

ROUGHLY EDITED TRANSCRIPT
CITY OF EUGENE
COUNCIL MEETING
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>> Mayor Knudson: Thank you. Good evening everyone and welcome to the October 12 Eugene City Council Meeting. Thank you for joining us in this hybrid meeting tonight. Anyone wishing to access the meeting remotely can do so by watching the meeting on our website on Comcast 21 or by following the access instructions listed on the city's public webcast and meetings materials page. Tonight's meeting will include a public comment period, and if you wish to speak, please fill out a request to speak forum on the web page of the website or at the entrance to this room. We will accept request forms until 7:35 p.m. These forms will be used to generate the order of speakers and accurately enter speaker's names into the public record.

The public comment period will be limited to 90 minutes or conclude by 10:00 p.m., whichever occurs first. And if the number of speakers exceeds the time we have allotted, we would encourage speakers to consider abbreviating their remarks at the maximum number of speakers could be heard from. For those joining this meeting remotely, you're welcome to submit your comments to city council by e-mail, and that's true of anyone attending this meeting.

As a reminder, council's meeting rules of conduct apply to all attendees both in the chambers and in the lobby, and include no flags, signs, disruptive language, noise or conduct that obstructs the business of the council. Please keep the room quiet and respectful for all speakers, and the person who is giving public comment should be the only person speaking. You're welcome to wave your hands in silent support. We encourage those who are ill to join our meeting remotely rather than in person, and we have masks available in the lobby if you need one. In case of a medical emergency, an automated external defibrillator, AED is located behind the counter at the west side of the room beneath those screens. Emergency exits are through the double doors located in the back of the room and the double doors near the front of the room. The doors to the patio can also be used if needed.

With that, I call the October 12, 2026 meeting of the Eugene City Council to order. Today in the city of Eugene and across the country, we are celebrating Indigenous Peoples' Day, and we are beginning tonight's meeting with a land acknowledgment. Since time immemorial, the Kalapuya people have been the

Indigenous stewards to our region building dynamic communities, maintaining balance with wildlife, and enacting sustainable land practices. A land acknowledgment is a way of resisting the erasure of Indigenous histories, and honoring native communities by inviting truth and reconciliation. Following treaties between 1851 and 1855, Kalapuya people were dispossessed of their Indigenous homeland by the United States government and forcibly removed to the Coast Reservation in Western Oregon. As we consider the impacts of colonization, we also acknowledge the strength and resiliency of displaced Indigenous people. The City of Eugene is built within the traditional homelands known as Kalapuya Ilihi. Kalapuya descendants are citizens of the confederated tribes of Grand Ronde Community of Oregon, and the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians of Oregon, they continue to make contributions in our communities here and across the lands. We express our respect for the inherent political sovereignty of all federally recognized Tribal Nations and Indigenous people who live in the State of Oregon and across the nation.

Our first item on tonight's agenda are ceremonial matters. Proclamations and ceremonial documents created at the request of the mayor. And this month, the month of October, we have six proclamations that we are recognizing and celebrating. The first, I mentioned briefly at our last council meeting on September 28 that the University of Oregon is celebrating its 150th anniversary on October 16, and I have the pleasure of joining US students on the evening before their first day of class. 150 years does not come by very often in our community, and we are happy to congratulate and celebrate that milestone for our flagship research institution locally.

October is also domestic violence awareness month. My thanks to many organizations, the hope and safety alliance for their work to end domestic violence and support all those who are impacted by it.

October is also Filipino American history month. I want to extend my appreciation to all of our Filipino American for their work to celebrate and lift up this important aspect of our local history and culture.

