

# City of St. Helens City Council

Work Session Minutes

February 6, 2019

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**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  
Jacob Graichen, City Planner  
Jenny Dimsho, Associate Planner  
Joe Hogue, Police Lieutenant  
Malinda Duran, Police Support Specialist  
Marimar Moreno, Code Enforcement Officer  
Tina Curry, Event Manager

**Others:**

Christine Menges	Fran Bennett	Kelsea Kees
Janet LeSollen	Steven LeSollen	Patrick Trapp
Brent Keller	Leah Tillotson	Robert Salisbury
Nicole Thill		

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

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

- ♦ Janet LeSollen. She is here about her property at 375 S. 13<sup>th</sup> Street. Former Code Enforcement Officer Adam Hartless brought new Code Enforcement Officer Marimar Moreno by their property a couple times to explain the status. Janet just recently convinced her husband to stop scrapping and he began removing it. Officer Moreno came by the other today and issued her husband a \$350 ticket with no discussion. Janet feels that was drastic and set off her husband's anxiety. A lot of the stuff has been removed and the wood is being cut. She uses all the pots to sell her plants at the farmer's market. She will be dumping them out after the last frost and moving them from down below. They live on less than \$1,000/month. It's difficult. They're close to being homeless. They both do odd jobs and volunteer in the community.

Mayor Scholl requested Code Enforcement Officer Moreno explain the situation since she was in attendance. Moreno explained that she stopped by the house twice before she cited them. She has pictures and documentation. They never responded to her notices. She went back and

Janet's husband was upset. Moreno explained what the ticket was for and he responded that he would bring it to Council.

Chief Greenway added that he received a phone message from the gentleman expressing his displeasure with the citation. He also mentioned that he has been cited in the past by two former code enforcement officers. That presents the reoccurring issue at that address. He also said he would be seeking an attorney to sue City Council, Chief Greenway, and the Police Department. Greenway looked into it and it is an ongoing issue with that address. Moreno was acting within the ordinance and conducting her job. He suggested the issue be addressed in Court. The Police Department is not targeting them.

Mayor Scholl expressed that he has seen progress on the property. He will look into it further and follow-up with the LeSollen's.

♦ Patrick Trapp. Port of Columbia County update:

- Moving ahead with the planning process for a 30,000 sq. ft. spec building at McNulty.
- Looking for additional locations to expand.
- Early stages of renovating the dock at Multnomah Industrial site. Mark Even builds high-end floating homes at that site.
- Conducting an evaluation of whether or not to expand into phase two of the RV park at the marina in Warren.
- Purchased a building from Oregon Aero at Scappoose Airport. The Port now owns all the structures within their property lines out there.
- A business from Hillsboro that employees about 40 people is looking to move to Columbia County.
- Close to signing a lease with the Clatskanie art network to display their work on Port property.
- The bumper business still wants to move to St. Helens but needs the seed money first.

3) **Discussion Topics**

3.A Employee Length of Service Award

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

**15 Years**

Malinda Duran came to work for the City as the Municipal Court Clerk in January of 2004. In approximately June of 2014, she began working closely with the Police Department to help them work towards getting the Department accredited. In October of 2014, former Police Chief Terry Moss created a new position of Police Support Specialist and after an internal recruitment was posted, Malinda applied and was eventually promoted to the position. Since being in her new position, Malinda worked hard to complete the accreditation. It is something she is very proud of.

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

3.B City Forester's Annual Report - Brent Keller from Mason, Bruce & Girard  
Brent Keller reviewed his report. A copy is included in the archive meeting packet.

### 3.C Review of Street Vacation - Jacob

Mayor Scholl removed himself from the room because this issue is regarding his application for a street vacation.

City Planner Jacob Graichen reviewed his report. A copy is included in the archive meeting packet.

Councilor Topaz pointed out the gravel and painted lines. Was that work permitted or done illegally? Graichen responded that some of the work was done a little in advance but they did get a right-of-way permit after. Topaz asked because he did work by his place to get water off the crosswalk. He was chastised for doing it by the City Engineer in 2006/07. Has whoever did that on the subject property been informed they were not supposed to do that. Graichen responded that they were informed and applied for a right-of-way permit.

