

Doing More

HOW A PERFORMANCE AUDITOR CAN BUILD COMMUNITY TRUST

Accountability and transparency are essential to democracy. As Eugene's mayor, I invite you to explore with me the potential benefits of a performance auditor to improve the effectiveness of city government and build the community's trust in our public process.

Last year, while knocking on doors, I heard many express concerns about how well city government is managing resources to advance community priorities.

This year in my State of the City address, I promised that "my goal is to improve our framework for communicating and accounting for our decisions so that everyone feels informed, heard and is comfortable with the decision-making process."

To improve two-way communication between city government and the community, we've created the "dashboard" report available on the city's website summarizing issues the Eugene City Council is considering. Every week I post a blog about the council's recent work; every month I publish a guest viewpoint in the *Register-Guard* on an important issue facing the city.

I also continue to canvass every part of the city to hear public views firsthand. Common concerns include the cost of a new City Hall, how to make downtown work for everyone, how to ensure our neighborhoods continue to be great places to live while making room for new residents, and reducing traffic congestion.

But we must do more. In response to what I am hearing, I believe a performance auditor would improve the accountability and transparency of city government.

A performance auditor is not a financial auditor — we already have a strong audit department in our finance division.

A performance auditor looks beyond the dollars, evaluating the cost effectiveness and alignment of specific programs with the values and priorities the city has established. A performance auditor is independent of city staff, but works to make them more successful by determining key goals, assessing efforts and making recommendations for getting better results and communicating more clearly to the public what they do and why.

The idea of a performance auditor isn't new. A 2002 charter review committee recommended that the city establish a performance auditor. But a shift in the City Council, a new city manager and a recession that cut city staffing combined to halt progress on this recommendation.

There are several ways to establish a performance auditor. Your voices will help find the best fit for a city of our size and resources.

A public process worked well to establish Eugene's independent police auditor, who is hired by and reports directly to the City Council. A performance auditor could similarly be answerable to the City Council.

In some communities, the performance auditor is an elected position.

Currently, we can contract out for external performance audits, but this means paying to bring someone into the community who doesn't know us as well.

Lane County already has a successful performance auditor that reports directly to the county commissioners and has already created significant savings. Eugene might even consider sharing that position to save costs.

Let's open this conversation to explore these options and others. Our goal is to ensure that city government does the best possible job in delivering services to the public.

I want to conduct a listening tour around the community. I am also looking to ask a cross-section of community leaders to review the 2002 charter review committee recommendations to learn from the experiences of similar communities with performance auditors, and to report on the pros and cons of different approaches.

We have much to be proud of. Our city leadership prudently and effectively brought us through the worst recession since the depression, one that caused us to make significant cuts, and we have now stabilized the city's budget.

But the community demands that we do better. I need your help to ensure that our city government serves us well, does so cost-effectively and enjoys the public's trust.

Lucy Vinis is the mayor of Eugene.



LETTERS

"We lost him in a senseless act that brought close to home the insidious rift of prejudice and intolerance that is too familiar, too common. We ask that in honor of his memory. We use this tragedy as an opportunity for reflection and change. We choose love."

We raise our children to love. Let us lead by example.

Please attend future Lane County Commission meetings when public testimony is heard and use your voice for love.

*Carol Louise Scherer
Eugene*

COOKED TO DEATH

Since we first walked this earth we have desired to have more and more convenience. We harnessed fire and invented the wheel and indoor plumbing. Until now, the advantages of our conveniences have far outweighed their disadvantages.

Today, however, the disadvantages of wireless technology far outweigh its advantages. These invisible wireless signals are carried through the air via microwaves — yes, the same microwave radiation that cooks your food.

We are slowly being cooked, especially the most vulnerable, like our children and the elderly. We are being exposed and harmed by this microwave radiation 24/7 through Bluetooth, wi-fi, cell towers, cell phones, cordless phones, speakers, headphones, baby monitors and all our other convenient wireless gadgets.

Now here come the EWEB commissioners with their long term plan (already being implemented) to install unnecessary digital wireless pulsed microwave radiating AMI meters (aka "smart meters") on every home and business in Eugene to meter water and electricity use.

EWEB commissioners are required, as trustees, to implement the "precautionary principal" whenever there is even a chance of causing harm to people or the environment by their actions. They are well aware of these dangers, and yet negligently refuse to stop or warn the people of Eugene. Don't opt-in.

*Abraham Likwornik
Eugene*

BROWN IS NOT GREEN

People tell me that Gov. Kate Brown

is an environmentalist, but I don't see it. Seems like when it comes to timber and other extractive interests, she just rolls over.

While Brown touts she's "committed" to the Paris Agreement goals, she can't say "No!" to the Pacific Connector fracked-gas pipeline in southern Oregon, or the Jordan Cove LNG terminal in Coos Bay!

We almost lost the Elliott State Forest because of her dithering last year. Then, new Secretary of State Dennis Richardson joined the State Land Board, almost putting the kibosh on the whole thing, with new Treasurer Tobias Read also in favor of selling! Thankfully, better heads prevailed.

Kate has shown no interest in pushing for a strong cap & reinvest bill to limit the big air polluters in Oregon. Her much ballyhooed "Coal to Clean" bill won't do much until 2030!

The toxic aerial spraying of pesticides across our timberlands and citizens, doesn't bother her, either.

I read the papers daily. I never see anything directly from Kate to her Oregon constituents. What exactly does she stand for? When will Oregonians find out? Will Oregon ever begin comprehensive climate change work? Will she step up to make it happen?

*Robin Bloomgarden
Eugene*

IS THERE A DOCTOR IN THE HOUSE?

If you talk to medical people in Lane County and Eugene, they will tell you this: Doctors, specialists of all kinds and most psychiatrists are all leaving Oregon and moving to other states or even moving out of the USA completely.

Where are they going? To states and nations that have plenty of money to pay doctors — and no types of government medical insurance, especially not the ACA, Medicaid or even little Medicare (since that plan has become cut to the bone.)

What will happen to Oregon? It will have so few doctors, psychiatrists and specialists that patients will need to travel to Seattle or other states just to find a doctor or specialist. This has happened already.

A place cannot exist forever without any doctors.

*D.H. Bucher
Eugene*

Envision Eugene

Urban Growth Boundary Adoption

This is the final phase of urban growth boundary adoption! In this phase the Eugene City Council and the Lane County Board of Commissioners will consider Eugene's UGB proposal, recommended by their respective Planning Commissions, before making a decision on UGB adoption.

Joint City and County Public Hearing

NEW TIME!

June 27

6:30 pm

Harris Hall
125 E 8th Ave., Eugene

Information stations and staff will be available beginning at 5 pm, presentation at 6 pm, hearing at 6:30 pm.

You are encouraged to attend and provide comment at the hearing.

See the UGB Proposal details at: www.envisioneugene.org and go to Adopting Our Urban Growth Boundary.

Get Involved! www.envisioneugene.org