

# City of St. Helens City Council

Work Session Minutes

August 21, 2019

---

**Members Present:** Mayor Rick Scholl  
Councilor Ginny Carlson  
Councilor Keith Locke  
Councilor Stephen R. Topaz  
Council President Doug Morten (arrived at 2:39 p.m.)

**Members Absent:** None

**Staff Present:** John Walsh, City Administrator  
Kathy Payne, City Recorder  
Margaret Jeffries, Library Director  
Sue Nelson, Public Works Interim Director  
Brian Greenway, Police Chief  
Amy Lindgren, Municipal Court Judge

**Others:** Chrissy Marquardt Christine Menges  
Dave Innocenti Nicole Thill  
Kathy Innocenti

1) **1:00 P.M. - Call Work Session to Order**

2) **Visitor Comments - Limited to five (5) minutes per speaker**  
No visitor comments.

3) **Discussion Topics**

3.A Employee Length of Service Award

One employee has reached a milestone in his employment with the City of St. Helens. The following individual will receive a certificate and pin.

## **10 Years**

**Tory Shelby** came to work for the City in July of 2009 as a Parks Utility I. Since that time, he has worked as a Utility Worker I and II and a Parks Utility II, where he currently serves the citizens of St. Helens today.

**Congratulations, Tory, and thank you** for your service!

3.D Municipal Judge 4th Quarter Report - Judge Lindgren

3.E Prosecutor 4th Quarter Report – Written report in packet

Judge Amy Lindgren was in attendance to give her report. Prosecutor Sam Erskine is unable to be here and submitted a written report. She commented on parts of his report.

- In the process of appointing a pro-tem judge. It is on tonight's agenda for approval.
- Appreciate the addition of Court security.

- Have a turnaround time of about 30 days for misdemeanor cases, which is significantly shorter than the National Center for State Courts "Model Time Standards."
- Up to 105% clearance rate.
- Requested changing from quarterly reports to bi-annual reports. Consensus of Council to receive quarterly written reports and bi-annual in-person reports.
- Shout out to Code Enforcement Officer Marimar Moreno! She is doing a great job!

### 3.B Chamber of Commerce Semi-Annual Report – Chrissy Marquardt, Exec. Director

Chrissy Marquardt was in attendance to give a report to the Council.

#### Wings and Wheels

- It was a successful event and a learning experience as this was her first year.
- 1,700 spectators (200 more than last year).
- About 4,000 people including vendors and volunteers. Vendors were really happy. They love the event.

#### Visitor's Center

- Can give this more attention now that Wings and Wheels is over.
- The coffee cart is not up and running yet. The sink needs to be changed and an inspection done. It will be a priority for her in the next month.
- Cakehouse is doing very well. Erynn has been really helpful. She is an asset to the Chamber.
- The InRoads Credit Union Room is being used often. That room will eventually be able to be booked through an automated system.

#### Coffee & Commerce

- Held the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Friday of the month.
- September 13 at the Amani Center.
- September 27 at the St. Helens School District.

Mayor Scholl asked if the Wings & Wheels is a Chamber event? Chrissy said yes, with partnerships from the Port of Columbia County, Northwest Automobile Association Club, and Highway 30 Cruisers in St. Helens. They do need to improve on the running participation for the next one.

### 3.C Senior Center Semi-Annual Report – Kathy Innocenti, Center Manager

Senior Center Manager Kathy Innocenti was in attendance to give her report. A copy of the Financial Statement and Newsletter is included in the archive meeting packet.

- Received a large bequest this year. Their entire bank account is about \$300,000. Two-thirds of that is in a money market account. They are financially comfortable for now.
- Continuing to write grant applications and hold fundraisers.
- Top Notch is doing very well. It doesn't cover all of their expenses but the success of the store has kept the Center in business.
- Writing grant application to update the signs for Top Notch and the Senior Center.
- The Board has appointed a new member to fill a vacancy from a member passing away. Also updated the bylaws.
- She is now an Executive Director, rather than a manager.

