

MINUTES

Eugene City Council
Bascom/Tykeson Room — Eugene Public Library
100 West 10th Avenue—Eugene, Oregon

October 8, 2012
5:30 p.m.

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

COUNCILORS ABSENT: Andrea Ortiz

A. Work Session: Panel Discussion on the Transport of Coal for Export through Eugene

Mayor Piercy opened the meeting, turning the floor over to Central Services Executive Director Kristie Hammitt and Sustainability Liaison Babe O'Sullivan who introduced the four guest panelists: Reedsport Mayor Keith Tymchuk, Dr. Andy Harris, Physicians for Social Responsibility, Ross MacFarlane, Climate Solutions Mission, and David Koch, Oregon International Port of Coos Bay.

Each person spoke or presented information for about 10 minutes, sharing their perspective on coal use as an energy form, the transport of coal through the area, market demands, impacts and side effects of shipping coal, climate impacts of both shipping and burning coal as a fuel, reliance on fossil fuels in general, job impacts related to both supporting and not supporting coal transport, costs of coal processing, economic impacts of repeated budget reductions, and environmental and health concerns.

The Mayor and councilors asked a variety of questions, attempting to gather as much information as possible. Some of the questions, thoughts and comments are listed below.

- Is there a Cumulative Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)? *No, not yet.*
- What about the larger issue of impact to the whole northwest? *Limited information at this time.*
- Why not look at the entire shipping routes, and why not look at all the cargos? *Coos Bay has done this and more study is needed. Coos County will look at the entire picture, with a full EIS.*
- How long would the study and discussion of coal transport impacts be? *Six months, longer? Maybe 2 years? Senator Wyden asked for an in-depth study of environmental and other impacts of fossil fuel transport.*
- Regarding dust escaping cars, what safety measures are currently in place? *Covered cars, extra tariff costs, covered processing facilities, use of chemical suppressants to reduce dust loss as the trains move.*
- Regarding the Coos Bay rail lines, what kinds of cargo are shipped? *Surely not just coal. A variety of things, but coal is an important commodity for the rail system.*
- What is the number of miles the coal would be shipped through Oregon? *Anywhere from 1,000 to 1,700 miles total.*
- Concerns expressed about transporting “big coal” and the ultimate impact of burning coal as an energy source.
- Concerns were raised about the global impacts of coal use and the catastrophic impact to the Earth/air/water.
- A comprehensive EIS is important and should be done.

- Federal regulations are in place for compounds and elements that negatively impact the general public, such as leaded fuel and paint, DDT, etc. and the full impacts of coal should be regulated locally in the same way.
- Communities around the nation are also facing budget issues and many are speaking out about the economic impacts of not buying and supporting coal use and transport. Jobs can be created in other industries that are healthier than coal transport.
- Concerns about trains blocking roads and intersections for long periods of time and delaying emergency response vehicles.
- Concerns about coal dust impacts, global warming, danger to people living along the shipping paths.
- Some felt that new jobs, new opportunities, economic prosperity were at risk if this opportunity isn't accepted and they reiterated that transport can be accommodated safely.
- A need to find the balance between long term effects of coal use and transport and job opportunities.
- Concerns about the "collision of values where no one is wrong – and all things are important."
- Concerns about quality of life vs. quality of livelihood and wanting to "do no harm."
- Thanks to all the presenters and community members who attended – the information is good.
- More information is needed, more studies, more data.
- What things could cause harm in this opportunity? More discussion is needed.
- Several councilors said they want to support the south coast, a neighboring community, but many had concerns about the risk to Eugene's community and residents between the Coast and Eugene.
- Regarding the overall shipping items that go in and out of the Port of Coos Bay, coal is about seven percent of the total products – that was not confirmed, but wasn't denied either.
- Concerns about the 150+ rivers and bridges the coal trains would travel over.
- Derailing concerns, coal dust coating the rail lines, creating hazards to everyone.
- Building coal handling facilities is expensive.
- This is greed-driven by those who stand to make the biggest profits.
- Dangers to elderly, young, problems with asthma, bronchitis and other respiratory conditions.
- Public health is more important than almost anything else.
- This is a balancing act.

ADJOURN: The meeting adjourned at 7:05 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,



Michelle Mortensen
Deputy City Recorder