

City of St. Helens

CITY COUNCIL

Work Session Minutes

April 19, 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
Adam Hartless, Code Enforcement Officer
Bob Johnston, Building Official
Jacob Graichen, City Planner
Jenny Dimsho, Assistant Planner
Crystal Farnsworth, Communications Officer

Others: Brent Violette Agnes Petersen Nicole Thill
Cody Mann Ashley Baggett Cindy Sutliff
Janet LeSollen Steve LeSollen Wayne Mayo
Linda Demaray Diane Vergara

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



Visitor Comments

♦ Agnes Petersen. She is here on behalf of Brent Violette. They had requested an extension of time to clean his property. Brent cut down a couple of trees that fell during the wind storm. He tried to pick up his wood splitter at the high school but there was a bomb threat. Brent says there are some improvements. There is a lot more to do. They respectfully request an extension be granted.

Code Enforcement Officer Hartless showed pictures he took today of Brent's property. There is minimal improvement.

Building Official Johnston reported that Brent has relocated the stacked firewood from the right-of-way to his property. He has only cleaned about 10%. Johnston asked the Council to let staff proceed with cleaning up the property.

Mayor Scholl clarified that Brent has until May 22 to clean up the property.

♦ Brett Violette. He talked about what he has been working on to clean up. It's been hard to keep up with declining health and bad weather.

Council President Morten would like to set a date for City crews to clean up the property, if it's not done sooner. This is costing the taxpayers a lot of money and has to end.

It was the consensus of the Council to set a cleanup deadline of June 5, 2017. After that, the City will have it done and bill Brent.

♦Janet LeSollen, 375 S. 13th Street. She also has a nuisance property. They have been working to cleanup the property. She has hauled out probably 15 years of accumulation. They have put up a double carport to sort through recyclable materials.

♦Diane Vergara. She lives across the street from Janet. Diane confirmed that Janet has been outside cleaning up every day, rain or shine.

Building Official Johnston reported that cleanup of the LeSollen property has been going on for 10 years. Of the 5-6 loads that have been taken out of there, there are probably 30-35 more loads to go. One of the concerns is that the front door is blocked from debris/junk. They are making small progress but it's been going on a long time. They are 5-10% done.

Code Enforcement Officer Hartless showed Council pictures he took of the property today. Only minimal cleanup has been done. He has seen Janet working on two occasions. Most of the cleanup seems to be with the plants. He hasn't seen much of the actual garbage being moved out.

The City paid for this property to be cleaned up already in the past. It was the consensus of the Council to set a cleanup deadline of May 3, 2017.

♦Linda Demaray, 951 Plymouth Street. She is still waiting for cleanup to be done at the house near her. There is also a camper with three children living in it.

Building Official Johnston said that Linda is referring to the property at 920 Plymouth Street. He went by there yesterday. There is a family living in a travel trailer in the front yard. They indicated that they will be gone by May 5. City cleanup of the property will most likely begin next week.

Code Enforcement Officer Hartless reported that the contractor has been cleaning up about two houses a week. He will move this property further up the list.

♦Cindy Sutliff, Bicycle & Pedestrian Commission member. She asked the Council to consider helping businesses get bike racks to be a more bike-friendly City.

Cindy is also the owner of Tea Time. They had a small business meeting at her shop recently. They want to make sure that the City Council is aware of the local businesses. A couple of the Council members are regulars at her business but a few have never been.

♦Agnes Petersen. She read in the paper that the City is going to conduct a study of Municipal Court. She tried the very first jury trial here 1960. She has tried cases here from that day forward and is very interested in court systems. Agnes requested the Council put her on any kind of study group.

Mayor Scholl informed Agnes that a public meeting to review Municipal Court will be held on April 26 at 4:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

Semi-Annual Report from IT Consultant Centerlogic

Max Stahl with Centerlogic was in attendance to provide the Council with an update.

- Outstanding issues with the new phone system.
- Decommissioned the old primary server yesterday.
- Everything is now backed up to the same location.
- The AV upgrade project will begin in May and should take about six days.
- The agenda management program will be kicked off next week.
- Firewall upgrades are coming up.

Proposal from Public Health Foundation to Implement Soda Tax

Ashley Baggett from the Public Health Foundation was in attendance to present their proposal. She reviewed a PowerPoint presentation that is included in the archive packet for this meeting. She talked about the negative impacts of sugary drinks. Implementing a tax discourages consumption and raises revenue for educational programs. Areas that have implemented the tax have seen an approximate 20% decrease in consumption.