October 7, last week, we also celebrated mobility international U.S.A. day, and recognized it as mobility international U.S.A. day in the city of Eugene. This is an organization that was founded here 45 years ago, does incredible work to advocate for human rights of people who are living with disabilities locally across the country and around the world. This extends to the wild program that brings leaders from countries across the United States to the city of Eugene for trainings and then supports them also with their initiatives as they return home. I want to highlight that with the support and advising advocacy, the city of Eugene launched a new wheelchair accessible taxi pilot program on October 1. So just a few days ago, we were able to follow through on an area of real significant need in our community relative to accessibility. It was wonderful to go see the new Amtrak trains, the arrow trains, and see all of the improvements that they include. If you are using a wheel device to access them and know people

throughout our community will be able to call a taxi and get to those trains on time very early in the morning or arriving late at night. This is a 24/7 service, just like any taxi service with the exception of the city of Eugene's support through this pilot. We hope that it increases access to everyone in our community has two opportunities and their needs here.

Yesterday, October 11, we recognized national coming out day in the city of Eugene. We are a city that is continuously dedicated to supporting the experience as everyone here in our community, we want for everyone to feel at home here, and they can build their future here and live and be loved for exactly who they are. So a wonderful opportunity for us to recognize and celebrate that experience.

And finally on October 10, we recognize world mental health day. Nearly one in ten adults in the United States experience mental health crisis each year, and we know from the surgeon general from just a few years ago that our youth and adolescent Americans are also experiencing a mental health crisis. Mental health is a vital component, individual, and community well-being, and we continue to advocate for equitable access to mental health services for all. It's an incredibly important part of our healthcare system locally.

With that, I just want to say thank you to all of the organizations and community members who do so much related to these proclamations and their work, and we look forward to celebrating at events and touch points throughout this month.

That concludes our first agenda item this evening.

Our second item on tonight's agenda is committee reports and items of interest, so I will now open the floor for committee reports and items of interest from council. I have a few to share. Any Councilors who would also like to step forward, please do. We have been very busy in the fall and the city of Eugene that is true every year. But one of the things I wanted to highlight is that we also had a chance to celebrate something that was an unusual experience in our community, and that is a couple of weeks ago, Nate Jackson, a teacher at Willamette High School, named the Regional Teacher Of The Year, which is a wonderful experience to watch him being celebrated by the community of Willamette High School and also across our community broadly. Many people are so admiring and appreciate the work that Mr. Jackson does teaching in our schools, and the incredibly exciting news that last week, Nate Jackson was named Oregon's Teacher Of The Year. So that surprise becoming one of four finalists was delightful for a few people who were in the know that Mr. Jackson would soon to become Oregon's teacher of the year. Even more exciting to watch him take that opportunity to be recognized and celebrated, and immediately send it back out to his community, appreciating his students, his colleagues, leadership, and staff across his high school, community, and leadership within the Bethel School District. I know Councilor Evans was also very

trailed to hear the news, and it's a pleasure for me to highlight that this evening. Pretty great education, pretty fantastic teachers that we have here in the City of Eugene, and a wonderful example of that in Nate Jackson.

The other item I wanted to highlight is an opportunity that I was happy to seek out over the past couple of weeks. I participated in the 83rd annual session, National Session of the Mayors Institute On City Design. So this is a program that is entirely funded, fully funded through the national endowment of the arts and the U.S. Conference of Mayors. I was delighted as an architect and urban designer to be invited to be a part of this. It is essentially the permanent forum for city layers, for mayors to address pressing issues in their communities through city design and development, and it was a really wonderful opportunity to speak with a collection of six other mayors from across the country about the priorities they have in terms of supporting community connections through design and the physical connection present in their communities. And also to have opportunities that we are presented with here in the city of Eugene, relative to our downtown core, relative to connections to our Riverfront, the University of Oregon, and other areas of our city to be able to talk about how it is we could nurture those. It takes a lot of coordination to deliver really excellent urban design, but it also takes framing and understanding the problem you're trying to solve clearly. I was grateful to be a part of this very intensive visit to Cincinnati. I want to thank Mayor Aftab Pureval for hosting us in Cincinnati, which also ended our week during the Cincinnati arts week in the BLINK Festival, which brings two million people into the center of their city to celebrate arts and culture. Really a fantastic opportunity.

