

# MINUTES

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

April 18, 2012  
5:30 p.m.

**PRESENT:** Claire Syrett, Chair; Shanda Miller, Vice Chair; John Barofsky, Ken Beeson, George Brown, Chelsea Clinton, Pat Farr, Laura Illig, Andrea Ortiz, George Poling, Chris Pryor, Mark Rust, Doug Smith, Betty Taylor, Alan Zelenka, members; Mayor Kitty Piercy; City Manager Jon Ruiz; Assistant City Manager/Planning and Development Director Sarah Medary; City Attorney Glenn Klein; Central Services Director Kristie Hammitt; Police Chief Pete Kerns, Fire and EMS Chief Randy Grove, Public Works Director Kurt Corey; Library, Recreation, and Cultural Services Director Renee Grube; Jan Bohman, Mia Cariaga, Sue Cutsogeorge, Pavel Gubanikhin, Larry Hill, Twyla Miller, Jeff Perry, Central Services Department; Scott Luell, Planning and Development Department; Connie Bennett, Mike Magee, Library, Recreation, and Cultural Services; Lori Kievith, Police Department; Robert Tintle, Public Works Department.

**ABSENT:** Mike Clark, member.

## I. PUBLIC HEARING ON FISCAL YEAR 2013 PROPOSED BUDGET

Ms. Syrett called the public hearing to order and limited speakers to two minutes.

**Carol Berg Caldwell** urged continued funding for the Mental Health Court, emphasizing its success and the benefits it offered to both clients and the police at a time of limited public resources. She submitted a brochure about the Mental Health Court.

**Martin Chase** expressed agreement with the remarks of Ms. Berg Caldwell.

**Dennis Gabrielson** opposed the proposed budget because he believed it disproportionately affected union employees. He suggested the City emulate the State of Oregon in reducing its middle management workforce.

**Randy Hledik**, a member of the Lane Regional Air Protection Agency (LRAPA) Citizen Advisory Committee, advocated for the restoration of funding for LRAPA. He believed LRAPA was essential for economic growth and worked cooperatively with business to achieve prescribed air quality standards.

**Mike Fleck**, a member of the LRAPA Board of Directors, also advocated for the restoration of City funding for LRAPA. If the full contribution could not be achieved, he asked that Eugene City help find funding that allowed LRAPA to secure its State matching funds.

**Maurie Denner**, a member of the LRAPA Citizen Advisory Board, spoke in support of LRAPA and concurred with Mr. Fleck's testimony regarding the State match. He feared that some of LRAPA's tasks would fall to City government at higher cost and less service.

**Melissa Garcia Perry** opposed reductions in library service due to their disproportionate impact on low-income citizens who needed internet access for job searches, bathrooms, places to take their children, and places to stay warm. She believed that library reductions would be made up with budget expenditures in public safety.

**Rick Hensen**, Business Agent for AFSCME Local 1724, expressed disappointment in the City's efforts to suppress employee input in the budget process and that it chose to critique and misrepresent what AFSCME had done. He shared information packets with the committee that included information about the eliminated AFSCME positions. He noted that AFSCME positions represented about 30 percent of the General Fund but the union was disproportionately affected by the proposed reductions.

**Tony Rasta** advocated for continued funding for the Mental Health Court.

**Gary Gillespie** shared a statement opposing the proposed budget reductions as unnecessary and insufficient to realign the organizational structure and spending priorities and to reduce wasteful spending. He believed the services affected by the proposed reductions were important during the recession and should be maintained. He called for examination of management numbers and compensation levels and for elimination of vacant positions.

**Noemi Ferrigno**, a City employee, shared that her Municipal Court position was being eliminated at the same time the City was filling another management position. Ms. Ferrigno indicated that she was the only front-line employee at the Municipal Court who spoke Spanish, and asserted that her departure would affect the services to Spanish-speaking community.

**Cindy Clarke**, president of AFSCME Local 1724, questioned the City's spending priorities. She stated that one-third of employees received management pay and other management benefits at a high cost and she contrasted their status to that of lower paid employees who put in long hours, such as the Public Works employees who responded to the recent snow storm. She asked the committee to make the City's vision more than words on a wall and to make the City's actions congruent with its vision and the community's values.

