

City of St. Helens CITY COUNCIL

Work Session Minutes

September 21, 2016

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

Staff Present: John Walsh, City Administrator
Matt Brown, Finance Director
Crystal Farnsworth, Communications Officer
Margaret Jeffries, Library Director
Terry Moss, Police Chief
Neal Sheppard, Public Works Operations Director
Sue Nelson, Public Works Engineering Director

Others: Kellie Smith Gretchen Williams
Al Petersen

Mayor Randy Peterson called the meeting to order at 1:01 p.m.



Visitor Comments

◆Kellie Smith, St. Helens School District Board Member and Co-Chair of the Committee for the bond measure to renew, replace and renovate. They are requesting a \$49 million bond to rebuild the middle school, make improvements at the high school and build a school for CCEC. The bond will not raise taxes. It will replace the current bond that is expiring.

Councilor Carlson asked what the construction timeline is. Kellie said the construction would begin about a year after the bond is passed, if it does pass. She handed out conceptual drawings of the proposed construction.

Council President Morten asked if the Board is anticipating any changes based on it being an election year and politicians advocating for changes. Kellie responded that the Board is not anticipating any major changes right now.

Motion: Upon Carlson's motion and Conn's second, the Council unanimously moved to support the school bond with a resolution.

◆Gretchen Williams. She is here to talk about the Visitor Center conversation that was brought up at the last Council meeting. She was disappointed to hear the words "rumor has it" brought up repeatedly during the meeting. City government should not be run on rumors. To address those rumors: She has applied for three jobs in the time she has been with the Chamber. They are all full-time jobs with benefits, prospects that she will never have at the Visitor Center. She is not in a hurry to "run out the door" of the Visitor Center. She is not the only person who can do her job. It is a basic position that many people can fulfill. However, she goes above and

beyond her job description.

Councilor Conn said she thinks Gretchen has heard "rumor has it" from the City Council before because the Council doesn't receive any reports from the Visitor Center. Gretchen said she has considered preparing reports for the City. She reports to the Chamber of Commerce and can send an email to the City has well.

Council President Morten recalled that the Council used to have a liaison to the Chamber in the past, but they don't anymore.

♦Al Petersen. To follow up on Gretchen's report, he was involved with the Chamber reorganization. He recalled discussion that Gretchen would report to Scott Burge and he should be reporting to the St. Helens City Council.

Regarding the last Waterfront meeting, to those that weren't there, it was a very good meeting. The developer did an excellent job of describing what he expects cities to have ready for development to begin. The Council should review what he said. Al wants to reemphasize what the developer said about the City providing evidence that what they are doing is based on plans that are in place. That should include streetscapes, public art, street trees, utility improvements, etc. The City has a Transportation System Plan and Corridor Master Plan in place. We should be making improvements based on what is in those plans, not simply replacing what is currently existing.

Employee Length of Service Award

We have one employee who has reached a big milestone in their employment with the City of St. Helens. The following individual will receive a certificate and pin at the September 21 Council work session.

25 Years

Terry Moss came to work for the City as a Police Officer in September of 1991. He then worked as Detective and Sergeant before being promoted to Lieutenant in September of 2003. In April 2013, after the retirement of Chief Steve Salle', he became Police Chief.

Congratulations, Terry, and thank you for your service!

Update on the 2015-16 Historic Preservation Rehabilitation Grant Program

Assistant Planner Jenny Dimsho presented an update on the grant program. Dimsho reviewed her memo that is included in the archive meeting packet. The following projects were funded:

- 61 Plaza Square, Pieper-Ramsdell Agency, Inc.
 - Grant Award: \$3,250
 - Total Project: \$6,502
- 20 S. 1st Street, VanNatta/Petersen Building
 - Grant Award: \$3,250
 - Total Project: \$39,685
- 231/235 S. 1st Street, Masonic Building
 - Grant Award: \$3,250
 - Total Project: \$15,400
- 170 Columbia Blvd., private residence
 - Grant Award: \$3,250
 - Total Project: \$7,275

Discuss Possibly Partnering with CAT for Housing Survey

City Administrator John Walsh reported that Jim Tierney has been before the Council several times regarding a housing needs assessment and requesting the City financially support the assessment. Walsh has talked to Jim about how they can leverage that cost by matching with grants. Walsh recommends the Council authorize up to \$10,000, but \$5,000 up front.

Motion: Upon Locke's motion on the floor from the September 7 Council regular session and Conn's second, the Council unanimously authorized up to \$10,000 for the housing needs assessment.

Discuss Enterprise Zone Policy Proposal

Columbia County Economic Team Executive Director Chuck Daughtry reviewed the proposal. A copy is included in the archive meeting packet. Approvals have been received from Columbia City, Scappoose, Clatskanie and Rainier. Port of St. Helens will vote on it next week. Columbia County votes on it today at 2:30 p.m.

Council President Morten asked if CCET voted on the proposal and if it was approved. Chuck said yes, it was voted on and unanimously approved.

Councilor Locke requested to see numbers comparing the current percentages to the proposed, before voting on it. Chuck could report back to Council with that information. However, this is time sensitive and that would take a while.

