

City of St. Helens

CITY COUNCIL

Work Session Minutes

April 5, 2017

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

Members Absent: Ginny Carlson, Councilor

Staff Present: John Walsh, City Administrator
Matt Brown, Finance Director
Crystal Farnsworth, Communications Officer
Margaret Jeffries, Library Director
Neal Sheppard, Public Works Operations Director
Sue Nelson, Public Works Engineering Director
Bob Johnston, Building Official
Aaron Kundurs, Wastewater Treatment Plant Superintendent
Cindy Phillips, Municipal Court Judge
Riki Frappier, Municipal Court Clerk

Others:	Teresa Knight	Darrold Sandberg	Linda Demaray
	Janet LeSollen	Amanda Normine	Al Petersen
	Josh Wagoner	Mike DeHeep	Steve Atchison
	Mark Lang	Dan Brown	Katie May
	Greg Payne		

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



Visitor Comments

♦ Bob Johnston, City Building Official. Gave an update on the nuisance abatement proceedings. About half the people have cleaned up their properties and will be given notification that they are now off the list. The other half have not cleaned up their properties yet. He does not feel that there is any benefit to extend anyone's timeframe to clean up their properties. A contractor has been selected to proceed next week with required clean ups.

♦ Darrold Sandberg, owner of Ace Hardware. He is very disappointed to hear that the City Council is considering doing away with Municipal Court. If the Council gets rid of Municipal Court, it will take away his chance to deal with the theft problem at his business. He hopes the Council will consider keeping Court.

♦ Janet LeSollen. She is here regarding the nuisance abatement issue. Her husband is mentally ill. She has tried many times to clean up her property and been verbally abused by him. It is very embarrassing. She has hired someone to help with the cleanup of her property now that her husband is gone doing a trucking business. She thinks that she can clean up her property within approximately two weeks and asks the Council for their consideration.

After discussion, Council concurred to give Janet an additional two weeks and report back to the next Council meeting.

♦Linda Demaray. She asked if the abatement process includes campers with people and dogs living in them.

Johnston responded that people living in campers is currently being addressed through the development code since it is a planning department issue.

Mayor Scholl proposed implementing a policy that people are only given a two week extension unless there is a medical hardship or death in the family. Some of the nuisances have been going on for months.

Annual Report from St. Helens Economic Development Corp. (SHEDCO)

Al Petersen gave a report to the Council. SHEDCO follows the Mainstreet program. SHEDCO has two main difficulties.

1. Getting volunteers. Everyone on the board works very hard on SHEDCO projects.
2. Getting Mainstreet businesses more deeply involved in SHEDCO. He is the only Mainstreet business owner serving on the board. Everyone else is a community volunteer or someone who owns a business elsewhere.

