

City of St. Helens City Council

Work Session Minutes

January 2, 2019

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

Members Absent: Councilor Ginny Carlson

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
Amy Lindgren, Municipal Court Judge
Tina Curry, Event Manager
Jennifer Johnson, Accounting Assistant

Others: Christine Menges Patrick Birkle Lisa Brooke
Simon Date Morris Malakoff Al Petersen
Nicole Thill Stephanie Patterson

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

2) **Oaths of Office: Mayor and Council Positions 1 and 3**

Municipal Court Judge Amy Lindgren administered oaths of office to new Mayor Rick Scholl, Councilor Doug Morten (position 1), and new Councilor Stephen R. Topaz (position 3).

3) **Visitor Comments - Limited to five (5) minutes per speaker**

- ♦ Morris Malokoff, The Chronicle. Introduced new reporter Christine Menges. She will be the new City Council reporter and he is moving move up to editable editions of the paper. They will still see him around reporting.
- ♦ Al Petersen, SHEDCO. He distributed information about the Mainstreet Revitalization Grant. A copy is included in the archive meeting packet. That information was also distributed to tenants and owners in the Mainstreet area announcing the Grant's availability. The State of Oregon will only issue the \$200,00 Grant through the Mainstreet Program, which is SHEDCO. The funds can be spent for building upgrades only in the Mainstreet area. He has already received several inquiries from building owners. The SHEDCO Board will review the submittals and choose the project that fits the grant parameters. It will be submitted to the State, who selects the finalist. He spoke with the El Tapatio owners, who won the grant two years ago. They are planning to begin construction soon. Their work has to be done by May 2020 to receive the funding.

- ♦ Patrick Birkle. Happy New Year! Congratulated Library Director Jeffries on the Library programs and congratulated Chief Greenway on the First Thursday programs. His main purpose for being here is to encourage the Council to conduct its business in evening meetings when more of the working population can attend meetings. The research he has done of other cities has shown work sessions occur in the evenings prior to regular sessions.

Discussion ensued about meeting times. Council directed staff to discuss the possible options and report back.

Mayor Scholl encouraged Patrick to review the agendas prior to the meeting. If there's a topic he would like to hear discussed or be a part of, he can request it be moved from the work session to the regular session.

Councilor Locke talked about the ways information is distributed to the public. He wishes they had not stopped mailing the quarterly Gazette.

- ♦ Lisa Brooke. Within 24 hours of the last work session, the sign at the skate park was cleaned. She was grateful for how quickly that was taken care of. The St. Helens Skate Park 2019 Instagram page already has 50 followers. It's been a great resource to find out what the kids would like to see in the park. The Arts & Cultural Commission has created a work plan for each member to focus on one part of this project. She is working on a timeline with staff and hopes to have a grand re-opening in July to have a whole summer for play. She asked the Council to consider changing the rules to allow for spray paint to be used for this project. Current law does not allow for spray paint in parks. She also requested lights around the skate park to allow for more user time when it gets dark earlier. She is gathering names of companies to seek quotes for work. What is the best way to solicit proposals?

Councilor Morten asked Lisa to present this proposal to the January 14 Parks & Trails Commission. Lisa concurred and also plans to get the Youth Council involved.

4) **Discussion Topics**

4.A Discuss Council Appointments - Mayor Scholl
Postponed for a month.

4.B Review IT Specialist Job Description - Matt
Finance Director Brown reviewed the IT Specialist job description. A copy is included in the archive meeting packet. He recommends renewing the contract with Centerlogic for one more year. That would give the new person time to learn the job from Centerlogic. The goal is to eventually have the person take over everything Centerlogic does.

Council directed staff to move forward with the job announcement and shorten the Centerlogic contract renewal to six months.

4.C Review RFP for Comprehensive Police Station Replacement Needs Assessment - Matt
Finance Director Brown reviewed the RFP. A copy is included in the archive meeting packet. Chief Greenway updated the Council on the visit to Sandy's police station. They did learn the importance of finding property with sufficient space for growth. Sandy's police station has no

room to grow. They also expressed frustration with the administration being on one level of the building and officers on another, which resulted from lack of space and building up. It's beneficial to consider long term growth. Brown approximates a 50-year police station would cost \$4-7 million.

Councilor Topaz suggested combining the Police Department and City Hall since they are both at capacity. A piece of the Waterfront property could be used. It's also a way to direct people downtown. Council President Morten talked about combining County and City resources to house both jurisdictions, including court rooms. Mayor Scholl pointed out that those can both be looked at once a firm is selected.

