

City of St. Helens

CITY COUNCIL

Work Session Minutes

February 15, 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
Bob Johnston, Building Official
Jamin Coy, Code Enforcement Officer
Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder

Others: Bob Salisbury Cheryl Young Steve Pegram
Nicole Thill Tina Curry Ernie Martin

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



Visitor Comments

♦**Bob Salisbury.** He is an attorney in St. Helens but is appearing today as a member of the St. Helens Community Foundation. He thanked the Council for all they do. He recently made a request to the Council to pay for the Foundation's insurance. He has been working with City Administrator Walsh, Consultant Tina Curry and 13 Nights on the River coordinator Christina Sullivan. They are making some changes to the insurance, so he's not here asking for the City to pay the event insurance. However, he is requesting the City pay for the officer's and director's insurance, which is \$1,183 a year.

Councilor Conn appreciates the Foundation serving as a buffer between the City and events.

Council President Morten asked if community event organizers will still be able to come to the Foundation for insurance assistance. Bob confirmed they will. They do need to plan ahead with their insurance needs.

Semi-Annual Report from Senior Center

Cheryl Young, Center Manager, was in attendance to give their semi-annual report. She handed out her report to the Council dated February 14, 2017, a copy of which is available in the archive packet for this meeting. She congratulated the Mayor. She thanked the City, especially Public Works, for their help with several things that they have had issues with over the last year. She requested the City take over the maintenance of the fire alarm system. She can't handle it anymore and really believes this is something the City should take care of.

Public Works Operations Director Sheppeard spoke with Cheryl this morning. He is going to have a couple of his staff members help her.

Discussion of the Senior Center building maintenance. Since the building is owned by the City, they were in concurrence to support the Senior Center's request.

Council President Morten pointed out the salaries line item under expenses. It appears to be a 15.4% increase. Cheryl explained that they did have to raise everyone's salary when minimum wage increased last year. They have had to move staff around. Costs have gone up and revenue is down.

Discuss Participation in Homeland Security Emergency Management Commission

Steve Pegram, Columbia County Emergency Management Director, was in attendance. He handed out a packet to each Council member, a copy of which is included in the archive meeting packet. He is here to ask the City to renew their participation in the Commission. Emergency Management typically helps jurisdictions within the County with their emergency operations plans. If there is a disaster and their plans are not compliant, you will not be eligible for federal reimbursement. The cost to participate is \$7,919.44 per year. They are 2.5 FTEs short of having the staff needed to operate effectively. The participation cost would help them fund those needed positions. The City last participated in 2008. They have continued to support the City during that time.

Chief Moss reported that the cost to participate is less than what the City was contributing in the past. Even though the City stopped contributing, Emergency Management never stopped helping. They were a tremendous help during Spirit of Halloweentown last year.

Building Official Johnston volunteered to represent the City on the Commission.

Steve added they also offer tourniquet training and an active shooter civilian response training at no charge. Sheppeard asked if they could offer those at a safety training. Steve confirmed that they can. They recommend it be done annually.

Request from Relay for Life

Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder and Co-Captain of Relay for Life Team City Slickers, was in attendance to ask the Council if they would be willing to donate two \$100 gift certificates towards someone's utility bill to the Relay for Life Carnival on March 11.

Council President Morten expressed that the event is extremely positive and meaningful for our community.

Motion: Upon Carlson's motion and Morten's second, the Council unanimously approved the donation of three \$100 utility bill gift certificates to the Relay for Life carnival auction.

Nuisance Abatements

Building Official Johnston presented a list of 13 properties needing to be cleaned up. He requested to remove three properties: 385 S. 17th Street, 1170 Deer Island Road, and 1380 West Street. They are making progress.

Councilor Locke asked what the status is of the LeSollen's property. Johnston responded that there has been no change. That property was included on a list that extended the deadline to February 27. After that, they will check progress. If no work has been done, a contractor will do the cleanup and send the owner a bill.

Customer Request to Adjust Utility Bill Due to Leak

Finance Director Brown reviewed the request, a copy of which is included in the archive meeting packet. The request is in excess of \$1,000 and relief is up to the discretion of the City Council. The leak was in their irrigation system and they promptly had it repaired by a plumber. Brown has already issued a \$1,000 credit and they are requesting an additional \$2,300.

After discussion, the Council was in consensus to give them an additional \$1,000 credit.

Review Request for Proposal (RFP) for Cost of Service Analyses

Finance Director Brown reviewed the proposed RFP, a copy of which is included in the archive meeting packet. The consultant would analyze cost of service for City utility services; analyze and update water, wastewater and stormwater utility rates; and analyze and update system development charge fees. He plans to release the RFP on March 1st. Proposals are due March 15th and he anticipates reviewing them the first couple weeks of April.

Council President Morten and Councilor Locke volunteered to participate in the review of the RFP.

Discussion on Utility Rates

Finance Director Brown proposed a small increase of 1.5% in utility rates. There is the option to wait until the cost of service analyses is done.

Council Conn agreed with the 1.5% increase. She would prefer that increases be done in small increments.

Council President Morten would prefer to wait until the cost of service analyses is done.

Councilor Carlson would like to see comparisons of what it will look like to stay flat or increase. She is not in favor of two increases in a year. City Administrator Walsh agreed that the interactive models are very beneficial.

After discussion, it was the consensus of the Council for Brown to return with a model based on rate increases and how it effects the budget.

