

## MINUTES

### Eugene City Council Special Meeting Eugene, Oregon 97401

January 13, 2026  
1:00 p.m.

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

Mayor Knudson opened the January 13, 2026 work session of the Eugene City Council in a hybrid format at 500 E 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue, North Building, Eugene OR 97401.

#### 1. **SPECIAL MEETING: City Manager Recruitment Process**

Council President Evans introduced Valerie Phillips and Jeff Mori from the recruiting firm Bob Murray & Associates, who spoke about the day's interview process.

Candidate One: Matt Rodrigues

After introductions, Matt Rodrigues answered the following questions asked by Council in order by Council ward:

1. What collaborations have you had that were particularly constructive and ones that were more challenging?
2. In an increasingly volatile political environment, how would you balance Council priorities with federal policies that may conflict?
3. How would you address funding for climate change and homelessness in an environment of limited resources and competing priorities?
4. What is your approach to applying the triple bottom line and equity lens in your work?
5. Is the future use of Automated License Plate Reader (ALPR) technology in Eugene a good idea or a bad idea? Why or why not?
6. What safeguards do you think are necessary for the use of artificial intelligence and emerging technologies in city work?
7. What specific actions would you take to build an organizational culture where employees feel valued and appreciated?
8. If you believe economic growth is vital to stability and well-being, how would you respond to those in the community who oppose growth and development?

#### Councilor Discussion:

- Councilor Zelenka – noted maintaining stable financial footing and a clear understanding of the City's finances is the most critical responsibility for a successful City Manager; noted the importance of keeping Council informed, following Council direction, and making progress on issues important to Council, while also helping Council understand areas where the City Manager has deeper operational insight.

- Councilor Groves – asked what the candidate would do to help keep the Council focused on priorities amid distractions.
- Councilor Yeh – stated that in the first year, she would expect the new City Manager to plan and execute meaningful outreach to the community.
- Councilor Leech – stated the importance of internal communication; noted communicating the City’s message to the community in a clear, accessible way should be a priority for the first year and beyond; asked whether there is more the City can do to protect community members from federal actions.
- Councilor Keating – stated success in the first year should include strong internal and external communications, improving individual councilors’ ability to communicate with their wards, securing a Fire and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) solution for community safety, supporting passage of the library levy, fostering job growth, and protecting vulnerable populations from budget cuts; asked how the candidate sees the potential return of mental health and behavioral health services.
- Councilor Evans – asked for elaboration on equity and economic development, specifically recruitment and retention of a diverse staff.

Candidate Two: Jenny Haruyama

After introductions, Jenny Haruyama answered the following questions asked by Council in order by Council ward:

1. What collaborations have you had that were particularly constructive and ones that were more challenging?
2. In an increasingly volatile political environment, how would you balance Council priorities with federal policies that may conflict?
3. How would you address funding for climate change and homelessness in an environment of limited resources and competing priorities?
4. What is your approach to applying the triple bottom line and equity lens in your work?
5. Is the future use of ALPR technology in Eugene a good idea or a bad idea? Why or why not?
6. What safeguards do you think are necessary for the use of artificial intelligence and emerging technologies in city work?
7. What specific actions would you take to build an organizational culture where employees feel valued and appreciated?
8. If you believe economic growth is vital to stability and well-being, how would you respond to those in the community who oppose growth and development?

Councilor Discussion:

- Councilor Groves – asked what she would do to help keep the Council focused on priorities amid distractions.
- Councilor Zelenka – asked what three key takeaways she learned from transitioning from a strong mayor to a city manager form of government.

- Councilor Leech – asked how she would ensure a deep and broad understanding of priorities, including voices without access, and what happens when priorities feel opposing.
- Councilor Kashinsky – asked how she would handle tensions between sanctuary policies and other pressures.
- Councilor Keating – stated the importance of creative revenue strategies to grow the budget rather than cutting core services; asked how the candidate sees the potential return of mental health and behavioral health services.
- Councilor Evans – asked about her success reducing homelessness in Beaverton’s downtown area.

Candidate 3: Martha Bennett

After introductions, Martha Bennett answered the following questions asked by Council in order by Council ward:

1. What collaborations have you had that were particularly constructive and ones that were more challenging?
2. In an increasingly volatile political environment, how would you balance Council priorities with federal policies that may conflict?
3. How would you address funding for climate change and homelessness in an environment of limited resources and competing priorities?
4. What is your approach to applying the triple bottom line and equity lens in your work?
5. Is the future use of ALPR technology in Eugene a good idea or a bad idea? Why or why not?
6. What safeguards do you think are necessary for the use of artificial intelligence and emerging technologies in city work?
7. What specific actions would you take to build an organizational culture where employees feel valued and appreciated?
8. If you believe economic growth is vital to stability and well-being, how would you respond to those in the community who oppose growth and development?

Councilor Discussion:

- Councilor Groves – asked what she would do to help keep the Council focused on priorities amid distractions.
- Councilor Zelenka – asked how she would approach prioritization and balancing core services versus quality-of-life services.
- Councilor Keating – asked what lessons she has learned from past leadership challenges or failures.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Katie LaSala". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Katie" and last name "LaSala" clearly legible.

Katie LaSala  
City Recorder

*(Recorded by Cherish Bradshaw)*

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