No objection from Council to proceed with the RFP.

4.D Discussion Regarding Utility Rates - Matt

Finance Director Brown pointed out that this is only a discussion item. A public hearing has not been scheduled and they will not be making a decision at tonight's meeting. A consultant conducted a cost of services overview for utility funds. Identifying future projects, the consultant recommended annual increases based on the CPI and construction index. Brown recommends a 3.5% increase. That increase is approximately \$5/month.

Councilor Locke suggested an incentive program for people who use less water. Discussion ensued. Council President Morten requested Brown come back with a presentation showing different options.

5) Department Reports

Police Chief Greenway reported...

- Tomorrow's First Thursday will be a school emergency response presentation.
- Senator Ron Wyden will be holding a Town Hall meeting on Sunday, January 6, at 4:30 p.m. at the Meriwether Place.

Public Works Engineering Director Nelson reported...

- They are busy with reviewing private development plans and City projects.
- Happy New Year!

Public Works Operations Director Sheppard reported...

- Nothing to report.

Library Director Jeffries reported...

- Tonight's agenda includes an acceptance agreement for a Columbia County Cultural Coalition grant for Columbia County Reads. It's a collaboration of all the libraries in the County. St. Helens will be the fiscal agent for the grant.

Finance Director Brown reported...

- Distributed proposal ideas for the St. Helens Industrial Park Sign. Consensus of Council to use the longer, smaller sign. It gives more room to list future businesses below.

City Recorder Payne reported...

- Nothing to report.

City Administrator Walsh reported...

- Happy New Year and welcome aboard to Councilor Topaz.
- The Council Goals Retreat is January 23. Interviews will be held on site January 16 to gather information.
- He would also like to have a Council retreat to discuss general government, including the future of tourism.
- The Gazette is no longer distributed through the mail. They are investigating shrinking it down to fit into the monthly bills. Council President Morten asked if it would be appropriate to ask the Chronicle for a section of the paper. Morris Malakoff responded that it would be done from the advertising side of the paper. He's not able to give that space away. He directed Council to speak with Frank Perea.
- Christmas decor is being taken down right now.
- He attended Columbia City Mayor Young's retirement celebration on Monday. It was well attended.

Event Manager Tina Curry reported...

- Wished everyone a happy new year and looking forward to 2019.
- Thanked everyone for their help and making tourism better than it's ever been.
- Rock painting will be done for Valentine's Day. A giant heart for king and queen photo ops will be placed in the center of the Plaza. If you find a painted rock, you take it 2C's Vendor Mall or Running Dogs Brewery. They will pull a slip of paper that will have some type of prize.
- They are researching holding a Salmonfest that will celebrate the river and fishing. She would like restaurants to be involved. One idea is to shuttle people from Portland.
- The Plaza Christmas decorations are being taken down. They are looking for a solution to the mud problem in the Plaza.
- Thanked Stephanie Patterson for all of her assistance.
- Thank Simon Date at the Chamber. He has greatly improved relationships.
- Working on 13 Nights on the River. Pursuing ideas for nonprofits to earn money during 13 Nights. Councilor Locke requested Michael Allen Harrison and Patrick Lamb perform. Tina responded that they are too expensive. The City would lose money.

Mayor Scholl feels that Tina is doing a good job and wants to continue her contract month to month.

6) Council Reports

Councilor Locke reported...

- He has learned from working with Youth Council that bullying is a huge issue in our schools. He doesn't understand why it's not discussed with school shootings. He talked about bullying being a nationwide problem for more than just teens. Bullying includes adults as well. He hopes the new year brings an end to bullying.

Councilor Topaz reported...

- Nothing to report.

Council President Morten reported...

- Good report from Al Petersen on SHEDCO.
- He directed staff to review the Council meeting times and return to Council with recommendations.

- Lisa Brooke's testimony on the skate park is very encouraging. The collaboration of the Arts & Cultural Commission and Parks & Trails Commission is great.
- He is no longer a board member for the Columbia Leaning Center. There is an opening.
- Welcomed Steve Topaz to the Council.

Mayor Scholl reported...

- Happy New Year!
- Welcome to Councilor Topaz.
- This is the year we are going to move forward with a lot of the City projects that have been in the planning stages. He expressed the importance of communicating. It all comes down to funding.

7) **Other Business**

8) **Adjourn – 2:34 p.m.**

Executive Session

Respectfully submitted by Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder.

ATTEST:


Kathy Payne, City Recorder


Rick Scholl, Mayor