

City of St. Helens

CITY COUNCIL

Work Session Minutes

January 18, 2017

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

Staff Present: John Walsh, City Administrator
Matt Brown, Finance Director
Kathy Payne, City Recorder
Margaret Jeffries, Library Director
Neal Sheppard, Public Works Operations Director
Sue Nelson, Public Works Engineering Director
Crystal Farnsworth, Communications Officer
Jacob Graichen, City Planner
Jasmine Jordan, Mainstreet Coordinator
Jenny Dimsho, Assistant Planner

Others: Carl Coffman Gretchen Williams Chuck Daughtry
Tina Curry Cody Mann Nicole Thill
Jan Zurbrugg

Mayor Rick Scholl called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.



Visitor Comments

No visitor comments.

PROTEST HEARING: Notice of Nuisance Abatement – 364 N. 1st Street (Mullins)

This item has been postponed to February 1.

Annual Report from City Auditor

This item has been postponed to February 1.

SHEDCO's Report from their Tourism Meetings

Gretchen Williams, SHEDCO Board member, was present to give a report. She handed out a document to each Council member which she reviewed; a copy of which is available in the archive packet for this meeting. One highlight was from a recent survey that asked what St. Helens greatest assets were. The predominant answers were the river and waterfront district and Spirit of Halloweentown events.

Council President Morten congratulated Gretchen for putting together a concise report with this amount of energy. Where does the Chamber of Commerce fit in? Gretchen explained that the Chamber Board was initially reluctant to help with events. She talked to them about it being common for Chambers to be involved. In the end, they decided event planning was something they would get involved in.

Councilor Conn pointed out that advertising and marketing was mentioned in the report. She has heard from businesses that it's a need. What is the Chamber and SHEDCO doing to help businesses with that? Gretchen said the Chamber advertises events on their website and allows use of their bulk mailing permit. She would like to see more services made available. SHEDCO will be talking about it at their next meeting.

Discussion about SHEDCO, Keep it Local Columbia County, the Chamber and businesses needing to work together.

Affordable Housing Proposal

Carl Coffman, a developer, presented a proposal to have a container box housing facility. The containers are designed to stack seven to eight high and hold 50,000 pounds. Over 20,000 arrive on our shore and never leave. It's like a new, raw material. He showed examples of shipping containers turned to housing facilities in other countries. He proposes to place two buildings, which would be 36 units, on the waterfront property. The units would be sold individually and charged HOA's fees to cover the maintenance of the buildings and grounds.

Council President Morten liked the presentation. The property has been identified and the design has been identified. What kind of flexibilities are there with the proposed location? This is the first request, that he's aware of, to use the waterfront property. Carl responded that he recently had a conversation with Dan Saltzman with the City of Portland. He was told that if he got on the fast-track developer status, every year the City will tell him how much land is available and ask what he proposes. He's not sure what other land is available here. You can do anything with a cube. There's a lot of flexibility with location and design. They will become less affordable if a lot of modifications are made.

Councilor Conn appreciated the use of examples in Coffman's presentation. She is very interested in the use of reclaimed materials.

Councilor Carlson asked if the model is nearby to view. Carl said it is in Southern Oregon. It's made out of 20 foot containers. He proposes 40 foot containers.

Council President Morten asked Carl if he would consider commercial use on the lower level. Carl said it could be done but he pointed out all the vacant commercial buildings in town. He thinks commercial would be a mistake in that location.

Review Request to Extend Enterprise Zone Benefits for Cascades Tissue

Chuck Daughtry, CCET Executive Director, was in attendance to present the request. A copy is included in the archive meeting packet. Enterprise zones are designated geographic areas. South Columbia County Enterprise Zone includes parts of Scappoose, Vernonia, Columbia City, St. Helens and other nearby industrial areas. Lower Columbia Maritime Enterprise Zone includes parts of Rainier, Port Westward, Clatskanie and some land in Clatsop County. He has been working with Cascades Tissue for over a year on their expansion. It adds 70 jobs, preserves 100 jobs and is a \$56 million investment.

Enterprise zones allow companies who build within the designated geographic area to receive property tax abatement for up to three years. He is requesting the City approve an additional two years of abatement, called the extended enterprise zone. In exchange for that, the company will agree to pay 150% of the average medium wage within Columbia County. They will also be required to sign an agreement to recruit locally.

Semi-Annual Report from Columbia County Economic Team

While he was here, Chuck Daughtry gave the CCET semi-annual report.