**Kirsten Lee**, Looking Glass Youth and Family Services, said that even with additional funding, the human services providers were facing another round of budget cuts. She stated the service providers needed leadership for vital resources. She asked the committee to consider adding to the City's human services contribution.

**Larry Deckman** of the Eugene Public Library Foundation asked the Budget Committee to fully fund the downtown library. He supported the staff recommendation to reduce branch library hours.

**Mike Barnebey**, President of IAFF 851, asked the Budget Committee to restore funding for the fire engine proposed for reduction at Fire Station 2. He believed the reduction posed an increased and unacceptable risk to both the neighborhood and larger community and emphasized the importance of quick fire response.

**Deborah Frisch** opposed reductions in animal services and the library. She suggested that LRAPA should be cut because it duplicated existing services provided by the State of Oregon. Ms. Frisch also recommended the reduction of planning services and the Lane Council of Governments (LCOG) budget. She questioned a proposal by District Attorney Alex Gardner that funding spent on freelance prosecutors be given his office and suggested the success of that suggestion depended on which misdemeanors were handled by Mr. Gardner's Office.

**Mike Bellmore** shared a map labeled “Tree Storm” with the council and described the Public Works Department’s response to the recent snow storm. He described the number of calls the department received about downed trees and said staff from all over the department responded. Many had relatively safe jobs but tree work was relatively dangerous. Mr. Bellmore urged the Budget Committee to avoid staffing reductions.

**Julian Cherish** objected that services were being cut while management was being retained at the same levels. She called for a reevaluation of the City’s priorities.

**Randy Anderson**, liaison for the Mental Health Court, advocated for continued funding for the Mental Health Court and said that the court provided people with chronic untreated mental health issues an opportunity to be treated, including medication and cognitive therapy. Many people had been served by the program.

**Jeannine Parisi**, a member of the LRAPA Board of Directors, spoke in support of funding for LRAPA. She believed the agency was essential to the area’s livability and had more work to do to reduce benzene levels and greenhouse gases. She did not want to see LRAPA’s responsibilities abdicated to the State.

**Kathy Webb** asked the committee to retain the current library budget for both the downtown and branch libraries. She suggested a focus on wasteful funding, and cited natural restoration projects as an example.

**Deborah Nunez** asked the committee to avoid reductions in library services. Cutting library services and hours would negatively affect countless families who depended on the library for many services. She suggested there were other ways to cut the budget other than cutting services and employees.

**Lisa Warnes** agreed with previous speakers and expressed concern about the scope of reductions being contemplated. She feared the consequences and said the City could not continue to keep cutting. She questioned who would want to live in a community facing such cuts. She recommended the fat be cut out of the budget.

**Lisa Wolverton** questioned what she perceived as a lack of specificity in the City’s Request for Proposals for animal services and expressed disappointment that the public was not given a role in its development.

**Molly Sergeant** was also concerned about the City’s RFP for animal services and suggested it was vague and open to interpretation. She objected to the process to date and maintained the transition had been planned by bureaucrats without experience or community input. She asked the committee to reject the staff proposal and give the community more time to develop a sensible plan..

**Deanna Deal** asked the City to hire the animal control officers currently employed by Lane County.

**Diane Silverman**, Stop Pet Overpopulation Today, questioned whether the City could transition to another animal services model at less cost and with more volunteer support given how busy current rescue groups were. She called on the City to slow down and avoid closing the Lane County animal shelter.

**Sondra Arate** agreed with Ms. Silverman’s remarks and advocated for a more holistic approach to budget reductions. She recommended unfilled management positions be eliminated. She called for improved dialogue regarding animal services.

Ms. Syrett closed the public hearing.

Ms. Ortiz thanked those who testified and expressed appreciation for the input. However, she did not think there was any “magic fairy dust” that would keep people’s jobs.

Ms. Syrett clarified that the committee was not involved in the RFP process or the restructuring of LCAS.

Ms. Syrett noted that reductions to the Mental Health Court had not been proposed at this point and she thought it unlikely that any reduction would occur.

Ms. Syrett acknowledged AFSCME workers and thanked them for their input. She said it was challenging for the committee to consider the budget at that level of detail but she thought the union brought forth important issues that the manager, council, and mayor needed to consider.

## **II. APPROVAL OF COMMITTEE MINUTES**

The committee considered the minutes of February 22, February 29, March 6, and March 7, 2012.

