

City of St. Helens City Council

Work Session Minutes

December 5, 2018

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 Sheppeard, Public Works Operations Director
Sue Nelson, Public Works Engineering Director
Brian Greenway, Police Chief
Tina Curry, Event Coordinator

Others:

Greg Pettit	Lynn Pettit	Tammy Maygra
Emilia Ponti	Carroll Sweet	Ed Achziger
Annie Christensen	Paulette Lichatowich	Kristine Patterson
Jim Patterson	Joe Lewis	Chris Ponti
Ellen Roskovich	Heather Howard	Nancy Ward
Simon Date	Letica Employees	Janine Lidell
Kansas Keeton	Dr. M.T.	Sara Dalton-Busch
Kandace Manning	Al Petersen	Linda Zahl
Chuck Daughtry	Nicole Thill	Morris Malakoff
Steve Topaz		

1) **Call Work Session to Order - 1:00 p.m.**

2) **Presentation of Certificate of Appreciation to Letica Employees**

Mayor Scholl presented a certificate of appreciation to Letica employees for the volunteer work they did to clean up McCormick Park. Thank you, Letica employees!

4) **Discussion Topics**

4.A Semi-Annual Report from Columbia County Economic Team - Chuck Daughtry

Chuck Daughtry reviewed his report.

- Potential sale of the Armstrong property to a Washington state company that manufactures cardboard container board from recycled materials.
- Successful relocation of Composites Universal Group from Scappoose to St. Helens.
- Controlled Solutions will hopefully be an anchor tenant for a proposed new Port industrial building at McNulty Creek. They are a local business.

- The 18 acre industrial site where Callaway Trading is located is interested in marketing the property.
- Working with Alterations by Heather for development of a strategic plan. They are investigating funding sources for an expansion in St. Helens.
- Working with St. Helens and other stakeholders on the Regional Cooperative Tourism Program.
- Working on the potential sale of the former Foss site in Rainier to Diversified Marine.
- Leading a process to create an innovation district for the Oregon Manufacturing Innovation Center (OMIC). The focus of the district will be recruitment of metals and manufacturing businesses in collaboration with OMIC, Boeing, educational investors, and property owners. It will create a demand for industrial lands in Columbia County and surrounding counties.
- Reviewing bylaws and membership for future growth.

3) **Visitor Comments - Limited to five (5) minutes per speaker.**

- ◆ Al Petersen. Recommends following the Transportation Systems Plan and Corridor Master Plan in regards to the St. Helens Street and S. 1st Street intersection change. Kittleson & Associates has already been paid to come up with a plan. He is unable to attend tonight's public hearing, so submitted written testimony. A copy is included in the archive meeting packet.
- ◆ Ed Achziger. He expressed his concerns about handicap parking downtown. He has two vehicles parked next to each other. Only one was given a ticket, likely because the other one had a cover on it. His disability is only going to get worse and he has no way to park in front of his apartment even with a disabled parking permit. He is requesting Council take care of the ticket until they come up with a way to handle the handicap parking issue.

Public Works Engineering Director Nelson reviewed the number of parking spaces available in the area. Additional handicap spaces would have to meet development standards. There was discussion regarding the Code. Council President Morten requested staff look at the rules for how long vehicles with disabled parking spaces can remain parked. There were concerns about the white vans that park on the corner of Cowlitz Street and S. 1st Street for long periods of time.

- ◆ Emilia Ponti. She expressed health and safety concerns about the increased crude oil trains coming through St. Helens. She submitted a proposed resolution and talked about its urgency. A copy is included in the archive meeting packet. The Port is scheduled to vote on this a week from today. She requested the Council adopt an emergency resolution tonight so they can take it to the Port's meeting next Wednesday.

Mayor Scholl pointed out that it was also alarming to the Council. They have been working with Scappoose on a rail impact study and the effects if it would have on their cities. A resolution was passed in 2013 similar to this. They will review the proposed resolution but there is not time for the City attorney to review it for approval tonight. Councilor Conn suggested staff review the current resolution and the proposed resolution for future amendments. Council President Morten agreed that there is not sufficient time to approve a resolution tonight. They can take the adopted resolution to next week's meeting. They can also enforce the regulation against storing hazardous materials along the rail in City limits.

Councilor Locke suggested that Emilia advocate for safer rails to be installed. Emilia responded that her understanding is that the rail cars were not designed to carry crude oil. The safety regulations were recently removed.

