

City of St. Helens

CITY COUNCIL

Work Session Minutes

May 17, 2017

Members Present: Rick Scholl, Mayor
Keith Locke, Councilor
Susan Conn, Councilor
Ginny Carlson, Councilor

Members Absent: Doug Morten, Council President

Staff Present: John Walsh, City Administrator
Matt Brown, Finance Director
Kathy Payne, City Recorder
Margaret Jeffries, Library Director
Terry Moss, Police Chief
Neal Sheppard, Public Works Operations Director
Sue Nelson, Public Works Engineering Director
Jacob Graichen, City Planner
Jenny Dimsho, Associate Planner
Crystal Farnsworth, Communications Officer

Others:	Mary Ellen Funderburg	Leanne Murray	Cody Mann
	William Stroup	Linda Demaray	Shawna Stroup-Harrison
	Elaine Frank	Leslie Everett	

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



Visitor Comments

♦ Crystal Farnsworth, City Communications Officer. 13 Nights on the River and 4th of July are rapidly approaching. She is looking for direction from the Council on advertising for the event.

It was the consensus of the Council for Crystal to proceed with advertising.

♦ Linda Demaray. Thanked the Code Enforcement Officer Adam Hartless, the three police officers, and two contractors who handled the nuisance property near her. They handled the situation very well. However, the garbage bin is full again and the camper is still there. She has no hopes of it being maintained.

Annual Report from Library Board

Library Board Vice Chair Mary Ellen Funderburg was in attendance to give the Library Board report, a copy of which is included in the archive packet for this meeting.

- Thanked the Council for their support of the Library.
- The diverse age range of the Board gives them a good perspective during discussion.
- Board members bring varied skills and knowledge through involvement in community organizations and their daily jobs.
- Completed the Five-Year Strategic Plan.
- Created subcommittees consisting of two board members and two staff members:

- Facilities
- Access to Library Services/Fees and Services
- Marketing and Communications
- Lifelong Learning and Information/Resources for the Community
- Programs and assistance offered:
 - Oregon Humanities Conservation Projects
 - Art shows
 - Book readings
 - Ukulele orchestra
 - MakeIt programs
 - Storytelling
 - Proctoring exams for college students
 - Assisting patrons with pre-employment tests
 - Research information for job applications and interviews
 - Resume assistance
 - Computers available to patrons for emails, classes, etc.
 - Research for projects, history, etc.

Councilor Carlson saw that some larger retailers offer grants for programs involving children. IKEA is one she recently became aware of. Library Director Jeffries said that some of the Library staff and board members will be attending a grant-writing workshop early next month organized by the Oregon Community Foundation. They have received grants in the past.

Councilor Conn thanked Library staff and board members for their investment into the Strategic Plan.

Concerns Regarding Traffic Safety Around N. Vernonia Road & MacArthur Street

William Stroup, a citizen who lives at the corner of this intersection, is very concerned about traffic safety along N. Vernonia Road from Frantz Street to MacArthur Street. It is very unsafe for kids walking between those streets and Campbell Park. He suggested a crosswalk near Goodman Lane to improve safety.

Staff confirmed that the closest crosswalk is near Sherlock's Grocery.

Councilor Carlson talked about different strategies to naturally slow drivers. Public Works Engineering Director Nelson talked about it being difficult because of the way the street is classified, as well as multiple driveways and streets accessing it.

Further discussion ensued. Temporary speed radar signs will be posted in the area. Staff will investigate installing sidewalks in the area.

Police Chief Moss added his opinion that nothing works as well as a police officer with a stack of tickets and a radar gun. Complaints are up and traffic citations are down due to lack of staff. Ideally, they would have an officer issuing traffic citations all day.

♦Shawna Stroup-Harrison. She lives on Vernonia Road. She saw two kids almost get hit on her way here. She is in favor of whatever it will take to make it safer.

Mayor Scholl will talk to staff further and follow-up with William and Shawna.

