

MEETING MINUTES
Eugene Budget Committee Meeting
Zoom Meeting
5:30pm, Wednesday, May 17, 2023

Committee Member Attendance:

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Councilor Evans | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Councilor Yeh | ✓ Rayna Jackson |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Councilor Leech | ✓ Zach Mulholland |
| ✓ Councilor Clark | ✓ Eliza Kashinsky, Vice Chair |
| ✓ Councilor Keating | ✓ Ryan Moore |
| ✓ Councilor Semple | ✓ Tai Pruce-Zimmerman, Chair |
| ✓ Councilor Groves | ✓ Ryan Kounovsky |
| ✓ Councilor Zelenka | ✓ Siobhan Cancel |

Guests:

Mayor Lucy Vinis
City Manager Sarah Medary

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Tai Pruce-Zimmerman called the meeting to order at 5:32 pm.

Councilor Zelenka joined the meeting at 5:37 pm

I. Welcome

Chair Pruce-Zimmerman welcomed all participants to the meeting, outlined the agenda, and acknowledged the privilege of being able to attend these meetings.

II. [5:33 pm] Minutes Approval

Chair Pruce-Zimmerman indicated that the Budget Committee meeting minutes from May 10, 2023 need to be approved.

Eliza Kashinsky, seconded by Councilor Clark, moved to approve the May 10, 2023 meeting minutes.

VOTE: PASSED 10:0

III. [5:42] Public Comment

Kris Siewert: Provided comment in opposition of the proposed changes to Fire/EMS services.

Zak Harney: Provided comment in opposition of the proposed changes to Fire/EMS services.

Brenda Kameenui: Provided comment on the support of continued funding for the Eugene Public Library.

Sasha Elliot: Provided comment on the support of continued funding for Animal Welfare services.

Emily Heilbrun: Provided comment on the support of continued funding for the Eugene Public Library.

Krystal E.: Provided comment on the support of continued funding for the Eugene Public Library.

Mary Reilly: Provided comment on the support of continued funding Animal Welfare Services.

Gretchen Miller: Provided comment on the support of continued funding for the Eugene Public Library.

Cecelia Hagen: Provided comment on the support of continued funding for the Eugene Public Library.

Mandy Hazen: Provided comment on the support of continued funding for the Eugene Public Library.

Paul Goss: Provided comment on the support of continued funding for the Eugene Public Library.

Ryan Moore and Councilor Groves responded to public comment.

IV. [6:10 pm] Staff presentations

- Fire Engine/Squad Proposal – Presented by Fire and Emergency Medical Response Chief Mike Caven
- Climate Recovery – Presented by Public Works Director Matt Rodrigues
- Urban Renewal and URA Frozen Base - Presented by Economic Development Manager Anne Fifield and Senior Financial Analyst Maurizio Bottalico

[6:50 pm] Opened up for questions on presentations:

Councilor Clark: Commented on raising the frozen base.

Zach Mulholland: Question on urban renewal taxes per district and questions surrounding climate recovery and the implementation of the CAP 2.0 plan. Question on where Fire/EMS services have the biggest gaps as well as ambulance services and possible fees.

Councilor Keating: Commented on the potential of sharing staff for grant writing between Public Works and library. Question on whether there are any library activities that could be funded with URA resources.

Siobhan Cancel: No questions

Councilor Zelenka: Questions on clarifying the URA dollars breakdown for Riverfront versus Downtown. Commented on possible opportunity for additional revenue in the General Fund by increasing the URA frozen base beyond the proposed amount.

Councilor Semple: No questions

Eliza Kashinsky: Question on fire service calls breakdown and questions around ambulance services and delays they face with other agencies.

Rayna Jackson: Question on FTE changes for fire services and the different types of calls that would be affected by transitioning a Fire Engine to a Squad.

Councilor Clark: Question on availability to use URA dollars for city hall improvements. Question on using General Fund dollars for carbon offsets. Question on Community Safety Payroll tax dollars collected and the plan for the unspent, one-time dollars. Stated his motion will be to use payroll tax dollars to restore engine company.

Tai Pruce-Zimmerman: Question on the URA and spending limits on the downtown projects. Question on fire FTE and the increase in call volume and what resources have changed since 1981 that have allowed us to keep up with calls and city growth.

Ryan Moore: Question on downtown property tax revenue generation compared to other neighborhoods. Request to see tax revenue map. Question on riverfront housing units, and how many will be affordable housing.

Ryan Kounovsky: Question on ambulance services and how they were added to Fire. Question on types of calls for service and what information will be included in Alternative Response study. Question about possible property tax compression impacts that should be considered when discussing future revenue.

