

• The recent independent survey on **West Eugene EmX** shows residents are split in their overall opinion of the extension. No surprise there. But if you break down the questionnaire, you see some basic values showing up that LTD should find encouraging, and those values should get the attention of city councilors who are still on the fence about extending EmX. Residents surveyed favor a “robust public transportation system,” want to reduce traffic congestion in west Eugene, want faster and more frequent public transportation, favor cross-town mass transit without transfers, and like the idea of new jobs and economic stimulus created by the project. Those surveyed are not very worried about the impact on properties and businesses during the construction, and not very concerned about federal money going to local mass transit, but the majority are concerned about climate change and the need to reduce carbon emissions.

Now the challenge for LTD is to educate the public, dispel the misinformation being put out by opponents, and educate skeptical city councilors who will vote on the extension this summer.

• We see **EWEB is anticipating moving** its headquarters from the riverfront to near EWEB’s Roosevelt Operations Center. EWEB is negotiating the purchase a large office and light industrial building in west Eugene about a mile from the Roosevelt Operations Center, according to EWEB Principal Project Manager Kevin Biersdorff in the latest Intercom internal newsletter. He says purchasing the property would allow EWEB to “vacate the current headquarters and mobilize administrative functions in a relatively short period” in case someone offers to buy the riverfront property.

We think the current EWEB headquarters would make a great temporary City Hall while we refurbish the old City Hall. We have heard that bringing the EWEB building up to date would cost as much as remodeling our current City Hall, but why spend millions on a building that is structurally sound and highly functional as is? This is a beautiful building with public meeting rooms in a stunning and highly visible setting, and lots of parking. It needs to remain a public building, and we can think of no better use right now than city offices. EWEB already “contributes” \$12.5 million a year to city coffers, so we think a favorable lease could be worked out to mutual benefit. Meanwhile, we hear City Hall is to begin emptying out this summer as the city moves at least some functions into the Lane County building.

• We were delighted to hear at last Friday’s **City Club debate** that not only would Commissioner Pete Sorenson work to stop dirty coal trains from coming through Eugene, his opponent for the South Lane Commission seat, Andy Stahl, said he is willing to throw his body in front of a coal train to stop it. Nothing livens up a political debate like direct action. We bet there are some local activists who’d be willing to join Stahl on the tracks.

Sorenson’s been throwing himself in front of metaphoric trains for years in his efforts to help Lane County stay good and green. So here’s what’s got us confused: Sorenson, who has a long track record of standing up for the environment, labor and human rights is being challenged by Stahl, who says he plans to have a similar record. Stahl says the difference is that he’s going to get along with the other folks on the board. We think the chances of Faye Stewart, Sid Leiken and Jay Bozievich joining Stahl on the tracks for a rousing round of “Kumbaya” is pretty slim.

• Slashing the city budget means cuts to everything from animal control to firefighting. **So why did Eugene spend almost a half million dollars** for almost three years of fighting an excessive force lawsuit against the city and the Eugene Police Department? We’re delighted the Civil Liberties Defense Center gets a much-needed infusion of cash for all the work it does to defend the rights of everyone from activists to the homeless, but why didn’t the cops and the city just admit they were wrong from the get-go?

In January, a jury awarded Josh Schlossberg \$4,083 for medical expenses and \$1,500 in non-economic damages relating to his March 2009 arrest by Sgt. Bill Solesbee. The hundreds of thousands of dollars the city is paying (from a fund set aside for legal costs) are all for legal work. The city even began to appeal the verdict, but last week stopped the process. The city’s decision to drop its appeal of the case was a wise one. We just wish Eugene and EPD had made a similar choice – to pay Schlossberg’s medical bills, admit wrongdoing and be done with it, or even to accept Schlossberg’s attorney’s request for mediation – before racking up so many hours in legal fees, plus countless hours of undocumented city staff time.

SLANT includes short opinion pieces, observations and rumor-chasing notes compiled by the EW staff. Heard any good rumors lately? Contact Ted Taylor at 484-0519, editor@eugeneweekly.com

WAR DEAD

In Afghanistan

- **1,905 U.S. troops killed*** (1,902)
- **15,488 U.S. troops wounded in action** (15,480)
- **1095 U.S. contractors killed** (1095)
- **\$513.6 billion cost of war** (\$511.5 billion)
- **\$151.7 million cost to Eugene taxpayers** (\$151 million)

In Iraq

The war officially ended in December 2011 with a total of 4,422 U.S. troops killed, 31,923 wounded in action and undisclosed hundreds of U.S. military suicides. But U.S. contractors are assuming a larger role, high levels of U.S. spending continue, and the body count from civil unrest grows.

- **1,560 U.S. contractors killed** (1,560)
- **115,529 to 1.2 million civilians killed*** (115,485)
- **\$802.2 billion cost of war** (\$802 billion)
- **\$236.9 million cost to Eugene taxpayers** (\$236.8 million)

Through March 26, 2011; sources: icasualties.org; defense.gov, U.S. Dept. of Labor

** highest estimate; source: iraqbodycount.org; based on confirmed media reports; other groups calculate Iraqi civilian deaths as high as 655,000 (Lancet survey, 2006) to 1.2 million (Opinion Research Business survey, 2008)*



Envision Eugene

Draft Recommendation

Community presentations and discussions about the proposed Urban Growth Boundary and strategies to help Eugene grow smarter over the next 20 years.

Pick a date & place that works for you:

From 6:00 to 8:00 pm:

- March 20** — Petersen Barn
- March 22** — North Eugene High School
- April 3** — Churchill High School
- April 5** — The Studio at the Hult Center
- April 10** — Sheldon Community Center
- April 12** — South Eugene High School

www.EnvisionEugene.org
City of Eugene Planning & Development
541-682-6021



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