Any other item of interest from Council? I wanted to make sure I wasn't leaving anyone behind. Councilor Keating?

>> Keating: The protection agency met on Thursday. We -- let me make sure I get this exactly right. We issued a corrective notice for the proposed title 43 rules on October 9, 2026, with complete and updated documents. A new public hearing is planned for November 12, 2026 at 12:15 p.m. Written comments are still being accepted and corrected notice sets a new deadline of 11/12/26. Comments already submitted remain as part of the record. The protection agency invite public input on proposed updates to title 43, asbestos requirement rules. These updates include the permanent rules and regulations. In addition, I see at our stations, there is an update from the looking glass this month, Socktoberfest. It's a moment in which we can -- capture donations of new and gently used socks for unhoused youths. Socks could be donated at the looking glass admin office on West 11th or any one of these locations throughout the community by Eugene Springfield locations, Euphoria Chocolate at the location, Peace Health Hospital, Sparrow's Nest Coffee, Clean 52 Brewing. Macy's at Valley River Center, Heritage Bank, Eugene Delta Rotary Club, and Scouting America Pacific Crest Council. Thank you.

>> Mayor Knudson: One more item of interest to share, this might be the best time to highlight a city council meeting that there will be much more information about this event shortly. I've had the wonderful good fortune and privilege of being able to meet with a number of our inner faith community leaders, regularly over this past, now more than 18 months I've been in office and in this past year. And at one of our recent meetings, as it will not be a surprise to anyone in this room. There were some very specific questions and concerns from members of the community about elections integrity. This was late summer. There is quite a lot going on in the national news related to Oregon's very safe and effective mail voting system. But there was a specific ask about being able to think about how we might gather as a community to discuss and better understand the system that we have here on the ground. So on Wednesday, October 28, immediately following our City Council Work Session, we will be hosting a gathering with our leaders from our inner faith community and myself, Secretary of State Tobias Reed will be here to speak. It will essentially be some relatively short remarks and then Q&A that will be at that event. That'll be on the afternoon of October 28. The formal event will be from 2:00 to 3:00 p.m. in the afternoon, and you'll see more information about that in coming days. But to highlight for those here who are wondering how we're doing, and also about the systems we have in place locally and in this state to ensure safe and reliable and fair outcomes to our elections.

With that, that concludes our second agenda item this evening. Our third item is Consent Calendar 1, approval of city council meets, and also the approval of city council

tentative agenda. If there are no questions from council, I'll turn to the council president to put a motion forward.

>> Leech: Move to approve consent item one.

>> Mayor Knudson: Any discussion from Council? Seeing none, I will now take a vote for this motion. Councilors, please lock in your votes on the tablet in front of you. Councilor Evans, I see you voting in the affirmative. And the vote passes by a vote of 7-0. Thank you. That concludes our third agenda item this evening.

And the last item on tonight's agenda is the public comment period. Public comment period is an opportunity for individuals to speak to the city council on any city related issues, except for those items, which have been heard by hearing officials. Speakers should direct their comments to city council and the mayor and not to the audience. Staff, could you please share a list for those signed up to speak by 7:35 p.m. and announce the first speakers?

>> Clerk: Thank you, Mayor. We have six speakers signed up this evening. I will announce two speaker names at a time. When you are called to speak, please state your name and your ward or neighborhood, if known, before beginning your comments.

When you announce as the next speaker, please move to the seat in the front row designated for the next speaker. When it is your turn, you may come to the podium. Please leave any bags you may have with you at your seat. If you have documents to give council, please place them in the basket near the podium. You will have two and a half minutes to speak. The timer will flash red when you have 15 seconds remaining to speak. Your microphone will be muted at the two-and-a-half-minute mark. Please note the use of profanity is not permitted. Our first speakers tonight are Richard Larosa followed by Robert Parrish.