City Planner Request for Interpretation

City Planner Graichen reviewed the memo to Council requesting interpretation of "excavation" and "mining." A copy of the memo is included in the archive meeting packet. Based on recent land use activity and subsequent appeals, staff believes that the interpretation is that *when a property or a portion of it is predominately composed of rock, removal of more rock than the minimum necessary to facilitate development shall be considered "mining and/or quarrying."* However, the last time this came before the City was an Administrative decision that was appealed to the Planning Commission and then appealed to the Land Use Board of Appeals. The Council did not participate in the decision and he is looking for their input.

There was in-depth discussion. Council President Morten felt strongly that it should be measured by a number. Graichen argued that basing it on a number is dangerous. There are too many factors to account for with a number.

Motion: Carlson moved to accept the proposed interpretation by staff. Conn seconded.

Discussion.

Vote: All in favor; none opposed; motion carries.

Solid Waste Franchise Agreement

City Administrator Walsh reviewed the proposed agreement with changes based on discussion at last month's meeting. A copy is included in the archive meeting packet. It is on tonight's agenda for approval.

Department Reports

Police Chief Moss reported...

- The Police Department's Annual Report for 2016 is included in today's packet. The numbers have been fairly consistent in call types and call volumes over the last several years.
- Seann Luedke will be sworn in tonight at 7 p.m.
- He anticipates another officer being sworn in on March 1.
- Interviews were conducted on Monday to fill another vacant position. One was offered employment and they are beginning the background check immediately.
- Jamin Coy has proven himself as the Code Enforcement Officer. It was the overwhelming consensus of staff and supervisors that he be moved back to being a full-time Police Officer again.
- One of the candidates that interviewed Monday for the Police Officer position had also interviewed for the Code Enforcement Officer position last year. Moss contacted him and he is interested in the Code Enforcement Officer position.

Public Works Operations Director Sheppeard reported...

- Nothing to report.

Library Director Jeffries reported...

- They are celebrating the second annual Recycled Book Art Display in February. She encouraged everyone to visit the display.

Finance Director Brown reported...

- The senior discount form has been amended and will be distributed soon.
- He has been working with staff on ideas to update the upstairs conference room. It is in need of a computer, TV screen for presentations, new conference table and chairs. The upgrades are within the current budget. Council President Morten pointed out the need to update the Council Chambers as well. Depending on where you sit, the audience members cannot always see the screen. Brown responded that the Council Chambers is still on the docket. He is working with Azimuth for AV quotes.
- After talking to staff and maintenance crews, he is asking the Council if they are willing to allow him to purchase a new City Hall vehicle outside of the local area. He recommends a Toyota Rav4 Hybrid or Subaru Cross Trek. After discussion, it was the consensus of the Council to purchase local.

City Recorder Payne reported...

- Nothing to report.

City Administrator Walsh reported...

- He is looking for feedback from Council about the City absorbing 13 Nights and how much they want to take on. Councilors Carlson and Conn were concerned about taking it on financially and having no say in the scheduling. Conn is opposed to the five-day festival because of the impact it will have on City services. Walsh said Tina and Christina are hoping to raise about \$40,000 for the event. The Foundation will still be a sponsor. Ideally, there would be a group that would sponsor all community events. Unfortunately, no groups have taken it on.
- The property at 391 S. 12th Street is scheduled to close in a couple weeks.

- There will be an Urban Renewal Open House on February 21.
- The Council Retreat is tentatively scheduled for February 27 at 3:30 pm.

Council Reports

Councilor Locke reported...

- Asked for a couple garbage cans to be placed along the waterfront trail.

Councilor Carlson reported...

- Recruitment has begun for the NAMI event that will be held in May. She is on the Columbia County team. They do a lot of work for youth and young adults in our area.

Council President Morten reported...

- In Engineering, Nelson has been busy with the crack sealing project at the reservoir and the LED lighting project.
- He is excited to see the Parks Commission and Bicycle & Pedestrian Commission working together in March.
- He thanked Parks staff for their work to manage downed trees and remove snow.
- He asked Walsh for an update on the Portland State University project for Columbia View Park. Walsh explained that the Masters of Urban Regional Planning Department students selected the redesign of Columbia View Park as their project. It is expected to be completed by June.
- The Spotlight recently released an opinion of transparency in municipalities. They gave the City of Scappoose an 'A' and the City of St. Helens an 'A-'. He argues with that because we're as transparent as possible. One reason given was that Scappoose holds their work sessions in the evenings when it's easier for citizens to attend. He suggested that work sessions be shortened and carry more of that over to the evenings. However, he was concerned about taxing staff with the additional hours. Council discussed how very few people come to the evening meetings. Locke suggested asking the audience if they have any comments at the end of meetings.

Councilor Conn reported...

- Both Arts & Cultural Commission and Library Board have new and enthusiastic members.
- Today, she and Moss were involved in interviews for a new CIT Coordinator.
- Yesterday, she attended a Columbia County Future Connect Coalition meeting. It is for first generation college students. They are going to hold an open house and work with businesses for internships.
- Last week, she and Moss attended a criminal justice mental health collaboration meeting again. It focused on problem solving around mental issues in the jail.

Mayor Scholl reported...

- He looks forward to being involved in the budget process this year.
- He is meeting with the Boy Scouts next week and the American Children of the Revolution on March 11.

Executive Session

ORS 192.660(2)(e) Real Property Transactions

No executive session was needed.

Other Business

No other business was discussed.




There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder.

ATTEST:



Kathy Payne, City Recorder



Rick Scholl, Mayor