- Proposed expansion of an existing manufacturing business in St. Helens.
- The Port of St. Helens has been discussing plans to construct spec buildings at McNulty Creek. There is wetland mitigation that needs to be resolved.
- Oregon Manufacturers Innovation Center (OMIC) is a collaborative process that involves all the research institutions in Oregon; including Oregon State University, Portland State University, Oregon Institute of Technology and Portland Community College to build a world-class research, development and training facility in Columbia County. They were able to purchase the John Jersey property in Scappoose. As part of the land purchase, there was an agreement to construct a road access. There are companies from all of the world looking to co-locate near OMIC.
- The CCET annual breakfast is being re-scheduled again due to the weather.

Councilor Locke asked why companies are looking out here with all the empty buildings in Beaverton and Portland. Chuck explained that the cost of buildings is high in those areas. There is not as many industrial vacancies with the growth of marijuana.

2nd Quarter Communications Report

Crystal Farnsworth, Communications Officer, presented her report which is included in the archive packet for this meeting. She reviewed Spirit of Halloweentown communications in depth. About 250,000 people interacted with the City of St. Helens and Spirit of Halloweentown Facebook pages throughout the month of October. Farnsworth communicated with media from all across the United States to highlight events.

Discussion Regarding Use of RVs for Medical Hardships

City Planner Jacob Graichen reviewed his memo which is included in the archive packet for this meeting. The proposed amendment is for the use of Rvs on private property and not in City right-of-way.

Council emphasized their desire for it to only apply to relatives caring for each other and require an updated note from the doctor more often than once a year.

2nd Quarter Financial Report for FY 2016-17

This item has been postponed to February 1.

Review 2017-18 Proposed Budget Calendar

Finance Director Brown reviewed the proposed budget calendar. No concerns from Council.

Review Investment Policy

Finance Director Brown reviewed the proposed investment policy and a letter from the Oregon Short Term Fund Board with their approval and recommended changes. A copy is included in the archive meeting packet.

City Administrator Walsh explained that without an investment policy, they would follow the State's plan which is less of a percentage than if they had their own. The investment proposals are safe.

Council concurred with moving forward on the proposed investment policy. Brown will return with a report diagraming previous investments. After that, he will include it in his quarterly report.

Discussion Regarding 2017 Fireworks Plan

City Administrator Walsh talked about the risk involved with fireworks. The Council should keep in mind that they may not raise the entire amount needed for fireworks.

The St. Helens Community Foundation has come to the City asking for help. They are not in a position this year to do 13 Nights on the River on their own. Tina Curry and Christina Sullivan are working together to plan this year's 13 Nights on the River line-up, insurance and operations. Tina reported that 13 Nights is proposed to have two nights in June, five nights in July and two nights in August and September. They are planning to have concerts Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday, Monday and Tuesday over the 4th of July weekend. They will also be helping with concerts during Spirit of Halloweentown.

Discussion of needing to get the community involved in raising funds for fireworks. Councilor Locke suggested that the City advertise for a fireworks fundraising committee. If no one volunteers, then we announce that there will not be fireworks. It should not be a City task. Walsh added that it speaks to the need to have a group that organizes community events.

It was the consensus of the Council to work with Communications Officer Crystal Farnsworth to perform a media blitz requesting volunteers to form a committee to fundraise for fireworks. The contract was tabled for a couple months as they wait to see if they get volunteers.

Discussion Regarding Collection of Marijuana Tax

City Administrator Walsh reminded the Council that voters overwhelmingly approved a local marijuana tax of 3%. There were three options to collect; 1) the City collects and enforces, 2) the State administers and 3) the County collects. Scappoose has chosen to use the State. Walsh recommends St. Helens do the same. Council concurred with the recommendation. It is on tonight's agenda for ratification.

Proposed Increase to Library Board Membership

Library Director Jeffries reported that the Library Board currently has a seven member board. The bylaws call for five to seven members. There are currently two vacancies. However, they received three very strong candidates to fill those vacancies. She proposes to increase the bylaws to have seven to nine members.

The Council was in concurrence to allow Jeffries to bring back the appropriate code amendments to increase the size of the Library Board.

Department Reports

Reports were postponed until tonight's meeting.

Council Reports

Reports were postponed until tonight's meeting.

Executive Session

ORS 192.660(2)(e) Real Property Transactions

Motion: At 4:11 p.m., upon Locke's motion and Carlson's second, the Council unanimously voted to move into executive session under ORS 192.660(2)(e) Real Property Transactions.

Motion: At 4:54 p.m., upon completion of the executive session, Morten moved to go back into work session, seconded by Conn, and unanimously approved.

Other Business

No other business.




There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder.

ATTEST:


Kathy Payne, City Recorder


Rick Scholl, Mayor