MINUTES

Eugene City Council
Council Chamber—Eugene City Hall
777 Pearl Street—Eugene, Oregon

October 11, 2010
7:30 p.m.

COUNCILORS PRESENT: Mike Clark, Betty Taylor, Jennifer Solomon, Andrea Ortiz, George Poling, Chris Pryor, Alan Zelenka, George Brown, members.

Her Honor Mayor Kitty Piercy called the regular meeting of the Eugene City Council to order.

1. CEREMONIAL MATTERS

Mayor Piercy announced Willa Wright as the recipient of the Oregon Fitness Leadership Award. She commended Ms. Wright's long service to the community and noted the many committees and organizations she worked with. She read a proclamation from Governor Ted Kulongoski offering his sincere appreciation to Ms. Wright on behalf of the citizens of Oregon for promoting physical wellness and activity in Oregon.

2. PUBLIC FORUM

Mayor Piercy reviewed the rules of the Public Forum.

Emily Fox, 455 East 31st Avenue, submitted written testimony in opposition to the City's approval of permits allowing the construction of the Amazon Cottages. Her testimony was focused on concerns about decreased neighborhood livability from increased traffic, the impact of college student renters on neighborhood livability, and a lack of opportunity for the public to comment on the development proposal.

Carol Berg Caldwell, 2510 Augusta Street, commended the police's courteous and professional response to the riot near campus on October. She believed the response had kept many people safe. She thanked Sergeant Sam Kamkar and his team for their efforts during the event.

Julie Daniel, 2875 Harris Street, spoke in support of the West Eugene EmX extension. She did not think that businesses in west Eugene should be afraid of the proposed EmX line. She said that BRING Recycling, her business, was located near such an EmX line and it had grown since the line was installed. She believed the EmX line was an advantage and that more people were using it to reach her business. She noted that she had the EmX schedule on her business' Web site. Ms. Daniel believed EmX would efficiently reduce emissions and energy consumption. She acknowledged it was not easy to get people who owned cars to ride the bus, but suggested EmX had an advantage because of the frequency of service, which allowed people to make "spontaneous travel decisions" just like they could with a car.

Kimberly Gladen, 361 West Broadway, #4, discussed the Downtown Public Safety Zone (DPSZ). She said the crowd downtown had not subsided much because of the weather, and the reduced police presence

downtown had not helped. Because of the lack of police on Mondays and Tuesdays and in spite of prohibitions on skateboarding, it was now "open season" on pedestrians by skateboarders, who rode too close to pedestrians with the awareness there was no one to stop them. There was also a bad garbage problem on West Broadway. She reported that the crowd that hung out at 55 West Broadway left huge amounts of trash on the street and when asked to pick it up refused to do so. Ms. Gladen spoke of an incident where an individual had disturbed the food cart vendors on the Parks Block and said it took 15 minutes for the police to arrive. The vendors lost their customers for that afternoon. A vendor had mentioned to her that some youth were following an older lady and spitting her. She said no one should experience that. She observed that there was blood on the sidewalk at the 10th Avenue entrance of the Actors Cabaret, which was reported to the City but nothing was done. Ms. Gladen found that unacceptable.

Charles Hibberd, 5555 West 11th Avenue, business owner, congratulated the City for eliminating the parking meters downtown.

Mr. Hibberd was opposed to EmX on West 11th Avenue. He believed bus service could be provided much more efficiently. He said that most of the time buses that ran on West 11th Avenue were empty, and he recommended LTD run larger buses during peak hours for greater fuel savings. He did not think that carbon emissions would be reduced as a result of EmX because of the vehicles being used. While he understood EmX between the communities of Eugene and Springfield, Mr. Hibberd did not think it was needed on West 11th Avenue. The businesses on the road were not often used by bus users. He pointed out that LTD had budget problems now, and he questioned who would pay for the necessary infrastructure to support EmX. He asked if the City was going to pay, or were business owners going to pay. He pointed out that business owners already paid a payroll tax for the bus and none of his employees rode the bus. He encouraged the council to oppose the route, saying there were other alternatives. He said federal money referred to by LTD also taxpayer money.

Bob Machione, 288 West 6th Avenue, asked the council to consider small businesses when considering the West Eugene EmX route. He opposed EmX, saying it appeared to be based on faulty numbers. He said that LTD claimed that Our Money Our Transit was putting out false information but LTD was putting out vague misinformation. Two years ago LTD told him that it carried 6,000 people a day. When he questioned that number on the basis that LTD did not have sufficient seats to carry that many people, he was told it was actually 6,000 boardings a day, and that people were counted both when they got on and when they got off. A ride to work and a ride back home were counted as four boardings. LTD indicated it had 1.8 million boardings on the Springfield-Eugene EmX route. That number divided by four equaled 450,000 boardings for that line, which was LTD's busiest route by far. Extrapolating those numbers to actual passengers indicated that the route was carrying 1,000 to 1,200 people daily on average. He suggested the cost for the route was a lot to carry that number of people. He said the total cost of the system when built out would be $1.5 billion in today's dollars.

