

MINUTES

Eugene City Council Work Session Eugene, Oregon 97401

November 19, 2025
12:00 p.m.

Councilors Present: Eliza Kashinsky, Matt Keating, Alan Zelenka, Jennifer Yeh, Mike Clark, Lyndsie Leech, and Randy Groves

Councilors Absent: Greg Evans

Mayor Knudson opened the November 19, 2025, Eugene City Council Work Session in a virtual format.

1. WORK SESSION: Sustainability Commission FY25 Annual Report and FY26 Work Plan

Assistant City Manager, Kristie Hammitt, introduced Danielle Klinkebiel, who presented the Sustainability Commission's annual report and proposed Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 work plan, outlining accomplishments from the previous year and goals for transportation, buildings, waste, resilience, and community engagement.

Councilor Discussion:

- Councilor Kashinsky – stated appreciation for the Commission's work and their approach to the work; expressed interest in continuing discussions throughout the upcoming year.
- Councilor Zelenka – noted support for the proposed work plan; noted the Commission has looked into offsets previously, as part of the City's commitment to the Climate Recovery Ordinance (CRO); asked about adding local offsets to the work plan; stated next step is to develop local offset projects; asked about the work of the proposed Sustainable Buildings Committee; noted the building performance standards passed by the legislature in 2023; stated the importance of local business participating in building performance standards and making use of earlier adopter incentives; noted the history of the Triple Bottom Line as a tool for decision-making.
- Councilor Clark – stated strong support for creating local offset opportunities; expressed concern about sending taxpayer money out of the community; asked about the Triple Bottom Line analysis, specifically if there is data or information that exists to show cost-effectiveness of climate actions changes made in the community; asked for clarification about the Triple Bottom Line tool specifically about determining a project's cost efficiency or effectiveness; noted the need to have better metrics on this issue in order to better explain policy decisions to the community.

- Councilor Groves – noted agreement with exploring local offsets; asked about collaboration with local utilities on weatherization projects and incentives; spoke about the importance of reducing energy consumption while building capacity; suggested outreach to the young professional community in Eugene to strengthen engagement on sustainability topics; noted the Chamber of Commerce has an active young professionals group that are interested in being involved professionally and civically.
- Councilor Yeh – stated support for the work plan format; asked about geothermal energy topic and how results on that research would be shared out; suggested providing Council with information on what is required to create offset projects.
- Councilor Zelenka – noted it is a misconception that offsets have a net cost; stated offsets directly impact and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, which provide a net benefit; noted the City’s Climate Action Plan 2.0, provides net benefits for both individuals and society; stated interest in issuing a Request for Proposals (RFP) to encourage local businesses and non-profits to implement emission-reducing projects; stated City incentives could be the tipping point for businesses to act; stated the importance of the Triple Bottom Line approach as it factors into the decision-making process social and environmental criteria as well as economic criteria.
- Councilor Leech – expressed appreciation for the Commission’s work and engagement efforts.

MOTION: Councilor Leech, seconded by Councilor Zelenka, moved to approve the FY26 Sustainability Commission Work Plan.

VOTE: 7:0 PASSED

IN FAVOR: Kashinsky, Keating, Zelenka, Yeh, Clark, Leech, and Groves.

OPPOSED: None.

MOTION: Councilor Leech, seconded by Councilor Zelenka, moved to approve establishment of the following committees: Education and Outreach Committee, Sustainable Buildings Committee, Triple Bottom Line (TBL) Learning Group.

VOTE: 6:0 PASSED

IN FAVOR: Kashinsky, Keating, Zelenka, Yeh, Leech, and Groves.

OPPOSED: Clark.

2. WORK SESSION: Proposed Charter Amendments – Department Head Residency and Language Updates

City Manager, Sarah Medary, introduced Jason Dedrick, Policy analyst, who presented two proposed Charter amendments for referral to the May 2026 election.

