

City of St. Helens City Council

Work Session Minutes

June 20, 2018

Members Present: Mayor Rick Scholl
Council President Doug Morten
Councilor Ginny Carlson
Councilor Susan Conn
Councilor Keith Locke

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Kathy Payne, City Recorder
Matt Brown, Finance Director
Margaret Jeffries, Library Director
Neal Sheppard, Public Works Operations Director
Sue Nelson, Public Works Engineering Director
Terry Moss, Police Chief
Jenny Dimsho, Associate Planner
Sam Erskine, Prosecuting Attorney
Tina Curry, Event Manager

Others:

Alexis Cole	Chris Iverson	Nicole Thill
Patrick Birkle	Susan Wagner	Julie Thompson
Janis Walters	Carmin Dunn	Ron Schlumpberger
Tracie Murray		

- 1) **Call Work Session to Order - 1:00 p.m.**
- 2) **Visitor Comments - Limited to five (5) minutes per speaker**
 - ◆ Patrick Birkle. He is advocating for the Council to end afternoon work sessions in order to increase transparency, accountability, and provide greater opportunity for citizen participation. He reminded the Council that retreats also fall under public meetings law. Researching other jurisdictions, he found that many have work sessions that start shortly before regular meetings and are short in duration. Presentations and deliberations seem to be done in work sessions here, which excludes public participation. He also pointed that daytime meetings may deter interested people from running for a Council position. He thanked the Council and asked them to consider his recommendation.

Discussion ensued. Meetings are streamed live on the City's website. Council thanked Patrick for the information.

- ◆ Steve Topaz. Agreed with Patrick. He attended the Connection meeting and found some of the statements troubling.
 - Limited parallel parking on the Waterfront property.
 - Bike paths on both sides.

- No parking for the entrance to Nob Hill Nature Park. It's become a private park for people who live up there.
- Bicyclists would have to go up hill past Nob Hill Nature Park.
- No sidewalks because of the drop-off. He suggested a wall with a sidewalk on the top.
- Not decided to make the Highway 30, Gable Road, Old Portland Road, Plymouth Street, the main route coming into town.
- The trucks could not get around the turn-about.
- What kind of industry is expected?
- Peak travel will be 5:30-7:30 p.m., which is basically commuters coming from Portland.
- Rumors about a hotel on the Waterfront. That will limit local people having access to the Waterfront and eliminates industry.
- What is the City's overall plan?
- There is no way of building a reasonable ferry system out of St. Helens with a patchwork road.

Mayor Scholl pointed out that Associate Planner Dimsho will be reporting on the Riverfront Connector Plan later this afternoon. Council President Morten added that Nob Hill Nature Park is zoned residential.

Mayor Scholl stepped down and joined the audience. Council President Morten took over chairing the meeting.

- ◆ Rick Scholl. He owns property on the N. 9th Street rock bluff. He is in the process of collecting signatures for a Street Vacation. He is requesting the City's signature. The City used to be an automatic signature but it changed several years ago. It's difficult when the adjacent owner wants to mine their property.

City Planner Graichen further explained that State law requires two-thirds consent from surrounding property owners within the 200 and 400 foot surrounding area. Like Rick said, the City used to assume that City-owned property within that area was an automatic consent because if the City approves it, then they're giving their consent. That was contested by an attorney and determined that the applicant now has to request the City's signature on the consent form.

Discussion ensued. This is a new process. This will be the case for all Street Vacations with City-owned property within the affected area. The Council is not granting approval. They would only be giving their consent to move forward with the application, like any other affected property owner.

Council concurred with giving the City's signature.

Mayor Scholl resumed chairing the meeting.

- ◆ Tina Curry. Here to give feedback about parking after visiting the downtown merchants. They currently use 45 spaces. Many of the businesses have a parking policy for their employees. However, their policy is that they can't park in front of their own business. This will be discussed at the next merchant's meeting. She suggests a policy that employees park in the public parking lot behind 2C's or across from City Hall.