Wendy Butler-Boyesen, 1265 City View, supported the West Eugene EmX extension because she thought it was important for the community to provide accessibility in transportation for both business and people. She cited MAX in Gresham as an example of transit development that she considered had been a "golden opportunity" for business. She said buses serving West 11th Avenue had been reduced and the remaining buses had standing room only at times. All the accessible spaces were taken. She said her disabled husband could ride the EmX buses more easily than typical buses. Ms. Butler-Boyesen asserted that EmX cost 30 percent less per boarding than regular buses. She acknowledged business on West 11th Avenue would be disrupted by route construction but she did not think the construction would necessary kill businesses. She said that she continued to consume after going carless.

Kevin Belanger, 2990 High Street, a University of Oregon student, expressed support for the West Eugene EmX project because West 11th Avenue was auto-dominated and the street was not living up to its potential. A strategic investment in EmX would improve connections and give other modes of travel a chance. He suggested that just because West 11th Avenue was auto-focused now did not mean it always had to be that way. Speaking to contentions that EmX would decrease livability and housing prices, Mr. Belanger suggested that was not true because of studies that showed people were willing to pay more for housing near "enhanced public transportation" because they could walk there to get places more conveniently. He believed there was a surprising amount of hidden density along the proposed route and a "captive ridership" that would love to have a better option that sitting in traffic or following a bus schedule. He maintained that EmX was an eco-friendly option because the low fuel mileage would be offset by the volume of people it would carry. He further maintained that that LTD was choosing to place EmX in strategic locations along the highest ridership areas and areas with potential for future ridership increases. He believed the system was perfect for a community of Eugene's size.

Terra Smith, 951 East 19th Avenue, #10, a University of Oregon student, spoke of the challenge of reaching west Eugene by transit, and suggested that if EmX had been in place in the past she would have been able to travel to her destination in the west Eugene wetlands in a reasonable amount of time. As a student she had need to travel to West Eugene to reach stores such as Fred Meyer, but it was nearly impossible to do so using the current transit system. EmX would travel every 10 to 20 minutes and people would not have to worry about schedules. She supported EmX because it would promote environmental sustainability and help lower carbon emissions.

Andrew Serres, 1673 Olive Alley, a University of Oregon student, spoke of the difficulty of bicycling along West 11th Avenue and the congestion that currently existed. He favored the West Eugene EmX extension because it would bring about change. Constructing the line now would avoid the consequences of Seattle's past decisions not to build more public transportation. The EmX extension would help the local economy by creating more opportunities for commerce on West 11th Avenue and by creating a space for Eugene to prosper and become a national leader to transportation and community livability. Mr. Serres believed that EmX had the potential to unite different visions and hopes for Eugene.

Karyn Smoot, 1897 Ferry Street, also a University of Oregon student, spoke of her experience using transit in her hometown, San Francisco. She said that in Eugene, transit and alternate modes use brought the community together more so than in her hometown. She supported the West 11th Avenue route as proposed by LTD because she believed it would be well-used.

Julia Pommert, 2740 Almaden Street, also supported the West Eugene EmX extension. She believed that many who lived on the south side of West 11th Avenue used the bus more than others and tended to be those who could not participate in the political process as easily as she could. Those individuals stood to benefit from the extension.

Claire Otwell, 2245 Arthur Street, a student at the University of Oregon, also supported the West Eugene EmX extension. She thought it would provide much needed service to the community. She pointed out if the City was serious about implementing its Climate and Energy Action Plan, big steps must be taken to meet the goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 50 percent by 2030. One of the plan's high-priority actions called for aligning LTD's long-range transit plan to integrate bus routes into the larger transportation system. She thought the extension was a crucial step in implementing the plan.

Nicholas Garcia, 3725 Kincaid Street, represented a University of Oregon group called "Live Move." He supported the extension of the West Eugene EmX route and suggested there were those who could benefit from the system who could not speak in support of it. An effective transit system was a key to Eugene's future success. He asked the council to consider the public good in Eugene in general, not just the loudest voices.

Angela Bayliss, 255 Baxter Street, discussed her experience in rebuilding her house and the code violations committed by her contractor that had been passed by the City of Eugene Building and Permit Division.

Mayor Piercy closed the Public Forum and solicited council questions and comments.

Councilor Ortiz expressed appreciation for those offering testimony on the EmX system. She acknowledged Ms. Bayliss' remarks and asked if there was litigation pending related to her situation. City Attorney Emily Jerome was not aware of pending litigation. Councilor Ortiz expressed sympathy for Ms. Bayliss' situation and thanked her for bringing the information forward.

