

# City of St. Helens City Council

Work Session Minutes

May 16, 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  
Margaret Jeffries, Library Director  
Neal Sheppard, Public Works Operations Director  
Sue Nelson, Public Works Engineering Director  
Terry Moss, Police Chief  
Jacob Graichen, City Planner  
Thad Houk, Parks Field Supervisor  
Tina Curry, Events Manager

**Others:** Judy Thompson                      Julie Thompson  
Brent Keller                                  Nicole Thill  
Teresa Knight

- 1) **Call Work Session to Order - 1:00 p.m.**
- 2) **Visitor Comments - Limited to five (5) minutes per speaker**
  - ♦ Judy Thompson. She thanked Councilor's Carlson and Conn for their long-time support of the Columbia County National Alliance of Mental Illness (NAMI) walking team. Her team has been active since 2011 and has raised over \$50,000. Those funds support mental health programs in the community. Participating on the team is an easy way to support mental health. She encouraged everyone to sign up.

Councilor Conn added that NAMI has been a great supporter of the CIT program. Councilor Carlson thanked Judy for the awareness of mental health struggles she has brought to the community. Mayor Scholl thanked Judy as well. He also informed Chief Moss that Officer Luedke paid out of his own pocket for a taxi to send someone in a mental health crisis to services in Portland.

- 3) **Length of Service Award to Thad Houk for 20 Years**
  - 3.A Thad Houk - 20 years

There is one employee who has reached a milestone in his employment with the City of St. Helens. The following individual will receive a certificate and pin at the May 16 Council work session.

**Thad Houk** came to work for the City as a Utility Worker I in April of 1998. In May of 2001, he became a Utility Worker II and then in April of 2008, he was promoted to the Parks Field Supervisor position. Thad and his small crew work hard to make the parks beautiful and clean.

**Congratulations, Thad, and thank you** for your service!

**4) Discussion Topics**

**4.A Bid Results for 'Section-28' Timber Sale - Brent Keller from MB&G**

Brent Keller reviewed the bid results. A copy is included in the archive meeting packet. He recommends accepting the high bid and awarding the 'Section-28' sale to High Cascade, Inc. It is included on tonight's agenda for approval.

Discussion of Mayor Scholl and/or Council Locke working with Brent to inventory the mill property for logging.

**4.B Request to Waive Permit and Concession Agreement Fees for Spring Into Arts Show**

Teresa Knight reviewed her request to waive the permit and concession agreement fees for the Spring Into Arts Show. A copy is included in the archive meeting packet. In the future, they will work on getting sponsors and paid advertising to increase attendance.

**Motion:** Upon Locke's motion and Carlson's second, the Council unanimously waived the permit and concession agreement fees for the Spring Into Arts Show.

Referring back to the logging discussion, City Planner Graichen pointed out the difference between logging the Watershed property in the County and the mill property is the wetland rules. There are significant wetlands on the mill property with protection zones.

**Motion:** Upon Locke's motion and Carlson's second, the Council unanimously directed staff to move forward on evaluating the wetlands on the Boise mill property.

**4.C Proposed Development Code Amendments for Auxiliary Dwelling Units and Home Occupations - Jacob**

City Planner Graichen reviewed his memo outlining auxiliary dwelling unit options. A copy is included in the archive meeting packet. As far as home occupations, he recommends eliminating the requirement when there is no outward appearance of a business being operated at the residence.

**Motion:** Upon Carlson's motion and Conn's second, the Council directed Graichen to proceed with the proposed Development Code Amendments for Auxiliary Dwelling Units and Home Occupations.

**4.D Review Recreation Program Job Descriptions - Matt**

Finance Director Brown reviewed the job descriptions. Copies are included in the archive meeting packet. The union has requested that if a current employee gets the recreation program coordinator position and it creates a job sharing position, that they be able to maintain rights and benefits as a union member. The attorney is working on the memorandum and will be presented to the Council for approval. Programs and events are scheduled to begin in June before the budget approval. He requested positing the job announcement immediately to get someone in as soon as possible. No objection from Council.

Library Director Jeffries asked if the budget would need to be revised to cover benefits if one of her part-time library assistants were to get the job. Brown responded that the Council would need to approve it in a supplemental budget. Anyone applying for a secondary job would have to seek approval from their supervisor. He suggested reviewing it further after they receive applications.

4.E Review Resolution Establishing Local Limits for Discharge of Pollutants - Sue  
Removed from agenda.