MOTION: Councilor Leech, seconded by Councilor Zelenka, moved to adopt a Resolution Calling a City Election on May 19, 2026, for the Purpose of Referring to the Legal Electors of the City of Eugene a Measure Removing Gender-Specific Pronouns from the Eugene Charter as set forth in Attachment A to this AIS.

VOTE: 7:0 PASSED

IN FAVOR: Kashinsky, Keating, Zelenka, Yeh, Clark, Leech, and Groves.

OPPOSED: None.

MOTION: Councilor Leech, seconded by Councilor Zelenka, moved to adopt a Resolution Calling a City Election on May 19, 2026, for the Purpose of Referring to the Legal Electors of the City of Eugene a Measure Amending Subsection 16(3) of the Eugene Charter Concerning the City Residency Requirement of Department Heads as set forth in Attachment B to this AIS.

VOTE: 6:1 PASSED

IN FAVOR: Kashinsky, Keating, Yeh, Clark, Leech, and Groves.

OPPOSED: Zelenka.

Councilor Discussion:

- Councilor Leech – asked for volunteers from council to serve on the voters’ pamphlet proponent committee for removing gender-specific pronouns from the charter.

MOTION: Councilor Leech, seconded by Councilor Zelenka, moved to appoint Councilors Matt Keating, Jennifer Yeh, and Lyndsie Leech to the voters’ pamphlet proponent committee for the measure removing gender-specific pronouns from the Eugene Charter.

Councilor Discussion:

- Councilor Clark – asked for clarification on whether proponent committee statements are advocacy or neutral in nature.

VOTE: 7:0 PASSED

IN FAVOR: Kashinsky, Keating, Zelenka, Yeh, Clark, Leech, and Groves.

OPPOSED: None.

Councilor Discussion:

- Mayor Knudson – asked for volunteers from council to serve on the voters’ pamphlet proponent committee for removing the residency requirement for department heads from the charter.

MOTION: Councilor Leech, seconded by Councilor Zelenka, moved to appoint Councilors Eliza Kashinsky and Randy Groves to the voters' pamphlet proponent committee for the measure amending Subsection 16(3) of the Eugene Charter concerning the city residency requirement of department heads.

VOTE: 7:0 PASSED

IN FAVOR: Kashinsky, Keating, Zelenka, Yeh, Clark, Leech, and Groves.

OPPOSED: None.

Councilor Discussion:

- Mayor Knudson – noted the importance of community involvement in Charter review; stated support for prioritizing a discussion on affordable health care access for Councilors and suggested decoupling that topic from broader compensation discussions.
- Councilor Clark – asked for clarification around the topic of providing health care insurance coverage for Councilors; asked staff to confirm that Councilors are currently eligible to purchase the City's health insurance; stated support of a future conversation regarding health insurance for Councilors, and clarified the topic is about the City paying for health care coverage.
- Councilor Leech – noted importance of addressing health care access for elected officials; noted that for some considering running for an elected position with a stipend over full time work, access to health care is a consideration; supported future conversations about health care coverage separate from compensation.
- Councilor Yeh – expressed interest in reducing barriers to public service; stated support for separating health care coverage from a conversation about stipends; supported prioritizing health care access discussion in future Charter review.
- Councilor Keating – stated strong support for prioritizing a conversation around health care coverage for Council.
- Councilor Zelenka – noted support for separating the health insurance discussion from the monthly stipend discussion; asked that future health care conversations include a cost analysis, applicability to Councilors or families, and other variables; stated changes to health care coverage could not be placed on the May 2026 ballot because of the timing.
- Councilor Clark – asked staff if the coverage of Council's health benefits would require a Charter vote.
- Councilor Leech – noted that timing for the work does not allow for completion before the May election; asked that when the topic returns that Council receive a clearly outlined benefits component; emphasized Council has already directed staff to return and requested that health insurance be identified as a priority area within that conversation.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Katie LaSala
City Recorder

(Recorded by Rosa Roach)

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