

# City of St. Helens

## CITY COUNCIL

Work Session Minutes

October 18, 2017

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**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  
Kathy Payne, City Recorder  
Margaret Jeffries, Library Director  
Terry Moss, Police Chief  
Crystal Farnsworth, Communications Officer  
Bob Johnston, Building Official  
Jenny Dimsho, Associate Planner  
Tina Curry, Event Coordinator

**Others:** Bert Mueller                      Sue Mueller                      Nicole Thill  
Julie Thompson

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



### **Visitor Comments**

♦ Jenny Dimsho, Associate Planner. Tonight's agenda includes a resolution to adopt the Branding and Wayfinding Master Plan. She is here to address any questions the Council has.

♦ Bert Mueller. He is a member of the St. Helens Lions Club. One of their members heard that the City plans to put welcome signs at the entrance into St. Helens. It's customary with many cities to include logos of the major service organizations on the welcome signs. The three biggest service organizations are the Lions Club, Kiwanis, and Rotary Club. He suggests including those logos. A majority of the work done by those service organization benefits the public.

Council President Morten pointed out the sign in the railroad right-of-way between Columbia Blvd. and St. Helens Street. He suggested recognizing the service clubs in that area. Councilor Locke responded that the sign was placed there because the Kiwanis adopt that road area every spring. He agreed that it's a good spot for all the logos.

Dimsho asked ODOT if the existing non-conforming signs can be replaced with new signs. ODOT said no. Modifying existing signs is probably out of the question. New signs can be permitted by following the permitting process.

### **Spirit of Halloweentown Report**

Event Manager Tina Curry reviewed Spirit of Halloweentown activities.

- Record crowds attended last weekend.

- Vendors had record sales.
  - Businesses had record sales.
- This weekend:
  - Haunted Hot Rods
  - Musical entertainment.
  - Community activities.
- Receiving positive feedback online.
- Contacted by Fuji television from New York yesterday.
- On Buzzfeed again this morning.
- Posted a map in The Plaza for people to post pins where they're visiting from. Almost every country is represented.
- The family who won the Ultimate Fan Competition is comprised of five generations. They were very excited to be here.
- 99% of the people who came had a great time.
- Diane Franklin will be here at the end of the month. She will be joined by Harriet from Halloweentown.

### **First Quarter Communications Report**

Communications Officer Farnsworth presented her first quarter report to the Council, a copy of which is included in the archive packet for this meeting.

- Compared to last year, more time has been dedicated to communications.
- Reviewed social media stats and highlights.
- Reviewed activity highlights.
  - One of her favorite events was the Library stuffed animal sleepover. It received great reviews.
- At the last meeting, Council mentioned the need for a community survey about the Gazette. She asked what the Council had in mind. It was the consensus of the Council for the survey to broadly cover what people are looking for in the Gazette and how they receive it. She is working with City Recorder Payne to make the newsletter page more visible on the website.
- Working with Youth Librarian Gretchen Kolderup to release information about the proposed fee amendments, which Council will be making a decision on tonight.
- Working with the Police Department for an upcoming campaign to promote Donut Day.
- Will be at the Police Department Trunk-or-Treat taking photos.
- Heavy rains and winds are predicted for this Saturday.

Council took a brief recess to resolve some AV system issues.

### **First Quarter Financial Report**

Finance Director Brown presented his first quarter report to the Council, a copy of which is included in the archive packet for this meeting.

- Received higher than projected general fund revenues.
- Most department expenditures are on point.
- Reviewed individual funds. Details are included in the report.

### **Discuss Continuity of Operations Plan**

This item was taken off the agenda by staff.

### **Discuss Splash Pad Open Dates**

It was the consensus of the Council to post a sign with open dates of the Splash Pad of June 1 – September 30. Public Works Operation Director Sheppard can adjust the dates if needed, based on weather.

### **Update on Front Office Wiring and Configuration**

Finance Director Brown reported that staff ran into some wiring problems when the carpet was ripped out. He is still waiting for a quote from Azimuth to redo the wiring.

### **Discuss Hiring of Office Assistant for Front Office**

Finance Director Brown is looking for Council feedback on staffing needs in the front office. He proposes hiring someone to take over some of the front office duties currently being done by Heidi. Depending on how the position is set up, will be how it's paid for. A full-time position would cost about \$67,000. \$11,000 of that would come from the General Fund. The remaining amount would be split between Enterprise Funds.

Councilor Conn sees the need. The front office would be able to function more effectively with another person. They are the first interface with the public.

Council President Morten gave kudos to Heidi. Over the last year, she has been overwhelmed with stacks of paper. Even with how busy she is, she continues to give excellent customer service.

Mayor Scholl agreed with how well Heidi serves the public. He suggested hiring a part-time position that could possibly work into full-time.

Councilor Locke prefers the position be full-time.

Brown talked about ideas to reconfigure the front space for efficiency. He will come back in November with recommendations.

### **Department Reports**

**Police Chief Moss** reported...

- The search for police officers continue. The application process closed on Friday. He is waiting for test results and then will schedule interviews. Mayor Scholl asked if he could sit in on the interview process. Moss responded that they have a panel of supervisors, one member of the Council, and a community member. Councilor Locke told Mayor Scholl that it would be okay for him to observe.
- Mayor Scholl gave kudos to the officers for how they responded to Saturday's events.