>> Good evening, my name is Richard Larosa, and I'm here to speak about rape prevention. My mother was raped while walking the bike path. I went out looking for the rapist. I had a baseball bat. I was 13 years old. After the assault, folks in the neighborhood rallied. A warning sign was nailed to the tree near the path. We organized patrols. The following year, 1979, more than 200 people gathered at the University of Oregon Law School and formed community action against rape. In those early years, it was mostly women doing the work. Eventually men joined in. By the 1980s, men against rape was formed to educate people about rape, masculinity, violence, and power. In 2010, Eugene organized discussion groups and task forces. I don't know if these groups fizzled out or rebranded. Still, the questions remain -- questions men asking still remain. What do we do about the rapist among us? When do we make it a habit to confront men who believe they're entitled to women's bodies? What are we waiting for? We can't wait until a man decides to become a rapist. We have to get the message across to men while they're still figuring out how to be allies to women. We

already know we should challenge harassment, degradation when we see it, but none of us are doing it. Men will be men, boys will be boys. They're capable of overriding their worst impulses. I'm asking the city of Eugene to bring together the people already doing rape education and prevention work, and explore pilot program for boys and young men built around peer mentoring, consent, and bystander skills. 37 years ago people gathered on campus because fear and rage wasn't enough. They showed up, they took a stand, I'm standing here again as a son to a mother, an ally to women. Men Addressing Rape Culture or MARC is built around an idea meant to spread from person to person and community to community. Step in, speak up, follow through. If you want to help carry that idea forward, come see me after the meeting. Let's find each other. Thank you.

>> Clerk: Thank you, Richard. Next speaker is Robert Parrish.

>> Good evening. My name is Robert Parrish, ward seven. Days from the world mental health day, apparently. People noticed. They noticed when they stopped running in Eugene. We don't have a replacement for that loss yet, and people have noticed. Community response is a public good. Community response makes our city safer. Community response is a compassionate and effective approach to issues of poverty, substance abuse, mental health crisis, homelessness, and more. Community response is a cost effective use of public funds, and Eugene doesn't have one. We know the community response works in Eugene because it did for nearly 36 years, helping tens of

thousands of people per year inspiring literally hundreds of other communities to begin a community response program of their own. New research, published on September 23, 2026, and the journal of science advances shows they used to handle 18% of all EPD calls. One adjusted to include the calls, will typically be a response for assault, suspicious subject, and disputes. There's a 23% reduction in the need for EPD. When only considering calls that either EPD could respond to, the program handled 45 to 50% of all overlapping mandate calls. The recent alternative response RFP chose not to fund the program similar to what was lost. A for profit peer program that shares most with EPD and Eugene-Springfield Fire. That is an alternative response. Now, our city has to revisit the community safety payroll tax. We have to grapple with the fact this tax was advertised as funding community response when 0.2% of that \$100 million went to them. Not only is the community response program a good idea, tried and tested in our own city for decades already, but it is also a bargain. Current two-year budget includes \$186.7 million for EPD. That is a lot of money. \$255,000 a day. In exchange for two days at that rate, you could redo the recent RFP and fund a small, but dedicated community response program for a year.

>> Clerk: Thank you, Robert. Our next speakers are John Alford followed by Shaws.

>> My name is John Alford, ward four. My first time kind of coming before you guys. I've only been to one other meeting before this, and before that, honestly I have

no idea what you guys did. And that being said, I appreciate everything that you do do. I have questions more than I have requests. And this has to do with something that happened outside of our state, and has something to do with what maybe the city already has a plan for. I don't know. So in Jackson county, Mississippi, they -- the fifth circuit court ruled the U.S. constitution doesn't guarantee a right to clean drinking water, which you can't argue against. And they also included we don't have a right to accurate information from public officials during a health crisis. Now that to me is drastically concerning. I understand that Eugene does not necessarily do the inspections directly or have a regulatory body that does that. But we do have partnerships with government agencies that do that. And we have the ability to regulate how they operate within our city and how they disclose information. I don't know what we can do to protect our city and our people from the misuse of other government agencies. That is what I'm bringing forward. I don't have clear ideas on how to address this. All I know is hearing this kind of report coming across the nation is incredibly disturbing. Now, that's really all I have today to bring to you guys, and I appreciate your time. I would love to hear feedback on that at some point in the future. Thank you.

