MINUTES

City Council Work Session
McNutt Room, City Hall

July 18, 2012
12:00 Noon

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

Mayor Kitty Piercy opened the meeting and welcomed those present, those watching the webcast and those at home to the City Council Work Session on Opportunity Eugene Task Force Update and Policy Framework. She noted that Council President George Brown had requested a moment to address an issue and turned the floor over to him.

Council President George Brown distributed a memorandum for the City Council to read regarding the Capstone Project.

A. OPPORTUNITY EUGENE TASK FORCE UPDATE

Planning and Development's Community Programs Analyst, Michael Wisth provided a brief PowerPoint presentation and overview of the work done by the City of Eugene and the Opportunity Eugene Task Force to address the issue of homelessness. The overview touched on City Council-allocated money for improved health care services at Whitebird, the Chrysalis Program, Buckley House and additional services at the SVDP Hwy. 99 Lindholm Center, as well as a variety of other service enhancements.

Mr. Wisth reviewed the six Task Force recommendations and policy framework. He concluded his presentation by outlining the three proposed council options.

The councilor expressed a variety of concerns, preferences and requests, including:

- The overall cost of homelessness, even if council did nothing to address the issue
- There is an ongoing need to provide safe overnight shelter
- The safety and security of all people in the community, both housed and un-housed is paramount
- The time it takes to move complex issues and actions through local government is significant
- There is concern that winter and cold weather are quickly approaching
- There is concern about the six-week Council break related to the October 1st target date for a homeless campsite and any work that could or would be done during that window of time
- The level of disappointment to community members will be enormous if the council doesn't provide a way for progress on this issue to begin
- City staff should be tasked with researching appropriate sites and locations during the Council break so that when Council reconvenes it can begin to work on site selection without losing that valuable window of time
- This is a very complex and important issue and the City Council needs to work diligently and carefully to do it right the first time and avoid hasty actions they may regret later
- All constituents' points of view must be considered– some urge swift action to help homeless

individuals, others expressed concerns about the overall impact, safety and security.

- Getting 30 people with families who are currently homeless with children into a camp near Cesar Chavez School.
- Assess the risk and liability factors, community impacts; discuss larger community concerns associated with a homeless camp.
- Identify both public and privately owned locations for Council consideration

A majority of councilors supported the concept of Council Option 1, but felt some revisions were needed before passing a motion.

> *Councilor Brown, seconded by Councilor Ortiz, moved to direct the City Manager to pursue implementation without additional policy framework, a recommendation of #1, safe and secure site or sites of the Opportunity Eugene Task Force with a view to having the site or sites ready for occupancy October 1, 2012.*

Discussion followed, with Councilor Brown noting that the October 1, 2012, date is aspirational and may not be realistic, but it is an identified target date to work toward.

> *Councilor Zelenka, seconded by Councilor Pryor, move to substitute that the council agree with the Opportunity Eugene Task Force recommendation #1 and direct the City Manager to schedule a work session to:*
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> *a) Finalize the policy framework and*
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> *b) Evaluate the recommendations of the Opportunity Eugene Task Force based on this framework and to direct the City Manager to explore, investigate and develop a process to implement recommendation #1 (safe and secure site of the task force) and evaluate them consistent with policy framework as revised by the Council, with the policy framework and bring this work back to a work session after the summer break.*

Councilor Zelenka withdrew his substitute motion after Councilor Clark said he would submit an alternate substitute motion.

> *Councilor Clark, seconded by Councilor Pryor, moved to substitute to direct the City Manager to schedule a work session after council break to a) finalize the policy framework, and b) evaluate the recommendations of the Opportunity Eugene Task Force based on this framework.*
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> *The motion passed 5:3, with Councilors Taylor, Brown and Ortiz opposed.*
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> *The main motion passed 5:3, with Councilors Taylor, Brown and Ortiz opposed.*
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> *Councilor Clark, seconded by Councilor Pryor, move to direct the City Manager to explore, investigate and develop a process for implementation of Recommendation #1, evaluate against the framework, and bring it back for a work session after break.*

Councilor Brown noted concerns about the amount of time this work will take, that severe weather will be coming soon and that an encampment, if it develops at Cesar Chavez Elementary School, would be temporary, for three to five years. He also noted that it would be occupied by 30 individuals or families with children who attend that school.

> *The motion failed 4:5, with councilors Brown, Ortiz, Taylor, and Zelenka opposed, and Mayor Piercy breaking the tie in opposition.*

The Mayor noted that she was frustrated with their inability to set aside some of the smaller details in favor of moving this process forward – she wanted the council to come agreement. She asked the council to find a way to get to yes, so that they could find a way to begin work on this issue.

Councilor Zelenka suggested a truncated and simpler version of the motion. Councilor Zelenka suggested that they implement option #1 of the recommendations from the Opportunity Eugene Task Force and ask the City Manager what he plans to bring back to the council.

> *Councilor Clark, seconded by Councilor Pryor, move to have the City Manager come back after the break with an evaluation of potential locations and process for creating a safe and secure location or locations.*

Councilor Taylor noted that she wanted to discuss the topic at a work session before the council break. Councilor Brown asked to be kept informed as the process moved along. He asked if staff could send an e-mail to the City Council and to the Opportunity Eugene Village People about potential sites that are identified.

The City Manager recapped what he heard Councilors request:

- Identify and evaluate potential public and private sites
- Identify process options to establish one or more sites
- Bring information back to the City Council in a work session meeting after the break

City Manager then clarified that there are a couple of ways these things can be accomplished:

- Identify sites and share them publicly, which might create some anxiety
- Do a public process on the front end in the hope of allowing early input

The City Manager noted that the City needs to remain neutral on this topic and bring forward its best professional expertise. Mayor Piercy acknowledged that a whole range of things will likely be brought forward and discussed, and while that doesn't negate all the work that has been done to-date, it does allow for future possibilities.

> *The motion passed 7:1, with Councilor Ortiz opposed.*

V. ADJOURN:

The Mayor adjourned the meeting at 1:35 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michelle Mortensen

Michelle Mortensen
Deputy City Recorder