

City of St. Helens CITY COUNCIL

Work Session Minutes

October 21, 2015

Members Present: Randy Peterson, Mayor
Doug Morten, Council President
Keith Locke, Councilor
Susan Conn, Councilor
Ginny Carlson, Councilor

Staff Present: John Walsh, City Administrator
Jon Ellis, Finance Director
Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder
Margaret Jeffries, Library Director
Terry Moss, Police Chief – left early
Crystal Farnsworth, Communications Officer
Riki Frappier, Interim Municipal Court Clerk

Others: Tina Curry Steve Topaz Colleen DeShazer
Bing Theobald Eric Jensen Ed Burgmans
John Harper CJ Peterson Page Atchison

Mayor Randy Peterson called the meeting to order at 1 p.m.



Visitor Comments

♦**Steve Topaz.** Distributed a handout that listed what he thought went wrong with the pumpkin lighting celebration. A copy is included in the archive meeting packet. St. Helens likes to have big events to showcase the City but they need to find a way to work with other agencies. When he worked on the Maritime and 4th of July events, they had to follow rules and fill out forms. That doesn't seemed to have happened for the pumpkin lighting. There were kids everywhere and no traffic control when it was dark. He was concerned that there was only one way in and out of the Boise Veneer lot and cars were traveling the same path as pedestrians. Safety needs to be improved. The Maritime team set the standard high but no one seemed to follow it. The City lacked communication with businesses and restaurants.

Discuss Requests for Staffing Additions/Modifications

Finance Director Ellis reviewed the staffing needs as included in the archive meeting packet.

Councilor Locke asked if the surplus funds are from the reduced staffing at the Police Department. Ellis cannot say for sure. He will return to the next meeting with a report. Locke would like to use those saved funds to keep Scott Williams working full-time as code enforcement. Councilor Conn was concerned about the impact that would have on Public Works. Ellis agreed that would have an impact on service levels.

Mayor Peterson would like to spend a couple more weeks reviewing the request and then address it at the next meeting. There are needs in every department. Ellis reminded Council that he will be retiring June 30. He would like to have a replacement sooner than that for training purposes.

Councilor Locke asked what the financial status is of Municipal Court. Ellis said they are in line with the budget but still require about \$130,000 in General Fund resources. More information will be included in the next quarterly report.

It was the consensus of the Council to continue discussion at the November 4 work session.

Spirit of Halloweentown Activities Update

Tina Curry with E2C Corporation was in attendance to give Council an update. Tina talked about how successful the events have gone. There has been an influx of visitors from out of town. She addressed the pumpkin lighting event. The parking was not horrible. Photographers, Marnie and other visitors seemed to make it here fine. Just like Trailblazer games, you're going to have a backup of traffic when there's an influx of people coming. Ideally, the Monster Dash and pumpkin lighting would not have been on the same day. They had no idea how big it would get when it was first announced that Marnie would be attending. Another concern was the bathroom situation. Unfortunately, they did not have a good phone number to contact Hudson to have the port-a-potties emptied. They now have it for future events.

New activities were added this year and continue to be added for the coming weekends. Unfortunately, we cannot control websites giving incorrect event information. Restaurants have had phenomenal sales and are gearing up for record crowds. Tina distributed and reviewed a plan of action for 2016. A copy is included in the archive meeting packet.

Councilor Conn suggested working with the Kiwanis to help with parking. They manage the parking during the fair.

Presentation by Community Advocate for Spirit of Halloweentown Planning

Stephanie Patterson was in attendance to present her ideas for Spirit of Halloweentown next year. She distributed and reviewed a proposal. A copy is included in the archive meeting packet.

She thanked the Council and Tina for their work on the Spirit of Halloweentown. She would like to establish a task force of Chamber members, SHEDCO and business owners. The community needs to be involved. Stephanie talked about Halloweentown activities that began in 1998 and what can be done in the future.

Stephanie spoke of two other cities that have taken advantage of marketing and are thriving; Leavenworth, Washington and Sleepy Hollow, New York.

