ROUGHLY EDITED TRANSCRIPT
CITY OF EUGENE
COUNCIL MEETING
DECEMBER 5, 2025
8:30 A.M.

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>> Mayor Knudson: Good morning, everyone, and welcome to the December 5th, 2025, City Council Special Meeting.

Thank you for joining us in this virtual meeting format today.

For meetings like this one, there is no opportunity for public comment, and those wishing to access the meeting can do so by watching the live stream available on our website, the broadcast on Comcast Channel 21 or by calling into one of the phone numbers listed for this meeting on the public webcasts and meeting materials page of the City of Eugene website.

Thank you again for joining us this morning and good morning, City Council.

I now call the December 5th, 2025, Special Meeting of the Eugene City Council to order.

I will hand off for our topic which is a special meeting for the City Manager in-person interview process.

And I'll hand over to our Central Services Executive Director.

>> Thank you, Mayor.

I'm going to share my screen.

And while I do that, I'll just remind everyone that we're here today to talk about the interview process for City Manager that will take place the week of January 11th.

And as you know, you've engaged quite a bit with the community to get to this point and I will review that.

Later today you will interview candidates virtually and determine who will be moving to this portion of the interview process.

So just to remind everyone of the engagement to date, prior to the job posting going out, you had requested that Bob Murray and Associates who is the reciter working on this engage with the community to learn more about the skills, attributes, and experience that the community would like a City Manager to have.

And so they held stakeholder meetings with folks that all of you had suggested they meet with.

There was a City Council public listening session in which all of you attended.

We held two drop-ins.

One was for the public at large over Zoom and a second drop-in for boards, commissioning, and neighborhoods over Zoom.

And then we also conducted a staff survey.

That survey was based on all of the public feedback.

And then we asked staff to prioritize the feedback that was provided by the community and I shared that with you earlier this week.

So I am going to share this as an overview and then go through some of these pieces in specifics.

But this does plan on a four-day process for all of you and I'll highlight the components you're engaged in.

We are asking the candidates to arrive by Sunday, January 11th so they can participate in a meet and greet with all of you.

That will not be in a public meeting.

It will be an opportunity for all of you to meet with them individually and in a more casual setting before the week the formal process starts.

On the morning of Monday, January 12th, they'll engage in a panel interview with the Executive team.

Those will be under an hour for each candidate and sort of the typical ranked interview.

Next they'll move to a community tour with City Staff.

This will give them an opportunity to learn more about special projects, upcoming initiative, city facilities, and interact with a wide variety of staff throughout the organization.

That afternoon they'll have another ranked panel interview.

And this is made up of community stakeholders.

I'll visit that list in detail in a moment.

And just a note for all of you that evening in the State of the City.

On Tuesday morning, the candidates will join agency partners.

I'll go over that list in detail here in a minute also.

That is a ranked interview process and, you know, typical around an hour interviews.

Midday, they'll meet with all of you in a public session.

So this is your opportunity for a more formal panel interview and the public will be invited to watch that or be in the room in the Council Chambers.

Each of those will be about an hour.

That evening, we are proposing a panel interview with standing committees.

And I'll go over this one in more detail here in a minute too.

But that will be an opportunity for the largest portion of the community to contribute and provide feedback to you.

And again, I'll go over that in detail in just a moment.

That is the last event for the candidates.

So on Wednesday you have a regularly scheduled council work session at noon.

And at 1:45 after you've had a 15-minute break or so after that work session, you'll have the opportunity to deliberate what you have seen over the course of the week.

My intent is to send you all of the feedback and everything that we've heard from panels on Tuesday evening so that you have that to work with for the discussion on Wednesday.

We're sketching out about two hours for that deliberation.

In the event you're ready to make a decision or announce a finalist publicly, we would notice a public meeting so you could do that.

If other steps are needed, that's always an option too.

So I'm going to talk a little bit about some of these panels in more detail.

And this is a list of the community stakeholders that we are proposing based on conversations we've had with you over the entire process.

Bethany Cartledge from St. Vincent DePaul, Greg Erwin, Dana Fleming, Demond Hawkins, Graham Treanor with AFL-CIO if you're not familiar, Brittany Quick-Warner, Guadalupe Quinn, and Katie Wilgus.

I am suggesting that we not -- for the most part not allow for substitutions and later I'll go over how we might work with substitutions in the event somebody asks.

But this is a fairly large group, so it does allow for folks to -- if folks can't make it, we'll still have ample people to participate.

These are the agency partners proposed.

You'll notice they're all of our partner agencies across the region.

Jameson Auten, Stephanie Bulger, Frank Lawson, Miriam Mickelson, Steve Mohkrohisky, Nancy Newton, Karl Scholz, and Kraig Sproles.

I'll give you one more second to look at that.

And then the last piece I'll go over in detail is the process we're proposing for Standing Committees.

So this would take place in the Council Chamber and a panel who would ask questions of each candidate and receive answers would be made up of the Chair or Vice Chair from each of your eight Standing Committees.

In addition, we would invite all of the Boards and Commission members to the room to listen to the conversation, and we'd invite neighborhood association elected board representatives, probably the Chair and Vice Chair, President, Vice President to be in the room as well so they could hear the interview take place.