Discussion of property. A retaining wall would offer a safety barrier. Four structures are tentatively planned to be built in the area.

### 3.D Review Right-of-Way Dedication of City Properties - Jacob

City Planner Jacob Graichen reviewed his report. A copy is included in the archive meeting packet. No objection from Council. Approval is on tonight's agenda.

### 3.E Review Proposed Updates to Council Operating Rules & Procedures - John

City Administrator John Walsh reviewed the Council Operating Rules and Procedures. A copy is included in the archive meeting packet. The document was last updated in 2008 and there was a Charter amendment in 2012. The proposed update incorporates those changes and cleans up the document.

### 3.F Review Proposed Updates to Governing Policy - John

City Administrator John Walsh reviewed the draft Governing Policy. A copy is included in the archive meeting packet. The proposed changes incorporate Council goals. It also gives the City Administrator a supervisory role over department heads, with the exception of termination being a Council responsibility.

## 4) Department Reports

Chief Greenway reported...

- First Thursday is tomorrow. The topic of discussion is opioid overdoses.
- Cocoa with a Cop is on Monday, February 11 at 4 p.m. at Burgerville.
- Associate Planner Jenny Dimsho has been assisting the Police Department in applying for a grant for a drone. Drones are a new technology being used by the police to enhance what they can do. One licensed operator will be identified and certified through the FAA.

Mayor Scholl asked Greenway to find out the range. He would like to see the drone lift off quicker than police could respond to an incident. Consensus of Council for the Mayor to sign the grant application.

Public Works Engineering Director Nelson reported...

- Dimsho also applied for and received the Safe Routes to School Grant for sidewalks on Columbia Blvd. It was a \$322,000 grant reward. It will be in conjunction with the Gable Road construction project.

- Has heard rumors about the two million gallon reservoir on Pittsburg Road. The City has been working on repairs. A new liner was installed a while ago and it's not functioning correctly. Staff is working with the contractor to repair it. The repairs will be done at no cost to the City. It's under warranty. She is meeting with project engineers tomorrow to talk about ways to move forward and get it completed.
- Council awarded the S. 10th Street Storm Drainage project about a month ago. The contractor ordered the material and is ready to start. The work will be primarily done at S. 10th & Plymouth Street. They are working toward minimal impact to the neighbors. The project will allow them to decommission a stormwater pump station. That will reduce electrical costs and staff time to service it, in addition two freeing up two City lots.
- Currently have a water line replacement out to bid. It is for a water line replacement on S. 11<sup>th</sup> Street.
- She will be attending a Regional Recovery Conference in Portland. It's the regional disaster preparedness organization through the City of Portland.

Library Director Jeffries reported...

- An updated babysitting program is being debuted next week.
- The next Conversation Project is "It's a Free Country" and will be held Tuesday, February 12 at 7 p.m.
- St. Helens has a vibrant group of writers in the community. The writer's guild meets on the second Saturday of the month. That has been expanded into a time to write twice a month on Saturday evening.
- MakerFest will be held Saturday, February 23, 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. These events collaborate with the St. Helens High School Robotics Club and St. Helens Rapid Manufacturing Program.

Finance Director Brown reported...

- The 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Financial Report is included in the packet for Council review. They can contact him if there are any questions.
- Tonight's agenda includes a contract with Mackenzie Architecture Firm. They are looking at natural playgrounds for Godfrey Park and Campbell Park.
- Council talked about holding a Public Forum at the Recreation Center. Does the Council still want to do that in February or March? They could invite the public to talk about the recreation program. Mayor Scholl suggested holding it around Spring Break to encourage students to attend.

City Recorder Payne reported:

- Proposes another City Hall Clean-up Day on March 15. Asking for permission to close City Hall for records clean-up. No objection from Council.
- The City Boards & Commissions Volunteer Reception is tentatively scheduled for April 11. Last year it was at The Roof. Does the Council want to have it there again? Councilor Carlson suggested we have it at the Recreation Center to give more room for attendees. Council President Morten agreed with showcasing the new Recreation Center.

City Administrator Walsh reported...

- The Council Goals Retreat was very productive. It helps him with his work.
- The Council Tourism Retreat was also successful at defining a good direction to move forward.

