

# City of St. Helens

## Consent Agenda for Approval

### CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

Presented for approval on this 6<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2024 are the following Council minutes:

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2024

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- Work Session, Executive Session, and Regular Session Minutes dated August 7, 2024
- Work Session, Executive Session, and Regular Session Minutes dated August 21, 2024
- Work Session, Executive Session, Public Hearing, and Regular Session Minutes dated September 4, 2024
- Planning Commission and City Council Joint Meeting Minutes dated September 25, 2024

#### **After Approval of Council Minutes:**

- Scan as PDF Searchable
- Make one double-sided, hole-punched copy and send to Library Reference
- Minutes related to hearings and deliberations get copied to working file
- Save PDF in Minutes folder
- Update file name & signature block on Word document & copy Word document into Council minutes folder in Shared Drive
- Upload & publish in MuniCode
- Email minutes link to distribution list
- Add minutes to HPRMS
- Add packet and exhibits to HPRMS
- File original in Vault
- Update minutes spreadsheet



# COUNCIL WORK SESSION

Wednesday, August 07, 2024

## DRAFT MINUTES

### MEMBERS PRESENT

Mayor Rick Scholl  
Council President Jessica Chilton  
Councilor Mark Gundersen  
Councilor Russell Hubbard  
Councilor Brandon Sundeen

### STAFF

John Walsh, City Administrator	Sharon Darroux, Engineering Manager
Crystal King, Communications Officer	Tory Shelby, Parks Field Supervisor
Jenny Dimsho, Associate Planner	Tim Underwood, Construction Inspector
Gloria Butsch, Finance Director	Alex Bird, Engineer II
Suzanne Bishop, Library Director	Ashley Wigod, Contracted City Attorney
Brian Greenway, Police Chief	Matthew Kahl, Contracted City Attorney

### OTHERS

Rom Trommlitz	Brady Preheim	Brittany Hummel
Brian Pixley	Jane Garcia	Steve Topaz
Al Petersen	Jennifer Shoemaker	Brittany Lapp
Adam St. Pierre	James McFarland	Elise Mickelson
Laura Jenkins-Law	Casie Campbell	

### CALL WORK SESSION TO ORDER – 2: 00 p.m.

### VISITOR COMMENTS - Limited to three (3) minutes per speaker

- ◆ Al Petersen. Spoke about his email to Councilors on the proposed design for the new St. Helens entrance sign at Millard Road.
- ◆ Ron Trommlitz. Expressed concerns over the investigations into the failure of the 2-million-gallon reservoir W-449 rehabilitation and the resulting settlement agreement.
- ◆ Brady Preheim. Encouraged Councilors to oppose the jail levy, mentioned the progress of the City's "dirty dirt deal", expressed dismay about a parking lot downtown being designated for employees only, and noted the lack of communication between the City and County regarding contracting broadband services would result in duplicated services. He also cited concerns about the Tourism contract with Treadway and urged the Council not to sign the contract.
- ◆ Steve Topaz. Read aloud quotes that he and others he had spoken which he felt were characteristic of the City Council.
- ◆ Brittany Lapp. Spoke about her conversation with City Administrator Walsh and emails to Councilors about the possibility of partially compensating the Sand Island Sandcastle Competition carvers who had cleared their schedules and booked airfare and hotels before the event was canceled due to the delay in signing the Tourism contract with Treadway.

- ◆ Adam St. Pierre. Reminded the Council that the City's Tourism subcontractor held the liability and responsibility for events, and if a contract existed, the contractor for the Sandcastle Competition would be liable for taking care of the carvers.

## DISCUSSION TOPICS

### 1. **Employee Length of Service Recognition - Tim Underwood (25), Tory Shelby (15), and Dawn Richardson (5)**

Mayor Scholl presented length of service awards to Tim Underwood, Tory Shelby, and Dawn Richardson and expressed appreciation for all the awardees.

### 2. **Presentation in Support of the Columbia County Jail Levy - Sheriff Brian Pixley**

Columbia County Sheriff Brian Pixley - gave a presentation in support of the Columbia County Jail Levy which would cost \$0.79 per \$1,000 of assessed value if the levy passed. He noted the frequency of matrix releases before the levy began in 2014, where inmates were released early due to insufficient funding. If the levy did not pass, the jail in St. Helens would become a book-and-release facility.

Police Chief Greenway explained the impacts on the community if the jail were closed, including scaling back the number of offenders that could be lodged, and having to contract with another jail facility, likely in Yamhill or Clatsop County, with prisoner transport for court or medical purposes to be provided by two officers from the St. Helens Police Department. Offenders booked into the St. Helens facility would be released back into the City.

Sheriff Pixley noted the increased food and medical contract costs due to inflation and he urged the Council to consider signing a resolution in support of the Jail Levy.

Questions from the Council were addressed regarding the average occupancy of the jail, confirming the jail had been built using timber revenue, and discussing the 21-cent increase from the previous levy.

The Council and staff shared anecdotes highlighting the impact of having a limited jail facility, and noted people would be laid off if the jail was closed. Sheriff Pixley confirmed the jail was fully staffed, and he described the current procedures for releasing inmates.

### 3. **Library Department Semi-Annual Report - Library Director Suzanne Bishop**

Library Director Bishop presented the Library Department Semi-Annual Report and 2023 – 2028 Strategic Plan. She reported on Library building use, local partnerships, and the resources and services provided to the community such as a cooling center, a seed exchange program, and a small business resource corner. She described the procurement process for Library resources, announced the pending hire of a new Youth and Makerspace Librarian, and noted the positive impact of Library staff and volunteers on patrons.

Questions and appreciative comments from the Council and staff were addressed regarding the Library's service as a cooling center, the support for small business development in the community, and the Library partnerships with GROW, Columbia Economic Team (CET), and Portland Community College's (PCC) Oregon Manufacturing Innovation Training Center (OMIC).

### 4. **Utility Bill Leak Adjustment Request for 2560 Columbia Blvd. (Melton) - City Administrator John Walsh**

### 5. **Utility Bill Leak Adjustment Request for 2304 Columbia Blvd. (Nezbeda) - City Administrator John Walsh**

City Administrator Walsh presented the leak adjustment requests for 2560 Columbia Blvd and 2304 Columbia Blvd, noting that both were multi-month leaks and the adjustment requests, totaling over \$1,000, were based on the average monthly bills from the last three years

## **6. Review Agreement with Strategic Networks Group, Inc. for Broadband Planning Services - *City Administrator John Walsh***

City Administrator Walsh confirmed Resolution 2017 would be on the agenda for tonight's regular City Council meeting. Resolution 2017 supported the findings of the Broadband eStrategy Report which would be used to work with private partner entities to bring broadband investments to St. Helens. He was not aware of the County working with anyone other than Michael Curri, Strategic Networks Group Founder and President, who had concluded his previous work advancing broadband opportunities in St. Helens and had proposed a personal services agreement with the City not to exceed the amount of \$35,000. City Administrator Walsh stated St. Helens was also in line to receive a portion of the \$682 million in Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) funding coming to Oregon in 2026, and it would be a shame not to pursue those grants.

There was discussion on the surrounding area being practical for private investors, ensuring the City was working with the County, planning to use funds from Community Development and Economic Planning, Michael Curri's work queueing up investors and coordinating with other cities, and proceeding with the BEAD application to set the groundwork to receive funding regardless of what the County did.

## **7. Discussion regarding St. Helens Welcome Signs on Columbia River Highway - *Associate Planner Jenny Dimsho***

Associate Planner Dimsho presented the City of St. Helens Branding and Wayfinding Master Plan and highlighted the efforts toward creating cohesive wayfinding to direct people from the highway to the downtown area, and the permitting difficulties which delayed the entry sign project until after the Millard Road signal project was completed. She explained the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) would have to approve the entry sign footings, distance from the railroad tracks, and sign content. ODOT thought the previous proposal submitted by the Entry Sign Committee was cluttered and could distract drivers but the proposed design in the Council packet had been shown to ODOT in 2020 and was given their unofficial "blessing." She talked about using breakaway footings, the Lions Club and Kiwanis Club showing interest in being on the signs, illuminating the signs, the need for a new cost estimate, and that it was within the Council's purview to reconsider the entry sign design or locations.

There was discussion about using the removal of the old signs as a bargaining chip with ODOT, the story behind the Community Achievement Award 1956 on one of the old signs, possibly using the Community Development budget to fund the signs quickly rather than waiting for a grant and proceeding with a new cost estimate.

The Council had mixed opinions on whether to match the new entry signs to the current wayfinding signs or create a memorable sign with a striking new design. They discussed putting an entry sign at Millard Road, directing traffic to the Riverfront District, holding a retreat to review the Riverfront Connector and other corridor plans, possibly using a sign to direct traffic to the Hoylton District, and possibly creating a committee to consider new sign designs. They also noted the importance of getting the new entry signs up quickly as the old signs were so embarrassing that people had been painting them.

