

City of St. Helens City Council

Work Session Minutes

February 20, 2019

Members Present: Mayor Rick Scholl
Council President Doug Morten
Councilor Ginny Carlson
Councilor Keith Locke
Councilor Stephen R. Topaz

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: John Walsh, City Administrator
Kathy Payne, City Recorder
Matt Brown, Finance Director
Margaret Jeffries, Library Director
Neal Sheppard, Public Works Operations Director
Sue Nelson, Public Works Engineering Director
Brian Greenway, Police Chief
Jacob Graichen, City Planner
Amy Lindgren, Municipal Court Judge
Sam Erskine, City Prosecutor
Tina Curry, Event Manager

Others:	Jennifer Myrick	Carroll Sweet	Simon Date
	Paulette Lichatowich	Connor Delaney	Les Watters
	Jimi Hendrix	Leah Tillotson	Christine Menges
	Nicole Thill	Al Petersen	

1) **Call Work Session to Order - 1:00 p.m.**

2) **Visitor Comments - Limited to five (5) minutes per visitor**

- ♦ Jennifer Myrick. She is currently in negotiations to purchase historic property at 260 S. 2nd Street. It was built in 1885. She hopes to obtain grant funding, restore it, renovate it, and add it to the historical register. It's currently uninhabitable and has a collapsed sewer line that continues to be used. She is requesting the City refrain from enforcing the code violations at this time because it would significantly complicate the purchase and restoration. She is a public defender and hopes to restore the building and make it usable for public defenders. Her realtor is in attendance and can explain some of the architectural significance and complications to purchase the home.
- ♦ Jimi Hendrix. It's difficult to finance the property with the collapsed sewer line, which is why they are asking for corporation from the City. They have been in discussions with a couple sewer line companies. She also spoke with the permit office about a new sewer line. The house is still beautiful and is worth restoring.

Council President Morten asked if the home is in the historical district. Jennifer responded that it is. She is not the owner yet so cannot apply for the historical designation. Councilor Carlson confirmed that she and City Planner Jacob Graichen have both spoken with Jennifer.

Mayor Scholl asked staff what is wrong with the sewer. Public Works Engineering Director Nelson responded that it is an old home. The lateral goes under the public parking lot where it joins the other buildings. Somewhere under there it is crushed. There is no public sanitary main within close proximity to the building. They have spoken about alternatives. There is no way to fix the problem without tearing a building apart.

City Planner Graichen spoke about grant opportunities. The building does contribute to the historic district, which means it eligible for some of the grant programs. They do have a cycle coming up. The owner should receive a letter soon. There will be one award of about \$12,500.

Jennifer added that the movie Twilight was partially filmed at this location, so is good for tourism.

- ◆ Al Petersen, SHEDCO Chair. Distributed and reviewed a handout about their most recent grant application process. A copy is included in the archive meeting packet. SHEDCO selected the Columbia Theater application for the Oregon Mainstreet Revitalization Grant submittal.
- ◆ Leah Tillotson, owner of Columbia Theater. If she receives the grant, she would like to:
 - Update the marquis.
 - Add a family bathroom downstairs.
 - New seating.
 - New carpet.
 - Improve men's bathroom.

She requested a letter of support from the City. The Council was in consensus to provide a letter of support. Al will work with City Administrator Walsh.

- ◆ Les Watters, Columbia County Museum Association. There will be a 130th Birthday Party for the incorporation of St. Helens on Monday. He encouraged the Council to attend. Mayor Scholl will speak and Brandon Sundeen will present a program on what St. Helens was like in 1889. There will be birthday cake to celebrate.

Council President Morten suggested the Kiwanis Community Parade make their theme in celebration of St. Helens' 130th Birthday. He'll suggest it to the Kiwanis Board. Les agreed to support it. Mayor Scholl added that the City could acknowledge the Birthday in the parade as well.

Les pointed out that no one has checked with them about the property on S. 2nd Street. They do have some history about the property at the museum.

- ◆ Carol Sweet, Envision Columbia County. There is a Bill before the Oregon legislature on railroad safety. It would bring Oregon up to the same safety standards as California and Washington. They plan to send Betsy Johnson a letter thanking her for her support and offering their help. A copy of the letter is included in the archive meeting packet.

3) Discussion Topics

3.A Chamber of Commerce Semi-Annual Report - Simon Date

Simon Date distributed and reviewed his presentation. A copy is included in the archive meeting packet. He encouraged the Council to purchase a table at the Annual Awards Banquet on March 21 at 7 p.m.

The Council was in concurrence to purchase two tables for City Council and employees for the Chamber's Annual Awards Banquet on March 21.

Councilor Carlson said the Chamber is discussing having events leading up to the banquet to encourage community support; such as Clean-up Day, Open up Your Business Day, Support your Neighbor Day, etc.

3.B Auditor's Annual Report - Kenny with Pauly Rogers and Co, PC

Connor Delaney reviewed the draft annual audit report. A copy of the report is included in the archive meeting packet. It was a clean audit. The financial statements will be ready soon.

3.C Municipal Judge's 2nd Quarter Report - Judge Amy Lindgren

Judge Amy Lindgren reviewed her report. A copy is included in the archive meeting packet. After reviewing her report, she distributed a flyer from the Oregon Center on Behavioral Health & Justice Integration. A copy is included in the archive meeting packet. They provide access to training for crisis intervention and mental health issues. Services are offered at no cost. She will contact them to set up a training for staff.

3.D Prosecutor's 2nd Quarter Report - Sam Erskine

City Prosecutor Sam Erskine reviewed his report. A copy is included in the archive meeting packet.