And we'd provide them a form at the end so they could provide you feedback.

So the folks in the audience would not be interacting with candidates, only the eight standing Committee members would be.

But they'd have an opportunity to listen to the conversation and then provide you feedback.

I'm going to go back to this slide for just a moment so that you can give it another look.

I did email this to you as well.

But this is, again, an overview of the four days.

So you'll note that this requires your engagement on Sunday evening, and then you have the State of the City on Monday.

Mid-day panel interviews with all of you.

And then Wednesday, it's most of the afternoon if we consider your Work Session and then the time for deliberations.

So today I'm hoping to get your approval for this plan.

The plan does assume two to three finalists.

If you wanted to call for more, we would need to do some Tetris work.

Not impossible, but that would need to happen.

Bob Murray and Associates will be working with the candidates that week, so they will help them move from portion to portion of this process.

And staff will be working on most of the logistics for that week.

And then my proposal is that if we do need any substitutions in the event that many folks can't attend one of those critical panels, then we'd work with Council Leadership to finalize options for other folks who could participate.

And Mayor, I'll turn it back to you for questions and discussion.

I'll leave this up for a minute.

>> Mayor Knudson: Thank you so much, Mia.

Very appreciated.

I will now open the floor for Council discussion.

Councilors?

Let me see who we have in the queue here.

Councilor Clark.

>> Clark: Thank you, Mayor.

And thank you for the presentation.

I'm looking at this and please correct me if I'm wrong, but I'm seeing that the only informal conversations social hour, if you will, that I see is between Council and the candidates on Sunday night.

Am I correct about that?

>> Yes.

>> Clark: There isn't an opportunity for the general public or for any of our panels to be able to do that at all at any point.

I'm right about that; right?

>> Right.

>> Clark: I just want to lodge the opinion that I believe there's value in that.

I believe that soft skills are going to be some of the most important evaluation pieces for these folks.

And I would like community members to be able to interact with them in a social setting as well.

But that's my point of view and I don't know if that was said or not.

I needed to say it.

Thank you very much.

>> Mayor Knudson: Councilor Groves

>> Groves: Thank you, Mayor.

I think it's a well laid out process.

I did have a question regarding the agency panel.

I didn't see anyone from Fort Jay on there.

Is there a reason for that?

>> Miriam Mickelson was listed.

She's the new superintendent.

>> Groves: Okay.

I had a different name in my head.

I take that back.

And as far as informal setting the issue Councilor Clark brought up, I don't think that's a bad idea.

But I don't think any additional people should be included in the informal session with Council.

It's hard enough to get in and talk to these people.

You know, you can have one person that ties up a candidate for quite a while.

So I'm very adamant about we need to keep our time to us and the candidates.

Thank you.

>> Mayor Knudson: Councilor Zelenka.

>> Zelenka: I agree with what Randy just said.

Those are limited in the interactions with maybe two people, three people.

And somebody could tie up someone for the whole time and really doesn't provide the value.

On the community panel, I was wondering if Dan Bryant was asked to be on that panel.

>> The list that you -- these are the folks who I am proposing we ask.

He can be added if you all desire that.

>> Zelenka: I will make a motion to add Dan Bryant to that panel if he's available.

>> If everyone is generally in agreement, I don't know that we need a formal motion.

>> Zelenka: I'm wondering about the time to review the panelist input.

The last panel on the night before we meet which would be Tuesday night.

So how are we going to be able to -- how are you going to be able to assimilate all of that stuff, get it out to us, and then us be able to read it in a timely fashion?

For our meeting the next day at noon?

And then all the other panels.

How's that going to work?

Are we going to get them as they're create ed so we can have time to look at it?

>> We can certainly do that.

I did intend to send these late Tuesday night or the morning.

We can go over it at the beginning of your deliberations.

We can provide an overview at that session.

>> Zelenka: Yeah.

Wednesday morning wouldn't work for me.

Tuesday night would.

And I actually prefer if you get them created, just send them.

And then the last one we get would be late Tuesday evening on that panel.

That would be a big lift to look through that information.

Because I think those are valuable inputs to the Council.

I don't want to short trip them.

>> We can do that.

>> Zelenka: Thanks.

>> Mayor Knudson: Councilor Kashinsky.

>> Kashinsky: Yes.

Thank you and thank you for all the work you've put into this and the support you're providing as we're going through this process.

The overall setup and the list of panelists looks good to me.

I did have a question of where does reference checking and background checking fall into this process.

Because I'm assuming we're not doing that before we have a final candidate.

But then if we're announcing a decision before we've done background and reference checking, that feels a little strange.

>> So you might recall that BMA has done quite a bit of reference checking and some informal background work before they brought you candidates.

So some of that has been done.

There will be a more formal background that needs to occur and that would happen after you've identified the finalists.

>> Kashinsky: Okay.

And would we get the information from the reference checks that they're doing -- like at what point does that come into this process?

>> I'll need to check with them.

>> Kashinsky: Okay.

Thank you.

>> Mayor Knudson: Councilor Yeh.

