

City of St. Helens

Consent Agenda for Approval

CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

Presented for approval on this 2nd day of March, 2022 are the following Council minutes:

2022

- Executive Session Minutes dated February 11 & 16, 2022
- Work Session, Executive Session, Public Hearing, and Regular Session Minutes dated February 16, 2022
- Executive Session Minutes dated February 22, 2022

After Approval of Council Minutes:

- Scan as PDF Searchable
- Make one double-sided, hole-punched copy and send to Library Reference
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City of St. Helens
CITY COUNCIL

Executive Session Summary

February 11 & 16, 2022

Members Present: Rick Scholl, Mayor
Doug Morten, Council President
Patrick Birkle, Councilor
Stephen R. Topaz, Councilor
Jessica Chilton, Councilor

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



At 1:00 p.m., Mayor Scholl opened the Executive Session pursuant to the ORS numbers listed below and then gave Council roll call. Representatives of the news media and designated staff shall be allowed to attend the executive session. All other members of the audience are asked to leave the room. 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.

- **Consider Employment of a Public Officer, under ORS 192.660(2)(a)**
 - The Council interviewed four candidates for the Library Director position.

The Mayor recessed the Executive Session at 5:09 p.m. until February 16 after the Council’s Work Session.

At 3:55 p.m. on February 16, the Mayor reconvened the Executive Session under ORS 192.660(2)(a).

Members Present: Rick Scholl, Mayor
Doug Morten, Council President
Patrick Birkle, Councilor
Stephen R. Topaz, Councilor
Jessica Chilton, Councilor

Staff Present: John Walsh, City Administrator
Kathy Payne, City Recorder
William Monahan, City Attorney from Jordan Ramis

The Executive Session was adjourned at 4:15 p.m.



ATTEST:

Kathy Payne, City Recorder

Rick Scholl, Mayor



COUNCIL WORK SESSION

Wednesday, February 16, 2022

DRAFT MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mayor Rick Scholl
Council President Doug Morten
Councilor Patrick Birkle – 1:07 p.m.
Councilor Stephen R. Topaz
Councilor Jessica Chilton

STAFF PRESENT

John Walsh, City Administrator	Jenny Dimsho, Associate Planner
Kathy Payne, City Recorder	Crystal King, Communications Officer
Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder	Tina Curry, Event Coordinator
Jacob Graichen, City Planner	Bill Monahan, City Attorney

OTHERS

Steve Toschi	Paul Vogel
Amy Bynum	Jeanne
Jason Moos	

CALL WORK SESSION TO ORDER – 1 p.m.

VISITOR COMMENTS - Limited to five (5) minutes per speaker

- ◆ Steve Toschi. Three comments:
 - Requesting additional resources for the Planning Commission. City Planner Jacob Graichen and Associate Planner Jenny Dimsho are tremendous resources, brilliant, and dedicated to their jobs and citizens. They work tirelessly. However, they have limitations. With the upcoming budget review, he encourages additional resources for Planning. It would aid the City in the short and long term. The City continues to grow and is complex.
 - Requesting additional time for people to respond to the Riverfront Development RFQ. It would give people more time to research and bring ideas.
 - There is a public hearing tonight for an annexation of property off Pittsburg Road. He recommends zoning it R7. No one was a proponent of R5. The Planning Commission did not consider or deliberate on R5.

- ◆ Tina Curry. Reviewed her report.
 - Shoutout to Jeff Kemp of Pacific Stainless Steel for allowing the City to use their docks to offload the tram last week.
 - Receiving a lot of calls right now from people wanting to purchase tickets for Spirit of Halloweentown. She is trying to create the schedule and offer tickets earlier this year. Vendor spaces are already sold out.
 - Same for 13 Nights on the River
 - She has been meeting with Judy Thompson about 4th of July
 - There is a lot of community member involvement

- Should have a complete agenda by the end of next week
- There will be events all day, from 10:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m.
- Need Council's input to finalize plans for fireworks
 - Are they allowing tailgating on the Waterfront?
 - Will the fireworks be set off from a barge, Sand Island, or on the Waterfront property?

