



Vol. I (15), Dec. 5, 2025

“Sunshine” or openness in government refers to access to public records and meetings. Regardless of what label an access law is given – “sunshine,” freedom of information, or transparency – the premise is that everyday people have the right to know what actions their government is taking.¹

The ☀ Sunshine Report from the LWVLC Observer Corps:

Lane County Board of Commissioners

[December 2, 2025 \[meeting agenda and materials\]](#)

The Board approved a request to sell property on Rhododendron Drive in Florence to the **Oregon Coast Humane Society** for \$500. The organization is a non-profit animal shelter whose mission is rescuing, caring for, and finding responsible, loving, permanent homes for homeless and at-risk dogs and cats. Acquisition of the property will allow expansion to accommodate the hundreds of animals cared for in the facility each year.

A Health and Human Services report focused on the financial and emotional harm caused by **gambling addiction in Lane County**. Of great concern is the **exposure to gambling opportunities, which begin as early as middle school**, and the effect of gambling addiction on developing adolescent brains. The rate of gambling addiction is 4% higher in Oregon compared to data for the rest of the nation. Gambling opportunities are ubiquitous, from sports betting and gambling as part of video games to visiting casinos; yet gambling disorder remains underdiagnosed and undertreated, often due to stigma, isolation, and a lack of public awareness. The [GamAware Coalition of Lane County](#) provides resources to raise awareness of and reduce gambling- and gaming-related harm. Lane County is the only county in Oregon with a coalition devoted to this issue.

Commissioners held a work session on the [City of Eugene Urban Growth Strategies Project](#), a multi-year urban growth boundary analysis that integrates state-required urban growth planning and equitable community engagement. Council-directed Urban Growth Strategies will identify the tools, actions, policies, and land needed for housing, jobs, and other urban uses within Eugene’s urban growth boundary for the next 20 years.

¹ [LWV Observing Your Government in Action](#)

According to the Oregon Housing Needs Analysis, Eugene needs more than **26,000 homes over the next 20 years**. This would require the construction of about 1600 homes each year, a 70% increase from current production. Necessary regulatory changes could include adjusting density standards, updating zoning, supporting missing middle housing and zoning changes. The vision for the future must also include planning for new jobs and employment zones. A more detailed explanation of the principles involved in the planning and an illustrative map can be found [here](#).

In the **Public Comments** period, a majority of the six who spoke expressed opposition to the use of Flock cameras with concerns about the security of the data collected and the concept of surveillance.

 Reported by: Nancy Mills

Springfield City Council

November 17, 2025

In the **Community Testimony** period, there were six additional pleas for reconsideration of the \$500,000 cut to the public library. Three individuals spoke against the use of Flock cameras. Mayor VanGordon said the topic was still being researched and would be brought before the public soon.

The Council discussed the annexation of five residential parcels into Springfield proper and the construction of six homes on 52nd St by Dev Northwest as potential homes for lower income families.

Springfield's Heritage Commission gave two awards for 2025. The History Maker Award went to the Springfield Ukrainian Catholic Church for all of the cultural richness they have added to the community. The Preservation Award went to the Lane County Monuments Project that created historical narratives to go with many historical monuments in Lane County and Springfield, in particular.

November 24, 2025

The City Council met for a rather quiet, but productive meeting. First were in-person interviews for several city advisory boards. Next the Council listened to updates on efforts to support lower income families with financial waivers and help with home improvements. Finally, Alli Camp and the Springfield Economic Development Agency (SEDA) gave a follow-up report on progress towards the master plan for the large property in Glenwood. Alli stated that when the master plan is finally finished, all of the infrastructure will have been decided, i.e., water, sewer, electrical, boundaries, etc. The Council was pleased with SEDA's progress and encouraged Alli and the SEDA team to move forward.

There were no comments from the public during this Council meeting.

December 1, 2025

Most of the evening was devoted to testimony from more than 20 speakers from Springfield and Eugene about **ICE operations** in our city and area. Approximately 80 concerned residents were present. People called on the Council to be more proactive in protecting our non-white population. The Council responded that they would look into all of the suggestions offered and would get back to the community soon.

In the Business Session, the Council heard reports from city departments. The Transportation Planning Department discussed a traffic calming study they are conducting with home owners on Centennial Street to determine if speed bumps of two types have been effective. Speeding on city streets has become a big problem since the Covid shutdown and they are exploring several options to fix this problem.

 Reported by: Jen Allison-Keim

Eugene City Council

[November 24, 2025 \[meeting agenda and materials\]](#)

Councilors voted unanimously to **end a tax exemption for a low-income housing project completed in 2024 because the non-profit agency administering it chose to shift use from permanent housing to short-term shelter**. The Reveille Foundation property, a converted motel at 1190 W. Sixth Ave., had operated with reduced taxes for a year and will repay the taxes owed for that year. The shift will allow Reveille to be eligible for tax relief under a Lane County program serving homeless individuals with low-level criminal offenses who agree to participate in a specialized program to avoid going to jail.

