

MINUTES

Eugene City Council
McNutt Room—City Hall
777 Pearl Street—Eugene, Oregon

February 29, 2012
Noon

COUNCILORS PRESENT: George Brown, Pat Farr, Betty Taylor, George Poling, Chris Pryor, Alan Zelenka.

COUNCILORS ABSENT: Andrea Ortiz, Mike Clark.

Her Honor Mayor Kitty Piercy called the February 29, 2012, work session of the Eugene City Council to order.

A. WORK SESSION:
Review of 2011 Implementation of Bond Measure to Fix Streets and 2012 Pavement Management Program

Public Works Director Kurt Corey reminded the council that Eugene voters approved a \$35.9 million bond measure for street repairs in November 2008. The measure included a contract with an outside auditor to report on the use of the bonds as well as establishment of a Street Repair Review Panel to advise the City Manager on the expenditure of those funds and to ensure they were spent in accordance with the bond resolution adopted by the City Council. He referred the council to the auditor's letter, included in the meeting packet, which found the City in compliance with the purpose and limitations of City Council Resolution 4953 and noted no exceptions. The packet also included a report from the Street Repair Review Panel finding the City in compliance with the resolution, included in the meeting packet as Attachment A. Mr. Corey highlighted some of the report's recommendations.

Maintenance Director Jeff Lankston and Surface Operations Manager Eric Johnson then led the council through a PowerPoint presentation entitled *2012 Pavement Management Report*. The presentation highlighted key points in the full report in the council packet, and included information showing the impact of renewing the 2008 bond on the street maintenance backlog. Councilors asked questions clarifying the details of the presentation.

Mayor Piercy wanted to know when residents of badly damaged roads such as North Seneca Street could expect repairs. She asked if a slurry seal was possible on such a street. Mr. Langston said the focus of the slurry seal program was on improved residential streets with asphalt. The segment in question was gravel, and the City's grading and gravel program ceased in the early 1990s due to budget concerns. Mayor Piercy acknowledged the budget and the fact the streets in question were unimproved, but suggested the street conditions might make residents living on such streets feel like second-class citizens. They seemed to occur where people had the least ability to do something about them. Mr. Corey concurred. He suggested that the City might be able to use some Road Fund dollars to make nominal repairs on gravel streets.

Mayor Piercy appreciated what the City had done to repair streets in the Harlow area as a result of public pressure but believed the City needed to be cognizant of the social equity of its expenditures.

Ms. Taylor thanked staff for its work. She reported that she had received more compliments and thanks for the street repairs than anything else and those she spoke to had expressed support for another bond measure.

Mr. Farr concurred with Mayor Piercy's remarks regarding North Seneca Street, saying it was one example of many throughout the community. He agreed the City should revisit its maintenance approach toward such facilities as alleys for the reasons mentioned by Mayor Piercy. He agreed with Ms. Taylor that citizen satisfaction regarding the bond measure results was high.

Mr. Farr asked how much of the deterioration of West 11th and West 18th avenues could be attributed to the lack of the West Eugene Parkway, which would have accommodated some of the traffic that now went down those arterials. Mr. Corey said the City had not performed such an analysis. Generally, deterioration on asphalt streets was proportionate to time and load. Mr. Farr suggested the City was spending more to maintain those streets than it would have had the parkway been in place.

Mr. Zelenka maintained that the West Eugene Parkway would never have been built because "the feds would have stopped it." He agreed with Ms. Taylor about constituent satisfaction and noted the local jobs that were created as a result of the bond.

Mr. Zelenka said without further funding, the maintenance backlog would grow. The City must have \$15 million to \$18 million more to make progress. He recalled past discussion of a transportation system fee and suggested it had more of a nexus to road repair than a bond. In addition, he believed it was unfair for Eugene residents to pay full cost of the roads when 50 percent of those using them paid nothing. He maintained a transportation system fee "would get us there" and asked for further information about the status of that mechanism. Mr. Corey had nothing new to report. He suggested the issue was complicated by the current economy. He thought the City needed to continue to consider such a fee and reminded the council that the City had been limited in the past by its ability to collect the fee.

City Manager Ruiz reminded Mr. Zelenka that the council had asked staff to return with information in the near-term to support future discussions about different taxing mechanisms.

Mr. Brown thanked Public Works and the members of the panel. He also thanked the council for developing the bond measure, which he considered a great model for the future to address problems where there was wide agreement.

Mr. Poling also thanked the panel, staff, and the voters. Speaking to the potential of renewing the bond, Mr. Poling acknowledged his concerns about passing such a bond in the current economic climate.

Mr. Pryor thanked staff and the panel. He believed that with the support of the voters, the repair backlog had been brought under control to some degree. He also commended the council for taking action to address the backlog, but agreed with Mr. Zelenka that there was more work to be done. He wondered if there was a way to consolidate the council's discussions about taxes or approach them in a more unified way given there were only so many taxing mechanisms available. Mr. Pryor did not want the council to forget the operations and maintenance backlog and questioned how the City could approach that and what the community would be comfortable funding. Street repair was one of the most important expenditures the City was making and he anticipated it would continue to be an important topic. He did not want to lose the progress that had been made.

Mayor Piercy emphasized the importance of roads to all modes of travel. She pointed out some roads were in such poor condition that parents had to drive their children to school because they were too rutted to bicycle or walk. Their poor condition affected residents' ability to get around the community and earn a livelihood. Many residents were not in a strong financial position to contribute to the solution but they still needed roads.

Mr. Zelenka emphasized that the council had not fixed the problem; it merely put a bandage on it. While he supported a broader conversation about revenue and wanted that to happen sooner rather than later, he would not be likely to support another bond measure unless a council majority supported a transportation utility fee.

Speaking to Mr. Zelenka's remarks, Ms. Taylor pointed out that residents got to vote on the bond measure. She believed that residents liked the bond measure and would probably vote for it again.

Mr. Corey anticipated the Street Repair Review Panel would discuss the potential of another street repair measure at upcoming meetings and staff would share the panel's recommendation later in the year.

Mayor Piercy adjourned the meeting at 1 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Beth Forrest".

Beth Forrest
City Recorder

(Recorded by Kimberly Young)