5) **Department Reports**

5.A Public Works Department Summary

Chief Moss reported...

- Judy Thompson and NAMI have had a profound impact on the Police Department. With Judy's help, they sent officers to other counties for CIT training. They have since been able to start their own local CIT program. The approach of working with people in crisis is a result of work done by Judy, Councilor Conn, and many others. Moss will be participating in the NAMI walk. Judy's team is one of the top three fundraising teams in the entire program.
- He and Nelson lead an employee customer service training for all staff about eight years ago. It was very successful. They would like to do it again for employees who were not here at that time.

Public Works Engineering Director Nelson reported...

- Completed a couple big projects. Very happy with the work done on Columbia Blvd.

Public Works Operations Director Sheppard reported...

- Hired a new Public Works Utility Worker I, Bryson Takemoto. He has worked for the City as a Summer Labor employee in the past.

Library Director Jeffries reported...

- Communications Officer Farnsworth has been working with the Library to have their own social media presence.
- The Friends of the Library has a quarterly art show. The display cases are in the lobby. The show includes local sketches.
- The collaborative efforts to bring Dolly Parton's Imagination Library to Columbia County is going very well. They have people representing various organizations from Vernonia, Scappoose, Columbia City, and St. Helens. They are seeking grant funding to sustain the program for the first two years. To secure the 50% match they have to enroll the first child by the end of June. The program better prepares children for school.

Finance Director Brown reported...

- Council will be receiving a questionnaire from the audit team. They can be returned to the auditors, Walsh, or himself.
- Still do not have a prosecutor for Court. He proposes moving Cindy Phillips into a pro-tem prosecutor position until they determine the future of that department. Requested volunteers to participate in the judge RFP interviews. Locke and Conn will participate.
- Recreation Program
  - Begins in June.

- Program guides will be distributed to all residential mailing addresses in St. Helens, Columbia City, and Warren.
- Recreation page on the website <https://www.ci.st-helens.or.us/recreation>.
- Using Eventbrite for class registrations.
- Working with Farnsworth for social media outreach.

City Recorder Payne reported...

- Acknowledged the social media campaign for National Police Week.
- Next week is Public Works week.
- The Public Works breakfast is this Friday morning.

Event Manager Tina Curry reported...

- Thanked Chief Moss and Councilors Carlson and Conn for taking an active role in NAMI. She supports their team.
- Merchants meeting was held on Monday.
  - Almost 20 people in attendance.
  - Merchants appreciate the resource.
  - May be able to put signs up sooner than expected.
  - Will be emailing all merchants about the social media campaign to update websites and have correct information for tourists.
  - Parking was a hot topic. A number of retail staff members are parking in front of their stores instead of in the free public parking lot. Merchants will be talking to their staff about parking elsewhere. In the meantime, the City will be researching parking options.
  - Discussed the Waterfront Development and the future it has of bringing new commerce to the area. They are looking forward to that.
  - Updated the map. It should be ready within a couple weeks.
- 4<sup>th</sup> of July
  - Lots of food vendors
  - Elks
  - Trashcan painting
  - Bell ringing
  - Patriotic singers
  - Flag raising
  - Hit Machine
  - Will fireworks be set from Sand Island or the Waterfront property?
  - Does the Council want to keep Festival of the Fairies open as part of their tailgating parking passes?

Discussion. There will be an increased cost to move the fireworks from the Waterfront property to Sand Island. Mayor Scholl is opposed to keeping the Festival of the Fairies. He would like to know actual costs for the fireworks before making a decision. Councilor Conn is in favor of moving the fireworks to Sand Island. Councilor Carlson encouraged Tina to talk to Holly Haebe about CERT team helping with traffic control.

- Festival of the Fairies
  - Approximately 500 people attended from out of town.
  - The biggest comment was that businesses downtown were not open.
  - 2C's was very busy, especially the second week.
  - Running Dogs Brewery was also busy.

Discussion. Council President Morten suggested moving the festival to McCormick Park. It's more scenic and kid-friendly there. Tina pointed out that it would be more expensive in McCormick Park because of fencing. Holding the festival downtown also draws visitors to restaurants and shops. Morten, Walsh, and Farnsworth met with some downtown business owners about the event. They provided positive criticism for the event. They would have liked to have a schedule to distribute to customers. People not on social media are not finding out what is happening. Morten also suggested additional event signage. Councilor Carlson expressed that the festival would be a valuable addition to 4<sup>th</sup> of July activities. Mayor Scholl argued that people are not coming to 4<sup>th</sup> of July for the Festival of the Fairies. They're coming for the fireworks. After much discussion, it was the consensus of the Council to take the Festival of the Fairies down.