Mayor Scholl encouraged Tina to reach out to Columbia River PUD. They expressed interested in donating funds for fireworks.

DISCUSSION TOPICS - *The Council will take a break around 3:00 p.m.*

1. Semi-Annual Report from Columbia Economic Team (CET) - Paul Vogel, Executive Director

Paul Vogel reviewed his report. A copy is included in the archive packet for this meeting.

- Thanked Council for their membership
- Reviewed collaborative partnerships and projects
- 2021 Columbia County Small Business and Non-Profit Grant Program
 - Completed in January 2022
 - \$490,000 disbursed
 - 62% increase in non-profit applications
- Compared 2020 and 2021 grant application statistics
- Reviewed projects in partnership with St. Helens
 - South County Roundtable tentatively scheduled for March
 - Travel Oregon Destination-Ready collaborative
 - St. Helens Manufacturing Complex
 - St. Helens Industrial Park
 - Port tenant expansion at Multnomah Business Park
 - Active with Main Street program
- Reviewed County-wide projects
 - OMIC
 - Industrial prospects
 - Local/regional expansions
 - Coordination with local partners
 - Business expansions
 - NEXT Renewables
- Keep it Local update
 - Successful holiday campaign
 - Updating website
 - Free Digital Education program
 - Small business and consumer surveys
 - Collaborating with Chambers and Main Streets
 - Planning for Small Business Week
 - Small Business Resource Center partnership
- Reviewed the new Small Business Development Center
 - Introduced Jason Moos as the new director

Council President Morten thanked Paul for the report. He talked about the history of CET and how far it has come. Cities are trying different things to help the economy. One of the reasons he voted in favor of purchasing the Boise Cascade property was that it came with a 40 million gallon/day water permit for industrial and agricultural use. He would like to see brainstorming to use those assets. Water is more

valuable than fossil fuels. Paul was not aware of the permit. They have a lot of industrial land but much of it is privately owned. That site is increasingly drawing attention because it's publicly owned.

Councilor Topaz pointed out that the Library could be a resource for business services with their multiple computers. Paul agreed that it's a good space for workshops.

Mayor Scholl asked if the meeting in March is the City County Dinner? Paul was not sure. They can certainly be combined.

Mayor Scholl is glad to see Opportunity Zones being used. He agreed with Council President Morten about the large availability of water on the industrial property. Paul appreciates that the City is developing the property mindfully. There's a lot of potential and the need for patience.

Councilor Topaz pointed out that LA is beginning to reuse their grey water due to shortages.

Mayor Scholl thanked Paul for his report and service to the community.

2. Review Community Grant Applications Received

Review of the requests submitted and the funds available. A copy is included in the archive packet for this meeting.

Council President Morten is in favor of supporting homeless and mental health by granting the full request from Columbia Community Mental Health (CCMH). He is also in favor of supporting United Way.

City Recorder Payne reported that they have about \$1,500 in the budget for grants. After reviewing upcoming expenses, Mayor Scholl suggested they go up to \$2,000.

Councilor Birkle declared that he will be participating with Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) in the upcoming recruitment.

Councilor Chilton declared that she is employed by CCMH. However, this will benefit clients and has no monetary gain for herself.

Councilor Topaz pointed out that the Library already does a lot for the Dolly Parton's Imagination Library. United Way seems to be trying to do the same thing. Councilor Chilton clarified that the program is sponsored by United Way and the Library is a partner.

Discussion of granting the following funds:

- CCMH - \$684.70
- United Way - \$500
- CERT - \$500
- Riverside Community Outreach - \$400

Councilor Chilton asked how they respond to applicants who requested but did not receive funds. Council talked about being clear about what funds are available.