>> Yeh: Yeah.

Thanks.

So first of all, thank you so much for you and your staff.

This is taking a lot of chaos and making it a lot simpler for us.

I really appreciate it.

I wanted to -- I like the idea of having an overview at the beginning of the Wednesday meeting just as a transparency kind of issue.

I think the community's really interested as they should be.

Even if it's -- you know, you might send it a little more detailed.

Being able to report back some general themes I think would be appreciated.

By the community.

I don't have a problem with adding Dan Bryant.

I wouldn't want to bump someone else, though.

Because I think it is a good list that you provided.

So if it was comfortable to add one more person, I would not be against that.

Otherwise I think this looks great.

>> Mayor Knudson: Councilor Keating first and then second round.

>> Keating: Can you hear me?

>> Mayor Knudson: We can.

>> Keating: I don't have any heartburn over adding Dan Bryant.

I think that's a reasonable addition.

If we're just doing a head nod affirmation, good flag to Councilor Zelenka.

Mia, this looks great.

Ready to move forward.

I'll leave that there.

Good morning.

>> Mayor Knudson: Councilor Zelenka.

>> Zelenka: Mia, could you go into more about what the background check would entail, what that means?

And if in particular last time we talked, I asked about the checks with staff and community members in their communities.

Not the ones that they provided.

Those always end up being glowing, obviously.

So how's that process going to work?

And that should be input into our final decision.

>> Yes.

I hear you.

That is something BMA would do prior to identifying a finalist.

>> Zelenka: A finalist?

Or two or three?

>> If your interest is having them do more work, two or three.

We can let them know that today or shortly after.

They can work on that between now and the January interviews.

They have done some of that.

But if there's something more intentional you'd like them to do, they certainly can.

And we can talk to them about that.

>> Zelenka: Yeah.

I definitely want to see that, all the finalists that come into the public interviews.

By that time, their name will be public and people understand they're coming to Eugene potentially.

So the confidentiality part goes away so I would like to see that information before we go into the final interviews.

Those will be an important part of my decision making.

>> We can do that.

>> Mayor Knudson: Thank you, councilors.

Any more questions or feedback on this proposed process?

And the community stakeholders, agency partners, committees, neighborhood groups, and at large listening session?

So with that, I will offer my thanks and appreciation for all the work that has gone into this process and this incredibly important decision for our community.

Very much appreciate all of that effort.

Looking forward to a very busy start to 2026 and a really exciting week for our community.

And with that, I will turn to the Council President to put a motion forward.

[Silence]

Councilor Evans, you're muted.

>> Evans: Mayor, I don't have a motion to put forward.

I'm not seeing anything.

I didn't get anything in the --

>> Mayor Knudson: The motion that we need put forward is to move to approve the process for the in-person interviews as presented by Staff.

>> Evans: So moved.

>> Second.

>> Mayor Knudson: Thank you.

Any further discussion from Council?

Councilor -- seeing none, I will now take a vote for this motion.

Please raise your hands or digitally.

One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight.

Thank you, all.

The motion passes with a vote of 8-0.

Very appreciated, everyone.

Thank you.

This concludes our first agenda item.

And unless there are any questions related to process and how we are continuing this morning, what we will do now is take a 15-minute break.

It's 8:53 right now.

We'll be back together just after -- just before 9:10, I guess.

And Councilors, if you would return to this meeting room, this Zoom room, they will announce the general subject of the Executive Session and the rules before we move into that separate Executive Session link.

So a little bit of that Zoom acrobatics that Staff mentioned as we started this meeting.

But thank you for those extra efforts in helping us to meet all of our requirements with the community and keep people informed.

>> Mayor, may I say something?

>> Mayor Knudson: Absolutely.

Please, Mia.

>> We are scheduled to go into Executive Session at 9:30.

While we finished early, we need to take a full break until 9:30 and come back to this link to go into Exec Session.

>> Mayor Knudson: That sounds great.

Council, any objections?

[Laughter]

I would think not.

That's also simpler.

>> Zelenka: So we go into this one first and then Executive Session.

>> Mayor Knudson: Yes.

We will come back to this meeting link at 9:30.

We will announce Executive Session and then migrate in.

Thank you, Staff, for that clarification.

And we will see everyone back here at 9:30.

[Break]

>> Mayor Knudson: -- Council.

We are still in our December 5th, 2025 Special Meeting of the Eugene City Council and now we will move into Executive Session.

Our agenda item pursuant to ORS 192.660(2)(f) and ORS 192.660(2)(a).

The Eugene City Council will now meet in Executive Session held pursuant to ORS 192.660(2)(f) and ORS 192.355(2) and ORS 192.660(2)(a).

Representatives of the news media and designated staff shall be allowed to attend the Executive Session.

All other members of the audience are asked to leave the meeting.

Representatives of the news media are directed not to record or report on any of the deliberations during the Executive Session except to state the general subject of the session as previously announced.

No decisions will be made and may be made in Executive Session.

At the end of Executive Session, the meeting of the Eugene City Council will conclude and we will not return to Open Session.

Councilors, if you would please now log out of the public meeting and log back in using the Executive Session Zoom invitation.