

City of St. Helens City Council

Work Session Minutes

December 19, 2018

Members Present: Mayor Rick Scholl
Council President Doug Morten
Councilor Susan Conn
Councilor Ginny Carlson
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
Brian Greenway, Police Chief
Crystal Farnsworth, Communications Officer
Jenny Dimsho, Associate Planner
Shanna Duggan, Recreation Coordinator
Jennifer Johnson, Accounting Assistant
Gretchen Kolderup, Youth Librarian
Jacob Graichen, City Planner
Jamie Edwards, Utility, Banking & Court Specialist
Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder

Others:	Simon Date	Curtis Miller	Scot Stockwell
	Judy Thompson	Jenn Farrington	Lisa Brooke
	Steve Topaz	Nicole Thill	Leticia Juarez-Sisson

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

Honoring Outgoing Councilor Susan Conn

Council President Morten presented Councilor Conn with a plaque and \$50 gift certificate to Mean's Nursery. He talked about her years of service and commitment to the community.

Judy Thompson thanked Conn for her support with Nationally Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI).

Mayor Scholl talked about Conn's involvement in the community. She is an asset and he looks forward to continuing to work with her.

Councilor Carlson talked about Conn's leadership on the Arts & Cultural Commission. Her input is appreciated.

Councilor Locke has enjoyed working with Conn. She will be missed.

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

- ◆ Lisa Brooke. She spoke about the City's skate park condition and potential improvements. Maintenance needs to be done soon before it deteriorates further. She reviewed pictures of the current status and ideas for ways to work with the Arts & Cultural Commission to include artwork in the park. Copies of the pictures are included in the archive meeting packet. She has been speaking with kids who use the park and would like them to be included in the work project. Their biggest concerns are:

- The drain in the large bowl has been plugged for a long time. That bowl is unusable.
- Decaying concrete along the edge of the bowls. Skateboard wheels get stuck in the opening. The edges are hazardous and unusable.

The City has \$20,000 dedicated to improvements. She would like to hold a 20-year anniversary celebration of the project this summer and capitalize on improvements made. Skateboarders travel from all over to try out different parks and they're well publicized.

Council President Morten is excited to see the Arts & Cultural Commission and Parks Commission work together on this project. Discussion ensued about the project. Public Works Operations Director Sheppard will look into the current maintenance issues to see what can be done.

- ◆ Simon Date. He will miss Councilor Conn. He thanked her for the support of the Chamber and community. He looks forward to working with her in the future.

- ◆ Steve Topaz

- Needs to meet with Councilor Conn about the transition.
- Encouraged to hear that kids will be a part of the improvements to the skate park. He suggested talking to ODOT about painting the concrete.
- Talked about his problems with the Connector Plan.
 - Changes to roadways between First Street and the Waterfront property.
 - Heavy equipment dumping toxic waste in the lagoon. Will it be transported by barge or large trucks? Will large trucks be able to negotiate the turn-arounds?
 - Needs to accommodate the possibility of a future ferry system.

3) **Discussion Topics**

3.A **Employee Length of Service Award**

One employee has reached a milestone in her employment with the City of St. Helens. The following individual received a certificate and pin.

10 Years

Crystal Farnsworth came to work for the City as a Receptionist/Utility Billing Specialist in November of 2008. In January of 2011, she was promoted to Planning Secretary. In July of 2012, she was promoted to a new position that the City created...Communications Officer...where she currently serves and does a fantastic job of communicating City-related business to the citizens of our community and beyond.

Congratulations, Crystal, and thank you for your service!

