MINUTES

Eugene City Council
Harris Hall, 125 East 8th Avenue
Eugene, Oregon 97401

April 24, 2013
12:00 p.m.

Councilors Present: George Brown, Betty Taylor, Alan Zelenka, Mike Clark, Greg Evans, Chris Pryor, Claire Syrett

Councilors Absent: George Poling

Mayor Piercy opened the April 24, 2013, work session of the Eugene City Council. Noting the importance of the homeless camping issue, City Manager Jon Ruiz said Planning staff would reschedule the Metro Plan Boundary Adjustment Proposal item.

A. WORK SESSION: Multi-Unit Property Tax Exemption (MUPTE)

City Attorney Glenn Klein explained that the current MUPTE suspension expires in June 2013. To avoid a gap in program activity, council action needs to be taken to either implement a new program or extend the suspension date of the current program until changes can be made.

MOTION: Councilor Brown, seconded by Councilor Taylor, moved to direct staff to extend the MUPTE suspension until October 1, 2013.

SUBSTITUTE MOTION and VOTE: Councilor Syrett, seconded by Councilor Clark, moved to substitute to extend the suspension until the end of July 2013. PASSED 5:2, councilors Brown and Taylor opposed.

VOTE ON MAIN MOTION AS AMENDED: PASSED 5:2, councilors Brown and Taylor opposed.

Councilor Brown asked when the council would receive the City Manager's recommendation on the MUPTE application for "The Hub" student housing project. The City Manager indicated he would have an answer soon.

B. WORK SESSION: Homeless Camping in Parks and Open Spaces

Acting Parks and Open Space Director Mark Schoening gave a presentation that highlighted some of the challenges his division has related to homeless camping in parks, wetlands or sensitive environmental areas and in open spaces impacted by campers.

Council Discussion:

- Take incremental, deliberate steps in addressing homeless issues(s).
- Consider allowing dusk to dawn safe sleeping on vacant city-owned land that is not environmentally sensitive.
- Allow a trial period to see if the proposed changes will help address issues for homeless people.
- Explore potential for private property owners to help address this problem by allowing

camping on their property.

- Work collaboratively (network) with local businesses, faith communities, etc. to partner in efforts to place more homeless people on private land or at authorized locations.
- Transition homeless people into new areas in a sensitive and humane way.
- Acknowledge that sanitation is a real problem.
- Important to strike a balance between impact and addressing needs.

MOTION and VOTE: Councilor Pryor, seconded by Councilor Evans, moved to extend the meeting by 10 minutes. PASSED 7:0.

MOTION: Councilor Zelenka, seconded by Councilor Syrett, moved to direct the City Manager to bring back an ordinance that would allow people to sleep undisturbed and camp overnight from 10 p.m. – 7 a.m. on vacant City of Eugene-owned lands, but not including improved park land or sensitive environment open spaces, with staff to bring back a specific list of allowable sites, and on religious institution or non-profit organization properties if they allow it. This shall be a pilot program for 120 days and council shall then review the pilot program and assess whether or not to continue the ordinance.

A friendly amendment to include commercial and industrial properties if they allow it was accepted.

MOTION TO TABLE AND VOTE: Councilor Taylor, seconded by Councilor Clark, moved to table the discussion until the May 8th City Council meeting. FAILED: 2:5, councilors Taylor and Clark in favor.

VOTE ON MAIN MOTION: PASSED 7:0.

Councilor Clark requested the following information:

1. What kind of liability would the City have if it allowed public camping on City-owned property?
2. Where would the money come from to pay for the services needed to support a camping effort?

The meeting adjourned at 1:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Mortensen
Deputy City Recorder