We have a lot to be proud of in this town.

Presentation by Eric Jensen for Proposed Dog Sculpture

Eric Jensen was in attendance to present the Council with his idea for a dog sculpture in St. Helens. He briefly reviewed the history of Lewis and Clark's dog, Seaman. He showed Council samples of other projects he has worked on.

Eric's proposal places the sculpture near the river in old town. He displayed a drawing of what it would look like. Funds would be raised through foundation grants and managed by a committee. The project would create civic pride.

Eric would like to leave the drawing here on display until Monday. The next steps would be to

gain agreement from the Council and then create a committee.

Mayor Peterson asked what kind of timeline is anticipated. Eric believes it would be a year. It will depend on funding. Peterson informed Eric that this will need to go to the Arts & Cultural Commission.

Council President Morten said this fits uniquely in the vision of the waterfront. However, it's too soon right now to make any decisions for that property.

Communications FY14/15 4th Quarter and FY15/16 1st Quarter Reports

Crystal Farnsworth presented her reports, copies of which are included in the archive packet for this meeting.

Discussion Regarding Carbon Pricing

Page Atchison from Oregon Climate was in attendance to answer any questions.

Council President Morten suggested Page work with League of Oregon Cities (LOC). Page reviewed the other agencies that have adopted resolutions.

No decisions were made.

Review Draft Marijuana Related Business License Form and Community Impact Agreement

City Administrator Walsh reviewed the form and agreement. Copies are included in the archive meeting packet.

Council President Morten asked if the percentages are the same for retail and grow operations. Walsh confirmed it is the same. They would be separate business licenses.

♦Ed Burgmans, Alternative Medical Consulting. The State has already mandated a 17% tax. They will be giving 3% back to counties and cities. Is the City taxing the actual product? If so, he does not believe you can tax medication.

Mayor Peterson confirmed that the tax is based on gross sales.

♦John Harper. He is a local business owner and represents GEO Enterprises. Is the City's tax in addition to what you will receive from the State?

Walsh confirmed it is. John H. does not believe the City will need that much as an impact. Adding that tax is going to drive people to the street. Council President Morten said they were suggested higher percentages from another applicant. John H. said they are going to be competing against the street. These businesses are not eligible for tax deductions for rent, labor, wages, utilities, etc. He would advise them to stay out of the City if these taxes are approved.

Ed urged the Council to work individually with each business when setting rates.

John H. suggested the Council reduce the percentage or make it a flat rate fee for the first year. It can be adjusted in a year if needed.

♦CJ Peterson. This provides jobs. We live in a town where half of the people use food stamp cards. We have bigger things to deal with than 15% tax. He owns a nonprofit in town that

helps homeless and abused kids. Some of his money will go towards helping them. He is a professional grower when he is not teaching. Our City is not that great. We have a huge problem with meth and heroine. The cannabis users are willing to come in and clean it up. It's not the weed users that are killing people.

♦**Bing Theobald**. She is an applicant for a marijuana business license. Morten mentioned that an applicant was willing to pay higher taxes. If she is thinking of the same person, he is not involved in the business. She was out of the country and did not know what was happening. Bing would like to make this business successful. She will be meeting with Walsh tomorrow to review business data.

Review Utility Rates Proposal for 2016

Finance Director Ellis reviewed his PowerPoint presentation. A copy is included in the archive meeting packet.

Council President Morten asked to combine our tax base and utility costs to compare with other cities. We have one of the lowest tax bases in Oregon. That would be helpful to show the public. The public also needs to know about all the projects that have been done to come into compliance with state and federal laws. Ellis can have that information available at the public forum.

Department Reports

Library Director Jeffries reported...

