

MINUTES

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

April 28, 2010
12:00 p.m.

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

Ms. Piercy called the work session meeting of the Eugene City Council to order at 12:00 p.m.

Ms. Ortiz noted that Ms. Ortiz was out of town and would not be in attendance for the work session although she was expected to attend the Budget Committee meeting later that evening.

A. WORK SESSION – COMMITTEE REPORTS AND ITEMS OF INTEREST FROM MAYOR, CITY COUNCIL, AND CITY MANAGER

Ms. Piercy appreciated the recent opportunity to welcome home returning veterans to the community. She further noted that she had participated in the demobilization ceremony that had taken place the previous week.

Ms. Piercy noted her attendance at the DisOrient Asian American Film Festival on April 23, at the Bijou Art Cinemas.

Ms. Piercy commented on her participation in the Earth Day events on April 24, and further noted that she had the opportunity to present the Mayor's Bold Steps Award to Sequential BioFuels for their work in providing alternative fuel options to the community.

Ms. Piercy reported she had participated in a student reading event at Twin Oaks Elementary School during the previous week.

Ms. Piercy reported she had attended the Eugene Police Department's (EPD) promotions meeting and planned to attend the EPD's award ceremony on April 28.

Ms. Piercy noted she had received a phone call from an aide at a local school regarding a missing autistic child who had been located by the EPD unharmed on an EmX bus.

Ms. Piercy reported she had participated in an event to honor 77 senior companions on April 27.

Ms. Piercy noted that she and Ms. Taylor had conducted another Mayor's One-on-One event at a local Rite-Aid location. She noted that she and Ms. Taylor had fielded several questions regarding the naming of the new Willamette River bridge, smoking at LTD bus stops, Crest Drive road construction issues, the future of the Network Charter School, and the new Eugene Water & Electric Board CEO's upcoming presentation at the City Club of Eugene.

Ms. Taylor stated that the assessment committee comprised of herself, Ms. Solomon and Mr. Poling had finished their work and would present their findings to the council on June 23 for final approval.

Ms. Taylor noted she had attended a recent neighborhood awards event and reported that an award had been presented for the Crest Drive design.

Ms. Taylor noted that she had participated in a ride-along with EPD Sergeant Michael Gilbert and had found it to be very enlightening.

Ms. Taylor noted that the Lane Workforce Partnership Board (LWP) had met during the previous week and reported that the LWP and Lane Community College continued to train employees for the new hospital in Junction City. Ms. Taylor further reported on the manner in which the LWP had planned to distribute and utilize State employee workforce training funds.

Ms. Solomon reported on her recent attendance earlier in 2010 at an auction to benefit the Bridgeway House, an organization devoted to providing support and social services to children with autism and related disabilities.

Ms. Solomon reported that the most recent meeting of the Human Services Commission had been cancelled.

Mr. Brown noted he had attended a recent Human Rights Commission meeting where the commission had reviewed several of its working agreements.

Mr. Brown noted he had attended the recent neighborhood awards event at the Campbell Center.

Mr. Pryor stated that the Housing Policy Board was scheduled to meet on Monday, May 3, to discuss the next round of funding for projects in the Westmoreland School area.

Mr. Pryor reported that a poll was being conducted in the community regarding setbacks on West 11th Avenue.

Mr. Zelenka noted he had attended the most recent EWEB meeting and commended the efforts of outgoing General Manager Randy Berggren. Mr. Zelenka further suggested that the Council invite Mr. Berggren's eventual successor to the next City Council meeting.

Mr. Zelenka noted he had attended the meeting of the Sustainability Commission on April 21.

Mr. Zelenka reported that he had attended the 20th anniversary party for the Cascade Raptor Center on Fox Hollow Road. He encouraged the councilors and members of the community to participate in the upcoming Envision Eugene workshops.