Request for Council Consideration Regarding Property Off Deer Island Road

Leslie Everett, Elaine Frank and her husband are co-owners of the subject property. They are requesting the rental property be rezoned. It was purchased in 2013 with a house and duplex on it. She showed photos of the property. The residences are a nonconforming use because they are now zoned Light Industrial. There is a driveway to access City property adjacent to their property. They are now challenged with a tenant that did significant damage to the small house, which was discovered after a house fire. They have been working hard to clean up the property. The current zoning prohibits them from replacing the house. They are requesting a zone change to allow them the opportunity to rebuild and improve the neighborhood and offer affordable housing.

Public Works Operations Sheppard pointed out that the owners have done a fantastic job cleaning the property.

City Planner Graichen said the property has been zoned Light Industrial for over 30 years. It is subject to nonconforming use rules. In order to replace the dwelling unit, they need to change the zoning and apply for a land partition. Normally, they wouldn't come to the Council but would go through the application process. Graichen pointed out the proximity to the City's driveway access. He suggested the property owners approach the Council about including that piece of City property with the re-zone request.

Council liked the idea of adding more affordable housing in close proximity to the transit station.

Department Reports

Police Chief Moss reported...

- Referring back to the earlier discussion on pedestrian safety, ODOT defines a school zone as a minimum of 200 feet from the school property line.
- Tonight's agenda includes two declarations of surplus property.
- The CERT graduation was held last Thursday.
- He, Finance Director Brown, and Communications Officer Farnsworth reviewed a mobile app program last week. It would give the community direct access to the Police Department. It would also benefit Public Works and Communications. Brown is doing further research on the finance side of it.
- The Cops Grant application is opening soon. It will pay up to 75% of a police officer for three years. The City is responsible for the cost the fourth year. Brown reviewed the cost and the City would be paying about \$27,000 a year. There is definitely a need. There were 3,000 applicants last year. Only 900 were awarded. It's a competitive process. One area of funding the City qualifies to apply under is an additional school resource officer. He will meet with the Superintendent Scott Stockwell to review needs. Consensus of the Council to proceed with the application.

Public Works Engineering Director Nelson reported...

- Still working on the LED light exchange project. Columbia River PUD is about 75% of the way done. Anticipate it being done by the end of the month.
- Next week is National Public Works Week. Council and staff are invited to breakfast at the City Shops on Friday, May 26th beginning at 7:30 a.m.

Public Works Operations Director Sheppard reported...

- The slab will be poured for the new pavilion at McCormick Park tomorrow.
- They will be participating in Big Rig Day at McBride Elementary School on Friday.

Library Director Jeffries reported...

- The quarterly artist talk is happening tomorrow at 7 p.m.
- MakerFest is Saturday, 11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
- On June 8, there is a collaborative program between the Oregon Historical Society, Portland Garden Club, St. Helens Garden Club, St. Helens Public Library, and the Columbia County Museum Association. They will be reviewing the history of Portland gardens to celebrate national garden week.
- Tonight's agenda includes an agreement for the Library to participate in the Edge Initiative. It is a suite of tools that help libraries assess their technology needs and align with the community's needs. St. Helens is one of five Oregon libraries selected to participate. It is a chance for us to interact with libraries that are of a similar size.

Finance Director Brown reported...

- Tonight's agenda includes RFPs for Municipal Court Judge and Prosecutor. He has tentatively contacted the Pro-Tem Judge and Prosecutor to possibly fill in during the month of July.
- He has been researching the purchase of cameras on top of City Hall to face toward the river and the Plaza. If it's ok with the Council, he would like to spend \$160 on one camera and invest time with Centerlogic to install it. Council concurred.
- The AV system upgrades have been pushed back to June 20. A piece of the equipment is on backorder.
- He distributed and reviewed a handout comparing court budgets with similar sized cities. A copy is included in the archive meeting packet.

Mayor Scholl talked about incentives to get people to pay past amounts due, which totals \$2.5 million. Brown can look into program ideas. Councilors Conn and Carlson did not agree that was a priority. These are most likely people that can't even afford a smaller amount. Carlson suggested a new program moving forward. City Recorder Payne suggested having them conduct community service hours during 13 Nights on the River.

