

# MINUTES

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

February 15, 2012  
Noon

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

COUNCILORS ABSENT: Mike Clark.

Her Honor Mayor Kitty Piercy called the February 15, 2012, work session of the Eugene City Council to order.

**A. ACTION:**

**Resolution 5055 Requesting that the United States Congress Refer to the States an Amendment to the US Constitution Declaring that Corporations Do Not Possess the Constitutional Rights that Natural Persons Possess**

City Attorney Glenn Klein was present to answer questions.

Mr. Zelenka, seconded by Mr. Brown, moved to adopt Resolution 5055, a resolution requesting that the United States Congress refer to the states an amendment to the United States Constitution declaring that corporations do not possess the constitutional rights that natural persons possess.

Mr. Zelenka shared highlights from an editorial written by Fred Wertheimer of Democracy 21 entitled “Super PACS a disaster for democracy.” He believed money was corrupting democracy and he encouraged the council to support the resolution.

Ms. Taylor, seconded by Mr. Brown, moved to delete the words “and unions.”

Ms. Taylor did not think that unions were comparable to corporations. She said unions exist to protect the rights of working people while corporations existed to make a profit. She did not think any other communities’ resolutions mentioned unions.

Mr. Poling could not support the amendment because the *Citizens United versus Federal Election Commission* decision was specific to unions, corporations, and special interests groups. If the amendment passed, he would be unable to support the resolution.

Mr. Zelenka agreed with Ms. Taylor. He supported unions and thought they were substantially different from corporations. He also agreed that unions did not wield the same power as corporations. However, he pointed out, the resolution was not about unions and corporations but about campaign finance reform and the undue influence on money on democracy, no matter the source. He could not envision an amendment that did not limit all contributions.

Mr. Pryor concurred with the remarks of Mr. Zelenka.

Mr. Brown supported the amendment. He attributed many benefits enjoyed by all people, such as the weekend and sick leave, to the efforts of unions.

Mayor Piercy shared a communication from "We the People of Eugene," which opposed the inclusion of unions in the resolution but recommended that if unions were addressed they be mentioned in Section 2 rather than Section H.

The amendment to the motion failed, 5:2; Ms. Taylor and Mr. Brown voting yes.

Mr. Zelenka offered a friendly amendment, accepted by Mr. Brown, to correct an error in Section 1 of the resolution, which should also read "corporations, unions, and special interest groups."

Ms. Taylor said it was difficult to vote for the resolution because she did not think it made sense.

Mr. Farr said his vote against the resolution was not an indictment of the resolution but rather reflected his belief that the council diluted its attention and resources away from its mission to address issues it had no control over, nor was it chartered to have control over. The resources and time spent could be spent on issues the council had a direct impact upon. He invited residents with concerns about federal issues to take them to their federal representatives because they had the power to address such matters.

Speaking to Ms. Taylor's comments about unions, Ms. Ortiz indicated support for unions but thought the resolution was about campaign finance reform. She pointed out that unions had considerable power in places such as California, where the California Correctional Peace Officers Association played a key role in getting Arnold Schwarzenegger elected as governor. Ms. Ortiz believed such resolutions were within the purview of the council.

Ms. Taylor agreed with Ms. Ortiz that such resolutions were within the purview of the council. She also believed that such local actions had an impact nationally.

Mr. Brown agreed with Ms. Ortiz and Ms. Taylor that it was appropriate for the council to consider the resolution. He emphasized the importance of symbolic statements.

Mr. Zelenka pointed out to Mr. Farr that the council took a position on State legislation that might not be pertinent to the City's agenda but were reflective of the government as a whole, and he thought government "all the way up the line" had the responsibility to deal with such issues.

Mr. Poling did not find the argument that no other community had included unions in their resolutions to be persuasive. He expressed concern that the resolution did not speak specifically to limits on contributions and questioned who would make those rules. Mr. Poling advocated for campaign finance limits at the local level. Mr. Brown concurred.

Mr. Zelenka noted that some had advocated for referring the resolution to the voters but he opposed that due to the cost; in addition, the deadline for the May ballot was passed and there was time to discuss putting it on the November ballot.

The motion passed, 6:1; Mr. Farr voting no.

**B. WORK SESSION:  
Neighborhood Analysis**

The council was joined by Lorna Flormoe of the Neighborhood Services Program. With the assistance of a PowerPoint presentation, Ms. Flormoe walked the council through the City of Eugene's 2011 *Neighborhood Analysis*, copies of which were included in the meeting packet. Councilors asked questions clarifying the details of the presentation and were generally complimentary of the analysis.

Mr. Poling suggested it would be useful if two graphs on page U-13, *Type of Commute to Work* and *Travel Time to Work*, could be combined to give the reader a sense of the most efficient commute. He suggested the decline in crime in Trainsong could be attributed both to data-led policing and a lack of reporting.

Mr. Pryor suggested that information from the school catchment area would also be useful for a more complete picture of the area in question. He looked forward to seeing such analyses for all neighborhoods. Ms. Flormoe indicated all 23 neighborhood analyses would be available online soon. She said staff would look for other data types to include in the analysis.

**C. WORK SESSION:  
Building Inspector Field Mobility**

Building Official Stuart Ramsing and Building Inspector Supervisor Kyle Richardson joined the council and presented on the City's Building Inspector Field Mobility. The council viewed a prototype of the vehicles used by building inspectors.

Mayor Piercy adjourned the meeting at 1:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Beth Forrest*

Beth Forrest  
City Recorder

*(Recorded by Kimberly Young)*