

# City of St. Helens

## CITY COUNCIL

Work Session Minutes

September 6, 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  
Terry Moss, Police Chief  
Neal Sheppard, Public Works Operations Director  
Sue Nelson, Public Works Engineering Director  
Malinda Duran, Police Support Specialist  
Bob Johnston, Building Official

**Others:** Nicole Thill Julie Thompson

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



### **Visitor Comments**

No visitor comments.

### **Request from Police Department**

Police Support Specialist Malinda Duran was in attendance to make the request from the Police Department. For the last two years the police department has participated in the Spirit of Halloweentown Scarecrow contest and this year will not be an exception. This year their "scarecrow" will be a children's costume party on the front lawn hosted by Officer Friendly and his K-9 Spike. To tie in with the scarecrow, they will be hosting a community event inviting trick-or-treaters to come by the police station. The Council is invited to participate by hosting a table that offers trick-or-treaters the opportunity to play a game, learn about a program, or otherwise obtain a treat. The event will be held from 5-8 p.m., outdoors weather permitting otherwise in our garage.

The Council was in concurrence to have a table at the event and Mayor Scholl and Councilor Conn agreed to participate. City Recorder Payne said she would help with it, that there are ideas on Pinterest that she's looked at and Oriental Trading has little prizes and candy that are inexpensive.

### **Discuss Amendments to Municipal Code – Graffiti Clean-Up Timeframe**

Building Official Bob Johnston reviewed graffiti as outlined in St. Helens Municipal Code Ch. 8.14.070(1)(i), "No person shall willfully or wantonly damage, mutilate or deface any exterior surface of any structure or building on any private or public property by placing thereon any marking, carving or graffiti. It shall be the responsibility of the owner or person in charge of the premises to restore said surface to an approved state of maintenance and repair." Chief Moss

polled other cities to find out their timeframe for graffiti clean-up. Responses are included in the archive meeting packet.

After discussion about the definition of graffiti and timeframes, Council directed staff to return with a proposal to amend the Code.

### **Discuss Transient Room Fee Rate**

City Administrator Walsh is proposing to change the rate from 7% to 10%. That seems to be the common rate throughout the state.

The Council was in consensus to look at increasing the rate. Council directed Walsh to come back with a proposal.

### **Discuss Possible Topics and Date/Location for Council Retreat**

The Council was in concurrence to hold the retreat on November 8<sup>th</sup>, 10 a.m. – 3 p.m., and find out if they can use the Columbia Soil & Water Conservation building. Possible agenda items include:

- waterfront development
- Cascade Tissue update
- long range and short range plans of Boise property
  - facilities and space utilization
  - potential marketing
  - signage at entrance
  - clean up entrance
- Urban Renewal
- any concerns staff would like Council to discuss

### **Department Reports**

**Police Chief Moss** reported...

- An upgrade will be done to the panic alarm system at City Hall. The service will be enhanced to include the Library, Police, and Public Works.

**Public Works Engineering Director Nelson** reported...

- Paving should wrap up next week.
- She met with Columbia County Road Department and the Gable Road project consultant today to review the scope of work. They have done several jobs with the same scope.

Council President Morten was asked why the black top on South First Street doesn't go sidewalk to sidewalk. Nelson responded that they hope to redo the entire roadway and sidewalks within a few years. But they need to wait until there is a comprehensive design standard for all of the downtown area.

**Public Works Operations Director Sheppard** reported...

- The stairway that goes from the Waterfront property up to Nob Hill Nature Park is complete.
- The dock at the north end of Sand Island has been deteriorating. Roger repaired it yesterday.

**Library Director Jeffries** reported...

- The Arts & Cultural Commission will have a ribbon cutting ceremony on September 21<sup>st</sup> at 6 p.m. for the Salmon Tree Cycle Sculpture. It will be held in the Columbia Vet parking lot. Parking is behind Dollar Tree. There will be a speaker and light refreshments. It's open to the public and formal invitations were distributed to invited guests and dignitaries.
- There is a Library program starting at 7 p.m. that same evening. It's the first of four

installments of Civics for Adults:

- Misinformation, Fake News, and Political Propaganda, September 21, 2017
- Citizen Activism 101 – Making Change Happen, February 15, 2018
- The Influence of the Constitution on Political Conversation, April 19, 2018
- Beyond Voting: Elections and Campaign Financing, September 20, 2018

**Finance Director Brown** reported...

- Court has been closed on Fridays for the last several months. A lot of changes have been made over there. Staff anticipates being 100% caught up in October or November. He recommends reopening Court on Fridays to increase the service level. Council concurred.
- He's starting to have issues with staffing in Utility Billing and Court. Three staff are in Utility Billing, one in Court, and one is a Legal Assistant to the Prosecutor. On Mondays and Tuesdays, one of Utility Billing staff members goes over to Court to cover. On Wednesday, another Utility Billing staff member helps in the Building Department. He would like to improve efficiencies in a cost effective manner by possibly combining departments. Council was in consensus to pursue it further.
- Violette's Villa property is in the process of being sold. They are requesting the lien payoff be lowered. In 2012, an unpaid utility bill was liened in the amount of \$28,000. Interest has accrued and they now owe \$38,900. The personal representative is requesting the City accept \$15,000 as a payoff. The Council was in consensus to keep it at \$38,900 to maintain consistency with all other citizens.