Associate Planner Dimsho confirmed she would get a free cost estimate for the signs from the fabricator who prepared the shop drawing, although she heard mixed feedback from the Council on whether to use the proposed design or use a new design, and she noted that the permits for the signs would not be requested from ODOT until there was a plan for funding.

Mayor Scholl acknowledged the communications between Dimsho and ODOT regarding the entry sign project had begun six years ago, and he appreciated her diligent work. He also stated he would like to thank the person who had painted the old entry signs.

### **8. Review Draft Agreement with Treadway Events and Entertainment LLC for Special Event Coordination and Management Services - *City Administrator John Walsh***

Contracted City Attorney Matthew Kahl walked Councilors through a hard copy of the draft agreement with Treadway, highlighting the term length and possible extensions, procedure for budgeting and expenditures, written event summary timeframe requirements, end of event and end of year reporting, using an event funds account and electronic payments rather than cash, ownership of event materials, the ability for the City to do inspections and audits, and other various provisions included in the contract. Attachment A included a description of the scope of work, the Tourism program objectives, compensation paid to the contractor, a description of the four main events in St. Helens with flexibility for other events to be created, and the contractor's responsibilities, including providing final reports to the City Administrator. Attachment B covered the insurance obligations, and Attachment C included the terms of compensation. He explained the RFP had included incentive pay of 5% of net revenues, and that Attachment C defined and clarified what net revenue was and how the aggregate 5% of net revenue would be calculated.

Questions and comments from the Council were addressed about the extent of the plans being made for the Spirit of Halloweentown event this year, providing written event summaries to Councilors for the first year, creating an inventory list for event materials, net revenue calculation, City staff feeling comfortable with the accounting for this contract, and a duplication error identified in the contract. Kahl confirmed the error would be corrected in the final contract.

City Administrator Walsh noted he would be meeting with Treadway between this meeting and the regular City Council meeting tonight, and he confirmed acceptance of the contract would be on tonight's agenda for the regular City Council meeting.

There was discussion clarifying vessel ownership and insurance responsibilities in the contract.

### **9. Report from City Administrator John Walsh**

City Administrator Walsh reported progress had been made on the Riverwalk and the Police Station projects. 13 Nights on the River was going well at McCormick Park with five event nights left, and he announced upcoming musical performances for those events. He noted he and Councilor Hubbard had visited the site for Project Arcadia with City Staff and he looked forward to creating a building footprint and working on a purchase and sale agreement. He stated the Council packet contained a grant application for \$61,000 from the Marine Board for repair of the debris boom and dock, and other grants would cover further dock repairs after an electrical fire.

### **ADJOURN – 4:03 p.m.**

#### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

- Real Property Transactions, under ORS 192.660(2)(e)
- Consult with Counsel/Potential Litigation, under ORS 192.660(2)(h)

Respectfully submitted by Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder.

ATTEST:

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Crystal King, Communications Officer

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Rick Scholl, Mayor

# City of St. Helens CITY COUNCIL

Executive Session Summary

August 7, 2024

**Members Present:** Rick Scholl, Mayor  
Jessica Chilton, Council President  
Mark Gundersen, Councilor  
Brandon Sundeen, Councilor  
Russell Hubbard, Councilor

**Staff Present:** John Walsh, City Administrator

**Others:** Ashley Wigod, City Attorney with Jordan Ramis PC (via Zoom)



At 4:17 p.m., Mayor Scholl opened the Executive Session pursuant to the ORS numbers listed below and then gave Council roll call. Other than Labor Negotiator Consultations, representatives of the news media, designated staff, and other persons as approved shall be allowed to attend the Executive Session. All other members of the audience are asked to leave the Council Chambers. Representatives of the news media were specifically directed not to report on or otherwise disclose any of the deliberations or anything said about these subjects during the executive session, except to state the general subject of the session as previously announced. No decision may be made in executive session. Any person in attendance, including the news media, who has a recording device is directed to turn it off.

- **Real Property Transactions, under ORS 192.660(2)(e)**
  - Update on Project Arcadia at the St. Helens Industrial Business Park.
  - Update on the sale of the Millard Road property.
  - Update on potential lease or purchase of property for a new public safety facility.
- **Consult with Legal Counsel/Litigation, under ORS 192.660(2)(h)**
  - Nothing discussed under this section.

The Executive Session was adjourned at 4:57 p.m.



ATTEST:

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John Walsh, City Administrator

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Rick Scholl, Mayor

*An audio recording of this meeting is archived at City Hall.*



# COUNCIL REGULAR SESSION

Wednesday, August 07, 2024

## DRAFT MINUTES

### MEMBERS PRESENT

Mayor Rick Scholl  
Council President Jessica Chilton  
Councilor Mark Gundersen  
Councilor Russell Hubbard

### MEMBERS ABSENT

Councilor Brandon Sundeen

### STAFF

John Walsh, City Administrator  
Crystal King, Communications Officer  
Jenny Dimsho, Associate Planner

### OTHERS

Steve Toschi	Miriam House	Mitzi Ponce
Brady Preheim	Elizabeth Millager	Adam
Arthur	Brandon Treadway	Judy Thompson
Robyn Toschi	Brittany Lapp	

### CALL REGULAR SESSION TO ORDER – 7:00 p.m.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

### VISITOR COMMENTS – *Limited to three (3) minutes per speaker*

- ◆ Steve Toschi. Expressed concern about the expenditures and contractor access to assets in the Treadway contract and urged Council to look closer before finalizing the contract. He supported the jail levy to keep the jail open as room existed to enforce laws and keep citizens safe.
- ◆ Brady Preheim. Stated the jail was losing money on federal prisoners, taxpayers supported the jail, and the City needed to charge the federal government enough to cover housing federal prisoners. He noted there was \$120,000 in the Budget for Tourism Funds, he did not know how \$193,000 would be paid to Treadway, and signing the contract without creating a Supplemental Budget was breaking the law.

### ORDINANCES – *Final Reading*

- 1. Ordinance No. 3302:** An Ordinance to Annex and Designate the Zone of Certain Property at 35456 East Division Road

**Motion:** Motion made by Council President Chilton and seconded by Councilor Gundersen to adopt Ordinance No. 3302. **Vote:** Yea: Mayor Scholl, Council President Chilton, Councilor Gundersen, Councilor Hubbard

- 2. Ordinance No. 3303:** An Ordinance to Annex and Designate the Zone of Certain Property West, South, and East of 58212 Old Portland Road

**Motion:** Motion made by Council President Chilton and seconded by Councilor Gundersen to adopt Ordinance No. 3303. **Vote:** Yea: Mayor Scholl, Council President Chilton, Councilor Gundersen, Councilor Hubbard

- 3. Ordinance No. 3304:** An Ordinance to Annex and Designate the Zone of Certain Property at 2180 Gable Road

**Motion:** Motion made by Council President Chilton and seconded by Councilor Gundersen to adopt Ordinance No. 3304. **Vote:** Yea: Mayor Scholl, Council President Chilton, Councilor Gundersen, Councilor Hubbard

## RESOLUTIONS

- 4. Resolution No. 2017:** A Resolution Adopting the Findings from Broadband and Digital Infrastructure Planning and Authorizing City Council Support for a Digital Infrastructure Initiative for St. Helens and Adjacent Municipalities to Include Preparation of BEAD Funding Pre-Qualification Required Financial Information

**Motion:** Motion made by Councilor Gundersen and seconded by Council President Chilton to adopt Resolution No. 2017. **Vote:** Yea: Mayor Scholl, Council President Chilton, Councilor Gundersen, Councilor Hubbard

## AWARD BID/CONTRACT

5. Award Contract to Hicks Striping & Curbing, LLC for the 2024 Pavement Striping Project (R-719) in the Amount of \$51,122.00

**Motion:** Motion made by Councilor Gundersen and seconded by Council President Chilton to approve '5' above. **Vote:** Yea: Mayor Scholl, Council President Chilton, Councilor Gundersen, Councilor Hubbard

## APPROVE AND/OR AUTHORIZE FOR SIGNATURE

6. Agreement with Strategic Networks Group, Inc. for Broadband Planning
7. Oregon State Marine Board Boating Facility Grant Agreement
8. Amendment No. 1 to Letter of Intent for Arcadia Project
9. Agreement with Treadway Events and Entertainment LLC for Special Event Coordination and Management Services
10. Diligence Access Agreement – Project Arcadia

**Motion:** Motion made by Council President Chilton and seconded by Councilor Gundersen to approve '6' through '10' above.

There was discussion on having a plan to fund the contract with Treadway, using ticket sales to generate funds, and possibly liquidating Tourism assets. City Administrator Walsh stated he was working with Finance Director Butsch on a Supplemental Budget, and that the payments to Treadway would be made incrementally throughout the year.

