

City of St. Helens City Council

Regular Session Minutes

February 6, 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
Sue Nelson, Public Works Engineering Director
Brian Greenway, Police Chief

Others:	Sheryl Westfall	Cheryl Morrissey	Jacob Rascon
	Brandon Flinn	Michael Palmer	Austin Yonner
	K.C.	Paul Barlow	Tres McDaniel
	Rachel Schlaht	William Stroup	Jordan Barlow
	Lisa Brooke	Aaron Mullins	

1) **Call Regular Session to Order - 7:00 p.m.**

2) **Pledge of Allegiance**

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

- ◆ Jordan Barlow. He is the manager and mechanic at Barlow Bikes & Boards in St. Helens. The large gathering here tonight is in support of the renovation of their beloved skate park at McCormick Park. It is in need of a serious overhaul. They have held a couple of meetings and are in the beginning stages of planning and fundraising. The common goal is to have a safe skate park that all of the community can enjoy. The skate park is going to be 20 years old in June.

Council President Morten expressed appreciation for them being here and being part of the process. He talked about the need for routine maintenance that the City can be supportive of.

- ◆ Lisa Brooke. The original idea of the skate park came from complaints from St. Frederic's Church to the Police Department about kids skating on their property. After putting up a sign for no skating on the property, the Church came back to the City with a letter of support to build a skate park. Twenty years later they have written a new letter of support, which was read into the record.

- ◆ Tres McDaniel. He's lived here for 24 years. He's been going to the park since he started walking. It's where he met his friends. It's very sad to see the park the way it is. The improvements will bring more people and put us on a map. He wants to be the small town that everyone aims to visit.
- ◆ Sheryl Westfall. She is a longtime member of the community. Two of her children learned how to ride their bike at the skate park. She's a foster parent of three foster children. They regularly go to the skate park to ride scooters or bikes. She appreciates it being there. It's a really good environment for our youth. She also wants to speak on behalf of her son, Joseph Etchison. He graduated from St. Helens High School. He was diagnosed with high functioning autism. The skate park means the world to him. He goes once a week and sweeps the entire skate park. She didn't know that until she was told by a Parks employee that he borrows a broom from their office and then started saving money to buy one. Joe was there when they painted the mural on the bowl recently and helped clean the area. It means so much to have a place to go and be with his friends. She appreciates the heart of McCormick Park.

Mayor Scholl clarified that \$20,000 has been dedicated for improvements to the skate park. Finance Director Brown confirmed that the Parks Master Plan lists \$20,000 for repairs and improvements. Councilor Carlson talked about the bigger scope that the skating community sees for the skate park. They are fundraising and seeking grants for additional funds.

- ◆ Brandon Flinn. He grew up in St. Helens. He is in support of the skate park renovation and expansion. He has spent a lot of time going there and meeting friends. A roof would be really nice to make it usable all year long.

Mayor Scholl agreed that a roof may help preserve it as well.

Jordan asked if the \$20,000 is what the City is going to base their decision on. Mayor Scholl explained that the \$20,000 was designated to repair the cracks. Brown added that a cover at Clatskanie cost \$70,000. Council President Morten has identified someone who can do the patchwork for only \$5,000 but needs to wait for it to dry out. Those funds can be built into the Parks budget annually. In the meantime, they can brainstorm expansion ideas.

Lisa really wants to see the users of the park help determine how the funds are spent and feel a sense of ownership. Mayor Scholl agreed that is important. They talked about holding a 20th birthday party for the skate park around June 8. June 7 is the anniversary of the ribbon cutting. Mayor Scholl talked about moving Citizens Day in the Park to coincide with the event. Council President Morten encouraged Lisa to involve the Parks & Trails Commission in the planning.

Tres talked to a shop in the Eugene/Springfield area about hosting a Jam day for the event. Mayor Scholl expressed that there are a lot of resources who have supported Citizens Day in the Park if they want to tie it all together. They need to set a date to start planning the event.

- ◆ Aaron Mullins. He hasn't always lived in St. Helens but has been skating there for about two years. It's good exercise and an opportunity to get out of the house. He's gotten to know a lot of people there. The skate park means a lot to them. The skate park in Scappoose is in great shape but is very small. The one in St. Helens is a great size but needs a lot of work. He talked about the improvements needed to make it safe.