>> Clerk: Thank you, John. Our next speakers are Shaws followed by Amanda Wahlberg.

>> I reside in Eugene. I am at 1165 440 Eugene. I spoke last time. Councilor Keating suggested people who have trouble with probable cause should contact the city

auditor, which is such a good idea. I did it the Monday morning after my traffic stop. And the problem with that is it appears to be a rubber stamp factory. Although the officer 30 days later said the stop was not within the purview. The auditor didn't catch that. It should have been over it there. But really it should have been over my window when I told him the law didn't apply. When I told the supervisor specifically that it wasn't a violation. Some stuff got overlooked there. I got some little dates to run down here. That was four days after the traffic, after I filed my complaint to the auditor that they just dismissed it and closed the file. Now, that's a problem. The signs of something like this happening are going to be other people having this problem. So if anybody in Eugene has been stopped for 15220, I sure would like to know about it because it appears to be a pattern in practice. It's really discerning to me that on my way in, there's an officer out there. He said yes, and I said does 15220 apply to rear windows and he couldn't give me an answer. That's a problem. So that was April 8. That I -- the day before -- so before there was a video about this, I wanted to set this matter behind me. So I sent the auditor an e-mail and said, hey, you know, this is going to go viral tomorrow on the channel with over a quarter million subscribers. Could we put this behind us? We're sorry, we'll drop the charges and move on with life. Which is what should have happened. Didn't happen. So instead, April 9, that video went up. Then on April 14, officer Anderson filed his motion to have it dismissed.

Then April 20, it was dismissed, and I didn't get notified. That should be a serious problem for everybody here. Basically, I was railroaded. I was plucked, I was stuck, and I'm still stuck, and I will be stuck until either I have to file suit under the Oregon claim act and title 421983, but maybe the city could come up with a better solution because I'm

trying to get on with my life. This exacerbated the PTSD from that. I'm trying to recover from it. I can't do it without your help. You need to acknowledge what went on was wrong and find a way to fix it instead of just circle the wagons and run high tail. I'm going to stick around

>> Clerk: Our next speakers are Amanda Wahlberg followed by Josh Easterland.

>> You don't have to worry or listen too hard to this because I know you already know more about this than I do. But this is a picture of a body. It's hanging from a meat hook. This was in a trailer right next to the catering company at the University of Oregon. And not only that, I have digital footage of -- from the gang, displaying nude images of children on the screen. I have a picture of that. I don't mind showing you dead bodies or exploitive material of children because that's disgusting. And I'm not going to shut up about this because the same pictures I showed you from the hospital basement with the human remains, I found that in the garbage at my school. And where I found this body, there were police cameras all around it. They know exactly what's going on. And I think the fact that none of you are willing to address this. None of you speak about this. You know what I mean, you know it's wrong too. Because if you didn't see a problem with this happening, you'd be like, yeah, so what, right? So you know it's wrong. And I don't even know what to do, and I can see why people are scared to talk about what's happening to them. I overhear people talking about being trafficked. The staff knows there's abductions happening there. People in the community know. But is

anyone really saying anything about it? No. Hope and safety aligns, they were trafficking people.

So yeah, what do you do when you're being trafficked? Any place you could go and anyone you could talk to is going to put you in the same predicament or worse. And it's -- it's BS that people have to live in a city of fear. Like there should be resources for people that are suffering. I don't know. Maybe like -- if there's one person -- maybe you don't care about the general population, right? But if there is one person you care about, maybe you have kids. Maybe you have a sister, maybe you have a mother, maybe you have one person that you wouldn't want to see be trafficked and tortured. Maybe you could think about like doing something about this problem because because I'm one person. I can't do everything. I've been thinking if I get all this evidence. If I find proof, maybe I can make it stop. It's gotten a little bit better, but it seems to just go on, and it's disgusting.