**Vote:** Yea: Mayor Scholl, Council President Chilton, Councilor Gundersen, Councilor Hubbard

## CONSENT AGENDA FOR ACCEPTANCE

11. Strategic Networks Group Broadband Assessment and eStrategy Report

**Motion:** Motion made by Councilor Gundersen and seconded by Council President Chilton to approve '11' above. **Vote:** Yea: Mayor Scholl, Council President Chilton, Councilor Gundersen, Councilor Hubbard

## CONSENT AGENDA FOR APPROVAL

12. Utility Bill Leak Adjustment Request for 2560 Columbia Blvd. (Craig Melton) in the Amount of \$1,084.22



13. Utility Bill Leak Adjustment Request for 2304 Columbia Blvd. (Paul Nezbeda) in the Amount of \$1,935.20
14. OLCC Licenses
15. Accounts Payable Bill Lists

**Motion:** Motion made by Council President Chilton and seconded by Councilor Gundersen to approve '12' through '15' above. **Vote:** Yea: Mayor Scholl, Council President Chilton, Councilor Gundersen, Councilor Hubbard

### **WORK SESSION ACTION ITEMS**

#### **Support of Jail Levy**

Mayor Scholl reviewed information about the Jail Levy, which would be taxed at \$0.79 per \$1,000 assessed value, noting if the levy did not pass the jail would likely become a book-and-release facility, and he expressed support for the levy.

There was discussion on the impacts of book-and-release, staffing at the jail, possibly having to send inmates to jails in McMinnville or Astoria, and directing staff to create a resolution in support of the Jail Levy. It was noted the purpose of the Jail was to uphold safety in the community rather than to bring in revenue.

**Motion:** Motion made by Council President Chilton and seconded by Councilor Gundersen to direct staff to come back with a resolution in support of the jail levy for approval at the August 21 Regular Session. **Vote:** Yea: Mayor Scholl, Council President Chilton, Councilor Gundersen, Councilor Hubbard

#### **Sand Island Sandcastle Competition**

**Motion:** Motion made by Council President Chilton and seconded by Councilor Gundersen to compensate the carvers of the cancelled Sand Island Sandcastle Competition.

Council discussed the carvers' expectations for compensation and alternatives to payment, but noted the contract had been between E2C and Brittany Lapp, the event organizer, not the City, which did not have funding to pay the carvers.

Council consented that the City was not responsible, and the carvers could go after E2C for breach of contract. Incentives could be offered to carvers for future events, and the City could make agreements directly with subcontractors, if Treadway was not ready.

**Vote:** Nay: Mayor Scholl, Council President Chilton, Councilor Gundersen, Councilor Hubbard; motion fails

### **COUNCIL MEMBER REPORTS**

**Council President Chilton** reported on summer camp events offered by the Recreation Center.

**Councilor Gundersen** reported the Planning Commission meeting had been canceled and the Columbia River Fire and Rescue meeting would be tomorrow.

**Councilor Hubbard** reported things were great at the Library.

### **MAYOR SCHOLL REPORTS**

Reported on the successful National Night Out and thanked employees who had received length of service awards. He noted the Waterfront was moving along, downtown businesses needed support, 13 Nights would return to the river venue next year, Treadway would be directed to focus on Spirit of Halloweentown, and the Chinook salmon were running.

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

**ADJOURN – 7:38 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted by Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder.

ATTEST:

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Crystal King, Communications Officer

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Rick Scholl, Mayor



# COUNCIL WORK SESSION

Wednesday, August 21, 2024

## DRAFT MINUTES

### MEMBERS PRESENT

Mayor Rick Scholl  
Council President Jessica Chilton  
Councilor Mark Gundersen  
Councilor Russell Hubbard  
Councilor Brandon Sundeen

### STAFF

John Walsh, City Administrator	Suzanne Bishop, Library Director
Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder	Jana Wiersma, Youth Librarian
Crystal King, Communications Officer	Alex Bird, Engineer II
Gloria Butsch, Finance Director	Ashley Wigod, Contracted City Attorney

### OTHERS

Steve Topaz	Steve Toschi	Mitz
Ron Trommlitz	Brady Preheim	Jenn
Jennifer Massey	Jak Massey	Arthur Leskowich
Michelle Millar	Lynne Pettit	Jessica Sturdivant

### CALL WORK SESSION TO ORDER – 2:00 p.m.

#### VISITOR COMMENTS - *Limited to three (3) minutes per speaker*

- ◆ Ron Trommlitz. Described information he received from Emery and Sons regarding the two million-gallon (2MG) reservoir replacement, noting that the City was not being transparent. He was told in November 2022 to cease talking about the failure of the 2MG rehabilitation lest he be sued. City Attorney Bowers received a suggestion by the District Attorney that the City could share the Walker Report redacting any legal advice. A disclosure would reveal cause and responsibility for the 2MG rehabilitation. It seemed the newspaper wanted to censure opinion on the matter.
- ◆ Steve Topaz. Referenced a National Institutes of Health (NIH) report connecting various sites and projects in the St. Helens region, which he listed, to higher rates of cancer due to contaminants. Columbia County had the highest cancer rate in Oregon.
- ◆ Brady Preheim. Disagreed with Council President Chilton's praise in The Chronicle for new tourism contractor Treadway who had canceled contracts which would likely result in no more celebrity appearances in St. Helens. Treadway was destroying tourism relationships that took almost a decade to build, knew nothing about hosting the haunted house which would take weeks to prepare, and had committed a fraud against the City. Financing was way over budget with Treadway's contract written at \$1 million. He asked if funding Main Street despite the Budget Committee denial of the funding was another favor to Councilor Hubbard. It was unacceptable and illegal to fund what the Budget Committee did not approve.

- ◆ Steve Toschi. Businesses downtown needed help after this year's changes, suggesting the Council look to Urban Renewal to create a fund for businesses to recoup some of the lost revenues due to construction this year.

**DISCUSSION TOPICS** - *The Council will take a break around 4:00PM*

**1. Presentation of Certificate to Outgoing Library Board Member Jessica Sturdivant**

Library Director Bishop and Mayor Scholl commended Ms. Sturdivant's service to the library.

Jana Wiersma was introduced as the new Youth and Makerspace Librarian, and the activities and programs she would be doing were described.

**2. Report from South Columbia County Chamber of Commerce - *Outreach Director Jak Massey***

Jak Massey presented the report on the South Columbia County Chamber of Commerce. Key highlights included its 145 active members and two staff members, official Chamber office hours, the successful March awards banquet which some of the Council attended, the upcoming Chamber fundraiser Halloween event, the growth of networking events, and current board members. She challenged each Council member to find a business not currently a member, tell them about the Chamber, and share the parade flyer.

Council President Chilton reminded Council that the City was a Chamber member and encouraged attending Chamber events.

**3. 4th Quarter Financial Report 2023/24 - *Finance Director Gloria Butsch***

Finance Director Butsch presented the 4th Quarter Financial Report, highlighting the General Fund cost for Services outweighed revenue by nearly \$1.3 million. For Fiscal Year 2025, the General Fund had once again been infused with one-time revenue which was an unsustainable practice. She advised the Council to prioritize identifying and obtaining the resources to support general services or for the City to discuss how to make service cuts. She also reported on the upcoming supplemental budget that would be proposed for the Tourism and Events Fund and noted that St. Helens was highly dependent on industrial businesses which were economy-driven for funding.

Mayor Scholl explained how the City's finances had ended up in their current state, citing the end of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding and Cascade Tissue leaving the city. The hope was to ultimately backfill the supplemental budget and interfund loan.

Council and staff discussed Mr. Preheim's question about the Main Street program being funded and the budget process. Main Street was budgeted in Projects and Programs in the Community Development Fund under Economic Planning. It was never brought up during budget discussions that Main Street would not be funded. The City developed a Memorandum of Understanding with Main Street which continued in perpetuity and started before Councilor Hubbard joined the Council. Main Street brought in hundreds of thousands of dollars.

**4. Utility Bill Leak Adjustment Request for 1835 St. Helens Street (Westside Laundry) - *City Administrator John Walsh***

City Administrator Walsh confirmed the utility bill leak adjustment requests come to the Council when they are over \$1000, noting Westside Laundry caught and fixed their leak.

The Council discussed whether to continue to hear the requests, raise the threshold of the amount that comes before the Council, or leave the requests to staff. Staff confirmed typically the leak was not caught on the first billing cycle because it was not seen the bill had spiked until the second bill came through. A significant leak would probably be noticed and called in, and when the City noted high usage, it would contact the customer.

The Council directed staff to look into raising the threshold, research the average of the last several write-offs, and draft the policy needed to raise the threshold.

#### **5. Report from City Administrator John Walsh**

City Administrator Walsh reported staff was busy with projects and programs especially due to people on summer breaks. Staff was keeping up but slipping behind a bit on important things. He provided updates on 13 Nights, staff's work on property-related matters and getting Treadway up to speed. He reviewed items on tonight's Regular Session agenda with input from Finance Director Butsch and answered clarifying questions about the agreement with Scappoose Bay and the amendment to the contract with Landis and Landis.