Mr. Zelenka reported that the West University Neighborhood Association was scheduled to meet on May 6, the Amazon Neighborhood Association was scheduled to meet on May 12, the Fairmount Neighborhood Association was scheduled to meet on May 18, and the Laurel Valley Citizens Association was scheduled to meet on May 20.

Mr. Zelenka stated he and Ms. Piercy would be attending the meeting of the Metropolitan Planning Commission on May 13. He noted that a high-speed rail open house event had been scheduled at the Campbell Center on May 18.

Mr. Clark noted his participation in the promotional video for the Envision Eugene events. He noted he had attended the recent meeting of the Cal Young Neighborhood Association on June 22 with Mr. Poling.

Mr. Clark noted that he had also attended the recent EPD promotion ceremonies and looked forward to the upcoming EPD commendation ceremonies. Mr. Clark further suggested that the EPD's promotion and commendation ceremonies be combined into one event in the future.

Mr. Ruiz noted that had also participated in the recent welcome home events for returning veterans at the Lane County Fairgrounds.

Mr. Ruiz noted that the firefighter recruit graduation ceremonies had been scheduled for Monday, May 3. He further reported that the current graduating class was the first all-female recruit class.

Ms. Piercy stated she planned to attend the Super ACT meeting in Salem on April 29 and noted that the meeting would involve a number of regional transportation planning groups from throughout the State. She further noted that the Super ACT meeting would involve a review of the various Connect Oregon projects.

Ms. Piercy noted that she planned to travel to Central Point on April 30 to meet with representatives from the metropolitan policy organizations from throughout Oregon.

B. WORK SESSION: Land Use Transportation Framework

Assistant City Manager Sarah Medary introduced Interim Sustainability Manager Kevin Finney, Sustainability Commission Chair Josh Skov and Sustainability Commission member Rusty Rexius.

Mr. Finney provided background on the land use and transportation policy framework discussions as outlined in the agenda item summary materials provided to the council. Mr. Finney briefly described the development of the Sustainability Commission's Land Use and Transportation Subcommittee's Action Plan for Eugene and noted that the plan described the foundational factors that the commission had identified in its research and provided specific strategies for advancing a vision for Eugene's future.

Mr. Skov thanked the City staff for their support of the Sustainability Commission and particularly thanked Division Manager Kelli Osborn and outgoing Sustainability Manager Kevin Finney.

Mr. Poling arrived to the meeting at 12:18 p.m.

Mr. Skov noted that the Sustainability Commission and its Land Use and Transportation Subcommittee planned to share the insights it had discovered over the past year and did not intend to ask the council for any specific actions during the current work session.

Mr. Skov briefly discussed the sustainability context under which the Sustainability Commission had been created and noted that the group had since that time generated a series of policy recommendations for approval by the Eugene City Council and had also created a separate subcommittee to discuss land use and transportation sustainability issues.

Mr. Rexius provided an overview of the Sustainability Commission's Land Use/Transportation Subcommittee and noted how its discussions, under an umbrella discussion regarding climate uncertainty and energy volatility, had progressed.

Mr. Rexius reported that the Land Use/Transportation Subcommittee's research into various private and public areas of the community had revealed a distinct lack of policy integration between land use and transportation planning concerns, particularly with respect to how the issues of climate uncertainty and energy volatility applied to land use and transportation matters.

Mr. Rexius hoped the Land Use/Transportation subcommittee's discussions and subsequent recommendations would help the council form a lens through which they might view various sustainability matters.

Mr. Rexius discussed how the nexus between land use and transportation concerns in the West Eugene Corridor had been addressed by the subcommittee as well as how the various disconnects between land use and transportation planning matters had impeded the development of effective and integrated strategies.

Mr. Skov discussed how the Land Use/Transportation Subcommittee's discussions had addressed the development of LTD's West Eugene EmX Extension project. He further noted that the subcommittee discussions had also addressed the City's ongoing Eugene Comprehensive Lands Assessment (ECLA) process.