Mr. Poling, seconded by Mr. Barofsky, moved to approve the February 22, February 29, March 6, and March 7, 2012, minutes.

Mr. Rust referred to page 12 of the minutes of the March 6, 2012, and asked that the motion adopting the committee’s minutes be amended to show that he had abstained from the vote as he had not been present at the meetings in question.

The motion passed unanimously, 15:0.

## **III. TABLED MOTION FROM MARCH 7, 2012, MEETING**

The committee considered the motion tabled on March 7:

*Move to allocate \$317,000 out of the Reserve for Revenue Shortfall to fund one-time dollars to keep the second fire company at Fire Station 2.*

Ms. Ortiz noted her work on the Ambulance Transport Fund Task Force and suggested the reduction was premature given the options that the task force would put forward.

Mr. Farr acknowledged that one-time funding was not the optimum approach but wanted to maintain the current model until the task force completed its work.

Mr. Rust also supported the motion. He supported one-time funding in this case to bridge the gap to a new model.

Mr. Barofsky opposed the motion. He was persuaded by the manager’s arguments for the reduction because even though a fire company was being lost the City was gaining an extra ambulance crew

Mr. Beeson believed the recommendation was well thought-out and consistent with the overall goal of making the reduction without pushing out the decision. He visited the station and learned response time

would be affected but also understood the department thought its standards could still be met. The equipment would be in place if funding was found to restore the service. He opposed the motion.

Mr. Poling opposed the motion because he did not like the use of one-time money, trusted the professional judgment of Chief Randy Groves, and believed that unless the committee acted, it could be discussing the same issue in a year.

Ms. Taylor said the City needed to call on its reserves. She also believed the City needed new sources of revenue. She deferred to the fire fighters as those who knew the most about the service. She said a minute could make a big difference in the case of a fire.

Mr. Pryor said he did not generally support one-time funding for ongoing expenses but would support the motion because he considered emergency services to be fundamental City services.

Mr. Brown expressed support for the motion and hoped funding could be similarly restored for LRAPA.

Ms. Clinton supported the motion because it would give the task force time to develop a solution.

The motion passed, 10:5; Ms. Ortiz, Mr. Rust, Mr. Farr, Mr. Pryor, Mr. Brown, Ms. Clinton, Ms. Taylor, Mr. Zelenka, Ms. Miller, Ms. Syrett voting yes; Mr. Barofsky, Mr. Beeson, Mr. Poling, Ms. Illig, and Mr. Smith voting no.

#### **IV. COMMITTEE DISCUSSION**

##### ***Library***

Mr. Barofsky expressed support for the manager's proposal to reduce branch library hours as the best of the worst choices.

Mr. Brown concurred with Mr. Barofsky. He could not support reductions to the downtown library because it was so heavily used by the community.

Mr. Zelenka agreed with Mr. Barofsky and Mr. Brown. Reductions at the main library affected more residents, services, and employees and did not make sense. He suggested branch hours could be restored when economy improved.

Ms. Syrett agreed with the remarks of Mr. Barofsky. She agreed about the importance of maintaining hours at the main library. Acceptance of the manager's recommendation was not a reflection on the services offered by the branch libraries.

Mr. Smith also supported the manager's proposal and suggested the manager consider how the City could transport patrons to the downtown library on a twice-weekly basis.

Ms. Taylor supported the manager's proposal but hoped that every neighborhood had a branch library someday.

Mr. Farr supported Alternative 1 because he did not like seeing the more distant parts of the city continue to experience reductions and have lower service levels than wards near downtown and in the south Eugene

area. The branch libraries were in place because residents of such areas could not access the downtown library easily.

Mr. Poling had received many contacts from users of the Sheldon Branch Library who could not access the downtown library because even riding a bus was difficult for some of the people. While he would have preferred Alternative 1, he did not think there was sufficient support for such a restoration.

Ms. Ortiz preferred Alternative 1 because her ward would be impacted by the manager's recommendation. Many of her constituents had no car and were challenged by the cost of a bus ride. Alternative 1 added back computer hours to the branch libraries, which were heavily used at the Bethel Branch Library.

Mr. Rust suggested that given the dollar amount for the alternatives was the same, the issue was impact, and he believed the least amount of impact was the most important. He thought it made sense to follow the manager's recommendation. He advocated for full funding of the library system.