Council agreed to put it on the agenda tonight for consideration.

IT Services Update

Finance Director Matt Brown gave an update on the RFP process. A panel of five staff members reviewed two proposals received, from Centerlogic and St. Helens Computer Center. Scoring was heavily in favor with going forward with Centerlogic and the pricing was a major difference. It was decided that he and City Recorder Payne would meet with Craig Schmid of Centerlogic to review some of the recent concerns, particularly regarding customer service issues. Staff recommends moving forward with a standard contract, but for only one year, to assess if improvements are made.

Mayor Peterson asked for the price difference. Brown said the St. Helens Computer was about \$8,100/month and Centerlogic was about \$5,200/month. Last year, we spent about \$71,000 for service. Peterson expressed his concern about their lack of responsiveness. Brown agreed and said that's why they are only proposing a one-year contract. Staff is working on mechanisms to track service better.

Council President Morten expressed his disappointment that a Councilor was not on the interview panel when it was a Council generated issue that spurred the initial RFP process. In the future, Council should be included to act as a watchdog to make sure the process is fair and open.

Councilor Locke said he does not think Centerlogic should have been given the opportunity to respond to City concerns without St. Helens Computer Center being given that same opportunity with regard to any concerns that the City had with their proposal.

Councilor Carlson likes the idea of a one-year contract to make service improvements.

Discussion on Sewage Rates for Kavanagh LID Non-Residents

Finance Director Brown reviewed the memo included in the archive meeting packet. He received the actual usage from McNulty Water PUD for Bing's account. It raised concerns regarding the other LID customers using McNulty water. There is significant higher usage based on McNulty's actual usage amounts as opposed to the averages that were used to initially calculate rates for customers. Brown is looking for direction from Council before moving forward. His recommendation is to use the actual usage instead of an average.

Public Works Engineering Director Sue Nelson and Brown met with McNulty to work on collaborating moving forward with being able to get actual usage to calculate sewer bills.

Council directed Brown to send a notice to customers making them aware that an issue has been discovered and their accounts are being evaluated for potential changes. Council was in agreement of moving forward with Brown's recommendations.

Update on Bing's Restaurant Sewer Issue

Finance Director Brown reminded the Council that the owner of Bing's restaurant attended the previous meeting but was not prepared to make a statement. Brown called him six times and he only returned one call and said he was seeking representation to be at the meeting. He has called four times since then regarding meeting together, and has not heard back from him. His sewer bill is now about \$2,000. Brown recommends moving forward with shutting off services based on delinquency. That also involves the County shutting down his restaurant until the sewage bill is paid. The LID is a whole other issue, which is about \$8,000.

Mayor Peterson asked what the process would be for shutting off services. Public Works Operations Director met with County staff and discussed the process. Bing's would be notified by letter two weeks prior to shut off and have the opportunity to make payment.

Motion: Upon Conn's motion and Morten's second, the Council unanimously approved staff's recommendation to begin the process of shutting off sewer service to Bing's Restaurant.

Review Requests to Waive Special Use Permit & Concession Fees for Halloweentown Events (Spirit of Halloweentown, Haunted/Scarecrow Tours & Parade)

Motion: Upon Morten's motion and Conn's second, the Council unanimously approved the waiver of Special Use Permit fees and Concession Agreement fees for Spirit of Halloweentown activities being put on by the City, Special Use Permit fees and Concession Agreement Fees for Shoestring Community Players Haunted Walking Tours, Special Use Permit fees and Concession Agreement fees for Shoestring Community Players Scarecrows Walking Tours and Special Use Permit fees for South Columbia County Chamber of Commerce Spirit of Halloweentown kick-off parade.

Update on Halloweentown Activities

Tina Curry gave the City Council an update on Spirit of Halloweentown activities and planning.

- The first weekend is being promoted just for the community with major activities beginning October 8.
- Public Works Operations Director Sheppard has a long list of public works items to prepare for.
- Chief Moss has a complete traffic plan in place.
- Information signage will be posted to direct visitors.
- Fox 12 On the Go with Joe will be here early in the morning on October 10. Communications Officer Farnsworth is putting clips together to give him.
- Two actors from Buffy the Vampire Slayer will be here on the last weekend of October.

- Anya Moucha is working on several items:
 - Walking map for visitors.
 - Points of interest map.
 - Other items to assist visitors.
- Many people are flying into town from out of state. Visitors should be more spread out this year because more activities are occurring.
- More props have been purchased.
- They are going to top the Plaza with an inch and a half of sand to try to help reduce the mud.
- There will be a fenced beer and wine area this year. It will not be open container.
- Parking is \$10 with in and out privileges. Kiwanis and CERT, as the parking volunteers, will receive 60% and the City retains 40%.

Councilor Locke expressed his concern with some of the obstacles on the waterfront property for parking. Chief Moss explained that he is working with Public Works Operations Director Sheppard and they will be using cones to mark road ways and parking spots. There will also be lighting from the City and the County.

Gretchen Williams added that the Visitor Center will be open on Sundays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. in October to assist. She has a wall of activities designated for event information. The restaurants are all well aware of the large crowds that will be present and are already prepping.