3) Discussion Topics

3.A Annual Insurance Agent Report - Chris Iverson of Hagan Hamilton Insurance
Chris Iverson reviewed his report. A copy is included in the archive meeting packet. There is an increase in premium cost. That is because the City is growing. Chris talked about an option to add cyber insurance. Council President Morten directed staff to find out what would be covered by our I.T. consultants.

Discussion ensued about the insurance coverage for the canoe. The City and volunteers would be covered. However, if it's just given to someone and they fill it with kids, that may not be covered.

3.B Annual CDBG Revolving Loan Fund Program Report - Susan Wagner of C.A.T.

Susan Wagner from Community Action Team reviewed her report. A copy is included in the archive meeting packet.

3.C Annual Parks Commission Report - John Brewington & Carmin Dunn Carmin Dunn of the Parks Commission gave a report.

- Nob Hill Nature
 - Volunteer clean-up and maintenance
 - Native plant walk
 - Built staircase
 - Scappoose Watershed donating plants
 - Kiosk with park name added
- Heinie Heumann Park
 - Fenced dog park with bench, picnic tables, and water
- McCormick Park
 - Dog park
 - Creek area utilized during nice weather
 - Disc golf course getting a lot of use
 - Would like to add tennis and basketball courts
 - Would like to add restrooms
 - Trails in good shape
 - Cannon is back
 - Hope to have upgrades done at the Veteran's Memorial in time for Veteran's Day this year. Funding is from the State Parks Grant and local Veteran's group.
- Walnut Tree Park
 - Kiwanis Club mows it
- Grey Cliffs Park
 - Grant received to install restrooms
 - Would like to fence the dog park
 - Would like to fix the trail from Wyeth Street, adding sand to the far end
 - Would like to add signage and pave the existing gravel parking area
- 6th Street Park
 - The dugouts need some work
 - Need additional parking
- Godfrey Park
 - Exploring potential for a natural playground
- Sand Island

- Camp host and shuttle preliminary interest. Seeking more information and public input.
- Dog parks
 - Suggested improvements
- Campbell Park
 - Used by softball teams
 - Priority to upgrade the existing restroom amenities
 - Need to upgrade the existing picnic shelters with utilities
 - Need to upgrade the tennis courts and playground equipment
- Boise property
 - Toured by the Commission last summer
 - Recommend moving forward with an RV park, day park, and trails
- The Parks Commission is willing to work with the Arts & Cultural Commission to paint picnic tables if there is still interest.
- Thank you to the Parks employees who are doing a great job maintaining and keeping the parks nice and functional
- Combining the Parks Commission and Bicycle & Pedestrian Commission
- Creating a subcommittee for a walking trail/urban hiking trail
- Defining what the Friends of Parks groups mean
- The Parks brochure needs to be updated
- Encouraged by the St. Helens Recreation Program and the increase use of parks
- Conversations about improvements to the Dalton Lake trail
- Focusing on priority one improvements
- Looking forward to the Waterfront property development and connectivity from Columbia View Park with a boardwalk along the water's edge
- Rich in property and poor in manpower
- Recommendation to review the park use fees
- Confusion with the Greater St. Helens Parks & Recreation District and it not being affiliated with the City
- Concerns about the swimming pool receiving free water
- Grants will help with funding limitations. Thank you to City staff who seek those out and spend time applying for them.

Council acknowledged their appreciation of the Parks Commission and the in-depth report.

3.D Follow-up Regarding FARA Building - Tracie Murray

Mayor Scholl talked about the facility being City-owned now. The Council is tasked with serving the community and need to determine the best use of the facility. It was the consensus of the Council to have the ability to use it as part of the Recreation Program.

Tracie Murray and Janis Walters were in attendance representing FARA. Janis agreed with the Recreation Program using it. She talked about the history of the FARA building. Boise purchased the property and it was turned into a fitness facility for employees and their families in the mid 1980's. With the closure of the mill and changes, it was opened to the public. She does not have a problem with the City taking it over for the Recreation Program but believes that users who frequent it will be disappointed. The bottom line is that it's City property.

