

# City of St. Helens City Council

Work Session Minutes

March 7, 2018

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**Members Present:** Mayor Rick Scholl  
Council President Doug Morten  
Councilor Ginny Carlson  
Councilor Susan Conn  
Councilor Keith Locke

**Members Absent:** None

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

**Others:** Tracie Murray                  Frank Perea  
Nicole Thill                          Steve Topaz

- 1) **Call Work Session to Order - 1:00 p.m.**
- 2) **Visitor Comments**
  - ♦ Steve Topaz. Last time he was here, he asked what type of businesses were preferred on the Waterfront or Paper Mill site. Since then, there was an article about the Armstrong ceiling tile plant. Part of the article mentioned that toxic waste from Armstrong would be dumped in the cooling pond. He assumes that the City has opened up the possibility to other businesses other than just the Port of Portland. He still hasn't received a list of other businesses that would locate on the property.

Council President Morten acknowledged Steve's testimony and that staff would look into it.

- 3) **Discussion Topics**
  - 3.A Discuss Trail Easement at 2480 Gable Road  
City Planner Graichen reviewed his memo. A copy is included in the archive meeting packet. The trail connects Gable Road to Sykes Road. It will be on tonight's agenda for approval.
  - 3.B Discuss Proposed Billing Insert Program  
Finance Director Brown reviewed his memo. A copy is included in the archive meeting packet. Discussion ensued.

Council was in consensus to allow non-profits and City information to go in the bills.

3.C            Review Requests for Proposals for Judicial Services & Prosecutorial Services  
Finance Director Brown reviewed the RFP process.

Council was in consensus to go forward with the RFPs as presented.

3.D            Review Draft Transient Room Fee Ordinance  
City Administrator Walsh presented the draft of the transient room fee amendments. A copy is included in the archive meeting packet. The hotel owners were notified of this meeting but they are not in attendance. It is on tonight's agenda for approval.

Councilor Locke asked if this would include camping. Council President Morten has never seen the tax charged on camping. City Administrator Walsh will research that before tonight's meeting and report back.

3.E            Discuss Lease of FARA Building/Lot  
Tracie Murray was here to talk about the Fitness and Recreation Association (FARA) building/lot. Councilor Carlson and Council President Morten talked about FARA appearing to be a private, exclusive club. There is no advertising. Tracie explained that it's by word of mouth. They've never had a need to advertise. Morten asked if she plans to advertise now that it's on public property. Tracie responded that she doesn't plan to. It's self-ran and that's how costs are kept down.

Councilor Carlson emphasized that it's now public property and Council needs to know if FARA's benefit aligns with public ownership.

City Administrator Walsh encouraged Tracie to apply with the County as nonprofit, since they currently have that status. That may significantly reduce the costs involved.

Council President Morten asked Tracie if she has any recommendations on how Council can validate their low lease payment. This was brought to their attention by a citizen and now the Council needs to address it. Tracie said they would have to close if the price is increased too much. She feels a reasonable cost would be \$1,200 - \$1,500 per year. Mayor Scholl pointed out that would only be about \$100 a month. Morten requested financial reports for FARA.

Council thanked Tracie for being in here and will be in contact.

#### 4)            **Department Reports**

4.A            Administration/Community Development Department Report

Police Chief Moss reported...

- Cocoa with a Cop is taking place at Burgerville tonight at 6 p.m.

Public Works Engineering Director Nelson reported...

- Nothing to report.

Public Works Operations Director Sheppard reported...

- Nothing to report.

Library Director Jeffries reported...

- Just finished interviews and the selection process for the new library assistant. They will be making an offer soon.

Finance Director Brown reported...

- Distributed a Court report to update the Council on current financial status.
- He is requesting to come back to Council with a proposal for a part-time limited term court position through the end of June. The budget originally funded a part-time position. He will return with more information.

City Recorder Payne reported...

- She was contacted about an online public surplus program. It allows you add items to an international program. The purchaser would pay any applicable fees. She talked to staff and they were in agreement to try it. Council concurred.
- She attended the CIS conference last week. The City received a plaque in recognition of 60 years with CIS benefits.
- She will be serving on Grand Jury for the next two months on Tuesdays.

City Administrator Walsh reported...

- Distributed information on opportunity zones. A copy is included in the archive meeting packet. Incentives were created to encourage long-term investments to low income communities designated as opportunity zones to the US Treasury Department. The Waterfront Property is within that zone. It offers an incentive for property investment.
- Commented on Steve's testimony about the Armstrong property. He used the word "toxic waste." Walsh emphasized that the City is not going to be a toxic waste repository. There are environmental impacts that Armstrong has been working on with DEQ.
- The Food Bank is acquiring property on Columbia Blvd. Casey Wheeler has requested assistance from Associate Planner Jenny Dimsho with writing a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG).

Councilor Carlson asked how that would impact an already busy Planning Division. Dimsho explained that she is meeting with Casey on Friday to discuss the scope of work. The Food Bank will be taking the lead to write the grant. She will review it and offer guidance. The City will not be managing the grant if it's received.

Mayor Scholl added that the City will also be applying for a CDBG at the same time. It is for an expansion of the Alano Club, a bathroom, and playground for the 6<sup>th</sup> Street Ball Field, and developing the road by the Alano Club, which is a City owned building. Dimsho did say that it's unlikely that Columbia County would receive two grants in the same cycle. The Food Bank has a critical need to move quickly over a short amount of time. The 6<sup>th</sup> Street Ball Field is a needed project but is not as cut and dry as the Food Bank. Councilor Conn agreed with the need to make park improvements but feels that feeding people is a bigger priority. For the record, Mayor Scholl explained that the Alano Club serves CCMH, Drug Court, DHS, high school senior projects, AA, NA, GA, OA, SA, karaoke, etc. The Alano Club pays \$250/month and they don't receive assistance. Council talked about this when former City Administrator Chad Olsen was here.

5) **Council Reports**

Councilor Locke reported...

- Nothing to report.

Councilor Carlson reported...

- Nothing to report.

Councilor Conn reported...

- The Arts & Cultural Commission is reviewing the budget to bring the new Chair and Vice Chair up to speed. Will be interviewing candidates for the open positions soon.
- Columbia County Job Fair is on April 6<sup>th</sup>.
- There is a group working towards the feasibility of the City and School District working together on a project.

Council President Morten reported...

- Parks agendas:
  - Working with the Marina to solve problems on the island and docks.
    - Regulating camping on Sand Island.
    - Tightening the rules at the Sand Island docks.
  - Excited about the \$100,000+ expansion of the McCormick Park Veterans Plaza. Work will be done this summer with a celebration at the Veterans Day ceremony. He'll have a proposed concept plan at tonight's meeting.

Mayor Scholl reported...

- Likes the idea of partnering with the Marina. Chief Moss talked about the Code Enforcement working on Saturdays during the summer to regularly patrol the docks. It's a struggle for the Police Department to access the island without a boat. Council President Morten talked about forming a Code Enforcement Committee and Ethics Commission, which has been very successful in other communities. He would like to talk further about these commissions at a future meeting.
- Suggested holding a Council retreat in April. It was the consensus of the Council to hold the retreat on Wednesday, April 25<sup>th</sup> at 5 p.m.

6) **Other Business**

City Recorder Payne noticed that Executive Session was not included on the agenda. It will be held following this meeting.

7) **Adjourn** – 2:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder.

ATTEST:

  
Kathy Payne, City Recorder

  
Rick Scholl, Mayor