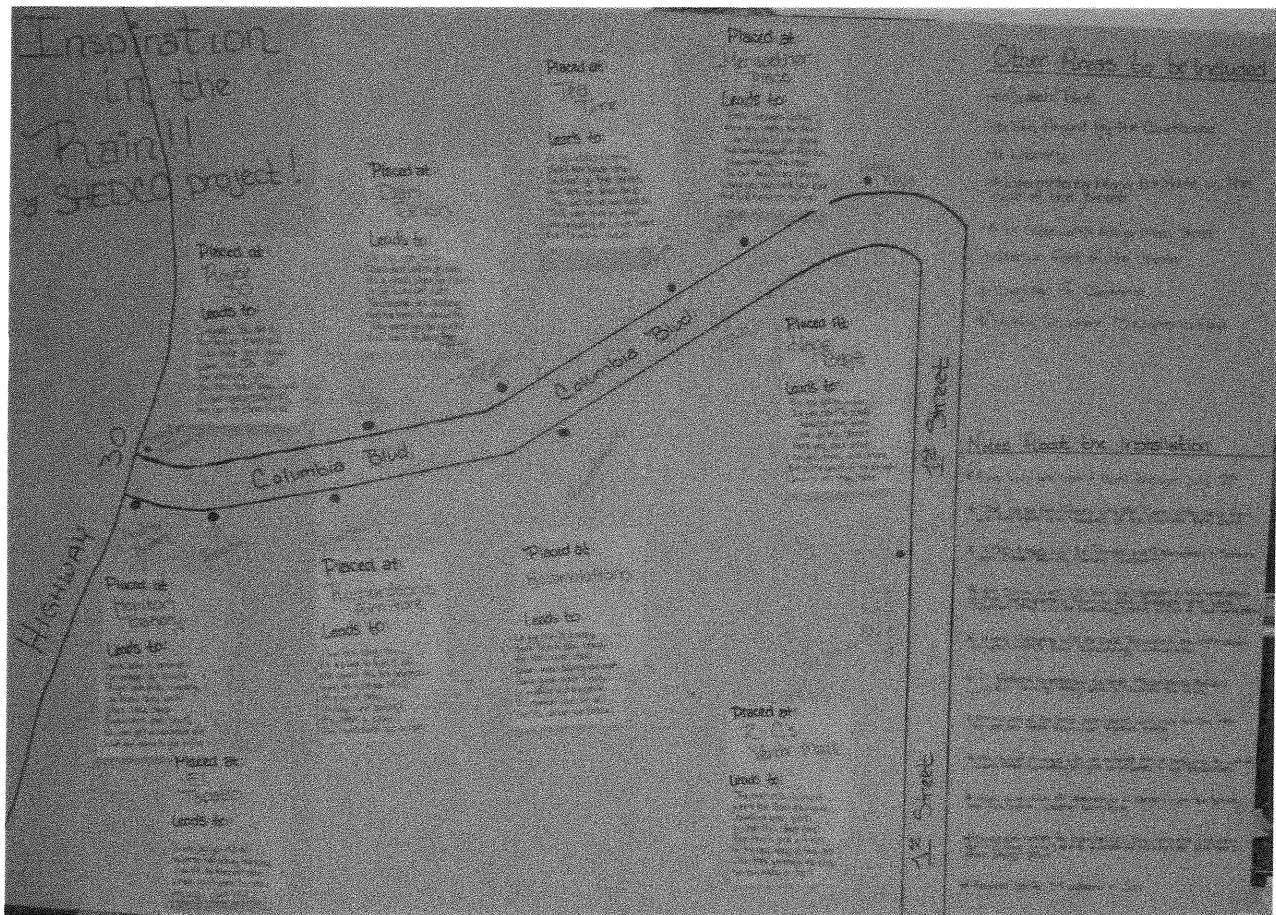
Recent SHEDCO projects:

- Online scavenger hunt.
- Helped businesses show up on Google.
- Assisted with grand openings.
- The helicopter 4th of July fundraiser.
- Art in the Plaza.
- Dog walk project.
- Shuttle during Spirit of Halloweentown that partnered with CC Rider.
- Shop small program.
- Created more Christmas ball lights for the Plaza.

The annual cleanup is Saturday, April 22. SHEDCO will be in the riverfront area doing clean up, planting plants, and continuing work from the previous year. They will meet in the Plaza at 9 a.m. and give assignments to volunteers. SHEDCO will host a picnic in the park at 1 p.m. Volunteers should go to the SOLVE website to register. Basic gardening tools, such as rakes, clippers, etc. are needed.

Amanda Normine, SHEDCO Vice Chair, agreed that getting volunteers is a huge problem. There is a lack of coordination between groups in the community. She would like the Council to consider some kind of committee or advisory group that organizes volunteers and coordinates with events. Council President Morten recommended that Amanda meet with City Administrator Walsh to discuss a volunteer collaboration program.

Amanda gave an update on the Inspiration in the Rain project. She showed the Council a board of the planned installation, a copy of which is on the following page. They will have clues that lead people to different locations around town. They are working with Teresa Knight on the artwork and asked Council to let them know if there is anything specific that they would like in the riverfront area.



Councilor Locke asked what happened to the dogs from the art walk. Al said that they attempted to auction them on eBay and Facebook and neither of those were very successful. They sold about 10 dogs. On April 29, there will be an event called Spring into Art at the Library. The remaining dogs will be for sale at that event.

Discuss Disposition of Municipal Court

City Administrator Walsh said there is an inequity between the revenue that Court brings in and the cost to operate. Discussion of closing the court comes up often when looking at the budget. Walsh is asking the Council for direction in how to proceed so that staff knows how to move forward.

Council President Morten would like to open the discussion up to audience members to hear their perspective. Councilor Locke agreed and suggested a small committee of local agencies be formed to review the options. Councilor Conn wants to look at the best possible way to use limited resources to benefit the community.

Mayor Scholl opened the floor up for comment.

Cindy Philips, Municipal Court Judge. She sent an email to the Council outlining the most important matters that she does not feel have been addressed.

1. How will probationers be handled?
2. What will happen with code enforcement issues if there is no City court? The Circuit Court has concurrent jurisdiction over misdemeanors that occur within City limits. That includes all A and B misdemeanors, but the Circuit Court does not have concurrent jurisdiction over City code violations. An agreement would need to be drafted between the City and the Circuit Court to address those types of violations.