Council discussed the proposed increase in the award to Clark and Sons Excavating, their concerns about the quality of the pavement patching work done by Clark and Sons, whether to award an increase, Engineering's opinion on the company's work, the possibility of an intergovernmental agreement with the County to do patching when it was almost finished with hot plant work, and bringing the City's specification to the right level.

Engineer II Alex Bird recommended not patching on Columbia Boulevard to avoid having to redo work during upcoming public improvement projects. He also described the quality issues that Engineering found in some areas. He noted after Public Works did catch basin work on Deer Island and North 8th or 10th Street, no puddles could be seen at those locations the day after the rainstorm on Saturday.

Mayor Scholl said agenda item seven would be removed from tonight's Regular Session Agenda. [Secretary's note: Correction that item six would be removed.]

City Administrator Walsh reported on the status of the City's forest cut for the year, noting prices for timber had fallen considerably. The Council was advised to postpone the future cut it had approved due to the impact of lower prices on finances. Price fluctuations made depending on timber to balance the budget risky.

Council and staff discussed the sale process, how long after Council's approval the timber would be cut and sold, and the contract details. Walsh confirmed the cut and sale would likely be next year at this point and reflected on how things had changed after having read the financial report. Mayor Scholl noted a special session would be held soon to discuss some revenue for the City and more jobs for the community.

Council requested an update from the Forester, including information on the current timber market, which staff would coordinate.

#### **ADJOURN – 3:14 p.m.**

#### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

- Real Property Transactions, under ORS 192.660(2)(e)
- Consult with Counsel/Potential Litigation, under ORS 192.660(2)(h)

Respectfully submitted by Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder.

ATTEST:

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Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder

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Rick Scholl, Mayor

# City of St. Helens CITY COUNCIL

Executive Session Summary

August 21, 2024

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**Members Present:** Rick Scholl, Mayor  
Jessica Chilton, Council President  
Mark Gundersen, Councilor  
Brandon Sundeen, Councilor  
Russell Hubbard, Councilor

**Staff Present:** John Walsh, City Administrator  
Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder

**Others:** Ashley Wigod, City Attorney with Jordan Ramis PC (via Zoom)



At 3:26 p.m., Mayor Scholl opened the Executive Session pursuant to the ORS numbers listed below and then gave Council roll call. Other than Labor Negotiator Consultations, representatives of the news media, designated staff, and other persons as approved shall be allowed to attend the Executive Session. All other members of the audience are asked to leave the Council Chambers. Representatives of the news media were specifically directed not to report on or otherwise disclose any of the deliberations or anything said about these subjects during the executive session, except to state the general subject of the session as previously announced. No decision may be made in executive session. Any person in attendance, including the news media, who has a recording device is directed to turn it off.

- **Real Property Transactions, under ORS 192.660(2)(e)**
  - Update on potential lease or purchase of property for a new public safety facility.
  - Update on Project Arcadia at the St. Helens Industrial Business Park.
- **Consult with Legal Counsel/Litigation, under ORS 192.660(2)(h)**
  - Update on contract services with Treadway Events, LLC.

The Executive Session was adjourned at 4:18 p.m.



ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder

\_\_\_\_\_  
Rick Scholl, Mayor

*An audio recording of this meeting is archived at City Hall.*



# COUNCIL REGULAR SESSION

Wednesday, August 21, 2024

## DRAFT MINUTES

### MEMBERS PRESENT

Mayor Rick Scholl  
Council President Jessica Chilton  
Councilor Mark Gundersen  
Councilor Russell Hubbard  
Councilor Brandon Sundeen

### STAFF

John Walsh, City Administrator  
Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder  
Crystal King, Communications Officer  
Gloria Butsch, Finance Director

### OTHERS

Marci Sanders	Randy Sanders	Brittany
Mitzi	Brady Preheim	Jennifer Massey
TW	Jenn	Doug Morten

Paul Carroll

### CALL REGULAR SESSION TO ORDER – 7:00 p.m.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

### VISITOR COMMENTS – *Limited to three (3) minutes per speaker*

- ◆ Randy Sanders, Big River Taproom. Business was at 50% and it was difficult to keep staff on board while construction mistakes were being made and the public thought downtown was closed. He asked to speak with the person managing the general contractor about when projects would be completed. He had planned to open a whiskey bar but was waiting for parking and wheelchair access to be available. Randy was provided Public Works Director Zaher's contact information.
- ◆ Brady Preheim. Expressed concern over Resolution No. 2018 providing funding to Treadway meaning the City was funding Tourism, Treadway already being paid an extra \$73,000 without having done anything to support events, Treadway needing to fund themselves as an independent contractor, not having money for the Supplemental Budget, and Treadway's history of going over budget on events in Scappoose. He also urged the Council to oppose Resolution No. 2019 because the jail was a cost overrun.
- ◆ Jennifer Massey. Concerned about the cost increase in the Treadway contract, noting she felt City Administrator Walsh was at fault. She suggested negotiating for a higher percentage than the 50/50 split for logging timber, and she wanted an update on the status of the Wauna account, social media accounts, and other City assets which were possibly still being used by E2C. She

appreciated questions asked about Main Street in the work session held earlier, and she also urged the Council to put City Administrator Walsh on administrative leave.

## RESOLUTIONS

- 1. Resolution No. 2018:** A Resolution Authorizing the City Finance Director and City Recorder to Establish an Events Checking Account

**Motion:** Motion made by Council President Chilton and seconded by Councilor Gundersen to adopt Resolution No. 2018. **Vote:** Yea: Mayor Scholl, Council President Chilton, Councilor Gundersen, Councilor Hubbard, Councilor Sundeen

The public was encouraged to listen to the earlier work session for further clarification provided by Finance Director Butsch about the purpose of the account and how it would work. The account belonged to the City and was not a joint account.

- 2. Resolution No. 2019:** A Resolution of the Common Council of the City of St. Helens in Support of the Proposed Jail Levy

**Motion:** Motion made by Councilor Gundersen and seconded by Councilor Sundeen to adopt Resolution No. 2019. **Vote:** Yea: Mayor Scholl, Council President Chilton, Councilor Gundersen, Councilor Hubbard, Councilor Sundeen

## APPROVE AND/OR AUTHORIZE FOR SIGNATURE

3. Agreement with Scappoose Bay Watershed Council for Maintenance and Improvement of Natural Areas on City-owned Properties
4. Amendment No. 1 to Oregon Parks and Recreation Department Land and Water Conservation Fund Grant Agreement for Riverwalk Phase I Project
5. First Amendment to Contract with Landis & Landis Construction, LLC, for the S. 1st and St. Helens Intersection Joint Utility Trenching and Electrical Undergrounding Project No. R-685A
- ~~6. First Amendment to Contract with Clark and Sons Excavating, Inc. for the 2024 Pavement Patching Project No. R-718~~
7. Amendment No. 2 to Agreement with Oregon Business Development Department for Sewer Capacity Improvement Project

**Motion:** Motion made by Councilor Gundersen and seconded by Council President Chilton to approve '3, 4,5, and 7'. **Vote:** Yea: Mayor Scholl, Council President Chilton, Councilor Gundersen, Councilor Hubbard, Councilor Sundeen

## APPOINTMENT TO CITY BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

8. Reappoint Colleen Ohler to Library Board

**Motion:** Motion made by Councilor Sundeen and seconded by Council President Chilton to appoint Colleen Ohler to the Library Board. **Vote:** Yea: Mayor Scholl, Council President Chilton, Councilor Gundersen, Councilor Sundeen; Abstaining: Councilor Hubbard

## CONSENT AGENDA FOR ACCEPTANCE

9. Library Board Minutes dated June 10, 20214
10. Planning Commission Minutes dated June 11, 2024

**Motion:** Motion made by Council President Chilton and seconded by Councilor Gundersen to approve '9' and '10' above. **Vote:** Yea: Mayor Scholl, Council President Chilton, Councilor Gundersen, Councilor Hubbard, Councilor Sundeen

## CONSENT AGENDA FOR APPROVAL

11. Joint City Council and Planning Commission Minutes dated August 12, 2024



12. Utility Bill Leak Adjustment Request for 1835 St. Helens Street (Westside Laundry) in the Amount of \$1,577.06
13. Accounts Payable Bill Lists

**Motion:** Motion made by Councilor Gundersen and seconded by Councilor Sundeen to approve '11' through '13' above. **Vote:** Yea: Mayor Scholl, Council President Chilton, Councilor Gundersen, Councilor Hubbard, Councilor Sundeen

### **WORK SESSION ACTION ITEMS**

None

### **COUNCIL MEMBER REPORTS**

Council President Chilton reported on the Chamber Happy Hour and the ribbon cuttings for Lightning Treats and Sweets and Rose Street Boutique, continuing communication between business owners and getting their feedback about Treadway, progress toward Project Arcadia, and community support for businesses downtown. She stated due to ongoing litigation they could not comment on Tourism assets or social media accounts.