City Administrator Walsh pointed out that St. Helens has the lowest number of FTE police officers. There are fewer officers to write tickets compared to other cities. Brown asked if Council would be interested in him researching what it would look like to add a traffic team. Discussion continued. Councilor Conn would like to review the contracts for cities that contract with the county or adjacent city for court services.

Brown will conduct more research and return to the next meeting with additional information.

City Recorder Payne reported...

- Council will need to appoint a member to the Columbia Learning Center Board of Directors at tonight's meeting. Council President Morten has expressed interest.

City Administrator Walsh reported...

- Referring to earlier discussion about a camera on the rooftop. He envisions something similar to Port of Ilwaco. You can control the camera from a laptop. Brown added that cameras like that range from \$400-500 instead of \$200. Council preferred a camera that zooms and moves around.
- An RFQ for a master site developer was released two weeks ago.
- Only two applications were received in response to the event manager/coordinator RFP. Councilor Locke received a request yesterday to extend the deadline. Council concurred to leave it open an additional two weeks.
- A revised social media policy will be coming to the Council.

Council Reports

Councilor Locke reported...

- The Bicycle and Pedestrian Commission gave away helmets at McBride Elementary School on May 5th. It was very successful. They will be doing the same at Lewis & Clark Elementary School in two weeks.
- He has been trying to get companies to relocate to the Boise property. They have lost some interest because of the higher PGE service rates. PGE has been very unresponsive to service needs. He would like to pursue switching to Columbia River PUD. Council was in concurrence to allow Locke and Walsh to begin correspondence.

Councilor Carlson reported...

- The Youth Council is hosting a mixer to gain interest on May 22nd. They are up to 15 members and ideally would have a core group of 20-30.
- Sunday is the NAMI Walk. Some statistics to consider are:
 - 1 in 5 people experience mental illness every year.
 - Only 1% of those get the medical attention they need.
 - 75% of youth involved in law enforcement have a mental health diagnosis.
 - Suicide is the number 3 cause of death of youth in the nation.
- She suggested using native plants in our parks. That could reduce maintenance costs.
- A few weeks ago Mayor Scholl brought up the need to become more business friendly. She suggested the City include a survey card with their business license renewal. That would give them the opportunity to provide feedback of what's working well and what's not. Mayor Scholl added that it may be beneficial to hold a town hall to hear from businesses as well.

Councilor Conn reported...

- The Arts & Cultural Commission is discussing holding a retreat to develop their mission and goals, and define their purpose.
- She attended the Columbia Pacific Economic Development District meeting last week. Information is shared between four counties. She distributed the RFQ for a master site developer to be shared with their networks.
- The next CIT training is June 5-9.

Mayor Scholl reported...

- He needs to meet with the State Fire Marshall to discuss 4th of July. He is asking for staff to help coordinate since the City is taking over it this year. The Elks Lodge is handling alcohol sales that day. The City is going to provide the insurance. Scholl suggested selling the alcohol in storage that was donated/purchased for Spirit of Halloweentown.
- A guy who visits Sand Island daily brought up the need for trashcans on the island. Council talked about the problems in the past where excess garbage was being dumped there when there were cans on site. They removed them with hopes of people packing it out, which was working in the past. Councilor Locke will talk to Parks staff.

William Stroup thanked the Council for listening to him earlier. He went back and talked to some of the neighbors. He appreciates that the City is going to work on it.

Executive Session

ORS 192.660(2)(e) Real Property Transactions

Motion: At 3:13 p.m., upon Carlson's motion and Locke's second, the Council unanimously voted to move into executive session under ORS 192.660(2)(e) Real Property Transactions.

Motion: At 3:54 p.m., upon completion of the executive session, Carlson moved to go back into

work session, seconded by Locke, and unanimously approved.

Other Business

No other business.




There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder.

ATTEST:


Kathy Payne, City Recorder


Rick Scholl, Mayor