Councilor Solomon expressed concern about the information shared by Ms. Gladen and said it seemed there was a complete reversal in conditions from the summer. She wanted an explanation about what happened. Speaking to Ms. Bayliss' remarks, she asked City Manager Jon Ruiz to send a memorandum to the council regarding the situation. City Manager Ruiz indicated he would do so.

Councilor Clark expressed appreciation for the testimony offered by the public. He agreed with the remarks of Ms. Gladden about changed conditions in downtown. When the officers dedicated to downtown during the summer were returned to their positions as school resource officers, the situation deteriorated. He did not think the police presence during the summer had been sufficient but at least conditions had been manageable. Councilor Clark wanted to find a way to effect a permanent change in the police staffing dedicated to downtown.

City Manager Ruiz said the issue was not one of resources, which had been appropriated by the City Council as part of the downtown public safety strategy, but rather that of hiring new officers, taking them through training, and getting them assigned.

Councilor Clark acknowledged City Manager Ruiz' remarks and said he hoped the situation improved to the point where the council was no longer having such conversations.

Councilor Zelenka noted the time it took between the allocation of resources and the deployment of officers, and noted that currently, the department only had one or two vacancies and would be fully staffed soon. He thought the City had adequate tools in place to address the problems downtown.

Councilor Zelenka thanked those who spoke about EmX and encouraged them to encourage their friends to speak as well.

Mayor Piercy also thanked those who offered public comment. Speaking to Ms. Gladen's remarks, she suggested that public safety solutions were only part of the solutions for downtown. She reported she had asked City Manager Ruiz about outreach strategies for dealing with those in need who spent time in downtown.

Speaking to Ms. Bayliss' comments, Mayor Piercy said she was not completely apprised of all the facts but wished to acknowledge that Ms. Bayliss had spent considerable time trying to make the council aware of the issues involved in her situation.

Councilor Ortiz asked City Manager Ruiz to discuss how the lack of parking revenues downtown would affect the downtown public safety strategy, and also asked the status of the second CAHOOTs van. City Manager Ruiz said in regard Councilor Ortiz' first question, the Urban Renewal District had $20 million to pay off the parking garage debt, which would free the debt service for the garage to pay for police officers. The removal of the parking meters had no impact on the strategy.

Speaking to Councilor Ortiz' second question, Councilor Zelenka reported that Chief Kerns had indicated to him earlier that the second CAHOOTS van would be ready and in use by January 2011.

3. CONSENT CALENDAR

A. Approval of City Council Minutes
- June 7, 2010, Joint Meeting of the City Council and Eugene Water & Electric Board
- June 9, 2010, Work Session

B. Approval of Tentative Working Agenda

C. Resolution Annexing Land to City of Eugene (Eugene Airport)

D. Resolution Granting 20-Year Property Tax Exemption for Lamb Building

Councilor Clark, seconded by Councilor Taylor, moved to approve the Consent Calendar.

Councilor Brown pulled item C. Councilor Ortiz pulled item D.

Roll call vote: The motion to approve the Consent Calendar without items C and D passed unanimously, 8:0.

Referring to Item C, Councilor Brown clarified the details of the stormwater discharge with Planner Steve Ochs.

Councilor Clark asked if the annexation request contained unimproved roads. Mr. Ochs said no.

Roll call vote: The motion to approve Item C passed unanimously, 8:0.

Referring to Item D, Councilor Ortiz requested more detail about the project in question. Becky Wheeler of the Planning and Development Department described the project and said the grand opening for the Lane Building was November 8. All were invited to attend.

Councilor Zelenka did not generally vote in favor of property tax exemptions because he thought they were generally unnecessary but the program in question would not have been built otherwise without the exemption, and it was the type of housing the City needed to encourage to overcome some of the constraints the community had in regard to land supply. He applauded the proposal.

Mayor Piercy observed that the project was one of the things the City did to prevent people from becoming homeless.

Roll call vote: The motion to approve Item D passed unanimously, 8:0.

4. WORK SESSION:
Lane Area Commission on Transportation (LACT) Bylaws

Intergovernmental Relations Manager Brenda Wilson provided background on the item. She reviewed changes to the bylaws, in particular highlighting the appointment process for the citizen members of the commission.

> Councilor Clark, seconded by Councilor Taylor, moved to support the May 18, 2010, FACT LC Bylaws for the Lane Area Commission on Transportation with the most current update and amendments.

Councilor Clark commended the work of Ms. Wilson as well as the work of the mayor in putting forward the council's unanimous position.

> Roll call vote: The motion passed unanimously, 8:0.

Mayor Piercy adjourned the meeting of the Eugene City Council at 8:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra J. Stubbs Deputy

Beth Forrest
City Recorder

(Recorded by Kimberly Young)