Councilor Sundeen reported on the Parks Commission approval of the Scappoose Bay Watershed Council projects, 13 Nights being a good opportunity to showcase McCormick Park, the Parks and Trails Commission proposal to create a Milton Creek Woodland Reserve, and summer programs coming to a close at the Recreation Center.

Councilor Gundersen reported on the approval of Lightning Treats and Sweets at the last Planning Commission meeting, incidents responded to by the Columbia River Fire and Rescue, and the need for the jail levy.

Councilor Hubbard reported on the new hire and progress on the solar project at the Library, and considering the possibility of charging for Fire, EMS, and Police responses to calls from Broadleaf Arbor after reviewing statistics and policies from other cities. Additionally, he wanted a monthly update on construction projects from Public Works Director Zaher.

### **MAYOR SCHOLL REPORTS**

Mayor Scholl reported on the process of Budget creation and implementation and the circumstances leading to the current Budget issues including loss of industry, covid, and inflation. He stated the Waterfront was a huge undertaking, apologized for issues due to construction, estimated the project would be complete near the end of the year, and encouraged everyone to support downtown businesses. He noted that Project Arcadia would create jobs and revenue in the area and said the City and County depended on economic development, which included creating a plan to work out power needs and market industrial property. He wished all a safe Labor Day and announced he would be running for Mayor.

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

### **ADJOURN – 7:42 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted by Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder.

ATTEST:

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Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder

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Rick Scholl, Mayor



# COUNCIL WORK SESSION

Wednesday, September 04, 2024

## DRAFT MINUTES

### MEMBERS PRESENT

Mayor Rick Scholl  
Council President Jessica Chilton  
Councilor Mark Gundersen  
Councilor Russell Hubbard  
Councilor Brandon Sundeen – arrived at 2:09 p.m.

### STAFF

John Walsh, City Administrator	Mouhamad Zaher, Public Works Director
Kathy Payne, City Recorder	Sharon Darroux, Engineering Manager
Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder	Alex Bird, Engineer II
Suzanne Bishop, Library Director	Ashley Wigod, Contracted City Attorney
Gloria Butsch, Finance Director	

### OTHERS

Howard Blumenthal	Nick Hellmich	Scott Jacobson
Jerry Belcher	Adam	Kevin Thompson
Lynne Pettit	Mary Wheeler	Mitzi Ponce
Michelle	Rooster	TW
Jaime	RT	Jason Morris
CC	Britt	Arthur
Dexter Quidd	Benjamin Atkins	Melissa Watson
Diana Wiener	Barry Greenberg	Kanale T.
TC	Steve Topaz	Ron Trommlitz
Brady Preheim	Jason Moon	

### CALL WORK SESSION TO ORDER – 2:00 p.m.

### VISITOR COMMENTS - *Limited to three (3) minutes per speaker*

- ◆ Ron Trommlitz. Described the lack of accountability and transparency with the 2 million-gallon (2MG) water reservoir leak and rehabilitation failure resulting in a more expensive reservoir replacement, citing evidence being withheld from the public and explaining why City Administrator Walsh should be replaced.
- ◆ Howard Blumenthal. Asked if he could organize clean-ups of the pieces of construction fence on the waterfront before they got into the waterways, citing concerns about the pollution of microplastics.
- ◆ Steve Topaz. Added to his comments at an earlier meeting, listing more places in St. Helens that contained toxic waste. He was surprised that during the recent special session the Council did not know who should sign the bill of sale for the mill when it was spelled out by City Charter. He

asked why project managers Associate Planner Dimsho and City Administrator Walsh did not help the man at the last meeting with concerns about concrete forming on the waterfront.

Mayor Scholl responded that he, Public Works Director Zaher, and City Administrator Walsh had met with Randy Sanders and Dave Lauridsen.

Councilor Sundeen arrived at 2:09 p.m.

- ◆ Brady Preheim. Noted Treadway had failed to take over all tourism events and said it was not honoring the celebrity contracts for appearances at Halloweentown, which would likely result in the City being sued and celebrities no longer coming to St. Helens. Tourism used to make the City money, but now the City would be losing \$613,000 with the \$193,000 of Treadway's management fee, the \$300,000 transfer to Treadway being discussed tonight, and \$120,000 former events contractor E2C used to pay the City. He noted the entrances on the Waterfront could not fit two cars and should be widened.
- ◆ Barry Greenberg. Provided talent for Spirit of Halloweentown for the past 10 years and explained the significant liability the City faced with three of the biggest agencies in Los Angeles if celebrity contracts obligated months ago would not be honored. E2C's director, Tina Curry, was a person of her word and honored such contracts. If the contracts were not honored, no celebrities would appear in St. Helens again. He had received no reply from City Administrator Walsh to his letter outlining his points. Treadway did not respond after promising the contracts would be reviewed and signed.
- ◆ Diana Wiener. Asked if there was documentation of actual contracts with celebrities made on the City's behalf or if it was just hearsay.

## DISCUSSION TOPICS

### 1. Parks & Trails Commission Annual Report - *Chair Scott Jacobson*

Parks & Trails Commission Chair Scott Jacobson and Commission members Jerry Belcher, Nick Hellmich, and Howard Blumenthal reviewed the annual report, highlighting Parks inventory, the Commission's members and their current park assignments, and the Commission's discussion of changes wanted in four parks. Updates were provided on maintenance and improvement efforts at several parks. The report concluded with an overview of the current Milton Creek Woodland Reserve and Urban Trail projects, the \$2500 Oregon Community Foundation grant for signage, and acknowledgements.

Questions were addressed and comments from the Council were as follows:

- A splash pad next to the pool was suggested to draw more visitors to Civic Pride Park.
- The warranty period had expired to get a refund on the weathered playground tile coming apart at McCormick Park. Benches should be added at the playground, as there were never enough for people to sit.
- Access to Sand Island was prioritized to people who rented a campsite. The shuttle operator told the Commission if a person called the office, a shuttle could be arranged, from Memorial Day to Labor Day. Citizens of St. Helens used to get free shuttle rides to the island, but the practice went away and was not included in the contract.
- Port of Columbia County, who owns the other side, had confirmed they saw no issues with the riparian buffer being annexed for Milton Creek into St. Helens' park system.
- Drawings were shown of how spray painting the asphalt on the Urban Trail would look on the ground. Where there was no asphalt/concrete, pads would be poured even with the ground, and the spray paint would be on top of the pads.

It was suggested to have the next Commission report scheduled for a less full agenda to allow for dialogue. Mayor Scholl pointed out with 45 minutes the Commission had not been rushed.

Parks Commissioners expressed concerns that the Commission's input was not sought before decisions were made about Sand Island improvements and finances, and described the Commission's hopes for Milton Creek and plans to present on setting the area aside for a trail and nature area to Council before the end of the year.

Chair Scott Jacobson asked if the City Attorney could review public meeting laws and provide advice on when Commissioners could meet and have discussions.

## **2. Semi-Annual Report from St. Helens Senior Center - *Melissa Watson, Executive Director***

Executive Director Watson presented her report, highlighting the Senior Center's operations, active volunteers and staff members, community involvement and events, and the Center being a heating/cooling center during business hours, as well as updating on the Center's recent repairs and financials, including the use of TopNotch thrift store sales, which averaged \$11,000 a month, and a re-awarded grant of \$25,000. New state Medicaid guidelines would broaden eligibility for the home delivered meals program. More volunteers were needed, and she described how people could get involved.

She confirmed that with the new nutrition program guidelines, the reimbursement level would be higher, similar to Title XIX, which reimbursed \$12.25 for a meal with an average cost of \$10. However, the Center would have to look realistically at the capacity level.

There was discussion on other avenues for welfare checks that would hopefully come along with the clientele expanding, the cost to rent the Center's building, and social media videos encouraging people to get involved.

City Administrator Walsh and Mayor Scholl announced additional cooling centers that would be available.

## **3. Update on Waterfront Redevelopment Project - *Public Works Director Mouhamad Zaher***

Public Works Director Zaher, Engineering Manager Darroux, and Engineer II Bird provided the requested monthly Waterfront Project update, highlighting the goal of completing the project in December, the project team, and utility coordination. The impacts of the work's unforeseen risks and the tentative work schedule for the next three months were described, and updates provided on traffic and parking, including adding ADA parking next to the physical therapist's office downtown, the project budget, and the work being done in front of City Hall via time-lapse video.

Public Works Director Zaher described addressing the concerns of business owners and residents, including a successful meeting, which included a suggestion to add signage to navigate the closure of Cowlitz Street. He explained how the City updated citizens and businesses on the project, noting the City had no control over when contractor MEI let an employee go.