- ◆ Rachel Schlaht. She was there when the skate park opened. They love it. However, they do prefer going to other parks that have more to offer. She talked about improvements to make it safer and offer more opportunities for all levels.
- ◆ Austin Yonner. He has been riding that park since he was eight. He met all his friends there. There is a need for safety improvements. They call it a cheese grater when you fall. He wants the community to be the way it used to be when there were people lined up to use the park.

Council President Morten expressed his appreciation of the respect here tonight about the skate park. Councilor Carlson thanked the Barlow's for creating a place for these kids to be involved and feel important.

- ◆ Paul Barlow. He's in support of the renovation of the skate park. Cycle Columbia County organizes the Columbia Century Challenge. They are now a 501(c)(3). This project might be one that their group would be interested in helping with. He will bring it up at the next meeting.
- ◆ Jacob Rascon. He has only lived in St. Helens for two years. He's from a small town in Arizona. They had a really bad skate park there when he was a kid. They did something similar to this by fundraising and telling the community why they need a new park. They eventually fundraised a million dollars to build an amazing skate park on Lake Havasu. It brought people from all over. He agreed with what everyone said earlier.
- ◆ Jacob Schlaht. The skate park is not just a place hooligans go. It's a place people go to not be hooligans. It's a place to go work through what's happening in their lives.

Aaron added that a staircase would be nice for the skate park. He was caught skating on the Library stairs by Library Director Jeffries and was informed where to go for a skate park and found out about this meeting.

Councilor Topaz agreed with including the users in the planning of the skate park renovations.

4) **Ordinances - First Reading**

4.a Ordinance No. 3235: An Ordinance Vacating a Portion of the N. 8th Street (Spring Street), N. 9th Street (Pacific Street), and Wyeth Street Rights-of-Way

Mayor Scholl read Ordinance No. 3235 by title for the first time. The final reading will be held at the next regular session.

5) **Resolutions**

5.a Public Comments - Proposed Increase in Utility Rates

Resolution No. 1835: A Resolution to Establish Water, Sewer, Storm Drainage Utility Rates and Administrative Rules

- ◆ Shauna Harrison. Wants to clarify what's being proposed. It's an increase of water, sewer, and storm rates?

Council confirmed that is correct. Shauna asked why they are going up. Mayor Scholl responded that the cost to maintain them continues to rise. The Council actually proposes a lower rate increase than what was initially brought to them. Discussion ensued about renter responsibility.

Shauna asked for clarification of the past audits suggested by Councilor Topaz. Topaz responded that one was a financial audit and the other was an audit of departments and projects. Shauna asked if the rest of the Council feels the same. Council President Morten agreed that efficiency audits are important. They are done internally. Council basically audits what the staff does. Topaz suggested internal project audits also be available to the public. Finance Director Brown explained that the Capital Improvement Plan is updated every year. That document will show which projects were and were not completed. Topaz would like more specific information and it to be made public. Discussion ensued about the public process and the information being available on the website.

Shauna is aware of the information on the website. Affordability is her concern. Mayor Scholl used his utility bill as an example. The increase will be about \$5/month for his family of four.

- ◆ William Stroup. He's lived here for 50 years. He's all for an open audit. He has rentals that he keeps at below market rates. He no longer can afford to pay the water bills for his tenants. Most of the people he has in his rentals are low income, seniors, or disabled veterans. He just recently had to increase their rent. He wishes the City would find other ways to generate income.

Motion: Upon Morten's motion and Locke's second, the Council unanimously adopted Resolution No. 1835. [AYES: Scholl, Carlson, Locke, Morten, Topaz; Nays: None]

6) **Award Bid/Contract**

- 6.a Purchase New Full-Size Chevy Pick-up from Emmert Motors in the Amount of \$31,498

Council President Morten asked what department will be using the vehicle. Public Works Engineering Director Nelson responded that it replaces an older vehicle being used by the Sewer Division.