3.B STEM Activities for Youth at the Library - Gretchen

Youth Librarian Gretchen Kolderup reviewed her presentation. A copy is included in the archive meeting packet. The Library is so much more than just books. Science, Technology, Engineering, Math (STEM) has been used in the library for several years. More recently they joined the Maker Movement, which is all about skill development and design thinking. The Library is part of the Northwest STEM Hub, which includes Columbia, Clatsop, and Tillamook Counties. It is housed within the Northwest Regional Educational Service District (NWRESA) and focuses on linking educators, industry, and community. The Northwest STEM Hub Director praised the Library's program and offered additional funding to accelerate their program and become a pilot site. The Library was awarded a \$20,000 grant for an expansion of STEM programs. Those funds will be used for a high school intern, extra Library Assistant hours, and materials for programs

3.C Presentation of the Connect St. Helens Concept

St. Helens School District Superintendent Scot Stockwell thanked the Council for their continued partnership. Resulting from recent tragedies, they are looking into how to address the need for support of children and the community through connectivity. Becoming a commuter town has caused us to become less connected. Creating a Connect St. Helens concept would partner with Sources of Strength, which is a suicide prevention and teenage empowerment program.

Curtis Miller from Connect BG in Battleground, WA was in attendance to talk about their program. The program stemmed from the mayor reaching out to him and asking him to contact all the church pastors to gather for a meeting to discuss suicide prevention. The suicides they had seen resulted from substance abuse, academic failure, and behavior issues; which are symptoms of a deeper problem. Suicide comes from loneliness, isolation, and a disconnection; which technology has created. Suicide has increased among youth. They are in pain and don't know how to deal with it. Battleground has pooled their resources to increase the connectivity.

Scot knows that they can't do it alone. He needs to access community resources. St. Helens would have the safest schools in America if every student felt like they had a supportive adult. There is a sense of urgency to make this work. Councilor Conn encouraged the Council to look online at Connect BG and Sources of Strength. There is a lot of data that supports what was discussed.

3.D Update on Recreation Program - Shanna

Recreation Coordinator Shanna Duggan updated the Council on the Recreation Program.

- Began the program in June 2018.
- Started with a twice a week walking program. The participants took it on their own to meet daily. Will begin again when the weather improves.
- Hosted movie nights.
- Held a .4k Underachievers Fun Run on the 4th of July.
- Community game nights.
- Family yoga on Wednesdays during the summer.
- Helped with Citizens Day in the Park.
- Hired school aged staff to help with programs.
- Support from Youth Council.
- Held various classes in the Fall.
- Every Day Heroes presentation with Columbia River Fire & Rescue.
- Emergency Preparedness workshop.

- Started an after school child care program at Lewis & Clark Elementary School. Busses are available to bring students from other schools in the district. Grants received gave them the ability to lower the cost of tuition and provide a meal.
- Held a Fall Bazaar.
- Next year will bring:
 - Pee Wee basketball league
 - Parent café's
 - Play groups
 - Spring Break camp
 - Easter Egg Hunt
 - Teen Nights
 - Community café's
 - Indoor soccer
 - First Saturday Community Market
 - Growth of after school program
 - Continue partnering with St. Helens School District, Eisenschmidt Pool, and St. Helens Library.
 - Collaboration with the Chamber, CCMH Suicide Prevention Taskforce, Youth Soccer, Public Health, Communication Action Team, Columbia City Library, Kiwanis, Senior Center, Friends of the St. Helens Recreation Program, Youth Council, Arts & Cultural Commission, and other business and community members.

She appreciates the support from the Council. She welcomes their ideas for programs.

Scot Stockwell complimented the program. Duggan has taken it way beyond where he expected it to be. He is thrilled with the after school program that he's eager to grow at each school.

Council President Morten sees the Recreation Center as a valuable resource to the community. Council expressed their appreciation of Duggan and Brown for their work on the Program.

3.E Riverfront Connector Plan Update - Jacob

Associate Planner Jenny Dimsho and City Planner Jacob Graichen updated the Council on the Riverfront Connector Plan. A copy of their presentation is in the archive meeting packet. A joint work session to review the draft plan is scheduled for February 20 at 6 p.m. with the Planning Commission and Council. The Planning Commission will hold a public hearing in March, followed by the Council public hearing for adoption in April. Dimsho reviewed the changes resulting from past recommendations.

