

# City of St. Helens

## CITY COUNCIL

Work Session Minutes

May 6, 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  
Kathy Payne, City Recorder  
Margaret Jeffries, Library Director  
Terry Moss, Police Chief  
Neal Sheppard, Interim Public Works Co-Director  
Sue Nelson, Interim Public Works Co-Director  
Jenny Dimsho, Assistant Planner  
Julie Metz, Municipal Court Clerk  
Cindy Phillips, Municipal Court Judge

**Others:** Carroll Sweet      Barbara Lines      Mark Miller  
Ashley Bagget

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



### **Visitor Comments**

♦Carroll Sweet. She is from Scappoose. She is running for Port Commissioner. She saw another oil train derailment and explosion on the news today. She is with a group called Envision Columbia County. They have been working on oil train safety. She asked the Council to appoint someone to keep up on the oil trains issue.

### **Annual Report from Library Board**

Library Board member Barbara Lines presented a presentation, which is in the archive packet for this meeting. Their recommendation to the Council is to continue to increase funding for the Library.

Barbara reviewed the children's programs and adults programs. The Library Board helped select the book for the Our Community Reads program. A book from 1915 was selected to coincide with the Library's 100<sup>th</sup> birthday being celebrated throughout the month of May.

Over the period of several meetings, the Library Board reviewed their by-laws. They will disperse into subcommittees to focus on particular areas.

The Board has been reviewing Library staff and building safety concerns. Friends of the Library and Board members have stepped up to assist the Library during programs while there has been a shortage of staff.

There are two Board vacancies. They will conduct interviews and make a recommendation to

Council for appointments.

Council President Morten expressed that the Library serves as the cultural center of our community.

### **Municipal Court 3rd Quarter Report**

Finance Director Ellis introduced Julie Metz, Municipal Court Clerk. They reviewed the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter report, which is in the archive packet for this meeting.

Ellis talked about Julie's ability to utilize the Full Court program to the max. Julie reported that she has been able to go from inputting information into three programs and now to only entering it into Full Court and sending it out within three minutes instead of 30 minutes. They were two months behind when she began and now they're about a month behind. She hopes to streamline information going to the collection agency as well.

Ellis plans to include workload details in future reports. Julie is very involved in the Oregon Association for Court Administration (OACA). She is looking into becoming a member of their Board. She is also utilizing the association to get copies of other agency reports.

Councilor Conn asked if our court is working with drug court. Julie said they are arranging a meeting to start working on it.

### **Semi-Annual Report from Municipal Court Judge**

Judge Cindy Phillips was in attendance to give her report, which is in the archive packet for this meeting. She commended Julie for her computer skills and trying to make things more efficient. She encouraged the Council to allow staff to move forward with getting Full Court Enterprise, especially if the request to add a part-time staff person is not approved in the budget process for FY2015-16.

Judge Phillips thinks that working with drug court is an excellent idea. She is available to meet and begin the process.

She expressed her pleasure with the jail keeping inmates detained and not releasing them early. It still happens occasionally but is no longer constant. The process is working again.

Judge Phillips also expressed what an excellent police force we have. Court stays busy because the officers are working hard.

Mayor Peterson asked if the Full Court upgrade is in the current budget? Ellis said it's in the current budget and the carry forward. Most likely the upgrade will occur in October.

Ellis requested semi-annual municipal court reports to the Council instead of quarterly reports. Council was okay with that.

### **3rd Quarter Financial Report**

Finance Director Ellis presented his 3rd quarter financial report, which is included in the archive packet for this meeting.

### **Review "If I Were Mayor..." Contest Entries**

We received three posters representing 4-5 grades and three essays representing 6-8 grades. We did not receive any videos this year for 9-12 grades. Council used a ballot form to anonymously vote for their favorite poster and essay. Winners will be announced at this

evening's regular session.