- The HVAC in the building is finally starting to work properly. Columbia NW Heating has been great to work with. A ductless heat pump will be installed in the lobby next week. They are doing small steps at a time.
- She complimented Nelson for assistance from the Public Works crew.
- Fundraisers
  - Cinco De Mayo
  - British Tea
- Hired an activities coordinator to help implement more activities.
- Working with the Recreation Center for various activities.
- Attendance has increased 11% over the previous fiscal year.
- The kitchen prepared and served over 45,000 meals last fiscal year. That is a lot of food being prepared by two paid employees, a dishwasher, and a lot of volunteers.
- Hired an assistant cook.
- Have an assistant to the home delivery meals coordinator.
- Have done freezer and range repairs.
- Top Notch has been in business 10 years. They have had increases in sales every year. It's a really good money maker for the Center. They've given away over 2,100 books to kids during that time.
- She was a guest on an antiques and collectibles show on KOHL.

Discussion of partnerships and upcoming fundraisers.

3.F Discussion Regarding Bing's LID/SDC Partial Forgiveness Request  
City Recorder Payne distributed a handout to the Council. Councilor Carlson clarified that the recommendation is to relieve interest since the new owner was not aware of it.

**Motion:** Upon Topaz's motion and Carlson's second, the Council unanimously accepted staff's recommendation to not forgive the LID, forgive some of the SDCs but with interest, and pay \$100,000 in full. [Ayes: Scholl, Carlson, Locke, Topaz; Nays: None]

3.G Review Proposed New Parks Fees Schedule  
Postponed to tonight's meeting.

3.H Review Government Affairs & Project Support Specialist Job Description  
City Administrator Walsh reported that this position would be term limited. A copy is included in the archive meeting packet. They do have someone in mind to fill the short-term position.

3.I Discuss Use of Flying Eagle Canoe  
The City owns the canoe. It's considered a piece of art. Councilor Topaz asked if they could make money from it. Councilor Locke responded that the person who designed it gives tours in similar canoes on the Mississippi River for a fee. They need to determine if it should become a piece of art to be viewed or be used as a working vessel. Discussion ensued about utilizing the canoe to celebrate the community's heritage. They will talk to the City's event coordinator about creating an event in collaboration with next year's journey.

#### 4) Department Reports

Police Chief Greenway reported:

- The topic for the First Thursday in September will be Columbia 911. They will talk about what they do and their recruitment process.

- Acquired six fairly new office cubicles for the new police trailer. They are getting them for free from Portland State University (PSU).
- Judge Lindgren is fantastic. She brings an air of professionalism to the courtroom. She is extremely efficient but fair.
- They have added security to the courtroom. There has been concerns expressed about people appearing with criminal history and no form of protection. They have a short-term solution and are working with staff on a long-term solution.

Mayor Scholl asked Greenway to send someone in his place when he's not able to attend Council meetings. They would like to have police presence as well.

Public Works Interim Director Nelson reported...

- Public Works is cleaning and painting fire hydrants around town.
- Crack sealing begins next week.
- They have been busy working on subdivision plans.
- One of the Wastewater Treatment Plant employees accepted a job with another City and resigned. They will be amending the job description and then recruiting to fill it.
- Corresponding with the consultant to put together a Scope of Work for the S. First Street and St. Helens Street intersection improvements. She hopes to have a Scope for Council approval at the next meeting.
- Adjusting the N. Vernonia plan to move the sidewalks to avoid so much tree removal. Hope to have both projects under construction next Spring.

Councilor Topaz asked if the arborist can look at the trees to chop down the roots ahead of time. Nelson said that will be addressed. If there is an impact to roots they will need direction to safely deal with it.

Library Director Jeffries reported...

- The Museum Association is hosting a 100 year anniversary celebration of the John Gumm School on September 19 at the Columbia Center. There will be displays available to view in the Columbia Learning Center Lobby prior to the event.
- On September 21, the Library is hosting a free one-day genealogy conference. Registration is limited to 80 participants.
- On October 1, the Oregon Historical Society will be presenting their latest glass lantern slide show. This is on the history of the Mazamas, mountaineering, and outdoor recreation in the Pacific Northwest.
- Football season is almost here. She received a package in the mail this weekend from her brother. He is an Auburn Tiger, who will be playing the Oregon Ducks at the upcoming game.