**Library Director Jeffries** reported...

- The brand new book club kicks off this month. It was initiated by the Library Board and will be led by two of those members. Participants will be reading books with a Halloween twist.
- Halloween story time on October 25.
- Pumpkin painting on October 27.
- An author event was led by a staff member at the Library on Saturday.
- November is National Novel Writing Month. Author Tina Connelly will be presenting. She used to work at the St. Helens Book Store and is a Portland based science fiction author.
- The Friends of the Library are holding their fall book sale on Friday and Saturday. St. Helens Garden Club will join them for a plant sale on Saturday.

**Finance Director Brown** reported...

- There about 300 utility accounts that are not being charged storm fees. He is working with Public Works Engineering Director Nelson to determine what they should be charged.
- He is proposing to purchase a copier for the utility billing office. It would replace a desktop printer. Council concurred.
- An employee in utility billing is pregnant and due in December. Monthly billing was planned to go live during that time. He has spoken with other cities who have undergone the change

and he hears it is a difficult process. He suggested waiting until April to do it, to be fully staffed again and to get through a billing cycle. Council advised Brown to work with staff on what is most efficient and customer service friendly.

- Springbrook, which was based out of Portland for years, was bought out by Accela. Now Accela has been bought out. He and some of the staff are concerned about upcoming issues and support services. He would like to have a couple software companies come in to give demonstrations. It will give staff an idea of what is available. He can bring back information after the demonstrations and talk to Council about the next steps. No objection from Council to seek demonstrations.
- The Court report will be given on November 1. Court has seen a vast turnaround in regards to culture. Revenues are up and people are happy.

**City Recorder Payne** reported...

- Council is having a retreat on November 8 from 4-8 p.m. Since it's dinner time, she asked them to let her know what they would like to order.

**City Administrator Walsh** reported...

- Requested agendas items for the retreat.
- Spirit of Halloweentown does not happen by itself. It wouldn't happen without the support of staff, volunteers, public safety, and public works. It has really grown since pre-Marnie.
- He was invited to sit on the CCET panel next week. He will talk about what's been done to improve livability and economic development.
- People from EPA will be here next week to kick off a couple grants.
- The Oregon Leadership Summit is December 4. It will be held at the MODA Center.
- Portland has a Transient Boater Task Force. He will be attending their meeting tomorrow.
- Communications is a very important investment for the City.

**Council Reports**

**Councilor Locke** reported...

- Lots going on at the Boise property. The offices have been remodeled and the building cleaned out. Council President Morten asked if there is a timeline when the grow operation will begin. Locke responded that it's dependent on their OLCC license. It can take two – six months. Mayor Scholl added that they will be reaching out to the City for support of an over tier license.

**Councilor Conn** reported...

- She has made a difficult decision to step down as the City Council liaison to SHEDCO. Her goal was to be a communication link and promote collaboration. Since it's not a City committee, a liaison is not mandated. It's time to look at another strategy. She will remain active in many other committees. Mayor Scholl would like to review that relationship further at the retreat.
- The Library is making changes to provide better data of patron counts and improve safety. More volunteers are needed for special projects.
- The Library Board and Arts & Cultural Commission are participating in the Police Department's Trunk-or-Treat on Halloween.
- They just completed the fifth Crisis Intervention Training. It's a 40-hour training. She appreciates Chief Moss's leadership. It was a very interactive class.

**Council President Morten** reported...

- Looking forward to the Council retreat. Decisions will not be made there. It's a time to get to know each other and discussion the direction the City is moving.
- Kudos to staff and the community for their work on Spirit of Halloweentown events.
- He went over to check the condition of Sand Island after the yacht clubs had their cruise.

There was no trash anywhere. He requested staff fix the signs. The community and guests are taking pride in their environment and not leaving their garbage behind. He would like to see staff come up with a slogan to encourage that pride. He suggested something like, "A Community of Pride," and putting it on shirts with the City logo.

- Thanked Chief Moss for helping with the homeless situation. Having an ordinance of no camping in public right-of-ways and public lands has really helped staff reach those people and direct them to the proper resources for help. There's still a lot of work to do with our homeless.

**Mayor Scholl** reported...

- Staff recommended identifying the wetlands on the Boise White Paper property. He would like to add this to a future work session for further discussion and move forward on this soon.
- He spoke with Emily Chapman yesterday. She played Sophie in Halloweentown. She is interested in opening a café and gift shop in St. Helens. Her lease is up where she's at and she would like to move to our area. He asked the Council for location ideas.
- It was a good turnout at Spirit of Halloweentown this weekend. Kudos to the St. Helens Police Department and surrounding law enforcement agencies. The community was well taken care of. Walsh's leadership has proven to be successful.

### **Executive Session**

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

**Motion:** At 3:08 p.m., upon Conn'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 3:28 p.m., upon completion of the executive session, Morten moved to go back into work session, seconded by Conn, and unanimously approved.

### **Other Business**

City Recorder Payne reported that tonight's agenda includes a declaration of surplus property for electronic equipment. Max has more that needs to be added, so she will update the request.

Council President Morten reminded Locke about needing a Youth Council member to fill the vacant seat next to Conn. Councilor Locke will bring it up at to the next Youth Council meeting.




There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder.

ATTEST:

  
Kathy Payne, City Recorder

  
Rick Scholl, Mayor