Council made it very clear that they care deeply about the City and keeping it safe.

- ◆ Greg Pettit. He distributed his testimony to the Council and read it into the record. A copy is included in the archive meeting packet. The Port has moved this forward quickly. It could potentially have a huge impact on the community. The Port did not listen to everyone testifying in opposition except for the mayors of St. Helens and Scappoose. They have a lot of power with their opposition. He recommends the Council oppose the oil trains for the following reasons:
 - Poor public process
 - Impacts on traffic and livability
 - Safety risks
 - Environmental threat
 - Common sense
- ◆ Paulette Lichatowich. She distributed a packet of information to the Council. The packet included the Oregon DEQ Air Contaminant Permit for Global Partners, LLC to transport oil in tanker cars. It expires in August 2019 and due for renewal in June 2019. She went on to talk about what and how often they currently transport and propose to transport. It will have a significant impact on the community. The Council has the power to make a change.
- ◆ Carroll Sweet. She and Annie Christensen spoke to the Council about this issue a year ago. They talked about what Global proposes to store on the Port Westward property. She urged the Council to express their opposition. This makes money for only one company. It's not worth it.
- ◆ Annie Christensen. She has attended a lot of Port meetings. The Port heard public testimony from almost 60 people last Wednesday. The comments were mostly centered around traffic, environmental concerns, and jobs. They were prepared to vote that day. The only discussion among the Port members after hearing testimony was the need to respond to the mayors. She feels that the public is powerless. They need the Council to voice their concerns for the community. Seconds matter in an emergency and these trains would cut the town off for even longer periods of time.
- ◆ Tammy Maygra. She thanked the Council for attending the Port meeting. Global Partners, LLC is trying to get out of a downward spiral. The Port doesn't want another black eye down at Port Westward, so they want to keep the company there. It's at the expense of the community. She encouraged the Council to vote no on the change in the lease. If the Port succeeds, there needs to be discussion about overpasses and bonding. The Port needs to slow down and not rush a decision.
- ◆ Paulette Lichatowich. In 2017, the Port gave Global the option of subleasing their facilities. That's already been negotiated and improved. There is no restriction on what type of company they can sublease to.
- ◆ Joe Lewis. He is a retired drinking water treatment plant operator for the City of Scappoose. He talked about the negative impact an oil spill would have drinking water. Not having

drinking water is a critical issue. The City should take a very strong stand to oppose the Port's expansion of oil trains.

Mayor Scholl clarified that his testimony at the Port meeting was about a rail impact study. He is concerned about the impact the rail will have on the community.

- ◆ Nancy Ward. Encouraged the Council to say no loudly and strongly. A Port Commissioner told her that no one in a leadership role in the community has asked them to vote no. That may be all it takes to change their decision. The same people attend the Port meetings with alarming facts and it still doesn't change their decision. The Port should be holding public forums but they are not.
- ◆ Linda Zahl. She distributed a letter to the Council and read it into the record. A copy is included in the archive meeting packet. She appreciates that the Council appears to understand the problem with transporting so much crude oil. Their voice is so much stronger than the public's. She talked about the danger of separating emergency services and potential for disasters. She encouraged the Council to voice their opposition to the Port.
- ◆ Kristine Patterson. She distributed a letter to the Council. A copy is included in the archive meeting packet. No verbal testimony was given.
- ◆ Greg Pettit. He attended the meeting in Scappoose. He felt that Mayor Burge and City Administrator Sykes really wanted to say no but were concerned about the heat they would get from northern County. He encouraged St. Helens officials to talk to Scappoose officials and stand as a united front in opposition.

Council talked about the private conversations they have had with Scappoose officials and fire department personnel.

- ◆ Emilia Ponti. There is one way in and out of the County for evacuations. That's a concern to consider.

Council President Morten requested permission to utilize quotes from written testimony submitted today. There was no objection from the audience.

- ◆ Steve Topaz. Al Petersen talked about the need to follow the adopted traffic plan for improving the S. 1st Street and St. Helens Street intersection. Steve suggests temporarily changing it for one week to a four-way stop and one week to a three-way stop to see which option works best. It's a strange intersection with low vision clearance. Another test would be to open the gates on the Veneer property. You can use some logs to map out the location of the proposed streets. He also recommends having a moment of silence at tonight's meeting in honor of former President George H.W. Bush.