Steve Atchison, District Attorney. He has been talking with the County Commissioners about what would happen if they had to handle the City's court cases. He has five attorneys:

- One is primarily responsible for misdemeanors. He has 375 pending cases to work on.
- One is primarily responsible for juvenile dependency work.
- The remaining three attorneys handle approximately 400 felonies. They have agreed to help with the misdemeanor cases.

He would need at least one more attorney and staff member to cover the additional case load. He already submitted his proposed budget for next fiscal year, and that budget did not include hiring additional staff. Most cases the City sends over would be prosecuted as a violation to save time. However, time is still involved in handling those cases. If this proceeds, he needs to know how his court system is going to handle the resources needed to handle the City's cases.

Councilor Conn clarified that this change will not happen overnight. It will take a lot of time and coordination to transfer the cases over, if that happens.

Mark Lang, defense attorney in St. Helens. He used to work as a district attorney. St. Helens has a great court system with good staff that holds people accountable. It is important to look at the quality of life in addition to the dollars involved. This happened when the jail was matrix-ing out people. If the decision is to dump the Municipal Court into Circuit Court, there is no doubt that the crime in the community will go up. He has seen success as the jail retained people and held them more accountable. Community safety depends on this.

Councilor Conn doesn't intend to dump people into the Circuit Court. She would like to work with Circuit Court to create capacity.

Mayor Scholl asked how much the court system costs to operate. Finance Director Brown said the current Municipal Court budget is \$403,000 and revenue is approximately \$209,000.

Josh Wagoner. What is the Council prioritizing over the Court system? There are lots of issues involved with the Court that are important to address.

Council President Morten said we have a great court system with good people who work in the department. It's an economic balance issue. One of the Council's missions is the safety and wellbeing of the community. He supports forming a committee to further study the issue.

Councilor Conn said that no matter what happens, a system change needs to happen. The Council needs to examine what they are doing and if there are better ways to do that. Mayor Scholl agrees with creating a committee to discuss ways to be more efficient.

It was the consensus of the Council to coordinate a meeting between City Council, City staff, and County staff. A meeting will be scheduled and emailed out to all involved.

Greg Payne, here as a citizen. He wants the Council to consider the impact to future business development. He doesn't think businesses will want to locate here if we do not have a court.

Technical Advisory Committee Recommendation

Each March, the Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD) loading rate from Cascades is reviewed and compared with the reserve allocation from the previous year per the terms of the Operation and Use Agreement. As anticipated, the loading from the mill has increased from the 2015-2016 figures because of the maintenance issues with Cascades' clarifier. Last year, the reserve was set

at 66%. Data for the past year shows that the actual loading increased to an average of 75% (see table).

	2016-17				
	BE BOD	PE BOD	Total		
	Ave lbs/d	Ave lbs/d	Ave lbs/d	BE %	PE %
Mar-16	7054	2332	9386	75.15	24.85
Apr-16	6605	1988	8593	76.86	23.14
May-16	5271	1697	6968	75.65	24.35
Jun-16	3525	1326	4851	72.67	27.33
Jul-16	2513	1011	3524	71.31	28.69
Aug-16	1660	955	2615	63.48	36.52
Sep-16	4078	918	4996	81.63	18.37
Oct-16	7779	1525	9304	83.61	16.39
Nov-16	5654	1839	7493	75.46	24.54
Dec-16	1018	1851	2869	35.48	64.52
Jan-17	10214	2340	12554	81.36	18.64
Feb-17	14594	2427	17021	85.74	14.26
Totals	69965	20209	90174		
Averages	5830.42	1684.08	7514.50	73.0	27.0

Recommendation:

Adjust Cascades' reserve to 73% per the terms of the Operation and Use Agreement. This number is based on the average loading from Cascade compared to the loading from the City's Primary lagoon as outlined in section 9.2.3 in the Agreement. Per the agreement, Cascades pays either the reserve minimum or for actual loading, whichever is higher.

Council concurred with the recommendation.

Discuss Community Action Team Assistance Program

Finance Director Brown has discussed implementing a new assistance program with Community Action Team (CAT). He recommends giving CAT \$5,000 to see how successful the program is and how quickly the money comes back. He would like a specific amount budgeted each year to give to CAT for assistance.

City Administrator Walsh said one condition of receiving Federal funds is to be non-discriminatory. Giving funds to a program for a "discount" on utilities could be considered discriminatory. He thinks there is a way to structure it so the City does not violate rules.

