

ROUGHLY EDITED TRANSCRIPT

CITY OF EUGENE
CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION
AUGUST 24, 2026
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>> MAYOR KNUDSON: Good evening everyone and welcome to the August 24, 2026, City Council Special Meeting.

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

For special 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 channel 21 or by calling into one of the phone numbers listed for this meeting on the public webcast and meeting materials list on the City of Eugene website.

Thank you for joining us.

I now call the August 24, 2026, Special Meeting of the Eugene City Council to order.

I'm going to turn it right over to City Manager Haruyama to introduce our first topic which is a special meeting and a presentation of Initiative Petition 2006-1 to the City Council.

>> Thank you, Mayor, very much.

As a reminder, prospective initiative petition was filed with the city recorder's office in February regarding an ordinance to establish a licensure of large retailers to finance a clean energy fund.

The petition was successful as qualified for the November 3, 2026 general election.

And today's work session is being held as directed by Eugene code 2.980 and council must be presented with a petition and options no later than 20 days after the city recorder certifies a completed petition.

So following me will be our city recorder to give a very brief overview of this issue and then we'll turn it right back to you, Mayor.

>> Thank you, City Manager.

I will share my screen and we will get started.

All right.

As the city manager outlined this is the presentation of initiative petition 2026-1.

Quick, quick timeline.

We started this process in February when the petition was filed.

The signature gathering began in April.

And they had a turn in deadline of no later than July 27th.

They did turn their signature sheets in before that deadline and after the county reviewed the signatures and validated they did have enough valid signatures to meet the requirement, I certified the petition on the 5th of August.

And that's how we are here for this special meeting.

Real quick, I won't read you all of the language.

But I do have this slide available if council has questions and needs to look at the language again.

No later than 20 days, these options are to be presented to council.

There are four options outlined in your code.

The first one is to adopt the ordinance proposed by initiative petition.

The second option is specific to a referendum petitions.

So it would be applicable to this scenario.

The third option is to vote either urge adoption or defeat of the initiative measure.

The fourth is to order a submission of alternative measures or measure to be voted on at the same time as the election for the initiative measure.

Based on the timing of the completion date for this initiative petition, council has the option to either urge adoption or defeat today or to take no action.

And then I will stop there.

And just kick it back over to the Mayor to facilitate the conversation and any questions.

>> MAYOR KNUDSON: Thank you, City Recorder and City Manager for that presentation.

I now open the floor for council discussion.

And councilors, I'm having a hard time seeing the top of our Zoom screen in my remote meeting format.

I have Councilor Yeh and Councilor Keating at the top of the screen.

Do either of you have your hands raised?

>> We do.

>> Councilor Yeh.

>> YEH: Thanks, Mayor.

Thanks, Katie, for taking the time to do this at the last minute.

I appreciate it.

Personally, I think we don't need to take any action.

I think councilors are free to have an opinion and express that into the community as they see fit as individuals.

But as a council, collectively I think that we shouldn't take a position one way or the other.

I'm curious to see what other folks think.

But that's where I am at this point.

Thanks.

>> MAYOR KNUDSON: Councilor Keating.

>> KEATING: Thanks, Mayor.

To be perfectly transparent, I was the second person who signed this initiative right behind the former mayor.

I am super supportive of this initiative.

And I strongly feel that this initiative is smart public policy.

It exempts grocery sales, it exempts construction, it's pro labor, it's pro climate action.

And I am excited it's on the November ballot.

But like Councilor Yeh articulated, I think this body best serves our constituents by letting the voters decide in November.

So rather than debate and relitigate where we all kind of fall on the spectrum, I would like to see council tonight take no action and that's my two cents and I don't suspect I'll need a second round, but I'd love like Councilor Yeh said to see where others land on this.

And I just want to thank everyone for taking time out of their summer to get together and have this conversation tonight.

Thanks.

>> MAYOR KNUDSON: Councilor Groves.

>> GROVES: Mayor, I believe Councilor Clark was ahead of me.

>> Mayor KNUDSON: Sorry, the two of you your lineup is swapped.

But Councilor Clark, go ahead and then Councilor Groves.

>> CLARK: Thank you, Mayor.

Thank you, Councilor.

I have more questions than we have time for with this particular measure.

My first is for the city attorney.

I understand this is being put forward to the ballot as an ordinance.

Is that correct?

>> Yes, that's correct.

>> CLARK: So any amendments, changes, adjustments to this, is something council can do if it were to pass, for example?

>> That's correct.

Following your standard charter prescribed ordinance amendment process, correct.

>> CLARK: Have we done any work, I guess I'm asking Katie here, but I don't really know who I'm asking actually on staff.

Maybe city manager.

Have we done any kind of analysis of what this will cost the city or how it will be implemented if it passes?

>> I can answer that.

The only thing that we've done is write a ballot title for this and then defend the ballot title in a challenge.

And then the standard elections process work that Katie has done.

But we haven't done any work regarding the substance of this.

Because by the time it was submitted, we wrote the ballot title.

As soon as we wrote that ballot title, it became an election measure and we will not be doing any work regarding it substantively.

>> CLARK: If this were to pass, this is something the city would implement.

Am I correct in assuming that?

>> Correct.

>> CLARK: Whether we have the budget to do it or not.

Okay.

I'll ask a lot more questions later, I assume.

But thank you.

>> Mayor KNUDSON: Councilor Groves.

>> GROVES: Thank you, Mayor.

Can you hear me okay?

>> MAYOR KNUDSON: Yes, we can.

Thank you.

>> GROVES: I agree with Councilors Yeh and Keating that we shouldn't take a position on this.

Whether we do that as individual councilors, I think that's up to each councilor.

I have like Councilor Clark a lot of questions about cost and how we're going to oversee this and manage it.

But that's really separate from what we're here to talk about tonight.

But at the same time I don't think we should be taking a position on it.

I don't think we should be doing anything that disrupts the process either.

So that's where I stand and I'm interested in hearing the rest of our colleagues' thoughts.

Thank you.

>> MAYOR KNUDSON: Any other comments or discussion from councilors this evening?

This afternoon?

Then I will say thank you for those remarks.

And for our time this evening.

And with that, I move this presentation, it concludes our agenda for this special meeting.

And I now close the August 24, 2026, City Council Special Meeting.

And we are adjourned.

See you all again soon.