3.G Discussion Regarding the Arts & Cultural Commission

Councilor Conn was concerned about the lack of Commission members and projects. However, hearing about the skate park project today changes her thoughts about making changes to the Commission. The skate park will be an active project that will attract new interest.

Council President Morten will advocate to the Parks Commission to assign one or two people to be a liaison for arts in the parks.

Arts & Cultural Commission member Lisa Brooke wants to ask the City how they can serve, rather than coming up with projects on their own.

3.F Review Bids for Recreation Center Bathrooms - Matt

Finance Director Brown envisioned it would cost about \$50,000 to renovate the Recreation Center for full use. The roof cost about \$21,000. With all the work that has already been done, he is at about \$52,000. The bathrooms and flooring still has to be done. The flooring has already been purchased and will be installed by high school construction students in January. The bid included in the archive meeting packet is doing less than what they initially projected. It would allow for a couple stalls in the men's and women's restrooms.

Councilor Conn asked if City staff has the capability to do the work. Brown responded that staff is not available at this time. Sheppard added that it would take Roger Stauffer plus a couple more crew members. They are already behind on projects because of event assistance. Mayor Scholl would like to use City staff used when available. Discussion ensued about reducing what's done in the bathrooms. Brown can help with painting to reduce cost.

Council concurred to move forward with the bathroom renovations adjusted to meet the minimum needs for use.

4) Department Reports

Police Chief Greenway reported...

- Donut Day collected 2,500 pounds of food and \$2,800. This was the 16th Donut Day held. Over 50,000 pounds of food and over \$40,000 was raised over those 16 days.
- Have begun holding quarterly lunches at the elementary schools. Seven to eight officers attended a lunch at McBride. Officers got more out of visiting with the kids than the students did. They received 100's of thank you notes. It's strengthening the relationship between students and officers.
- Appreciates the St. Helens Lions Club donating food for first responders working on the holidays. Food will be available at Columbia 911.
- He, Brown, and two officers toured the new police station in Sandy. They recently began participating in the Enterprise Fleet Management program. They were excited about the program. They are able to monitor the vehicles better with the program. No one had anything negative to say about it.
- Has been working with Columbia 911 to pinpoint high service areas of crime and motor vehicle accidents. He will use that information to guide the officers with a game plan to be proactive in hot spots.
- Council President Morten asked about red light cameras. Greenway personally does not feel that it's a need at this time. It would take away from the community aspect and small town feel. There's been a lot of controversy with due process and being heard in court.

Public Works Engineering Director Nelson reported...

- Thanked Councilor Conn for her service on the Council. She appreciates her support.
- Merry Christmas!

Public Works Operations Director Sheppard reported...

- Gave kudos to Public Works employees Ethan Stirling and Curt LeMont. They recently rescued three teenage boys on the river in Clatskanie.
- FEMA has finally recognized Public Works as being First Responders.

Library Director Jeffries reported...

- Approaching completion of the collaboration project with the Scappoose Public Library.
- Tonight's packet includes a statement of work for the STEM program outlined today. She feels very privileged to have been selected for this opportunity.
- The Columbia County Museum Association created a wonderful display in the lobby of antique toys. Encouraged everyone to come look.
- She has greatly appreciated the experience, guidance, and connectedness that Councilor Conn has offered the Library. Conn will be missed.

Finance Director Brown reported...

- The Budget Committee approved funds to conduct a study for a new police station. He asked if the Council would like to move forward with the project. Council was in consensus for Brown to return with an RFP for review. Council President Morten asked Brown to include consideration of unit trains when they look at sites.
- Asked for the Council's thoughts on the proposed St. Helens Industrial site sign. Discussion to reduce the size of the logo and have St. Helens on one line and Industrial Park on a separate line. Brown will return with changes based on the discussion.
- Distributed copies of the proposed draft parks brochure. Council President Morten appreciates that the Parks Commission had the opportunity to review it as well. The deadline for feedback is December 31.
- The Council typically reviews utility rates in December. When the Cost of Service Analysis was done a couple years ago, the consultant's recommendation was to follow the CPI for rate increases. That would be about a 3.5% increase today, which is fairly low for the surrounding area. He will return with more discussion in January.