Mayor Scholl asked what they will do with the equipment. Janis said someone services it once or twice a year. They would likely ask him to give an estimate of value and sell it. Council

President Morten asked where the income would go from the sale. Janis replied that their articles of incorporation designate that those funds be donated to various charities.

Discussion ensued about the possibility of overlap for current users to continue using it to finish out their paid memberships. Mayor Scholl directed Finance Director Brown to investigate insurance costs to add the FARA building as its currently being used. Consensus of Council to make prior arrangements so notice gets posted when the gym is being used.

3.E Update on Riverfront Connector Plan - Jenny

Associate Planner Dimsho reviewed the Riverfront Connector Plan. A copy is included in the archive meeting packet.

3.F Discussion Regarding Parking at End of Strand Street

Public Works Engineering Director Nelson reviewed her memo and drawing of a temporary gravel parking area. A copy is included in the archive meeting packet. It will cost between \$18,000 – 23,000. That comes out to about \$859 per parking space that would be eliminated as soon as the property is developed.

Councilor Conn referred to Tina's earlier comments about business parking. She would like to look at it further.

Council President Morten is not in favor of proceeding at that cost. However, he would like to ensure we have proper signage, enforcement, and Ordinances.

Councilor Carlson talked about other areas that businesses complain about parking. It would set a bad precedent. A consistent policy and enforcement is important.

3.G Discussion Regarding Parking Time Limits

Public Works Engineering Director Nelson talked about changes that could be made to the Code that limit on-street parking time for vehicles. Council President Morten added that parking permits could be issued for residents who live in the adjacent buildings to park there. He would like staff to look into this further.

3.H Introduction of New Prosecutor Sam Erskine

Finance Director Brown introduced Sam Erskine to the Council. Sam approached the Council and talked about his job history. He suggested the Prosecutor's Office regularly report to Council once a quarter. Council liked that idea and appreciates staying informed.

4) Department Reports

4.A Public Works Department Report

Chief Moss reported...

- The two new reserve officers will be sworn in tonight.

Public Works Engineering Director Nelson reported...

- A contractor will be coming to do some maintenance on the City docks.

Public Works Operations Director Sheppeard reported...

- Most of the summer help is on board.

Library Director Jeffries reported...

- The Summer Library Challenge kicked off on Monday. They have had 261 signups over the last two days. Just under 700 people registered last year.
- Announced upcoming youth activities.

Finance Director Brown reported...

- Chris Iverson mentioned a potential increase to crime coverage. They currently have about \$200,000 liability on crime coverage. That covers theft and financial crimes, like what happened at the County. The auditors recently suggested that be increased to \$500,000. That will cost us about \$1,000. He asked for the Council to think about it and let him know.
- He distributed a document titled, "Tax Story." It is meant to inform citizens about what their property taxes pay for and what they don't pay for. A copy is included in the archive meeting packet. He asked the Council to review it and provide feedback.
- Building Maintenance Utility Worker Roger Stauffer joined him and several others for the FARA building visit. Stauffer pointed out some needed repairs. They approximate \$50,000 in repairs to bring it up to a public used facility. Possible funding sources:
 - Part of the \$500,000 re-investment in parks
 - Phase the improvements as needed
 - Grants (will do this first)

Council President Morten asked if the Recreation Program falls under Parks. Brown responded that it is under the Administration Department. Morten went on to ask why money would come from Parks to fund Recreation. Brown explained that it's available money and already budgeted. After reviewing the Parks Master Plan and the top priorities, it makes it a possible funding source. Morten argued that the additional money was supposed to be used to fund Parks.