Questions were addressed from the Council as follows:

- Paving 1st Street had been pushed back a bit because it could not be paved until Pump Station 1 was decommissioned and lateral connections were done.
- Instances where pavement was poured and then taken back out were due to grading issues, and the contractor paid.
- The project team met with Treadway to discuss the construction and shared staff's direct contact information.
- St. Helens was experiencing growing pains, which were expected, as the Council collaborated with staff to complete the construction in two years versus over multiple years.
- Urban Renewal utilized staff to do inspections for OTAC, doing a better job and saving \$100,000.

Council President Chilton stated Council should have been more diligent in making sure staff could handle such a major project in addition to their actual jobs. It was unfortunate she was not invited to the project meeting as she, like Mayor Scholl, oversaw Public Works.

Councilors Hubbard and Sundeen appreciated the update directly from Public Works, which put gossip to rest.

Councilor Sundeen wanted to see continued, regular communication with residents and businesses as well, in addition to the newsletter.

**4. Review Draft Amendments to Circulation Policy - *Library Director Suzanne Bishop***

Library Director Bishop requested approval of the proposed Circulation Policy amendments, which she reviewed. Although the document was updated, it included no changes to the policy. The old document stated the library still collected overdue fines, which it no longer did. Fees were still collected for lost and damaged items.

**Break - 3:55 p.m.**

**5. Review Draft Amendments to Purchasing Policy - *Finance Director Gloria Butsch***

Finance Director Butsch reviewed the proposed amendments to the Purchasing Policy, highlighting its purpose and the establishment of authority levels. Other than expenditures within Council-approved contracts, purchases were within department heads' and the City Administrator's authority. Department managers or departments would have up to a \$5,000 purchasing authority unless directed otherwise by the department director. A department director would have up to a \$10,000 authority, and the City Administrator up to a \$50,000. Anything over \$50,000 would come before Council.

**6. Review Draft Amendments to Purchasing Card Policies & Procedures Manual - *Finance Director Gloria Butsch***

Finance Director Butsch reviewed the Purchasing Card policies, processes involved, and proposed amendments, which would have the same authority levels as the Purchasing Policy. Once a month, Finance would pay the bill, and Council would get the purchasing card list of transactions, aside from the Accounts Payable list. The policies also outlined items purchasing cards could not be used for, including meals during training, which were reimbursable.

She confirmed gas cards were separate and managed differently from purchasing cards.

**7. Review Draft Amendments to Training and Travel Policy Procedures - *Finance Director Gloria Butsch***

Finance Director Butsch briefly reviewed the Training and Travel Policy and proposed amendments and explained how and why she standardized the meal reimbursement amounts using the federal government guidelines.

**8. Review of Utility Leak Adjustment Authority - *Finance Director Gloria Butsch***

Finance Director Butsch reviewed the data from the last six months of utility leak adjustment requests and the Utility Billing Administrative Rules, which had no provision that such requests must go to the Council. Council would only be involved if a customer was denied an adjustment and chose to appeal to Council. Otherwise, the City Administrator or Finance Director approved leak adjustments. There was no rule that requests be sent to Council when exceeding a specified dollar amount.

The Council consented to keeping the current Administrative Rules as written.

Questions from the Council were addressed as follows:

- Because the City calculated the leak adjustment based on the customer's average, the City would only give a \$2,500 adjustment on \$5,000 paid over five months. If the customer wanted the full leak adjustment, they would probably want to talk to the Council.

- One real-life example of why a leak adjustment could be denied was fraudulent activity, such as filling up one's pool with a neighbor's hose.
- All the leaks were on private property and had to run through the meter.
- The leak was the customer's problem; the City was just giving them a break. Adjustment policies varied from city to city. Some cities would not give any adjustments, and others would once a year.

The customer had 60 days from the discovery of the leak to get it fixed, after being notified by the City or the customer notifying the City, which the Council believed was reasonable and fair. The high-usage report was reviewed every month by staff.

#### **9. Audit Process Presentation - Finance Director Gloria Butsch**

Finance Director Butsch presented an overview of the audit process. Key highlights included why an annual audit was required, preparing for the audit, preliminary fieldwork, year-end closing, the audit itself, and finalizing the audit. She answered clarifying questions from Councilors about auditing grants, the requirements to become an auditor, and the three different levels of audit, noting that staff had been preparing a report in lieu of audit for Urban Renewal, which likely would require a review or a full audit next year.

Staff added that in Oregon, due to the difficulty of finding auditors, there had been discussion to follow Washington's process of audits being done by the State Audits Division. The Oregon Legislature lowered some criteria requiring a full audit, which allowed more entities to do a review.

#### **10. Review League of Oregon Cities (LOC) Priorities - City Administrator John Walsh**

City Administrator Walsh reviewed the League of Oregon Cities priorities for the Council to identify its top five priorities and highlighted the priorities that were mutually beneficial for the City and LOC.

The Council and staff discussed which priorities to choose, noting the restoration of recreational immunity made the City halt and consider if someone was hurt in a City park. It was explained that the marijuana tax would offer cities the opportunity to recover some of the 75 percent cannabis revenue taken due to Measure 110 and that the alcohol tax could take a couple paths, as Oregon had the lowest beer tax in the country and the second lowest wine tax.

Following discussion, Council identified infrastructure funding as its number one LOC priority followed by employment lands readiness and availability, restoration of recreational immunity, energy affordability, and transportation.

#### **11. Report from City Administrator John Walsh**

Postponed to the Regular Session.

**ADJOURN – 5:01 p.m.**

#### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

- Real Property Transactions, under ORS 192.660(2)(e)
- Consult with Counsel/Potential Litigation, under ORS 192.660(2)(h)

Respectfully submitted by Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder.

ATTEST:

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Kathy Payne, City Recorder

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Rick Scholl, Mayor

# City of St. Helens CITY COUNCIL

Executive Session Summary

September 4, 2024

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**Members Present:** Rick Scholl, Mayor  
Jessica Chilton, Council President  
Mark Gundersen, Councilor  
Brandon Sundeen, Councilor  
Russell Hubbard, Councilor

**Staff Present:** John Walsh, City Administrator  
Kathy Payne, City Recorder

**Others:** Ashley Wigod, City Attorney with Jordan Ramis PC (via Zoom)



At 5:05 p.m., Mayor Scholl opened the Executive Session pursuant to the ORS numbers listed below and then gave Council roll call. Other than Labor Negotiator Consultations, representatives of the news media, designated staff, and other persons as approved shall be allowed to attend the Executive Session. All other members of the audience are asked to leave the Council Chambers. Representatives of the news media were specifically directed not to report on or otherwise disclose any of the deliberations or anything said about these subjects during the executive session, except to state the general subject of the session as previously announced. No decision may be made in executive session. Any person in attendance, including the news media, who has a recording device is directed to turn it off.

- **Consult with Legal Counsel/Litigation, under ORS 192.660(2)(h)**
  - Discussion of potential litigation regarding contracts E2C Productions allegedly entered into with Spirit of Halloweentown Event talent.
  - Discussion regarding contract with Treadway Events and Entertainment for Special Events Coordination and Management Services.
- **Real Property Transactions, under ORS 192.660(2)(e)**
  - Discussion regarding potential transaction for real property for the future Public Safety Facility.

The Executive Session was adjourned at 5:45 p.m.



ATTEST:

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Kathy Payne, City Recorder

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Rick Scholl, Mayor

*An audio recording of this meeting is archived at City Hall.*



# COUNCIL PUBLIC HEARING

Wednesday, September 04, 2024

## DRAFT MINUTES

### MEMBERS PRESENT

Mayor Rick Scholl  
Council President Jessica Chilton  
Councilor Mark Gundersen  
Councilor Russell Hubbard  
Councilor Brandon Sundeen

### STAFF

John Walsh, City Administrator  
Kathy Payne, City Recorder  
Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder  
Gloria Butsch, Finance Director

### OTHERS

Jenn Massey	Mercedes Massey	Brady Preheim
Arthur	Rooster	Nicholas Hellmich
Mitzi Ponce	Stephanie Patterson	Judy Thompson
Mary Wheeler	Joseph Paul	Beverly Steven
Catherine R.	Adam St. Pierre	

### OPEN PUBLIC HEARING – 6:45 p.m.

### TOPIC

#### 1. Fiscal Year 2024-25 Supplemental Budget

Finance Director Butsch reviewed the purpose for the Supplemental Budget. It provides funding into the Tourism Fund to cover the costs of the new contract and estimated shortage.

### PUBLIC COMMENT

- ◆ Joseph Paul. Expressed his concerns about the increase in neighborhood crime. Why are they putting so much money into tourism and not crime? As of October 1, there will not be 24-hour patrol. Tourists don't want to be in a town with this kind of crime. Portland is coming to St. Helens.
- ◆ Brady Preheim. Expressed his opposition to the Supplemental Budget and it likely being the first of multiple payments. Treadway wants \$193,000 paid upfront instead of monthly installments, plus \$300,000, which isn't in the budget. If they had hired E2C, they would have had a \$220,000 guaranteed revenue stream. Those funds would have paid for multiple police officer positions. Treadway has yet to announce a schedule or ticketing. Barry and other talent agencies are going to sue the City. They will lose the case and pay the attorney fees. The contract is an unmitigated disaster. When Treadway asked how it would be funded during the interview, Walsh told them they would have to fund it on their own. They should not have signed the contract if they didn't have the money. Recommends Council vote no.