Mr. Skov asked how and in what form the Eugene City Council wanted the Sustainability Commission to communicate with them regarding sustainability issues in the future. Mr. Skov further asked how City staff might wish to interact in a support capacity to the Sustainability Commission and its Land Use/Transportation Subcommittee.

Mr. Skov asked the council if they wanted the Sustainability Commission to return with guidance or recommendations on a decision-making framework with respect to various sustainability topics.

Mr. Zelenka commended Mr. Finney and thanked him for his work as the City's Interim Sustainability Manager.

Mr. Zelenka expressed that recent issues involving parking in the South and West University neighborhoods represented a perfect example of how the City had no defined process to discuss land use and transportation matters in an integrated fashion.

Mr. Zelenka noted he had been appointed to a greenhouse gas emissions task force by the Central Lane MPO's Metropolitan Policy Committee (MPC) which also discussed how land use and transportation planning concerns might be integrated more effectively.

Mr. Zelenka suggested that the council might task the Sustainability Commission to: a) work with local agencies on issues relating to Senate Bill 2001; and b) help develop council processes for discussions of local issues pertaining to matters of sustainability.

Ms. Medary, responding to a question from Ms. Taylor, stated that a notice for Mr. Finney's replacement position as interim sustainability manager had been posted and that Ms. Osborn would serve as staff support to the Sustainability Commission in the meantime.

Mr. Skov stated that the commission would continue to meet even in the absence of any staff support.

Ms. Taylor referred to Mr. Skov's earlier comments and suggested that the Sustainability Commission members regularly review the council agendas in advance so that they might speak to any upcoming issues relating to sustainability concerns.

Mr. Pryor referred to Mr. Rexius' earlier comments and stated that certain council outcomes relating to sustainability were often "tripped up" by a lack of efficient and defined processes for discussion of such matters. Mr. Pryor further noted that the Sustainability Commission had been very helpful to the council in demonstrating the nexus between land use and transportation planning concerns.

Mr. Clark appreciated the framework that Mr. Rexius had provided regarding the climate uncertainty and energy volatility.

Mr. Clark noted how the work of the Sustainability Commission was at the leading edge of emerging municipal policy discussions where sustainability was a primary concern. He further requested that the Sustainability Commission provide concrete information and actual data on the real-world implications of the policy discussions the commission ultimately participated in.

Mr. Brown asked if the Sustainability Commission had reviewed the sustainability policies of any other cities or municipalities. Mr. Skov responded that the most readily available examples of sustainability policies applied to cities and metro areas that were larger than the City of Eugene and could not easily be applied.

Mr. Brown assumed that members of the Sustainability Commission planned to participate in the upcoming Envision Eugene initiative and noted that their input on that process would be tremendously helpful.

Mr. Brown referred to the Sustainability Commission's Action Plan for Eugene that had been included in the agenda item summary materials and asked Mr. Skov to elaborate upon the removal of physical and psychological barriers pertaining to bicycle and pedestrian connectivity contained therein. Mr. Skov briefly described how that passage had referred to the infrastructure issues and the cultural barriers that had historically impeded the development of sustainable bicycle and pedestrian strategies in the community.

Ms. Piercy agreed that the Sustainability Commission's involvement would be valuable to the City's discussions regarding greenhouse gas emissions and the ECLA process and hoped that the commission might also be able to assist the councilors and City staff to use the triple-bottom line assessment tools more effectively.

Mr. Skov responded to Ms. Piercy's statement and expressed that energy and climate issues might form a significant portion of the details involved in various triple bottom line assessments regarding land use and transportation planning processes in the community.

Ms. Piercy asked how the Sustainability Commission's input might be used to resolve conflicting policy or decision making processes for the council and City staff.

Ms. Piercy appreciated the Sustainability Commission's outreach efforts involving the City's Planning Commission.

Mr. Zelenka asked if the Sustainability Commission could have specific efforts to develop processes and tools relating to the City's land use and transportation planning policies included in its work plan. Mr. Ruiz hoped that additional conversations about how such processes would be developed by the commission would be conducted before those processes were applied to any areas of the City's organization.