3.E Discuss Draft Changes to Council Operating Rules & Procedures

City Administrator Walsh reminded the Council that the draft changes were to include the 2012 Charter amendment and bring the document up to a current state. Council concurred with bringing the final draft back to the next work session.

3.F Discuss Draft Changes to Council Governing Policy

City Administrator Walsh pointed out the proposed change to increase the City Administrator's authority. Council requested a draft final version.

A discussion ensued regarding the Council's authority and the authority commissions have. Mayor Scholl suggested holding a retreat to discuss it further. He will issue Council appointments after the retreat.

3.G Discuss Possible Local Legal Counsel

City Administrator Walsh explained that the City has a contract with Jordan Ramis for legal services. They have attorneys who specialize in specific areas, which is beneficial. Scappoose has representation at all of their Council meetings. St. Helens has not done that due to cost. He spoke to Ed Trompke about his availability. Ed can be here as needed. He won't charge for travel and charges a reduced rate during the meeting since he's not practicing legal work the entire time.

Discussion ensued. The Council directed staff to consult with cities in similar size and see what they are doing in regards to legal services for Council meetings.

4) **Department Reports**

Police Chief Greenway reported...

- Police Officer interviews will be held tomorrow to fill two vacancies.

Public Works Engineering Director Nelson reported...

- Lots of private development projects happening.
- Working on the stormwater project on S. 10th Street.
- More projects coming.

Mayor Scholl commended Public Works on their work during the flood event. They were proactive at midnight. That is why there is a need to increase rates. The City continues to upgrade and maintain infrastructure to reduce damage caused by flooding. Nelson thanked Communications Officer for helping answer calls at the City Shops since Sheri was out sick.

Public Works Operations Director Sheppard reported...

- They had over 100 call-outs between midnight and 8 a.m. He saw water where he's never seen it before. It was frustrating not being able to do more because the system was overwhelmed.
- Thanked Mayor Scholl, the CERT team, and volunteers for helping sandbag.

Councilor Topaz spoke about the Gable Road cave-in. He pointed out that there is no leak collar around the culvert. Is that the City's culvert? Sheppard responded that it is the County's culvert. They are working on a project to replace it. Nelson added that they anticipate beginning that project next week.

Library Director Jeffries reported...

- MakerFest will be held at the Columbia Center on Saturday.
- The Library offers exam proctoring services.

Finance Director Brown reported...

- The quarterly Court report is included in the Administration Department Report of the Council packet.
- The new Recreation Guide will be released this week.
- The Recreation Program will provide a summer camp this summer.
- Currently reviewing the police station RFP proposals.
- Received 61 IT Specialist applications.

City Recorder Payne reported...

- Nothing to report.

Event Manager Curry reported...

- Just completed the Valentine's display in the Plaza.
- Will have a St. Patrick's Day display in the Plaza next month.
- A challenge with media is having lack of or inaccurate information published. It's a challenge she will try to address on www.discovercolumbiacounty.com by adding a new tab for hot topics and immediate concerns.

- The next merchants meeting will be in March.
- Working with the St. Helens Marina to host a Salmon Derby. They have agreed to be the official weigh-in station.
- Getting vendors and sponsors signed up for 13 Nights on the River. The schedule will be released this week.
- E2C is paying a person to work in the Visitor's Center at the Chamber of Commerce on the weekends.
- Volunteered to coordinate the desserts for the Chamber awards ceremony.
- Will post the Recreation Guide on www.discovercolumbiacounty.com.

Mayor Scholl asked when the first Spirit of Halloweentown meeting will be held. Tina responded that she's already met with individuals about new ideas. People can email her anytime and she can meet with them. Scholl asked her to post on her website that people need to come to her with their ideas.

City Administrator Walsh reported...

- Updating the Court job description.
- Updating the Tourism contract.
- Will come back with an updated Council Operating Rules & Procedures and Council Governing Policy.

5) **Council Reports**

Councilor Locke reported...

- ACSP is in town and will give a report at tonight's meeting.

Councilor Carlson reported...

- Thanked the Chronicle for doing a nice write-up about the valentine hearts. She helped put hearts up around town in the dark of the night. It's nice to come together as a community for a common good.

Councilor Topaz reported...

- Nothing to report.

Council President Morten reported...

- Asked what the status is of the Sand Island agreement. City Administrator Walsh responded that it is being reviewed by the other group's attorney.
- Thank you to the Police Chief and Public Works for their response during the flood.
- The Parks Commission made a motion to recommend that groups larger than 100 people be required to rent both gazebos in McCormick Park.
- The Parks Commission made a motion to recommend a fee of \$60 for the new gazebo.
- The Parks Commission made a motion to recommend that the Veteran's Memorial gazebo be called area two.

Mayor Scholl reported...

- It was amazing how fast the water came. The Wastewater Treatment facility had almost three inches of water in a 12 hour period and almost four inches in 24 hours. Sheppard was answering calls and directing his staff where to report. Scholl helped operated the sandbagger. Thank you to all the volunteers who helped.

- Spoke about the utility bill increase. Water, sewer, and storm costs all took a hit when Armstrong closed. Rates had to be increased to pay for future projects. They increased it as little as possible. It was an overall increase of 2.3%. It was discussed during multiple meetings.

6) **Other Business**

7) **Adjourn – 3:32 p.m.**

Executive Session - cancelled

Respectfully submitted by Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder.

ATTEST:



Kathy Payne, City Recorder



Rick Scholl, Mayor