Department Reports

Police Chief Moss reported...

- Shifts in personnel have occurred. Jamin Coy is now a code enforcement officer and has been doing well. That opened up a police officer position.

Public Works Engineering Director Nelson reported...

- The contractor has started work again at Godfrey Park. They will start chipping out rock soon to get the rest of the pipe in.
- The contractor is getting ready to start the 2MG reservoir liner project.
- S-2 Contracting will be doing more trench patching in town. All utility work with trenches crossing the street for utility work will be patched to have pavement in place before winter.

Public Works Operations Director Sheppard reported...

- There has been a complaint on Facebook about a contaminate in drinking water called Chromium-6. He assured the Council that the City is not in any violation regarding this level.

Library Director Jeffries reported...

- Thank you to the Police Department in dealing with the Library's alarm system problem. There has been some intermittent issues with wiring that has hopefully been corrected today.
- This Thursday, an archaeologist will be presenting a program about Chinese mining in the John Day area. A mineral group has already expressed interest in attending. It is part of a series sponsored by the Oregon Historical Society.
- She will be attending the Public Library Directors Meeting in Hillsboro on Friday.
- Christmas Eve observance falls on Friday and Christmas observance on Monday. It leaves the Library with insufficient staffing for Friday and Saturday. She spoke with Councilor Conn and they have decided the Library closure will follow other city building closures.

Finance Director Brown reported...

- He met with Wells Fargo representatives yesterday to review fees for banking services and

credit/debit card processing. They are expecting to save about \$1,500 per month in transaction fees.

Communications Officer Farnsworth reported...

- Nothing to report.

City Administrator Walsh reported...

- Jasmine Jordan is the new Main Street Program Coordinator.
 - Jasmine introduced herself to the Council. She is excited to be in St. Helens and work with SHEDCO.
- Next week is the League of Oregon Cities conference. He and Communications Officer Farnsworth will be doing presentations at the conference regarding our website conversion and community engagement.

Council Reports

Councilor Conn reported...

- Last week was City Hall week. She and Councilor Locke went to Scappoose. Locke led a presentation about PERS and Conn led a presentation on property tax reform.
- She attended the Northwest Area Commission on Transportation (ACT) meeting. Columbia County Roadmaster Lonny Welter presented three projects regarding maintenance and prevention.
- She went to approximately 200 businesses to promote the Spirit of Halloweentown scarecrow contest.
- The next CIT training is in October. She requested \$300 to show support of the program and for snacks. Council approved the funding.

Council President Morten reported...

- There is a lot happening around St. Helens Marina with construction and storage of equipment.
- He has received a lot of good comments about the off-leash dog area in McCormick Park.
- He had received a couple calls about the tree that collapsed on the Columbia View Park restrooms. He asked Sheppard to report on what happened. Sheppard explained that a large limb fell on the roof and did significant damage to the restroom roof that will probably result in complete replacement. The tree is rotted and belongs to the County. It will need to be evaluated and will probably have to be removed.
- The Parks Commission will probably have a full agenda at their next meeting.
 - Lots of citizens have ideas for Campbell Park, including adding bocce ball and pickle ball courts to replace the tennis courts.
 - Ongoing discussion with Keith Forsythe about Civic Pride Park.
- Looking forward to the League of Oregon Cities (LOC) conference this week.
- He will be retiring from the board of Joint Utilities Association. Their annual meeting is the week after the LOC conference.

Councilor Carlson reported...

- She watched the text to 911 video with Chief Moss. She was impressed with it. It was professionally done.
- She was invited to participate in the Ford Leadership summit in Redmond, following the LOC conference.
- Al Petersen commented that we are redoing sidewalks using the old plan. She asked Public Works to offer feedback. Nelson explained that the particular replacement in question was an owner-initiated repair, not City initiated. She looked at the corridor plan and it calls for a bump out. They can't put that additional cost on the owner but the City doesn't have the

money to do it at this time. Since it was owner-initiated through the sidewalk repair program, a bump out was not currently feasible. A green strip could have been installed, but you would need to do the entire two block section to make it function correctly. It would not be difficult to do in the future, but the entire block would need to be redone at once.

- She has heard from three different people who have noticed maintenance done and equipment replaced in parks this year. People have noticed and are impressed.
- Can the Library ADA curb cut be indicated or painted to make it more obvious? She could see how someone in a vehicle could have hit someone in a wheelchair or with a walker based on where it is located. Sheppard will have Public Works look at it.

Councilor Locke reported...

- He attended the City Hall meeting in Scappoose. He talked about PERS. The increase is the equivalent of three police officers and a police car for St. Helens.
- Dan Brown has been hired as the new Community Action Team (CAT) director. He has been with CAT for over six years.

Mayor Peterson reported...

- Nothing to report.

Executive Session

ORS 192.660(2)(e) Real Property Transactions

Motion: At 2:54 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.

Motion: At 3:30 p.m., upon completion of the executive session, Morten moved to go back into work session, seconded by Conn, and unanimously approved.

Other Business

None.




There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:31 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder.

ATTEST:


Crystal Farnsworth, Communications Officer


Randy Peterson, Mayor