Ms. Medary noted that staff planned to return to the council on May 10 to discuss ways in which the Sustainability Commission's input on land use and transportation issues might be applied to the City.

Mr. Skov mentioned that the Sustainability Commission planned to form a joint task force with the City's Planning Commission to review sustainability issues in the community. He further noted that the ultimate charge of that joint task force had not yet been defined.

Mr. Skov referred to earlier comments made by Mr. Clark and hoped that the Sustainability Commission might be given a regular and ongoing opportunity to consult with the council in a highly detailed manner.

Ms. Piercy commented that, as much as the council intended to listen to and rely on the Sustainability Commission's input, the council might ultimately disagree with the commission on certain issues.

Ms. Piercy stated that the Sustainability Commission's suggestions had been particularly helpful with respect to how STP-U funds would be applied in Eugene. Ms Piercy further stated that she looked forward to seeing how the commission's input would influence sustainability discussions for the City Council and other agencies.

Ms. Medary suggested that the Sustainability Commission and City staff would continue to investigate ways in which the triple bottom line assessment tools and sustainability considerations could be incorporated into as many City areas and decisions as possible.

Ms. Medary noted that staff would try to find ways for the Sustainability Commission to provide more regular updates to the council.

Mr. Zelenka responded to Ms. Medary's comment and noted that the council's meeting on May 10 would involve initial discussions on the nexus between land use and transportation planning issues.

Ms. Piercy, responding to a question from Mr. Skov, noted that the Sustainability Commission members were encouraged to attend the council's May 10 meeting.

Ms. Piercy suggested that someone with expertise in sustainability areas might make an effective replacement for Mr. Finney as the City's Interim Sustainability Manager.

Ms. Piercy thanked Mr. Skov for his presentation.

C. WORK SESSION: Redesigned Home Page

Community Relations Manager Jan Bohman provided an overview of the City's redesigned home page and noted that the City's efforts to replace its entire portal website platform were expected to be completed by the end of 2011. She further noted that the City, through its home page redesign efforts, was attempting to better represent the community personality of the City of Eugene.

Ms. Bohman stated that the home page redesign efforts were also part of the City's strategic communications plan. Staff had conducted interviews with various community members for that and received feedback regarding the website that had been considered in the homepage redesign.

Ms. Bohman described in detail the various changes that had been incorporated in the City's home page redesign.

Ms. Bohman noted that Applications Systems Analyst Kim McCrea had helped implement many of the new features of the redesigned home page and that AIC Public Service Officer Jeffrey Flowers had developed the layout of the new home page.

Ms. Bohman noted that the City slogan "The World's Greatest City of the Arts and Outdoors" had been changed to "A Great City for the Arts and Outdoors" on the redesigned home page.

Ms. Bohman noted that the City Council's current discussion topics had been highlighted on the redesigned home page.

Ms. Bohman, responding to a request from Ms. Taylor, demonstrated for the council members how the links for certain City departments had been altered on the redesigned home page in order to make them easier to navigate and access.

Ms. Piercy expressed that the redesigned home page appeared to be “much more lively” than before.

Ms. Medary, responding to a question from Mr. Clark, noted that the City planned to discontinue its use of the portal website platform by the end of 2011, and that staff planned to work on an RFP to investigate the use of different website service providers.

Mr. Clark commented that the City’s technological needs with respect to its website might change dramatically by the end of 2011. He hoped that portions of the City’s website would be made more compatible with emerging mobile communications technology.

Ms. Piercy hoped that any electronic public notices of the council’s meetings would include a link to the City website.

Ms. Bohman, responding to a question from Mr. Pryor, noted that there were currently no plans for the City to sell advertising space on its website to help cover any of the costs associated with revising and maintaining the website.

Ms. Piercy thanked Ms. Bohman for her presentation.

Ms. Piercy adjourned the meeting at 1:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Forrest,
City Recorder

(Recorded by Wade Hicks)