City Recorder Payne reported...

- City County Insurance Service Risk Consultants conducted an assessment of City Hall security issues. They made recommendations for security improvements. Some include minimal cost but some are more expensive. Staff will review the list and determine what needs to be budgeted.

Mayor Scholl asked if any of the recommendations were a surprise. Walsh responded that some of the recommendations were based on building limitations. Greenway suggested that this be discussed during executive session so it's not public broadcasted. Payne pointed out that the Council will begin seeing change over time.

City Administrator Walsh reported...

- Working with consultants on a communications plan for the lagoon. Technical work is still being done. Data should be available in October.
- The County and City is working together on a grant for the Salmonberry recreation trail.
- Looking for direction on what to do about the banners along the highway. The Ford Family Foundation banners are worn out. Councilor Carlson pointed out that the banners were turned over to the Arts & Cultural Commission. Discussion ensued.

Council President Morten arrived at 2:39 p.m.

**Motion:** Upon Morten's motion and Carlson's second, the Council unanimously directed staff to remove the broken banners.

## 5) Council Reports

Councilor Topaz reported...

- He attended the monthly Portland Harbor cleanup meeting last week. There was talk about using fungi and bacteria to clean up toxic waste. The speaker said they often spread it on the ground and then plant trees. The fungi follow the tree roots to get rid of toxic waste. He suggested trying this at the mill behind the fairgrounds. Walsh pointed out that the City does not own that property. That landfill has been capped and closed. Topaz would like to suggest to Boise, as the owner, to try this type of remediation. Discussion ensued. The State oversees monitoring that site.

Mayor Scholl directed Walsh to bring a policy to the Council outlining when it's okay to speak for the City or make it clear that you're speaking as an individual. Walsh responded that the City attorney is working on that now.

Councilor Carlson reported...

- She often visits nature preserves and display gardens as part of her regular job. She has noticed that many of them are part of wastewater treatment plants. Wildlife people and scientists are working together.
- She would like to have a conversation about street standards. There are Codes that allow for skinny streets, less parking, setback variances, etc. She understands those are available but then she gets asked why there is no room for parking, why there's no yard, etc. Mayor Scholl is not in favor of making the Code stricter. Councilor Topaz talked about some of houses built over 100 years ago needing to be torn down. Council President Morten would like to send this to the Planning Commission for review. Discussion ensued. Councilor Locke is working on scheduling a meeting this winter with Planning, Building, and a few builders.

Councilor Locke reported...

- Attended an Emergency Management meeting. Safety at all of our City buildings was discussed; such as adding more video cameras and changing the keys.
- Asked about the status of the brochure to educate the public on the lagoon. Walsh responded that it should be released soon.
- Attended two OLCC meetings on Monday. There was a lot of good information. They are very underfunded. They only receive funding through permit fees and not the tax revenue. They did receive some funding for compliance enforcement.

Council President Morten reported...

- Had a very interesting Parks & Trails Commission meeting last Monday. He appreciated that the individual came to the Commission before going to the newspaper. The individual presented his desire for stricter Sand Island camping rules. He was bothered by a fire pit that was still smoldering and the chance that the whole island could burn. He also expressed concerns about excessive tree cutting. Morten asked if the lessee could give a report in the fall.
- The Parks & Trails Commission also spent a great deal of time discussing softball fees and maintenance. The Commission recommends approving the lease agreement. Mayor Scholl said it will be discussed at tonight's meeting.

Mayor Scholl reported...

- Asked for a report from the City's forester Brent Keller.
- Recognized the Planning Commission for the good job they are doing. There is room to grow.

6) **Other Business**

7) **Adjourn – 3:30 p.m.**

#### **Executive Session**

Respectfully submitted by Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder.

ATTEST:

  
Kathy Payne, City Recorder

  
Rick Scholl, Mayor