Mayor Scholl congratulated Steve on winning the election. He also confirmed that a moment of silence was scheduled to take place tonight.

4.B Semi-Annual IT Consultant Report - Max with Centerlogic

Max Stahl reviewed his report.

- Testing out a new communication tool on some computers. It is called Microsoft Teams.

Councilor Carlson has heard about outages on the City's email server. Staff was without email for several days and had to use texting to communicate. She has seen issues like this the entire time she has served on Council. What are the steps to fix this? Max talked about the problem they had during the outage and agreed it was a big issue. The Microsoft Teams would be a solution to replace the email server that has been a constant problem.

Finance Director Brown talked about the potential for a full-time I.T. staff person to be on site. He and City Recorder Payne met with Centerlogic to review a job description. That person will help improve those on-site services.

4.C Review of St. Helens Street & 1st Street Alternatives Analysis - Sue
Public Works Engineering Director Nelson reviewed the proposal from Kittleson & Associates. A copy is included in the archive meeting packet. They were able to reduce the turn-around time from four months to two months. Because of the size and geometry of the intersection, it needs to be redesigned.

Council President Morten asked what the cost will be. Nelson responded that the alternatives analysis will provide cost estimates. Discussion ensued about the intersection. Finance Director Brown has identified funds for the analysis. They may be able to use Urban Renewal funds to conduct the actual improvements.

Public Works Operations Director Sheppard expressed that Steve Topaz's suggestion has the potential to cause wrecks. There were about four accidents after the intersection at 6th and West Street was changed, even with adequate signage. Councilor Carlson also wanted it to be stated on the record that driving on the Waterfront property has the potential for damages that the City would be liable for. Nelson added that it's private property and not public right-of-way.

There is a contract on tonight's agenda for approval.

4.D Review FY2019-20 Budget Calendar - Matt

Finance Director Brown reviewed the FY19-20 Budget calendar. A copy is included in the archive meeting packet. There was no objection from Council with the Budget Committee meeting dates. However, Mayor Scholl declared that the first meeting is held on his birthday. Brown will bring a cake to celebrate.

5) Department Reports

Chief Greenway reported...

- The next First Thursday event is this Thursday at 7 p.m. Brianne Mares will be giving a presentation about the Crisis Intervention Team (CIT).
- Donut Day will be held on Saturday beginning at 7 a.m. There will be live music, Officer and Mrs. Claus, and fun activities.
- He recently spent time with the City of Hillsboro and City of Portland training bureaus. Portland is going to allow our officers to attend their leadership trainings at no cost. It's important to build those relationships.
- He was just notified that Officer Kate Welter will be leaving St. Helens for the City of Hillsboro. This is the second officer who has left since he began. The common denominators of officers leaving is money and the work schedule. Our officers work five-8 hour shifts. Other agencies have enough staffing to work four-10 hour shifts or three-12 hour shifts. He will be bringing up staffing during the budget process. First responders need time to decompress away from the job.

Council President Morten asked if there is a certain amount of time officers are required to work per contract before departing the City. Greenway talked about other cities who have lost officers immediately after being trained. He does recruit officers from out of town with the enticement of the housing incentive. Scheduling could be another incentive.

Public Works Engineering Director Nelson reported...

- Thanked Greenway for his emergency response presentation at last week's safety training.

Public Works Operations Director Sheppeard reported...

- Ditto what Nelson said.

Library Director Jeffries reported...

- Several Columbia County agencies are working in collaboration to bring the Dolly Parton Imagination Library to the area. She talked about grants received to fund the program. The program sends one book a month to children birth to five years old.
- Youth Librarian Gretchen Kolderup will be at the next Council work session for a presentation about the Library STEM education funding that has been received.

Finance Director Brown reported...

- He's been working on a new parks brochure with Portland State University over the last couple months. It will be going to the Parks & Trails Commission meeting for their review and input. He hopes to present it to Council on December 19.
- The new online registration for recreation programs is now available on the City's website. It can be accessed from <https://www.ci.st-helens.or.us/recreation>. There is capability to add park reservations to it in the future. He can share it with the Parks & Trails Commission at their next meeting to get feedback.

City Recorder Payne reported...

- Nothing to report.

Event Coordinator Tina Curry reported...