- The Library has hosted four Conversation Project programs. The next one will be talking about dying. It is a sensitive subject and will be held in an intimate setting.
- National Novel Writing Month occurs in November. St. Helens had the ninth highest word count in the nation. The kick-off will be held October 29 at 5 p.m.
- Lego play day will be held today at the Library.
- The Youth Librarian will be attending the Kiwanis Children's Fair on October 31. They will be talking to families about what the Library offers.
- Pumpkin painting will be held on October 30 at 3 p.m. in the auditorium.

Finance Director Ellis reported...

- Nothing to report.

Deputy City Recorder Scholl reported...

- Nothing to report.

City Administrator Walsh reported...

- People are in the plaza all day visiting the pumpkin and taking advantage of photo opportunities. The restaurants and downtown businesses are doing very well.
- Tina Curry will also coordinate the Christmas tree lighting.
- Fireworks was mentioned earlier today. A lead agency is still needed.

Council Reports

Mayor Peterson reported...

- Nothing to report.

Councilor Conn reported...

- We are in the top five proposals for STIP funding. The deadline is the 20th. Walsh added that the Gable Road sidewalk project is ranked number four in our transportation region.
- Crisis Intervention Training is happening right now. It's a 40 hour training for first

responders. Two people from the City are attending. Chief Moss is presenting at it this afternoon.

- Attended a Brown Bag lunch at the Port of St. Helens yesterday.
- Attended an ODOT meeting for the Millard Road intersection proposal with Walsh.

Council President Morten reported...

- The Parks and Trails Master Plan was distributed to the Parks Commission at Monday's meeting. Assistant Planner Jenny Dimsho did a great job reviewing the plan. The parks were individually assigned to various members. They will report back at each meeting.
- The Parks Commission recommended waiving permit fees for community events for nonprofits and events sponsored by the City. Conn asked for clarification on when fees are waived. Deputy City Recorder Scholl said that park use fees are waived for nonprofits. Any additional fees are either paid or need to come to Council to be waived. Discussion of the need to have a written policy.
- The Parks Commission reviewed camping. They support a staff study on the impacts of camping on Sand Island and McCormick Park.
- Thanked Mayor Peterson for his appearance on the first airing of City Talk on KOHI. John Walsh and Tina Curry joined him and spoke about Spirit of Halloweentown activities. He would like other departments to speak in the future.

Councilor Carlson reported...

- The number of people coming in to visit the Spirit of Halloweentown has been astounding.
- St. Helens Youth Council has made a lot of gains.
- A Planning Commission training will be held in Scappoose.
- A Hallow "Teen" dance and party will be held on Saturday at the Meriwether Place. It is for 6th – 12th graders. It is sponsored by the St. Helens Youth Council.
- Two Youth Council members are involved in the Ford Leadership program.
- Youth Council has been assisting with Spirit of Halloweentown activities on the weekends.

Councilor Locke reported...

- Mike Stone contacted him about the Christmas Ships. Last year, Morten made a suggestion for the City to fund it instead of just asking for donations from local restaurants. Locke considered approaching the restaurants and telling them we will pay for their supplies and they donate their time. Morten heard from two restaurant owners that said they didn't think they could do it again. Carlson heard from one as well. Peterson said we need to compile a list of how many people are participating and then put it out to all the restaurants for proposals. Morten suggested getting the Chamber involved as well.
- Spoke with Jim Calnon, who works for the Corps of Engineers. They will be filling both ends of the island. Jim gave him a number for a contact to talk about taking ownership of Sand Island.
- He will not be at the next meeting.
- Council members participating in Youth Council meetings and events need to go through a background check.

Executive Session

ORS 192.660(2)(e) Real Property Transactions

Motion: At 3:47 p.m., upon Locke's motion and Morten's second, the Council unanimously voted to move into executive session under ORS 192.660(2)(e) Real Property Transactions.

Motion: At 4:09 p.m., upon completion of the executive session, Locke moved to go back into work session, seconded by Morten, and unanimously approved.

Other Business

Boy Scouts will be here at 6:30 p.m. to meet with Mayor Peterson.



There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:09 p.m.

ATTEST:



Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder



Randy Peterson, Mayor