- ◆ Adam St. Pierre. He is confused why the City would be getting sued when the independent contractor is the one who signed the contract with the talent. Treadway was supposed to have access to the Wauna account to cover costs but still does not. These failures need to be addressed. City Administrator Walsh should be put on administrative leave.
  
- ◆ Jennifer Massey. She echoed Adam about the Wauna account. She asked a lot of questions about the account during the Budget Committee meeting and felt there was no clarification. There are people who want to see Treadway fail. The Wauna funds are supposed to go to the new contractor. The City subsidized E2C from the Community Development Fund when they came in. This should have been vetted in November or December. This is affecting taxpayer money and tarnishing a contractor. She didn't have a problem with E2C or Tina Curry but is now disgusted by the toxicity and continued divide. This should not continue to happen. She reminded Mayor Scholl that he can put stuff on the agenda and should put Walsh on there to be placed on Administrative leave for this to be investigated. Having people paid in cash in City envelopes should be a huge concern.

**CLOSE PUBLIC HEARING – 6:58 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted by Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder.

ATTEST:

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Kathy Payne, City Recorder

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Rick Scholl, Mayor



# COUNCIL REGULAR SESSION

Wednesday, September 04, 2024

## DRAFT MINUTES

### MEMBERS PRESENT

Mayor Rick Scholl  
Council President Jessica Chilton  
Councilor Mark Gundersen  
Councilor Russell Hubbard  
Councilor Brandon Sundeen

### STAFF

John Walsh, City Administrator  
Kathy Payne, City Recorder  
Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder  
Gloria Butsch, Finance Director

### OTHERS

Jenn Massey	Mercedes Massey	Brady Preheim
Arthur	Rooster	Nicholas Hellmich
Mitzi Ponce	Stephanie Patterson	Judy Thompson
Mary Wheeler	Joseph Paul	Beverly Steven
Catherine R.	Adam St. Pierre	

### CALL REGULAR SESSION TO ORDER – 7:00 p.m.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

### PROCLAMATIONS

#### 1. Oregon Direct Support Professional Recognition Week - September 8-14, 2024

Mayor Scholl read the proclamation into the record.

### VISITOR COMMENTS – Limited to three (3) minutes per speaker

- ◆ Joseph Paul. Described being a victim of a recent crime, the frequency of thefts in St. Helens by known suspects, and concern that 24-hour patrol could be ceased. He also spoke about the drug activity at Forest Park Apartments, and his efforts to make his concerns known to mayoral candidates and Councilors. He would like to set up a time to talk with Mayor Scholl.
- ◆ Catherine Ross. Described a group of people casing driveways on her street and thefts that had occurred on her property and in her neighborhood, noting the suspects were well known to the cops. She was also concerned night patrols would end; money was being used for tourism, but her visitor would not return to St. Helens because of the crime. Her neighbors were reluctant to speak to Council because they were afraid of retaliation. Drug-related issues at Forest Park Apartments were causing the problem, and her report was not taken by the police.
- ◆ Jennifer Massey. Said communication with citizens and businesses at today's Council Work Session about the Waterfront project was helpful. She explained ways to mitigate unforeseen

risks when doing construction and stated police, fire, and medical should be top priorities. She also asked Council to be transparent with citizens about ending 24-hour police coverage.

- ◆ Adam St. Pierre. Congratulated Council on getting the paper mill going. He found Mayor Scholl hard to get ahold of and asked when the E2C audit of the last two years would start. He asked how an independent contractor was defined and why the City was dealing with lawsuits and paying people off. He explained why he believed Council should take a hard look at City Administrator Walsh's work.
- ◆ Brady Preheim. Explained E2C signed the talent contracts for events and while still contracted with the City, was told all planned events would take place and that the City or Treadway would take over the contracts. Treadway said they would do the contracts with the talent, then the company decided not to. Treadway had no need to sell tickets because they would receive \$500,000 from the City this year for doing nothing. He explained how the Wauna account was E2C's and had never been the City's. The City would lose the mediation, and the money would not come back to the City. He noted Treadway did not return phone calls.
- ◆ Nick Hellmich. Supported police and first responders but witnessed first-hand the amount of non-trauma informed care provided to individuals with mental illness, citing examples of use of derogatory terms. He witnessed EMS decline to transport a suicidal person because they said they do not get paid for it. He asked if something could be done. He hoped something in Treadway's contract held the company financially accountable if its work for St. Helens failed.

## RESOLUTIONS

2. **Resolution No. 2021:** A Resolution Authorizing an Interfund Loan in the Amount of \$300,000 Between the Community Development Fund and Visitor & Tourism Fund for Fiscal Year 2024-2025

**Motion:** Motion made by Council President Chilton and seconded by Councilor Gundersen to adopt Resolution No. 2021.

It was confirmed that the difference between Resolutions No. 2018 and No. 2021 was addressed in the next agenda item.

**Vote:** Yea: Mayor Scholl, Council President Chilton, Councilor Gundersen, Councilor Hubbard, Councilor Sundeen

3. **Resolution No. 2022:** A Resolution Authorizing City Administrator John Walsh and City Finance Director Gloria Butsch to Establish an Events Checking Account, and Rescinding Resolution No. 2018

**Motion:** Motion made by Councilor Gundersen and seconded by Council President Chilton to adopt Resolution No. 2022.

Finance Director Butsch explained the reason for the change was the prior draft was not specific enough and did not name John Walsh as the City Administrator or her as the Finance Director, which the bank required.

**Vote:** Yea: Mayor Scholl, Council President Chilton, Councilor Gundersen, Councilor Hubbard, Councilor Sundeen

- 4. Resolution No. 2023:** A Resolution to Adopt Purchasing Policies for the City of St. Helens, Superseding any Previous Policies

**Motion:** Motion made by Councilor Sundeen and seconded by Council President Chilton to adopt Resolution No. 2023. **Vote:** Yea: Mayor Scholl, Council President Chilton, Councilor Gundersen, Councilor Hubbard, Councilor Sundeen

- 5. Resolution No. 2024:** A Resolution to Adopt Purchasing Card Policies for the City of St. Helens, Superseding Resolution No. 1784

**Motion:** Motion made by Councilor Gundersen and seconded by Council President Chilton to adopt Resolution No. 2024.

Council President Chilton reported the Council clarified the resolution during the Work Session earlier. Citizens could go back and look at the explanation of the need for the policies and what they entailed.

**Vote:** Yea: Mayor Scholl, Council President Chilton, Councilor Gundersen, Councilor Hubbard, Councilor Sundeen

- 6. Resolution No. 2025:** A Resolution to Amend the City of St. Helens Personnel Policies and Procedures Handbook (Resolution No. 1913, as amended) Regarding Payroll Policies

**Motion:** Motion made by Councilor Sundeen and seconded by Councilor Gundersen to adopt Resolution No. 2025. **Vote:** Yea: Mayor Scholl, Council President Chilton, Councilor Gundersen, Councilor Hubbard, Councilor Sundeen

- 7. Resolution No. 2026:** A Resolution of the Common Council of the City of St. Helens, Oregon, Adopting and Appropriating Funds for a Supplemental Budget for Fiscal Year 2024-2025

**Motion:** Motion made by Councilor Gundersen and seconded by Councilor Hubbard to adopt Resolution No. 2026. **Vote:** Yea: Mayor Scholl, Council President Chilton, Councilor Gundersen, Councilor Hubbard, Councilor Sundeen

- 8. Resolution No. 2027:** A Resolution to Amend St. Helens Public Library Policies (Resolution No. 1902) Regarding Circulation Policies

**Motion:** Motion made by Council President Chilton and seconded by Councilor Hubbard to adopt Resolution No. 2027. **Vote:** Yea: Mayor Scholl, Council President Chilton, Councilor Gundersen, Councilor Hubbard, Councilor Sundeen

#### **APPROVE AND/OR AUTHORIZE FOR SIGNATURE**

9. First Amendment to Contract with Consor North America, Inc. for Wastewater Collection System Capacity Improvements Professional Engineering Design Services Project No. S-679

**Motion:** Motion made by Council President Chilton and seconded by Councilor Gundersen to approve '9' above. **Vote:** Yea: Mayor Scholl, Council President Chilton, Councilor Gundersen, Councilor Hubbard, Councilor Sundeen

#### **CONSENT AGENDA FOR APPROVAL**

10. Accounts Payable Bill Lists

**Motion:** Motion made by Councilor Gundersen and seconded by Councilor Sundeen to approve '10' above. **Vote:** Yea: Mayor Scholl, Council President Chilton, Councilor Gundersen, Councilor Hubbard, Councilor Sundeen

#### **WORK SESSION ACTION ITEMS**

None

#### **CITY ADMINISTRATOR REPORT**

City Administrator Walsh reported on Project Arcadia and his intention to follow up with the citizens who commented about police and first responders, noting the City was actively recruiting police officers.