Council President Morten is a strong proponent of education. He suggested presenting this to the School Board as well. Ashley talked about sugary drinks already being reduced in schools through a healthy policy. Unfortunately, high school students are within walking distances to purchase them during breaks and lunch.

Request from Wayne Mayo to Support County Street Vacation Application

Wayne Mayo was in attendance to present his request, a copy of which is included in the archive meeting packet. He and Ron Schlumpberger own property on the inside corner of Old Portland Road, west of the railroad tracks at Railroad Avenue. They are asking to vacate platted, unused streets, between their pieces of property. The City would be making recommendation to the County.

Council President Morten pointed out that the Urban Renewal Advisory Committee (URAC) is reviewing the transportation system. They are looking closely at intersections and this corridor. This request may be preliminary until the study is complete. Wayne pointed out the area they are requesting on a map. The railroad is not likely to ever give up any of their property, so that area will probably never be developed with a need for the undeveloped streets.

Mayor Scholl was under the impression that the opposite side of the street is what the URAC is reviewing for future development. He does not believe Wayne's side of the street will be needed.

Councilor Carlson is concerned that improvements are not being made along Old Portland Road with sidewalks and trees as development occurs. Wayne responded that he will be required to put in sidewalks if he builds there.

City Planner Graichen provided background information. He was approached by both Wayne and Ron about the County street vacation some time ago. The County reached out to the City since it's in the Urban Growth Boundary. State law requires you to consider whether or not the public interest will be prejudiced. Staff recommends not approving the street vacation based on the Council's guarded approach to street vacations and future street development that goes beyond our lifetime.

Mayor Scholl declared that he is related to Ron Schlumpberger and will abstain from voting. However, he does want the record to include, "When it makes sense, it makes sense." He does not believe that area will ever become part of an intersection. For the record, "this is the first he is seeing this."

Councilor Conn talked about the Council being very cautious with granting street vacations in past years. We are a growing community and in planning stages. She is reluctant to vacate the property because it's a main entrance to the community and is close to a main intersection.

Public Works Engineering Director Nelson agrees with Graichen. She is reluctant to recommend favorably because they do not know about future development. Having that extra property to do some reconfiguration is beneficial for long-term improvements. Gable Road has the highest traffic counts in the County other than the highway. Future development is only going to increase those numbers. Improvements at that intersection will happen at some point, such as a roundabout.

Mayor Scholl does not believe that holding onto the property will do the City any good. Common sense tells him it will never happen. Councilor Conn argued that he is balancing the request of two citizens against the potential future good of many more.

Mayor Scholl requested staff work with the public in the future and not against them.

City Administrator Walsh encouraged Council to complete the transportation system review prior to making any decisions such as these.

Councilor Locke pointed out that they need to look at this from a future standpoint. They may have to purchase surrounding property to develop the intersection. It may be 40-60 years into the future.

3rd Quarter Communications Report

Communications Officer Farnsworth was in attendance to present her report which is included in the archive packet for this meeting.

Mayor Scholl talked about the recent meeting between a producer, himself, and Crystal. The producer recommended the City purchase a drone and professional video camera. A drone costs about \$1,700 and a video camera is about \$3,000. They would be used to put together a tourism video and film events such as 13 Nights on the River and Spirit of Halloweentown.

Council President Morten mentioned the need for training and maintenance of the equipment. Crystal believes learning to use a drone will be less extensive than a professional video camera.

Discussion will continue at the next work session.

Urban Renewal Updates

City Administrator Walsh and Assistant Planner Jenny Dimsho reviewed the recent Urban Renewal process. City Council has been assigned the duty of the Urban Renewal Agency Board.

It was the consensus of the Council to hold the first meeting on May 3, 2017 at 6 p.m. if the consultants are available.

3rd Quarter Financial Report

Finance Director Brown presented his 3rd quarter report which is included in the archive packet for this meeting.

- Reviewed the changes to the Utility Billing division.
- Shoretel phones are 90% complete.
- Switch to Wells Fargo for banking is about 99% complete. It has dramatically increased the efficiency of Utility Billing.
- Collections agency switch is almost complete.

- The AV equipment in the Council Chambers will be updated next month.
- He proposes to send utility bills out monthly beginning this summer. They are waiting for Public Works to complete installation of electric meters.
- Briefly reviewed all department funds.
- Budget Committee meeting Thursday, May 4th. He asked the Council to read the budget message prior to the meeting. It should answer many questions about changes they will see.