- He and Nelson received an email from Columbia River PUD about the LED rates effective July 1. The new rates increase about 72%. Brown reviewed the report from Ameresco about lighting. A copy is included in the archive meeting packet. Brown has been in communications with CRPUD to talk about the impact. He is waiting to hear back from the General Manager. Council expressed concerns over that extreme increase without opportunity for public comment. Nelson added that she forwarded the rate increase to Ameresco who responded with shock and also wants to set up a meeting with CRPUD management. CRPUD indicated an approximate increase of 5% but never the 72%.

City Recorder Payne reported...

- Nothing to report.

Event Manager Tina Curry reported...

- 4th of July
 - Tailgating on the Waterfront property for \$10
 - Additional officers will be on site
 - Trash can painting in the morning
 - Music by a DJ in the morning
 - Face painting
 - Recreation Program activities
 - Bell ringing
 - Free cake
 - Winn Alexander Band at 3 p.m.
 - Flag raising and National Anthem at 4 p.m.

- Happy Hour music with Matt Brown at 5 p.m.
- Beer Garden
- Hit Machine at 8 p.m.
- Fireworks at 10 p.m.

5) Council Reports

Councilor Locke reported...

- He and Walsh met with Senator Betsy Johnson last week.
 - OLCC time limitations – Betsy called OLCC and was informed that the time limit is a guideline and as long as they continue working towards a goal, they will extend the deadline.
 - Will help with grants for the Waterfront boardwalk.
 - Will help with a partnership with Scappoose for water and sewer.
 - Moving forward on the treatment pond project.
 - Will help with the PGE issues at the Mill.
 - Betsy asked us to approach her more often for assistance.

Councilor Carlson reported...

- Chief Moss gave a keynote address to the eighth grade students at St. Helens Middle School. It was a well-received message. Moss is leaving big shoes to fill.
- Recreation Coordinator Shanna Duggan and a representative of Arts & Cultural Commission attended the recent Youth Council meeting. They talked about ways to make Youth Council more interactive and appealing.
- She would like a way to market all the work being done with Parks and Recreation. People who work in Portland may not be aware of all the great amenities here.

Councilor Conn reported...

- Thanked Public Works Operations Director Sheppard for responding quickly to a repair at Campbell Park.
- Received a ribbon at the Kiwanis Community Parade. Thanked Morten for providing the chicken lunch.
- Attended the annual CASA breakfast yesterday. She would love to see more people volunteer and donate to the organization. They are a voice for youth victims in Court.
- CIT training is July 16-20. She is requesting up to \$400 to purchase snacks. Council concurred.

Council President Morten reported...

- Addressed Steve's question:
 - Vision of Waterfront – raising the bar for quality of life. Has to be a service-based economy if it's going to revolve around people. It was on the market for five or six years as an industrial property before the City moved forward to obtain the property. It's a good investment for the citizens and livability. Citizens will have access to the river front.
- Addressed Patrick's concern:
 - Suggests Council look at holding evening work sessions once a month or every other month. There is potential to move away from day-time work sessions.
- Great presentation from Carmin. Each Parks Commission member is assigned a park and they report on it. The Bicycle and Pedestrian Commission now add to what is reported.

- Have a final plan for the McCormick Park Veteran's Plaza. Citizens, veterans, staff, and professional engineers have contributed to the project with in-kind services. This all started with Associate Planner Dimsho. Grand opening will be November 11, 2018 at 11 a.m.
- Sand Island is moving forward. Waiting for the attorney's review.

Mayor Scholl reported...

- The waterfront is very active.
- The parade was a lot of fun.
- Citizens Day in the Park is August 11. He has most of the sponsors on board. Requested a budget of \$1,000 for the event. Will be using the sound equipment from 13 Nights on the River. Council concurred with using \$1,000 from Council discretionary funds.
- Need to hold a retreat to discuss the City County Dinner. Councilor Conn strongly recommends a moderator if they hold another retreat.
- Businesses are lacking in St. Helens. They had five mills with over 1,000 living wage jobs, paying taxes and utilities.

6) **Other Business**

7) **Adjourn – 3:55 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted by Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder.

ATTEST:


Kathy Payne, City Recorder


Rick Scholl, Mayor