- The Port held a meeting with businesses and agencies effected by rail. There was a lot of interest in making it work effectively for public and private partnerships.
- The City has a partnership with ColPac. They hold bi-monthly meetings. He and former Councilor Conn attended them. A new voting member needs to be assigned. Mayor Scholl volunteered to serve with Council President Morten as an alternate.

## 5) **Council Reports**

Councilor Locke reported...

- Portland media blew the incident that occurred at the high school way out of proportion. The school resource officer has investigated it and no citations were issued.

Councilor Carlson reported...

- Following up on Councilor Locke's comment. The School District has offered outreach with the witnessed accounts. They have continued to educate the students at every practice and sporting event. A handful of people did things they shouldn't have done. Generations of people who have grown up here are good, wonderful people. It hurts to see her kids attend that school and be thought of that way. We have a lot of issues out here. The city versus rural divide has gone on long enough. We need to stand together to end bullying, bickering, and hate. Throwing hate is not educating our students and community.
- She will be attending the State Lobby Day for NAMI on February 25.
- She will be hosting a Mental Health Wellness Day for the community in May.

Councilor Topaz reported...

- The Willamette Weekly has an article today about our high school. When people say St. Helens and it's negative, that's the title we get. It represents the whole town. We have to be more inclusive to outsiders and insiders. Some of our problems started four or five generations ago. We need to put more effort into it.

Council President Morten reported...

- As a past high school teacher and coach, every moment was a teaching moment to reflect on our values and build respect amongst teammates, opponents, and the community. It's good practice to seize teaching moments. It's not only the responsibility of teachers. It takes quite a few people to influence one person growing up and hone their values of respect and dignity.
- Thanked Pat Trapp for reporting to the Council. It's very appreciated.
- He recently spoke to the Council about having legal counsel on site during meetings. Attorney Robert Salisbury was in the audience. Morten invited him to come to the mic.

Robert distributed conflict of interest cards to help guide public officials when they're in the community. He has had an office in St. Helens for 19 years. He currently represents the Port of Columbia County and a couple other special districts, so is familiar with what they deal with it. His office is just down the street. They wouldn't be paying for an attorney to come from Portland and would also be supporting a local business.

- Thanked Nelson for her report and Dimsho for her work on the Safe Passages grant. Safe passages to schools is very important. He has been pushing for sidewalks on Gable Road to the high school since he was elected 12 years ago.
- There was a wonderful article on the front page of the Spotlight about the skate park. He expressed his concerns about park maintenance. The Parks & Trails Commission meets

once per month. Each commissioner has an assigned park that they report on. He will ask them to report specifically about needed maintenance. The patch work on the skate park does wear out. It needs to be maintained annually. Thanks to Arts & Cultural Commissioner Lisa Brooke for spearheading the painting that was done.

Mayor Scholl reported...

- Congratulated and thanked all of the police officers for their work. He specifically recognized Officer Luedke and Officer Cutright. Congratulations to Officer Coy as officer of the year and Sergeant Eustice as employee of the year!
- He concurs with the Council regarding the discussions about the school. He has been in contact with Superintendent Scott Stockwell and High School Principal Katie Wagner. The behavior of the very few students is not excused. The actions do not represent St. Helens. They will face the fear and make changes. He will continue to move forward and be part of the solution. Personally, he feels ashamed that it happened. His daughter expressed her concerns to him about feeling guilt and shame for the school. Our students are victims as well.

Event Manager Tina Curry reported...

- The Council tasked her to come up with an idea to battle the situation in town. Her idea is to have a giant bonfire on the Waterfront. Community members would bring written words that need to be burned. It's a way to rid the toxicity. It's also an opportunity for someone to speak. She suggests it be early in the day for all ages to participate.
- Working on the new Visitor Center at the Chamber building. It will be a coffee shop, gift shop, and museum. It will be open from 11 a.m. – 3 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays.

Council President Morten asked the Council to weigh-in on whether or not to have local legal counsel. It will be discussed at the next Council meeting.

6) **Other Business**


7) **Adjourn – 2:50 p.m.**

### **Executive Session**

Respectfully submitted by Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder.

ATTEST:

  
Kathy Payne, City Recorder

  
Rick Scholl, Mayor