Review New Associate Planner Job Description

City Administrator Walsh reviewed the new Associate Planner job description. Assistant Planner Dimsho would move into this position. The position is supervised by the City Planner and Community Development Director.

There were no concerns from Council.

Department Reports

Public Works Engineering Director Nelson reported...

- The reservoir lining project is done.
- She, Public Works Operations Director Sheppard, and Engineering Project Manager Darroux attended the APWA conference last week. It was excellent and included beneficial varied topics.

Public Works Operations Director Sheppard reported...

- During the high water, a lot of debris built up behind the booms and damaged the docks. They hired a tug boat operator to clean out the logs. The Marine Board will reimburse them for the work.

Library Director Jeffries reported...

- The volunteer recognition event was held last week. They were really pleased to see how other facets of the Library program works.
- On Saturday, the St. Helens Garden Club held their semi-annual plant sale on the porch.
- In June, a program will be held co-hosted by the Library, Museum Association, and Garden Club.
- The Make-It! events are continuing.
- An author from Warrenton will be coming to the Library on April 27 to talk about his books, "Rollin' on the Wild River" and "Rollin' on the River."
- The Columbia Arts Guild is holding a "Spring Into Art" event at the Library on April 29.

Finance Director Brown reported...

- Five Cost of Service Analysis RFP's were received. They will review those tomorrow. He hopes to bring back more information to the next Council meeting.
- The tech panel meets next on Monday at 1 p.m.

City Recorder Payne reported...

- A Special Use Permit application was received yesterday for the Amani Center run/walk taking place on Saturday. They are requesting a street closure, so will be added to tonight's Council agenda for approval.
- Tomorrow night is the Annual Boards and Commissions Volunteer Reception at 5:30 p.m. in this room. Be there or be square!

City Administrator Walsh reported...

- The Police Department accreditation process is very work heavy and time extensive. He

commended Chief Moss and the staff for their work.

- Received a message from the Columbia River Yachting Association expressing their frustration with the City's lack of moving homeless people off the docks. It does make it difficult to rely on the Sheriff's Marine Patrol to follow-up. They are working on it though.
- The event planning RFP has been released.

Council Reports

Councilor Locke reported...

- Thanked the Police Department for all the work they have been doing.
- A lot of new officers have been hired. Morten acknowledged the chief on his KOHI presentations. He's a joy to listen to.

Councilor Carlson reported...

- She was on KOHI for Keep it Local last week. Supporting local businesses is so important.
- Youth Council had dwindled down but now they are at 15 members. She would like to provide a sign-in sheet at their meetings.
- She thanked Walsh for the role he plays and being trustworthy and honest.

Councilor Conn reported...

- The Empty Bowls event raised over \$7,000 for Columbia Pacific Food Bank.
- Attended Pat Trapp's retirement party on April 14. She thanked him for working with the City.
- She and Carlson attended the NAMI walk kick-off.
- Attended the Bonamici Town Hall on April 15.
- She and Chief Moss attended the 6th Annual Ruth Ann Harris-Inman breakfast yesterday. The center works with people who have been affected by domestic violence.
- There are a ton of activities to take part in on Saturday
- She is really proud of our outstanding police department.

Council President Morten reported...

- The Barbara Bullis golf tournament will be held May 5.
- Thanked Assistant Planner Dimsho for securing the grant for the Veterans' Memorial Plaza. They are now in the planning process of continuing expansion.
- Asked for an update on the St. Helens Community Foundation insurance. He heard the Foundation is crumbling. Conn said the last meeting was cancelled due to a lack of quorum.
- The Parks Commission is encouraging the Council to allow parks staff to mow the fields at the entrance of the Boise property. It would temporarily be used for boys youth soccer in the fall. Council concurred.

Mayor Scholl reported...

- Thanked staff for the birthday card.
- He and Crystal have been working with the producer to showcase the City. He would like to see it proceed.
- Kudos to Officer Luedke and Sergeant Miltich for the work they did.

Executive Session

ORS 192.660(2)(e) Real Property Transactions

Motion: At 3:49 p.m., upon Locke's motion and Morten's second, the Council unanimously voted to move into executive session under ORS 192.660(2)(e) Real Property Transactions.

Motion: At 4:55 p.m., upon Morten's motion and Locke's second, the Council unanimously recessed executive session until after tonight's regular session.

Other Business

City Recorder Payne reported that an amendment to the Alta Planning + Design, Inc. contract for Branding and Wayfinding Master Plan will be on tonight's agenda.




There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder.

ATTEST:


Kathy Payne, City Recorder


Rick Scholl, Mayor