**COUNCIL MEMBER REPORTS**

Council President Chilton spoke about the importance of citizens speaking at Council meetings and her prioritization of public safety concerns. She reported on playing softball and the upcoming Senior Health Fair and reminded everyone to drive cautiously since children were back in school. She noted that Halloweentown brought business and revenue to the city.

Councilor Sundeen reported on the Police Association meeting, noting that a modified police schedule was being discussed, but some aspects of the schedule would not be made public. He provided details about police staffing levels, noting current resources would result in longer response times. He celebrated moving closer to the sale of the paper mill property and the return of the mill. He was excited for Halloween, noting it would look different, but the event would happen.

It was confirmed the police had close to 23 positions filled and had two openings.

Councilor Gundersen reported on a positive meeting with Treadway earlier this week. The Planning Commission and Columbia River Fire & Rescue would hold meetings next week. He would be on vacation and not in attendance at the next Council meeting.

Councilor Hubbard commended Library Director Bishop and noted the solar project at the library was exciting. Funding for tourism and police regarded separate issues, and the money the City should have to get the new contractor going was tied up, and whether the City would ever get that money back was uncertain. He believed Treadway was all about joining forces with the City for a great tourism program. He encouraged more citizens to come forward about thefts and appreciated those who came to the meeting.

**MAYOR SCHOLL REPORTS**

Mayor Scholl thanked Mr. Paul and Ms. Ross for their testimony. The Council wanted residents to feel safe in the community and supported the police and the jail levy in order to keep criminals off the streets. In addition to St. Helens' officers, the city had the Oregon State Police and Columbia County based in St. Helens, which totaled 50 officers for the area. He also thanked Mr. Paul for his service. He described how he did not want the matter to become political and that public safety was a huge part of small businesses thriving. He addressed interruptions from citizens during his report.

- He commended Public Works Director Zaher for managing the Waterfront Project and explained Main Street's "I Dig St. Helens" campaign in support of downtown businesses. He preferred to talk to citizens one-on-one, as there were many half-truths in the public discourse. He encouraged participation in Neighborhood Watch.
- He described his involvement with the Police Department. The issue was not about policing versus tourism. He served all citizens regardless of their political affiliation or identity. He would always have time for citizens unless they posted a lie about him on Facebook.

**OTHER BUSINESS****ADJOURN – 7:59 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted by Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder.

ATTEST:

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Kathy Payne, City Recorder

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Rick Scholl, Mayor



# PLANNING COMMISSION & CITY COUNCIL

## JOINT MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, September 25, 2024, at 4:00 PM

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- Members Present:** Mayor Rick Scholl  
Council President Jessica Chilton  
Councilor Russ Hubbard  
Councilor Brandon Sundeen  
  
Chair Dan Cary  
Vice Chair Jennifer Shoemaker  
Commissioner Charles Castner  
Commissioner David Rosengard
- Members Absent:** Commissioner Brooke Sisco  
Commissioner Ginny Carlson  
Commissioner Scott Jacobson
- Staff Present:** City Administrator John Walsh  
City Planner Jacob Graichen  
Associate Planner Jenny Dimsho  
Community Development Admin Assistant Christina Sullivan

This meeting was held in the Council Chambers.

At 4:00 p.m., Mayor Rick Scholl opened the Joint Planning Commission and City Council Meeting. The purpose, rules, and goals of this meeting were explained.

### DISCUSSION OF POTENTIAL LOCATIONS OF NEW PUBLIC SAFETY FACILITY

City Planner Jacob Graichen shared the map of a new location to be considered for placing the Public Safety Facility. He said it is currently zoned Apartment Residential and for a while had been looked at by developers to build apartments while it was on the market.

He said it is now being purchased by the St. Helens School District and would need to be rezoned to Public Lands. He said they should look at rezoning it before the Housing Needs Analysis happens in 2027.

City Administrator John Walsh said the new police station has a whole team that has worked together to create a design for a police station and are ready to build it. He said this discussion was to give direction to staff on how to move forward with the two front runner properties.

David Lintz, a professional project manager, came to the design team when the Kaster Road site came to a halt. He said they had been working on the site at 1771 Columbia Boulevard and now this new site off Gable Road. He mentioned some of the differences between the two sites.

He mentioned the Gable Road site would be an easily buildable site, as the property is flat, and could take the current design of the building would fit right on this property with no changes to anything other than the parking and public improvements.

There was a discussion about the wetlands on the site. It was mentioned these were not significant wetlands to the City, but they still needed to have a delineation done.

Chair Dan Cary mentioned that his experience is in wetlands and back in January of 2020 he had done a small study on the adjacent property. He mentioned it is very wet in that area and when he was doing his study, he had looked over at this property and saw it was also very wet. He said the water was coming from this potential property onto the property he was doing the study for. He said it looks suspicious as a potential wetland.

There was a small discussion about a payment in lieu to be paid to be able to impact the wetland on the property.

There was a discussion about the access points and public improvements.

Lintz said he did think the 1771 Columbia Boulevard location was a better option, as it was downtown, more centrally located, and there was an updated budget to make this site affordable.

There was a discussion about the different needs for the police and how they would fit these building types on the two different sites.

There was a discussion about how the extra property would be used for the Gable Road location and how the City would partner with the School District.

Mayor Scholl shared how this size of the parcel would allow for growth if it was needed in the future. He said there was plenty of space to expand storage and a building. Scholl said as the City limits grow into the Urban Growth Boundary, this space seems to be the best location.

Chair Cary said in twenty years, there is not going to be much care about how much property they purchased, but the location of the police station. He said the focus should be on the best location for a station

Commissioner David Rosengard said in thirty years this property would allow for expansion and growth.

Commissioner Jennifer Shoemaker said it is unfortunate for the Houlton District if they lose the police station to this area of town. She felt the location in the Houlton District was the better option, as it was more centralized.

City Councilor Russ Hubbard mentioned he thought the Gable Road site would be difficult for response time, with a school zone there and the dangerous intersection of Gable Road and Columbia River Highway. He also agreed the location in Houlton District was the better location.

City Councilor Brandon Sundeen said the police do not sit at the station waiting for calls. He mentioned they are usually already out patrolling, so the location being central is not as important as a factor in selection as it seems.

There was a discussion about the cons for both locations. They also discussed some of the positives for both locations.

The group agreed the Gable Road site should be a consideration and did think City staff should look more into the wetland situation and if this site is one that could be used for the new Public Safety Facility.

### **DISCUSSION OF PLANNING COMMISSION PROACTIVE ITEMS**

Commissioner Shoemaker shared that there had been some movement on these items to have other members of the Planning Commission take over as a Chair of the subcommittees.

Graichen mentioned the rules had changed about subcommittees now and they would no longer be able to have these types of meetings without minutes, public notice, online viewing, and the other things required for a public meeting. He said they would need to do the research on these items individually and then bring back their findings to the meetings to discuss them.

There was a discussion how the group should move forward on the Proactive Items.

There was a discussion about the Plaza Square. Graichen mentioned they would need the sign off from Columbia County who owns the property, but also since the Plaza is a Historic Landmark on the Historic Landmarks Registry list, it would also go before the Historic Landmarks Commission, , to make sure all development or changes met the historic guidelines.

Graichen also shared how he would like to see the accessibility of the Plaza changed so that those with disabilities had easier access to the space as well.

Commissioner Shoemaker said she spoke with two County Commissioners about exploring options on how to improve this space. She said they agreed to allowing her to research some ideas to improve this space with more accessibility and to restore it back to a more historical look.

There was a discussion about how the Plaza looks now and some of the ways to restore it back to its more historical look.

Mayor Scholl moved the discussion about the parking that is in the downtown area. He said they think they need to start looking more into how to add more parking or the code requirements for parking to help the developers that are starting to look at our Riverfront Development. He also shared some parking areas that the City already owned that could count towards downtown parking.

Commissioner Shoemaker said it is not a bad idea to have a parking structure a further away that would encourage people to walk past all the businesses in the downtown area.

Councilor Sundeen said there was some discussion at the last joint meeting about some quick and simple solutions, such as changing the parking alignment from parallel parking to diagonal and he asked if there had been any more movement with this action. Graichen mentioned this agenda item came up quick (with minimal prep time), and the ideas, preliminary in nature, had not been explored to date.

There was a discussion about the parking inventory they currently have and what is needed.

There was also a discussion about having a parking management plan created and the ability to fund it.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business.

*There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 5:33 p.m.  
Respectfully submitted,  
Christina Sullivan  
Community Development Administrative Assistant*

/s/  
Rick Scholl, Mayor

/s/  
Dan Cary, Chair