choosing Kindness Celebration on Sunday.

Mayor Vinis adjourned the meeting of the Eugene City Council and convened a meeting of the Eugene Urban Renewal Agency.

2. URA WORK SESSION: Riverfront Urban Renewal Follow-Up

Planning and Development Director Denny Braud, Community Development Director Mike Kinnison, and Senior Financial Analyst Maurizio Bottalico gave an update about the Riverfront Urban Renewal District, including updated district financial capacity and back-up plan.

Council Discussion:

- Councilor Evans – asked how Williams & Dame would move forward if council did not grant a MUPTE for the riverfront housing and what that would mean for the housing piece of the proposed development.
- Councilor Syrett – talked about the staff memo that included information about increased costs for the quiet zone due to higher construction costs; asked for a more detailed explanation of what is driving these increased costs; asked about the river loans; said she is interested in exploring options for anything the City could do to avoid having to borrow money; said she thinks the steam plant is a project worthy of the City’s support, but not sure at what cost and would like to dig into that conversation more; supported the City looking for other funds that

could help with affordable housing; asked for a brief recap on financial support or subsidies that the City has provided to recent affordable housing projects, either complete or in progress; mentioned that some of the other projects are still too vague to say they're important or not important at this point.

- Councilor Pryor – said he'd like to understand more about each project's relationship to other projects and to the City's goals and strategies; said he's interested in two directions for funding strategies: looking at how to do this without an increased tax to Eugene residents and/or what the preferred methods are for funding these projects that might represent an increase to taxpayers.
- Councilor Zelenka – asked for more detail about the additional costs to the projects and whether 30 percent was a standard contingency fee; said the City has continued to learn that the longer construction is delayed, the more expensive it gets; said he thought the redesign of the 8th and Hilyard railroad crossing would reduce the costs, but asked why the costs have increased; said the steam plant was his number one priority, but wants to know more about what the 2.8 million dollars would go towards; said he didn't have enough information about the other projects to make a decision about them; mentioned the importance of parking, but acknowledged how expensive it is.
- Councilor Semple – asked about the plaza and how much it would cost to get that piece going, because it's so intertwined with development of the riverfront park.
- Councilor Syrett – agreed that the plaza is an important part of the development; asked whether the parking expense was included in the cost of the quiet zone,
- Mayor Vinis – asked what would happen with the lower road sections that don't get built if the back-up infrastructure plan was implemented.
- Councilor Yeh – clarified that the parking structure in the picture was not yet part of the funding strategy.

Mayor Vinis adjourned the meeting of the Eugene Urban Renewal Agency and convened a meeting of the Eugene City Council.

3. WORK SESSION: Climate Action Plan 2.0 – Buildings Gap Strategies and Update on Northwest Natural Gas Franchise Agreement Process

Intergovernmental Relations Manager Ethan Nelson and Building Official Mark Whitmill gave an update about potential strategies to move closer to the City's climate goals related to buildings.

Council Discussion:

- Councilor Zelenka – asked what “funding allocated” meant in the presentation, clarifying that it would be City funds put forward to promote the increased incentives/program acceleration.
- Councilor Syrett – said she is interested in thinking about ways to support EWEB's incentive program and energy efficiency retrofits; said she'd like to create a mandatory home energy score program.
- Councilor Taylor – asked what a home energy score program would look like and when buildings would be scored.
- Mayor Vinis – asked if council could attach energy efficient building requirements to MUPTE requirements.
- Councilor Syrett – asked if the benchmarking for rental properties would be for any rental property or just apartments; asked if new buildings would or could be required to meet energy efficiency standards; said that if the percentage of new housing being built continues to rise, more of an impact can be made when making requirements for new buildings; said she'd like to know what the financial commitment is that EWEB has been able to make for electrification incentives and how the City could support or enhance those programs.

- Councilor Taylor – asked why the presentation said regulate expansion of natural gas system instead of prohibit; said she thinks council should prohibit natural gas for new buildings.
- Councilor Zelenka – talked about regulatory hurdles and intricacies of building code and how none of these options are uncomplicated.
- Councilor Taylor – asked if council would be approving the elements of the Northwest Natural Gas franchise agreement, including the option of no new natural gas infrastructure.
- Councilor Evans –asked for more information about Northwest Natural’s recent expansion of infrastructure.
- Councilor Yeh – asked what a required level of EV readiness would mean; said there seems like a lot of possible improvements or options to expand upon EV readiness into actual charging stations; said she’d also like to partner with EWEB on electrification and energy efficiency incentives; said she’d like to explore prohibiting new natural gas installations and what that would look like.
- Councilor Syrett – talked about the state’s regulation of building codes, including energy efficiency requirements; asked if Representative Wilde’s proposed bills would increase EV charging standards more than the governor’s current orders.
- Councilor Evans – asked if the City could create incentives for new construction to incorporate electric rather than gas and what would those look like; asked if those incentives would be easier to do than a direct prohibition on natural gas.
- Councilor Zelenka – pointed out that building codes only apply to new construction, but most energy used is from existing buildings; said that focusing on existing buildings meeting a higher standard of energy efficiency at times of rental or sale would move the dial quite a bit more than new infrastructure; talked about how much effort it takes to get infrastructure EV ready and the big difference it makes in the affordability for future charging station installation; said that the state’s adoption of the new commercial and residential energy building code will make Oregon the state with the most energy-efficient building code starting in 2020.
- Councilor Yeh – responded to Councilor Zelenka and said that getting conduits EV ready is important, but not quite getting us there in terms of having charging stations available.

The meeting adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Forrest

Beth Forrest
City Recorder

(Recorded by Elena Domingo)

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