City Recorder Payne reported...

- Nothing to report.

City Administrator Walsh reported...

- This meeting has been really good. There was a lot of focus on community relationships.
- The Christmas Ship event was amazing. He is astonished by how many more people attend each year.
- The City did not receive the BUILD Grant. He's not discouraged knowing that these grants are normally not funded the first time.
- Will be receiving the final draft of the Sand Island Camping Lease soon.
- Looking for a place to put the pumpkin stained glass window. The Council Chambers is one option.
- The banners in the windows were a trial this year. The wind tore through them, so they were moved inside.

5) Council Reports

Councilor Locke reported...

- Asked for an explanation of the Ordinance for the Lightspeed Networks, Inc. on tonight's agenda. Walsh responded that it is a non-exclusive franchise agreement that serves public buildings. They want to provide a service to the County Courthouse.

Councilor Carlson reported...

- Lots of good stuff is happening this holiday season.
- Donated money to Hudson Garbage for building bikes. Volunteering makes a difference.

- Began her position as an interim council liaison for the Chamber of Commerce. She was encouraged by the meeting she attended.
- There has been miscommunication in the community about the new Legacy building. They want to spread the word that no doctors are leaving and no services will be eliminated. They are targeting June to be in the new location.

Councilor Conn reported...

- The Arts & Cultural Commission recommended approval of a mural on the City Hall Annex building and the proposal Craig Marquado has been presenting to the boards and commissions. She has reservations about them both.
- Council has talked about getting assistance for Walsh. She would like to direct staff to draft a job description based on that need. Council concurred.
- Thanked everyone for all of the time they have allowed her to serve in the community and support partners. Mayor Scholl thanked Conn for her service and commitment.
- The Arts & Cultural Commission recommended changing their meetings to every other month.

Council President Morten reported...

- Thanks to Councilor Conn. He was privileged to say a few good words about her.
- He apologized to Councilor Carlson for taking a break during her report.
- He doesn't know where Topaz's comment about putting "toxic waste" into the lagoon comes from. They have not talked about receiving toxic waste in the community.
- Appreciated the Arts & Cultural Commission report from Lisa Brooke.
- He would like to talk about the intersection of First Street and St. Helens Street based on the 2018 and 2019 goal sheets. The goals included the need for sidewalks and connectivity on N. Vernonia Road. There is not sufficient funding for both projects. Nelson concurred that they do not have funds to prepare plans, get bids, and construct both projects. Council needs to make a determination based on approximate costs and funding for next budget year. Discussion ensued about both project being a high priority. Nelson will move forward to gather information and return with reports of costs and funding for both projects.
- The Parks Commission unanimously recommended changing their schedule to meeting monthly. They have a lot of work to do. No objections from Council.
- Combining the Parks Commission and Bicycle & Pedestrian Commission has set them on a path to research connectivity with trails and pathways.
- Undergoing concept planning for Grey Cliffs Park. It is the only small craft water launch in the City. A grant paid for the restroom in the park.
- He's happy to see that the Sand Island Marine Park is moving forward.
- Upgrades continue at the Veterans Memorial Plaza in McCormick Park.

Mayor Scholl reported...

- Met with the Regional Solutions Team to discuss projects throughout the City. He is encouraged about the growth of the St. Helens Industrial Park.
- Met with the County yesterday about the Watershed Property. He hopes to work out an intergovernmental agreement, seek grants for a conceptual drawing, and seek gas tax funding for the off-roading project.

6) **Other Business**

7) **Adjourn – 4:24 p.m.**

Executive Session

Respectfully submitted by Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder.

ATTEST:


Kathy Payne, City Recorder


Rick Scholl, Mayor