**City Recorder Payne** reported...

- Nothing to report.

**City Administrator Walsh** reported...

- Scappoose City Council expressed interest in having a joint meeting to discuss common interests. The Council was in concurrence. Walsh will keep the Council updated.
- Spirit of Halloweentown is in full swing. This year is better organized with new and improved events. Bringing on a community liaison has proven to be a huge success.
- Staff is requesting combining the fall/winter Gazette due to the timing of Spirit of Halloweentown activities. Council was in concurrence with the request. They suggested creating a survey to gauge interest.

Mayor Scholl added that a St. Helens video was produced by a PSU student. He will ask Communications Officer Farnsworth to present it to Council.

### **Council Reports**

**Councilor Locke** reported...

- Council has discussed the intersection at St. Helens and South First Street and the lack of visibility. He suggested turning it into a four-way stop. The intersection at Cowlitz Street and South First Street should also be turned into a four-way stop. Nelson explained that staff would need to review the State criteria. It may not warrant a change. She will bring back information to the next work session.

Council watched the video produced by the PSU student. Communications Officer Farnsworth informed the Council that it is a series of videos that will be produced. Associate Planner Dimsho will take the lead on coordinating while she is out of the office.

Farnsworth reviewed upcoming Spirit of Halloweentown media communications.

Event Coordinator Tina Curry reported on Spirit of Halloweentown.

- Lot of new groups and activities involved.
- The entire family will be here for the pumpkin lighting.
- The museum was relocated to the Masonic Ballroom and will be awesome. It is being coordinated by Stephanie Patterson.
- A daily shuttle will run from Wild Currant Catering to Houlton Bakery. There is no charge for businesses to participate in the coin challenge. Coins are picked up at Skinny's Texaco when they complete the challenge.
- Met with the Emergency Management team to coordinate parking and prepare for the number of people coming. This year will be at maximum capacity.
- New photo ops added.
- Hoping Diane Franklin will lead the Lil' Spooks Parade.

**Councilor Carlson** reported...

- She thanked Natasha Parvey and her husband, Judy Thompson, Eddie Dunton, and their families for helping paint the Chamber building. It was extremely hot conditions working out there.
- Riverside will be working with Keep It Local and a local Boy Scout troop to paint Halloween-themed love rocks. They'll be placed around town.
- Saturday, September 23 is the Suicide Prevention Walk in Scappoose.
- Chief Moss is committed to having an officer attend Youth Council meetings. It's a great outreach to young people.
- She suggested hiring a temporary staff member to help Crystal and Heidi during the month of October. October is crazy down here.
- The Mainstreet Conference is October 4-6 in Oregon City. Walsh will review the schedule to see if it warrants having a staff member attend.

**Councilor Conn** reported...

- As Carlson mentioned, the Out of Darkness Walk is sponsored by Scappoose Police Department. It raises funds for suicide prevention. She will be attending and challenged the Council to join her.
- There are subcommittees reviewing the Library's Strategic Plan, one of which is facilities. She reminded the Council that the Library is stretched for space. A lot of activities occur there.
- The next CIT Training is October 9-13. She requested a budget of \$300 to provide snacks. The Council was in concurrence.

**Council President Morten** reported...

- Asked staff to create certificates for the individuals who painted the Chamber building. They should be recognized. Carlson will create a list of volunteers.
- Thanked Brown for participating in City Talk. He spoke and sang well.
- The manager at the St. Helens Moorage, Toni, has come before the Council twice now regarding issues of theft and piracy at the docks. He has encouraged her to report it to the Police Department since she knows who those individuals are. There were some instances on the City docks this last weekend.
- Verified that there are four people participating in the Barbara Bullis Golf Tournament. Morten, Locke, Walsh, and one other person will participate.

**Mayor Scholl** reported...

- The Alano Club offers a lot of self-help meetings and works with a lot of agencies. None of those agencies contribute financially. Recently, the Alano Club put about \$2,000 into landscaping with flowers, new sod, and new bark dust. Unfortunately, they've only had one day of rain in the last three months. He's requesting the Council forgive the additional cost

being spent to water the grass and flowers. Council President Morten suggested a club member present it to the Council. It creates an ethical dilemma for the Mayor, who sits on the Alano Club Board, to request funds from the City.

- He expressed his opposition to the sugar tax and feels it has gone way too far. He declared that he will not attend the public forum.

Councilor's Morten, Carlson, Conn, and Locke expressed their desire to hold the public forum to hear from the community.

#### **Executive Session**

#### **ORS 192.660(2)(e) Real Property Transactions**

**Motion:** At 3:01 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 3:20 p.m., upon completion of the executive session, Conn moved to go back into work session, seconded by Morten, and unanimously approved.

#### **Other Business**

No other business.



There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder.

ATTEST:

  
Kathy Payne, City Recorder

  
Rick Scholl, Mayor