Councilors also voted unanimously to begin considering **urban growth strategies** to address the city's future urban land needs with an emphasis on planning for a significant increase in housing at all income levels. The comprehensive effort will include creating a buildable lands inventory for both residential and employment uses and an urban growth boundary expansion analysis. The effort will include ongoing community engagement and an overall project timeline that extends through 2030.

Among the 24 people who spoke in the **Public Comment** period, almost everyone wanted the city council to block the construction of an **Amazon warehouse** near the airport. There was also continuing pressure to end the Flock Security traffic monitoring cameras contract and have the cameras removed from the city.

The most passionate comments addressed the **recent increase in area ICE arrests**. Speakers referred to them as abductions of law-abiding people. Three comments stood out:

- One woman referred to 1930s Germany and the era of Jewish persecution that led to the murders of 6 million people. "Hundreds of Oregonians have been kidnapped by ICE. They are denied due process. This should be the only thing this City Council

should be talking about right now.... If you have ever wondered, what would I have done, you need only look at what you're doing now. We are in the equivalent of 1930s Germany."

- One man said: "We have armed gangs in the street wearing masks and kidnapping people. These are not arrests, these are abductions....Your residents need protection right now."
- Another resident noted that Portland and other cities have declared **a state of emergency** related to the impacts of the federal deportations and asked councilors to consider a similar measure.

At the end of public comments, Councilor Lyndsie Leech asked city staff to prepare information for the Council about the steps and possible impacts of such an emergency declaration.

 Reported by: Susan Palmer

Eugene Water and Electricity Board

December 2, 2025 [[meeting agenda and materials](#)]

This was the second of two opportunities members of the public were given to comment on the proposed 2026 rate hikes: 4.4% for electric (20.8% McKenzie Valley Residential) and 6% for water. Only one member of the public testified and was supportive of the 2026 budget, including proposed rates. The Board passed the pricing resolutions unanimously.

The Board voted unanimously to allow EWEB to negotiate and execute an agreement to **transfer EWEB's McKenzie Valley service territory**, including designated assets and rights to operate, to Lane Electric Cooperative. Speaking in favor of the change, Commissioner Schlossberg said Lane Electric is better positioned to serve rural customers, and this transfer will allow upriver customers to have more representation. Commissioners Brown, Morris, and Carlson indicated their support. Commissioner Barofsky noted that despite transferring assets, EWEB will continue to be involved with the Upper McKenzie Valley as it is the source of our water and some renewable power projects.

Discussing **Limited Income Program Assistance**, it was noted that limited income customers are 4 times more likely to get services turned off and 50% more likely to get late fees. Five hundred customers needed assistance but didn't get help in 2025. EWEB has a process for determining whether customers qualify for assistance and several stages (income verification and scheduling interviews) were problematic. Customers have different reasons for needing assistance. EWEB is proposing a new Affordability Program for those with a chronic financial burden that would provide on-going help for those on a fixed low income, as well as an enhanced EWEB Customer Care (ECC) program intended to help people in need of intermittent help to avoid getting their power turned off. No information was given on how much funding EWEB would put toward these programs.

 Reported by: Jenny Lippert

Oakridge City Council

[November 20, 2025 \[meeting agenda and materials\]](#)

Mayor Cutchen opened a discussion regarding the continued Public Hearing of **rezoning request #4** by saying there were not any conflicts of interest or ex parte contacts. James Cleavenger, City Administrator, said the new rezoning maps had some missing information and were not yet available. After much discussion about whether it was better to close the Public Hearing and schedule it later or to have it continue until the next meeting, it was decided to continue the Public Hearing at the December 4 meeting.

The Council entered executive session to review a complaint against City Administrator Cleavenger. Upon returning to public session, Cleavenger asked for as much transparency as possible over the complaint. Three citizens spoke during the **Public Comment** period about their favorable interactions with Mr. Cleavenger over the ten years he has worked for the city. The Council unanimously approved acknowledging the receipt of the complaint, authorizing the city attorney to hire a third-party investigator (up to \$5,000), and requiring the Administrator to provide a neutral workplace and not supervise the complainant during the investigation.

 Reported by: Leslie Heaton

The Observer Corps is a group of LWVLC members who pledge to regularly attend government meetings and report back to the Lane County League. We have Observers at the County Commissioners meetings, Eugene City Council, Eugene 4J School District, Springfield School District, and Lane Transit District. To keep you informed, we will distribute their reports by email once a month. When topics arise that require action or attendance by a larger number of us, LWVLC will send out an email "Call for Action".

If you are interested in joining the Observer Corps, please contact Terry Parker, Advocacy Chair (action@lwvlc.com) or Beatrice McKenzie (beatrice@lwvlc.org). We hope to recruit one or two members for each government group. You can attend a meeting first before you pledge to go regularly.