### **Review Parks Commission Recommendations**

Council President Morten reported on the following:

- The Girls Softball Association requested credit for work they perform on City fields. The Parks Commission was not in support of setting that precedent. Councilor Carlson does not disagree but wants to find ways to encourage volunteerism. Councilor Conn would like to encourage volunteerism as well. She wants to make sure we show appreciation. Mayor Peterson appreciates them volunteering as well. However, they choose to make the improvements to the fields beyond what the City does. The fees are not unreasonable. Council concurred with the Parks Commission recommendation.
- Request from the Friends of the Library to install a small free library box at Columbia View Park by the lifejacket station. The Parks Commission was in support of this request. Library Director Jeffries reported that this is common among boaters. It was the consensus of the Council to go ahead with it.
- The Parks Commission discussed the "no smoking" ban in the parks. They wanted to keep the ordinance the way it is and allow smoking in the parks. They felt the Police could not enforce it. Mayor Peterson asked Chief Moss for his opinion. Chief Moss does not believe law enforcement is solely responsible to enforce the law that bans smoking within ten feet of a building entrance. It is much easier to enforce an ordinance that bans smoking in a park.

Ashley Bagget. She works for the Public Health Foundation as a Tobacco Prevention Coordinator. She grew up in Warren and worked in the Parks Department from 2003-2006. She spent a lot of time picking up cigarette butts at the ball fields and where children gather. In terms of the law, there is a 50 foot smoking ban from playgrounds. That can be ambiguous and is self-enforced. No amount of second hand smoke is safe. She proposes a blanket tobacco-free park to cover all forms of tobacco use. It can be self and police enforced. Communication and signage is very important.

Morten also pointed out the fire hazard in our parks. He appreciates Ashley's input. Sheppard add that the only two brush fires they have had in McCormick Park were caused by cigarettes.

Councilor Carlson talked about the great smoke-free signs the City of Rainier has in their parks.

Mayor Peterson requested staff present a revised ordinance banning smoking in parks. The parks are for family and children's activities. It's time to set the standard.

### **Highway Directional Signage Update**

City Recorder Payne followed up on the highway directional signage. She asked if the Council would prefer the sign to say Houlton Business District or Houlton District. It was the consensus of the Council to designate it as Houlton District. Directional signs will be placed at the following locations:

- Houlton District
  - Southeast corner of Milton Way and Columbia Blvd., headed east.
  - Northwest corner of N. 13<sup>th</sup> Street and Columbia Blvd., headed west.
- Riverfront District
  - Southeast corner of S. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street and St. Helens Street, headed east.

- Columbia View Amphitheater
  - By the pole in front of Scandalous Hair Salon.

### **Review RFQ for LED Lighting**

City Administrator Walsh performed an energy audit. The LED street lighting project would pay for itself overtime with the amount of money saved in energy costs.

Council was in concurrence to move forward with advertising the RFQ.

### **Department Reports**

#### **Police Chief Moss** reported...

- Tonight's agenda includes a declaration of surplus property, which includes a lot of bicycles.
- The building was painted a similar color to what it was before. It looks fresh and new.
- Interviewed candidates for the two open Police Officer positions last week. We selected one and made a tentative offer of employment. They are going to continue the recruitment process to fill the second position.
- The Sergeant position closes Friday.

#### **Interim Public Works Co-Director Nelson** reported...

- There was a nice article in the Spotlight about the goats clearing Godfrey Park. The goats completed their job and are gone now.

#### **Interim Public Works Co-Director Sheppard** reported...

- Nothing to report.

#### **Library Director Jeffries** reported...

- One of the historic Oregon newspapers that was digitized was the Columbia Register, which was the Houlton, Oregon paper, between 1904-1906.
- Copies of the Our Community Reads book is now available at the Library. It is titled 39 Steps and published in 1915. It was later made into a Hitchcock movie. You can also read it for free online.