City Administrator Walsh reported...

- Thanks to Public Works for the work they're doing on the roof of the Columbia View Park gazebo.
- The new Building Official begins June 1.
- Will be submitting a DLCD Housing Needs Grant application.
- Will be applying for the Build America Block Grant for rural communities. Funding will be used towards the Waterfront boardwalk. He would like assistance from the consultants because of the complexity of the application.
- The St. Helens census tract was selected as one of 86 to move forward for an opportunities zone. It allows for community investment. He is working with EcoNorthwest and the developer to determine what that means and how it affects the Waterfront development.
- Discussed community events and how they can be communicated to the public. Needs to be retitled on the City's home page and linked directly to upcoming events.
- Addressed a couple comments made about camping on Sand Island.
  - Sand Island would be subject to transient fees.
  - Asked the Council for ideas on changing the current five days in and 30 days out. Discussion ensued about transient boaters.
- Communicating with the Marine Board about what it would take to allow small cruise vessels on the outer dock.

## 6) **Council Reports**

Councilor Locke reported...

- Cascades is working on the purifier. He hopes it will be back online within a month.
- Cascades is cleaning up the brown paper from the parking lot.
- Working with Comcast to get a data line into the ACSP company so they can get their OLCC permit. However, Jordan Ramis has still not completed the contract. He asked staff to contact the attorney and encourage it be done soon.
- Ken talked to the Council at the last meeting about the canoe. Willow Bill will be here in the middle of June. Mayor Scholl added that Ken wants to do an event at Running Dogs Brewery. Locke went on to say that Ken will be at tonight's meeting to discuss their itinerary to take the canoe up and down the river. Council needs to be thinking about what they want to do with the canoe. He's been the keeper of it. Over 600 children and 200 adults from the community helped build it. Council President Morten would like to see it placed in a display case on the Waterfront property as it is developed. Discussion ensued about placement and insurance.
- Have had two Court meetings. They talked about how they can work together and make all of the courts better for the community. One idea is to have a quarterly meeting

between court personnel and law enforcement agencies to strategize ways to collaborate.

Councilor Carlson reported...

- Attended a school violence presentation at the high school last night. They are working on programs to capture the youth that are struggling from drugs, alcohol, mental health issues, etc. She was encouraged to see the partnership.
- The Youth Council is excited about being involved in the Recreation Program.
- Thanked Judy for all she does for people struggling with mental health in the community.
- She suggested the parks brochure include an explanation of park names. Many of our parks are historic and there's reasons behind the names. Council President Morten will take that suggestion back to the Parks Commission for signage.

Councilor Conn reported...

- Arts & Cultural Commission
  - Kannikar Petersen has submitted her resignation. Conn thanked her for her years of service and dedication.
  - Arts & Cultural & Conversation event yesterday at Starbucks. They painted "This is Us" houses and discussed what kind of art and creative projects are desired in St. Helens.
- Requested moving the mission statement to be visible for all the Council to see. It's important to keep in mind as decisions are being made. Brown will make it happen.
- Suggested that an independent legal consultant analyze current Court systems and provide feedback. She would like to see it be done before any decisions are made.

Council President Morten reported...

- Met with concerned business owners and staff about issues downtown. Some of their concerns and suggestions were:
  - Effectively communicate events.
  - Requested a temporary day-use parking lot at the end of Strand Street. Parking is affecting their businesses. Discussion ensued.
- Andrew and Brad will be making a presentation at the June 6 Council work session for the Sand Island camping and day use shuttle proposal.

Mayor Scholl reported...

- Only a few more days to burn in St. Helens.
- Received a request from Girl Scout Troop 10333 to hang wooden bird houses in the McCormick Park trees. Council concurred.
- Concerned about the time tourism is taking up for staff. There are a lot of bigger projects that need to be taken care of.
- Thank you to Public Works for fixing the gravel on the Waterfront property. It's much improved for walking.

7) **Other Business**

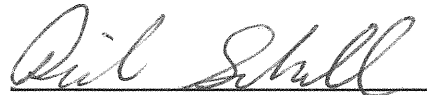
8) **Adjourn** – 3:20 p.m.

**Executive Session**

Respectfully submitted by Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder.

ATTEST:

  
Kathy Payne, City Recorder

  
Rick Scholl, Mayor