[7:40 pm] BREAK

V. [7:50 pm] Budget Committee Deliberation

City Manager Sarah Medary: Commented on wanting to listen to the feedback of the committee to understand where alternate options may be desired, as other reductions would involve positions that were currently filled, and staff communication would be required. Reiterated the complexity of the budget and the collective budget approach to protect and maintain the integrity of services. Noted that the proposed strategies were interconnected, and she would provide implications of alternate strategies if applicable and reminded the committee that the budget was developed with \$15 million in minimum reductions needed, which has since grown, and repurposing strategies to address the additional \$5 million needed to meet community needs.

Tai Pruce-Zimmerman: Chair Pruce-Zimmerman invited each Budget Committee member to provide comments or questions regarding either the general budget or staff presentations in a round-robin format, followed by additional rounds of questions/comments in which members could request to speak again. Commented on the structure of motions and deadlines on when to file as well as comments around what motions should include.

Councilor Groves: Commented on his plans to file a motion regarding the Fire/EMS services reductions. Stated concerns about library reductions as well as animal welfare service reductions.

Zach Mulholland: Commented on the success rate of rehousing out of shelter and requested more information on unhoused services the city provides versus county services. Asked about the ability to increase hazardous substance user fees. Would like to know the current amount collected from fees. Commented on library service level and asked how much the levy would need to be increased in the future to restore to current service level.

Councilor Keating: Commented on plans to submit a motion regarding animal services. Interested in a motion that may be submitted on fire services. Interested in exploring shifting the funding from downtown services to help fill the hole for unhoused services.

Siobhan Cancel: Experienced difficulty with internet connection and will submit written questions.

Councilor Semple: No questions or upcoming motions but expressed interest in what is coming. Stated she is not agreeable to big changes.

Eliza Kashinsky: Commented she is not planning to submit any motions. Stated concerns about changes that are being discussed. Expressed concerns around the Fire reductions, and the remaining gap of needs not being provided. Noted that there are funding gaps in many service areas that have not been discussed by the committee as well as reductions in the proposed budget that citizens have not provided public comment. Also stated concerns about future impacts of the \$8 million revenue gap.

Rayna Jackson: Question on the structure of motions and what lens the committee should use when looking at the motions. Asked about understanding what ripple effects the motions may cause.

Councilor Clark: Commented on putting forth a motion regarding fire reductions and will work with Councilor Groves on its submission. Commented on unhoused services and the need for policy changes.

Tai Pruce-Zimmerman: Stated no plans to make motions but will watch carefully what is brought to the table. Wants to understand why other strategies were not brought to the table or what the consequences are to those options. Echoed concerns about what has not been brought up in public comment from citizens.

Ryan Moore: Commented on his thoughts about the reasons for the budget gap.

Ryan Kounovsky: Commented on looking for small areas of adjustments to help keep some critical services regarding both Library and Animal Services. Expressed thoughts on Fire/EMS services and how we can balance the calls for service.

Mayor Vinis: Reiterated concerns about pulling on a thread that might unravel strategies that we cannot fully anticipate. Commented that the three areas of Fire/EMS, animal services and library resources all provide a service to the unhoused and are interconnected. Stated appreciation for the delicate balance that this budget represents.

Zach Mulholland: Question on climate funding and electric vehicle (EV) charging and provided comments on how important it is for the city to have matching funds to go after grants. Expressed interest in support for expanding fire services including increasing fees. Expressed interest in funding the Bethel branch literacy staff member and supportive of increased funding for animal services either through licensing fees or taxes or other sources. Expressed interest in spending more time discussing homeless services.

Councilor Keating: Commented on working with staff to draft motion to fill reductions to animal services including adjusting licensing fees for un-spayed/neutered animals and cat licensing fees.

Eliza Kashinsky: Asked about the process of citing funding sources in the motions. Stated staff had supplied answers to animal licensing fees in the packet. Commented on the unhoused and tackling the problem head on versus doing cleanup.

Councilor Clark: Commented on the continued increase in city's spending for unhoused services.

Tai Pruce-Zimmerman: Commented on unhoused spending and economic impacts.

Ryan Moore: Agreed that the City needs to look into upstream solutions, like renters' assistance and focus on who is becoming homeless rather than respond to issues like camp cleanups.

VI. [8:45 pm] Wrap-up and Next Steps

Chair Pruce-Zimmerman concluded the meeting with the following statement:

- Next meeting is on May 24th. The meeting will be held on Zoom and will offer opportunities for public comment and deliberation and hearing of motions.
- Motions should be submitted to Finance staff by 9:00 a.m. Monday May 22, 2023, to be included on the agenda and distributed by the May 24th meeting.
- Reminder to reach out to Liz (Elizabeth) Butterfield for budget questions as Vicki Silvers will be out of office.

ADJOURN

Chair Pruce-Zimmerman adjourned the meeting at 8:47 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Samantha Wright, AIC Program Coordinator, Finance Division