#### **Finance Director Ellis** reported...

- Tonight's agenda includes a resolution for re-appropriation; including the heating and air conditioning for City Hall, dock repairs, an AED, security cameras at the Police station, Library lockers, and a Parks building security system; some of which will be funded by a CIS matching grant.
- Requested to go into executive session to discuss an issue under ORS 192.660(2)(h) Potential Litigation.

#### **City Recorder Payne** reported...

- Tonight's agenda includes an ordinance for housekeeping amendments. They are primarily items Council has discussed over the last two years that are now in ordinance format.
- Jay Tappan's term on the Columbia Foundation expires May 31. Mayor Peterson said there is a vacant position as well. Councilor Conn has resigned.
- Reminder the City County Quarterly Dinner is May 26 at 6 p.m. at the St. Helens Senior Center.
- Be thinking about the summer schedule. In the past 10 years or so, we have cancelled the first meetings in July and August.
- Questions have come up since we hired goats to clear vegetation in Godfrey Park. She proposes to amend our code to allow temporary utilization of goats for vegetation clearing. Council concurred.

**City Administrator Walsh** reported...

- Working on several RFP's and RFQ's:
  - Street lights RFQ.
  - Bridge RFP.
  - Phone system RFP.
  - Consulting services RFQ related to the EPA Area Wide Planning Grant.
- Preparing for the Waterfront Committee meeting Monday at 3 p.m.

**Council Reports**

**Mayor Peterson** reported...

- Nothing to report.

**Councilor Conn** reported...

- She and Walsh attended the Columbia County Future Connect Work Group meeting funded by the Ford Foundation for the PCC scholarship program. They are beginning to recognize there may have been issues with the community. They are working to rebuild bridges. It's a great opportunity for students.
- Completed Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) training April 20-24. Thanked Council for providing money for snacks. She attended the course and is looking forward to future trainings. It was a collaboration of three mental health organizations, Columbia River Fire & Rescue, Sheriff's Department, State Police, local police, corrections, and community members. They provided tools to first responders to recognize mental health crisis's and de-escalate them safely.

**Council President Morten** reported...

- Thanked the Budget Committee and Ellis for their hard work. There were good comments by everyone.
- Carroll Sweet brought up an issue about "insurance" regarding the coal trains. Who pays if there is an accident and how much? What happens if there is a coal train wreck in our community? What is the final toll on businesses, the community, and the environment? We owe it to our citizens to answer those questions. He appreciates that being brought forward.

**Councilor Carlson** reported...

- NAMI walk is May 17. They are one of the groups who raised money for the CIT training. They are neck and neck with Multnomah County raising money for mental health services not covered by federal or state programs.
- We talked about appreciating volunteers at a previous meeting. The 13 Nights on the River group was recognized last year. She asked if the Council would support thanking the group who did the splash park project. Mayor Peterson agreed that was a good idea.
- She has been working with a buy-local group. They have secured funding from the County and Scappoose to support a County-wide buy-local effort. They are requesting \$1,000 from each city.

**Motion:** Upon Carlson's motion and Conn's second, the Council unanimously approved granting \$1,000 to the buy-local program.

**Councilor Locke** reported...

- Can the parade go through the Boise property? It would ease traffic congestion. Walsh will work with Boise on it.
- He would like the City to be involved in the parade. Sheppard will find out if the 1920's City truck still runs.

**Executive Session**

**ORS 192.660(2)(e) Real Property Transactions**

**ORS 192.660(2)(h) Potential Litigation**

**Motion:** At 2:44 p.m., upon Morten's motion and Locke's second, the Council unanimously voted to move into executive session under ORS 192.660(2)(e) Real Property Transactions and (h) Potential Litigation.

**Motion:** At 3:24 p.m., upon completion of the executive session, Morten moved to go back into work session, seconded by Carlson, and unanimously approved.

**Other Business**

No other business.




There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:25 p.m.

ATTEST:



Kathy Payne, City Recorder



Randy Peterson, Mayor