Motion: Upon Carlson's motion and Morten's second, the Council unanimously approved '6a' above. [AYES: Scholl, Carlson, Locke, Morten, Topaz; Nays: None]

7) **Approve and/or Authorize for Signature**

- 7.a Grant Agreement with ODOT for Safe Routes to School Program – Columbia Blvd. Sidewalk & Crosswalk Construction Project
- 7.b 3-Year Master Services Agreement with NW Regional Educational Services District Facilitating Further Partnerships
- 7.c Contract with S-2 Contractors, Inc. for Paving of Grey Cliffs Park Parking Lot as Part of the Grey Cliffs Park Improvement Project
- 7.d Deed for Dedication of City-Owned Properties to the Public for Road and Utility Purposes
- 7.e Agreement with Mackenzie for Consulting Services to Produce Master Plans for Godfrey Park and Campbell Parks

Council President Morten referred to '7a.' He is so glad that is happening.

Motion: Upon Carlson's motion and Locke's second, the Council unanimously approved '7a' through '7e' above. [AYES: Scholl, Carlson, Locke, Morten, Topaz; Nays: None]

8) **Consent Agenda for Acceptance**

- 8.a Library Board Minutes dated December 11, 2018

8.b Arts & Cultural Commission Minutes dated September 25, November 27, & December 10, 2018

8.c Parks & Trails Commission Minutes dated December 10, 2018

Motion: Upon Locke's motion and Carlson's second, the Council unanimously accepted '8a' through '8c' above. [AYES: Scholl, Carlson, Locke, Morten, Topaz; Nays: None]

9) **Consent Agenda for Approval**

9.a Council Work Session, Executive Session, and Regular Session Minutes dated January 2 and 16, 2019

9.b Accounts Payable Bill Lists

Motion: Upon Carlson's motion and Locke's second, the Council unanimously approved '9a' and '9b' above. [AYES: Scholl, Carlson, Locke, Morten, Topaz; Nays: None]

10) **Mayor Scholl Reports**

- Impressed by the display of passion the kids have for the skate park. He has a good feeling about partnering with them. The older ones have great potential to mentor the younger ones.
- He attended the Connect St. Helens training this past weekend. It focused on connecting with youth and mentoring them. It takes the whole community to make it work.

11) **Council Member Reports**

Council President Morten reported...

- He was very impressed with the skate park culture. Activities are so important for a healthy body and healthy mind. He can see the respect among the skaters.
- He is very excited about the paving at Grey Cliffs Park. He is in favor of all improvements on the waterfront.
- McCormick Park Veterans Plaza is moving forward. He's excited to see it finishing soon.

Councilor Topaz reported...

- Nothing to report.

Councilor Carlson reported...

- She appreciated everyone who testified tonight. Every comment matters.
- Asked if the rate study is available online. Finance Director Brown talked about the data changing with Boise and Armstrong leaving. Carlson went on to say that the funds coming into the City are earmarked for specific departments. Water rates can't be raised to pay for the Police Department, the skate park, etc. It's all listed in the audit online. The Council is doing a lot to promote growth, which will bring in additional funding.
- A Spring Clean-up Day has been held the last few days in connection with SOLV Clean-up Day and Earth Day. She talked to Judy Thompson about doing the flowers earlier. She will come back with more information about beautification and community pride.
- Today was another reminder of why we live here. We have people who care enough of about their community to come down here and testify about water rates, Brownfield redevelopment, or to listen.

Councilor Locke reported...

- Stay safe. It may snow this weekend.

12) **Department Reports**

Chief Greenway reported...

- Nothing to report.

Public Works Engineering Director Nelson reported...

- Nothing to report.

Library Director Jeffries reported...

- The ukulele group is four years old this month. They have added a lot to the community. They play at assisted living centers and community events. They have added an additional hour of instruction each month.

Finance Director Brown reported...

- Nothing to report.

City Recorder Payne reported...

- Nothing to report.

City Administrator Walsh reported...

- There is hope for bigger industries to offer the same rate subsidies they saw in the past.
- Council Goals will help form strategies and work plans. They will offer accountability of staff and department heads.
- He appreciates the skate park group coming tonight. He heard their desire to be part of the process. The most successful projects are those where you include the users.

13) **Other Business**

14) **Adjourn – 8:25 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted by Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder.

ATTEST:


Kathy Payne, City Recorder


Rick Scholl, Mayor