Councilor Locke declared that he sits on the CAT board. The original purpose of the assistance program was to do away with the perceived discrimination of giving a discount to seniors in order to use that money to help low income individuals.

It was the consensus of the Council to give CAT \$5,000 in the current fiscal year and budget \$5,000 for next year.

CAT Executive Director Dan Brown said it would be convenient to run the program the same way they run their current programs.

CAT Energy/Utility Coordinator Katie May explained that a crisis normally has to be documented

to receive funding. Funds are usually given in \$100 increments.

Review Staff Recommendation for Agenda Management & Live Streaming

City Recorder Payne and Deputy City Recorder Scholl have been working on updating the City's live streaming and agenda options. Five options were proposed and Granicus was the preferred option. The State of Oregon uses Granicus.

Council agreed to proceed with Granicus.

Review Special Event Coordination & Management RFP

City Administrator Walsh and Councilor Conn have worked together to create an RFP for event management and coordination that outlines what the City is seeking.

Councilor Conn would like the budget included in the RFP to be revised or reworded. It currently sounds like the City is on board with funding all those events, and she doesn't think the City wants to take on the responsibility of some of those events. Also, a clarifying point needs to be re-added that the person chosen is responsible for obtaining permits.

Council was in agreement to proceed.

Department Reports

Public Works Engineering Director Nelson reported...

- The reservoir is now fully lined. It was been inspected, will be disinfected and filled with water.
- Another I&I Project is coming up. It is on the agenda for approval tonight.
- A project for sewer main repairs is currently out for bid.
- A pump purchase upgrade is being proposed.
- There have been some issues with the GFI breaker flipping when people try to plug into the electrical pedestals at the docks. Since there's only one breaker, the whole dock loses power. An electrician trouble shot to find a solution. The proposal is to install four breakers in one location. It would cost a little under \$9,000. The City applied to the Marine Board for money and has received notice that those funds should be awarded. Councilor Locke asked for the responsible Marine Board contact information so that he can contact them.

Public Works Operations Director Sheppard reported...

- A big log damaged the docks at Sand Island. A contractor had to be hired to remove the debris. The Marine Board heard about it and offered possible grant dollars to help pay for repairs.
- Groundbreaking has occurred at McCormick Park for the new covered pavilion.

Library Director Jeffries reported...

- Columbia County library directors will be meeting at the St. Helens Public Library on Friday.
- The annual Library Volunteer Recognition event will be held on Monday night. She thanked the Council for allowing the Library to close early so that staff can attend. The Library Board and Friends of the Library will also be recognized.
- The Library had a substantial increase in its professional development budget this fiscal year. She thanked the Council for allowing staff to attend conferences.
- The Library's youth program called "Make It" is continuing. Last time, there was a stop motion animation event and the upcoming event will be a sewing workshop.

Finance Director Brown reported...

- Thanked Council for the discussion about Court.

Communications Officer Farnsworth reported...

- Nothing to report.

City Administrator Walsh reported...

- Lots of good things are coming to fruition with the waterfront redevelopment project. The City is at a good point in history. Council President Morten said it would be good to create a list of core values related to the waterfront redevelopment. That may be a piece that is missing from all the different projects.
- Requested that Council set a date to further discuss Court. It was the consensus of the Council to tentatively schedule the meeting for April 26 at 4:30 p.m.

Council Reports

Councilor Locke reported...

- Nothing to report..

Council President Morten reported...

- Acknowledged Friends of Nob Hill Nature Park for their cleanup day on April 1.
- Acknowledged Lions Club for their work on trails at McCormick Park.
- Acknowledged Garden Club for sprucing up areas around town.
- On Monday, the Parks Commission will hear from Portland State University (PSU) students regarding the Columbia View Park expansion project.

Councilor Conn reported...

- The Branding & Wayfinding open house went well.

Mayor Scholl reported...

- The Bicycle & Pedestrian Commission and Parks Commission will hold a joint meeting to discuss trails.
- The Branding and Wayfinding meeting went well.
- He is looking forward to hearing back from the PSU students on their proposals.

Executive Session

ORS 192.660(2)(e) Real Property Transactions

Motion: At 3:14 p.m., upon Locke's motion and Conn's second, the Council unanimously voted to move into executive session under ORS 192.660(2)(e) Real Property Transactions.

Motion: At 3:31 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 3:31 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder.

ATTEST:


Crystal Farnsworth, Communications Officer


Rick Scholl, Mayor