- Thanked Council for all they do to make the holidays cheery and bright.
- All prepared for the Christmas tree lighting in the Plaza. Will be serving hot chocolate and candy canes.
- Grinch photos will be available in the Plaza Saturday morning.
- The "This is Us" houses are now lit after dark. Councilor Carlson noticed that a couple of the houses had come loose. She contacted Joan Youngberg and she came the next day to fix them.
- Met with merchants and citizens regarding changes to the 2019 events. Councilor Carlson spoke with Shannon at Bertucci's. They are very excited about being involved even though they haven't made it to the meetings.
- Public Works and Parks crews have been very helpful with setup. Council President Morten appreciated that Tina recognized staff. He encouraged her to plan way in advance with dates staff is needed to help.
- Councilor Conn will be Mrs. Claus.
- Expecting record crowds for fireworks and Christmas ships.

City Administrator Walsh reported...

- Fireworks at 5 p.m., tree lighting at 5:30 p.m., and Christmas ships at 6 p.m. on Saturday. The events are being promoted on social media. These events wouldn't be possible without all the departments contributing.
- He would like to hold a Council retreat focused solely on tourism and events. The contract with Tina expires at the end of this year. She is already planning for next year.
- He contacted Eric Jensen about facilitating a Council goals exercise. Eric is available January 23 and 31. Consensus of Council to meet January 23.
- The County is very eager and excited to develop trail systems on the Watershed property. There is a tentative meeting scheduled on December 18 at 3 p.m.
- A Waterfront meeting with stakeholders is scheduled on December 12, from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. It will be noticed as an executive session if a quorum will be present.
- Attended the Oregon Leadership Summit on Monday. One of the biggest concerns is the PERS problem. State economists are predicting that the average household will pay \$600 in taxes just related to PERS. It will double and almost triple in the next 10 years if things don't change.
- He complimented the mayor and council for how well they interacted with citizen comments this afternoon.

6) **Council Reports**

Councilor Locke reported...

- Nothing to report.

Councilor Carlson reported...

- She has two Youth Council members who plan to be at Donut Day at 7 a.m. to help.
- She encouraged the Council to add citizen members to the Urban Renewal Agency.
- She would like a letter to be sent to the Port based on discussions and input received today. She wants to show that we stand with the citizens and their safety. Council concurred.
- She continuously hears about businesses limiting hours and closing. Grants are available for storefronts. She wants to see the City partner with businesses to build the Mainstreet. Discussion ensued.

Councilor Conn reported...

- She recommends the Arts & Cultural Commission be transitioned into an ad-hoc committee for review of public art projects. There are no large-scale art projects pending and the Commission has dwindled in size. Councilor Carlson supports that change. Council President Morten was concerned about them going away. They reflect the community and community involvement. Art will be very important as they move forward with the Waterfront property development. He suggested they meet quarterly. Discussion ensued. Councilor Carlson suggested holding an open house for people to come learn about our committees. They don't understand and don't volunteer when there's a need.

Council President Morten reported...

- Stacia Tyacke at Columbia County Juvenile Division is looking at a program for youth drop centers in the community. They would have staff who are very well qualified in mental health. It would be a safe place to go and talk to someone. Morten thought the Recreation Center may be a perfect location for the program. Mayor Scholl talked to County Commissioner Alex Tardif about the program. The youth are looking for their

own center. The City could not promise that the Recreation Center would be available every time they needed it. Brown added that he and Recreation Coordinator Duggan met with them on site. The County did request having control over the building during set times. It contradicted with Recreation Center needs. There is potential to partner with the Senior Center for use of their building. Discussion ensued.

- The City has partnered with Veterans and Lower Columbia Engineering for design and construction of the McCormick Park Veteran's Plaza. They have ran into some funding issues to complete the Plaza as planned. Fundraising will need to be done to complete the project.

Mayor Scholl reported...

- Fireworks, Christmas Tree lighting, and Christmas Ships on Saturday.
- Local bazaars happening all weekend.
- Hudson Garbage will be assembling bikes at the Columbia City Community Center on December 14 at 5 p.m. He asked who would like to participate. Pizza will be provided. Councilor Carlson volunteered plus one.
- Spoke about the shortage of housing that was discussed at the Leadership Summit.

7) **Other Business**

8) **Adjourn** – 4:14 p.m.

Executive Session

Respectfully submitted by Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder.

ATTEST:


Kathy Payne, City Recorder


Rick Scholl, Mayor