>> Clerk: Thank you, Amanda. Our next and final speaker is Josh Easterland.

>> Good evening, Mayor and Councilors. I'm Josh Easterland, ward eight director of equitable access of Eugene. I've been coming to you for years. Tonight, I have some great news from right here in Oregon. On September 30, Portland City Council passed its psychedelic health and safety ordinance. Ten votes to zero with two Councilors absent. It makes non-commercial personal use, cultivation, and sharing of

natural psychedelics a low law enforcement priority. I was at the hearing the week before. I listened to veterans, mental health professionals, parents, retired firefighter, and others describe how these substances had affected their lives. They spoke about addiction, depression, grief, trauma, and finding a way forward. But what stayed with me the most wasn't any single testimony, it was watching elected officials respond. Council vice president Olivia Clark acknowledged approaching the issue with reservations. After listening, she said the testimony had changed her thinking. Councilor Eric Zimmerman spoke about soldiers he had lost to suicide. He acknowledged there was much about psychedelics he didn't understand, but he took seriously the positive experiences of veterans who had found help.

These Councilors didn't come into the discussion with the same beliefs. They asked questions about safeguards, consulted with police, refined the proposal, and ultimately found common ground. And I think that's the lesson for Eugene. We don't have to agree about every claim made or whether we would personally choose to use them to agree on reasonable public safety priorities. Portland's police bureau explained that personal psychedelic use was already a low enforcement priority. Their ordinance simply makes that approach clear, consistent, and more durable across future leadership. I've sent you an e-mail with links to Portland's adopted ordinance, news coverage, and recordings of the public testimony and final vote. I'm also leaving a one-page briefing for each of you here tonight with a summary and links to those same resources. So I'm asking Eugene to take a concrete next step. Have your staff review Portland's adopted ordinance. Consult with the Eugene police about current enforcement priorities, and bring this issue back for a council discussion. I've been

asking you to consider this for years, and we have an Oregon example working through concerns and reaching agreement. I hope Eugene will do the same. Take care.

>> Clerk: Thank you, Josh. Mayor, that was our final speaker.

>> Mayor Knudson: Thank you. I'll close the public comment period. Are there any comments from city council? Councilor Yeh?

>> Yeh: I'm the city councilor. If you don't mind, I didn't fully understand what you were talking about, and I wanted to check in.

>> Mayor Knudson: Councilor Clark?

>> Clark: Thank you, Mayor. Madam city manager, I found Amanda's comments disturbing, and I don't understand the nature of all of what she was talking about, but I suspect perhaps someone in our community and law enforcement may. I would really like to have a briefing of any information that they have to further explain what she was talking about. Thank you.

>> We can do that.

>> Mayor Knudson: Other comments from council? Councilor Keating?

>> Keating: Thank you, mayor. Josh has been coming to our city council meetings for months, dare I say years. I appreciate -- in fact, we even met before, when I ran for city council. I remember meeting with you. I'm keenly interested in exploring this, I guess resolution approach or this approach that might get decriminalizing these natural items. So thank you for your due diligence. Thank you for your dedication and your commitment. So I look forward to reviewing the materials. It'd be nice to have a similar conversation here in Eugene, so thank you. Richard Larosa, I don't know if you're still here with us. That was some of the most powerful and moving testimony. Are you here, Richard? Thank you. I'm so sorry. I appreciate your words and your work. I look forward to being a helpful partner to advance the education piece. I'm keenly interested and your consent education and advocacy. I just want to say thank you. It's bold and brave and long overdue that men come forward and they're saying what you're saying, so thank you.

>> Mayor Knudson: Thank you, council. I will add my thanks to members of the community who came to public comment this evening to share their thoughts, and this

concludes our fourth agenda item this evening. So I now close the October 12, 2026 city council meeting, and we are adjourned.