Ms. Illig acknowledged some might consider the reduction disproportionate. However, she agreed with Mr. Rust about seeking a reduction with the least impact.

Mr. Farr, seconded by Ms. Ortiz, moved to instruct the City Manager to prepare Alternative 1 in the final budget. The motion failed, 12:3; Ms. Ortiz, Mr. Poling, and Mr. Farr voting yes.

Ms. Syrett called for a brief break.

Responding to a question from Mr. Barofsky about the drop in Beginning Working Capital in the Parking Fund, Mr. Luell acknowledged a trend and said it represented a variety of issues and no one specific thing. The City had taken corrective action to build the working capital again. Mr. Barofsky said the Parking Fund was a significant contributor to the General Fund but appeared to be struggling. He asked the committee to take note of that. Mr. Luell anticipated that the condition of the fund would improve as the demand for services increased.

Mr. Barofsky asked questions of Ms. Hammitt clarifying the details of the City's transition out of City Hall.

Mr. Barofsky suggested the possibility of exchanging \$100,000 of City of Eugene General Fund money dedicated to road repair for Lane County Road Fund money as it could mean retention of a prosecutor for Lane County. City Manager Ruiz said he would look into that possibility but believed the money referred to by Mr. Barofsky had been allocated to Occupy Eugene.

Ms. Ortiz and Mr. Zelenka indicated interest in revising the question of free downtown parking because of the condition of the Parking Fund.

### ***LRAPA***

Ms. Ortiz, seconded by Mr. Zelenka, moved to fund LRAPA in the amount of \$55,000 using \$25,000 from Council Contingency and \$30,000 from Reserves (savings from summer closure of Sheldon Pool).

Ms. Ortiz and Mr. Zelenka accepted a friendly amendment from Mr. Poling to make the allocation contingent on donations from other partner agencies.

Ms. Ortiz emphasized the importance of sustainable, long-term funding for LRAPA and advocated for a regional discussion that established the partners' value for the agency and led to stable funding.

Mr. Poling supported the motion this time but called for discussion of the long-term funding between the called for a conversation with the other partners in the effort.

Ms. Ortiz accepted a friendly amendment from Mr. Zelenka that the \$30,000 from the Sheldon pool closing was the committee's the first choice for funding but it could be replaced by in-kind contributions if that was possible.

Mr. Zelenka supported the motion and hoped the City's partners in LRAPA also contributed.

Ms. Miller supported the motion. She believed LRAPA was good for local businesses and more responsive than the State Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ).

Ms. Illig supported the motion. She believed LRAPA made an important community contribution. She acknowledged that Eugene could not support such programming alone and a regional, long-term, sustainable funding solution was needed.

Mr. Brown did not support the motion because it reduced the City's contribution. The less money the City gave the less money the agency received from the federal government. He offered a substitute motion

Mr. Brown, seconded by Ms. Taylor, moved to amend the motion to allocate \$152,000 out of the reserve for revenue shortfall to fund one-time dollars to restore funding to LRAPA.

Ms. Ortiz appreciated Mr. Brown's motion but suggested the funding shortage created a new opportunity that might be negated if Eugene came up with the full amount. She supported the original motion.

Ms. Syrett also appreciated Mr. Brown's motion but supported the original motion because she believed the committee needed to make some tough choices and could not fund the agency at the level members preferred.

Mr. Brown expressed concern that the Council Contingency would be needed for other purposes and he feared that lower funding levels would decrease the State match. He agreed a long-term solution was needed but he opposed any reductions in the agency's services.

Mr. Poling could not support Mr. Brown's motion because it involved a one-time expenditure for an on-going cost and he perceived no emergency.

The amendment failed, 13:2; Mr. Brown and Ms. Taylor voting yes.

City Manager Ruiz indicated that staff would allocate \$25,000 to LRAPA from the Council Contingency Fund and provide the remainder through in-kind contributions.

Mr. Rust indicated opposition to the motion because while he valued LRAPA, the agency duplicated services that could be provided by another provider, albeit at lower level of service. He supported the manager's proposed reduction.

The motion passed, 11:4; Mr. Rust, Mr. Smith, Mr. Beeson, and Mr. Brown voting no.

### *LCOG*

Mr. Pryor called attention to a recommendation from the City Manager that the committee allocate \$31,000 to LCOG. He emphasized the importance of the services delivered by LCOG, which was the principle provider locally for senior and disabled services and administered Medicaid. He anticipated the hiring of a new executive director was an opportunity to reposition the agency to make it more responsive and effective than it already was.

Mr. Pryor, seconded by Mr. Barofsky, moved to restore \$31,000 of LCOG funding as recommended by the City Manager.

Mr. Zelenka opposed motion because of the source of funding, which would reduce the funding allocated to the Sister City Program, the Council Contingency Fund, and funding set aside for the council's travel and memberships. He believed reducing the Sister City Program's budget by half would cripple the program, which was barely surviving.

Mr. Brown determined from City Manager Ruiz that the proposed funding sources were ongoing. Mr. Brown agreed with Mr. Zelenka and said he could not support such a reduction. He also questioned the other source of funding, which would reduce the council's ability to travel to conferences and gather information. He had attended one such conference as a council and found it enormously beneficial. He offered a substitute motion.

Mr. Brown, seconded by Ms. Taylor, moved to substitute the motion with a motion to allocate \$31,000 to LCOG using the Reserve for Revenue Shortfall. The substitute motion failed, 11:4; Mr. Zelenka, Ms. Syrett Mr. Brown and Ms. Taylor voting yes.

Ms. Ortiz agreed with Mr. Brown about the loss of funding for council travel, which she thought was importance to the council's continuing education.

Ms. Illig agreed that sister city programs were enormously important and built relationships. However, she also thought LCOG important given the need for regional planning. She did not like the source of the funding. However, she was more comfortable with the manager's recommendation than with the use of reserves.

Mr. Smith suggested the possibility of defunding the entire Sister City Program and questioned if it was worth maintaining at the lower level. He did not support the motion.

Committee members briefly discussed other potential funding sources.

Ms. Ortiz suggested the possibility of reallocating funding from the budget for neighborhood publications and reducing council travel by half the recommended amount.

Mr. Zelenka, seconded by Mr. Poling, moved to extend the meeting for another 15 minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Taylor opposed the use of Sister City Program funding to fund LCOG because the program was Eugene's small contribution to the promotion of world peace. The program was important to Eugene's

sister cities and its delegations meant a lot to those communities. She agreed with Ms. Ortiz about the importance of council travel.

Mr. Barofsky declined to accept a friendly amendment from Mr. Pryor to fund LCOG using \$15,000 from neighborhood publications, \$3,000 from the Council Contingency Fund, \$4,000 from council memberships, and \$9,000 from council travel.

Mr. Pryor, seconded by Mr. Farr, moved to substitute the motion with a motion to fund LCOG using \$15,000 from neighborhood publications, \$3,000 from the Council Contingency Fund, \$4,000 from council memberships, and \$9,000 from council travel.

Mr. Barofsky opposed the motion because citizens had no opportunity to provide input. He believed that neighborhood publications were very important in keeping neighborhood informed of City initiatives and activities.

Mr. Zelenka agreed with Mr. Barofsky. He believed such a reduction would be a hardship to the neighborhood associations.

Mr. Poling expressed concern about the proposed reduction in neighborhood publications, particularly since funding had not been increased above the past year's allocation and the City Council had approved the addition of two new neighborhood organizations.

Noting that the committee was nearing the end of the meeting, Ms. Syrett determined that committee members did not object to an additional meeting.

Ms. Taylor also opposed reducing the neighborhood publications budget. She believed that neighborhood newsletters were important to residents.

Ms. Ortiz believed the neighborhood associations realized that the City was in a budget crunch and did not think the impact on individual neighborhoods would be great. She valued the Sister City Program and preferred that the funding come from neighborhood publications.

With the assent of his second, Mr. Farr, Mr. Pryor withdrew his substitute motion.

With the assent of his second, Mr. Barofsky, Mr. Pryor also withdrew his original motion.

Mr. Zelenka asked staff to estimate the savings realized by the elimination of free parking. City Manager Ruiz agreed, but anticipated he would recommend any money realized remain inside the Parking Fund.

## **V. FINAL MOTIONS**

This item was postponed until next Budget Committee meeting.

## **ADJOURN**

Ms. Syrett adjourned the meeting at 9:18 p.m.

*(Recorded by Kimberly Young)*