All the applications submitted this time were new. Council discussed changing the grant process to take place once a year, rather than twice, like how they offered State Revenue Sharing in the past. Councilor Chilton is in favor of offering the grants once a year. She would also like a report that lists who has received funding in the past when they receive new applications. City Recorder Payne acknowledged that past recipients were required to include a report of how the funds were spent when they applied, which could be done again.

Mayor Scholl suggested that Tumbleweed Studios reach out to Parks & Recreation Manager Shanna Duggan about partnerships.

Councilor Topaz has concerns about funding the homeless. He is in favor of funding a training program, but not supporting people who don't want to work. He knows they need to support mental illness.

It was the consensus of the Council to accept grant applications around this time each year, with flexibility throughout the year as needed.

3. Potential Right of Way Dedication off Barr Avenue - *Jacob*

City Planner Graichen reviewed the potential right-of-way dedication. A copy of his report and maps are included in the archive packet for this meeting. Planning Commission is unanimously in favor of the dedication. It would allow a right-of-way for a street and sewer access. He is requesting Council give consent if they are okay with the concept. If so, he will return to a later meeting with a request to dedicate the right-of-way.

Discussion of wetlands. The wetlands shown are based on a wetlands analysis and are significant to the City, per the Comprehensive Plan Goal 5 process. It's not an option to eliminate them. If they were to eliminate them, they would be capping off critical drainage.

Councilor Chilton asked how many houses will go there. Graichen said it will probably be less than 10. Right now, this is just an annexation, so they won't know until a subdivision application is submitted.

Councilor Topaz asked if there is a preferred placement of streets. Graichen said it varies based on location.

4. Discussion of "Alterations" to the Courthouse Plaza, a Designated Landmark - *Jacob*

Graichen reviewed his report. A copy is included in the archive packet for this meeting. The Plaza is a unique feature for the City, drawing tourism and events. It's also a historical landmark. They have to think of it differently than any other property in the City. If a historical landmark is altered, it requires review by the Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC). It was tested with the vertical signage placed there. The Planning Commission, acting as the HLC, unanimously agreed that it was an alteration.

Council President Morten said the Plaza was redesigned in 1998 or 1999. It was stopped because a business owner was opposed. Graichen confirmed that the law changed in 2008 when the City became a Certified Local Government, and Codes had to be amended. He is not aware of the redesign from the late 1990's.

Graichen pointed out the crucifix pattern in the photos that could be restored, allowing for more pathways and less mud during events. Mayor Scholl is in favor of removing the trees to match the photo from 1910. The existing trees have a shelf life.

Councilor Chilton is in favor of restoring the crucifix pattern. It will help with the mud and brings it back to a historic look. The signs were put on a cement platform, which suggests permanency. The signs could be moved to the sidewalks. Graichen said it would need to go to the HLC.

Councilor Birkle talked about the permit process for signs not being followed. Do they need to follow the same rules for street signage? Councilor Topaz said yes. Councilor Birkle pointed out that one of the persons on the sign even voted saying this is an alteration. It's the permanent nature that is a concern.

Mayor Scholl asked if there is any historical reference to sidewalks all the way around. It would be nice to have flagpole locations. Council President Morten said the plan he spoke of earlier eliminated the interior parking and replaced it with sidewalks. Mayor Scholl asked Graichen to investigate removing the interior parking. Graichen talked about the attention this piece of land gets. They need to remember the historic resources.

Councilor Topaz talked about a vacuum irrigation system. It sucks the water out, so it doesn't get muddy. Council President Morten said they have that at the Augusta National golf course.

Walsh pointed out that there are Urban Renewal Agency funds for upgrades to the Plaza.

Mayor Scholl asked Graichen to talk to the Museum Association about returning the Plaza to what it used to look like.

Council President Morten suggested they consider container trees if they become an issue. They are not as messy.

5. Review Draft Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for Riverfront Development - *John*

Walsh reviewed the RFQ. A copy is included in the archive packet for this meeting. He is excited about the timing of this with the street and utilities plan. They did this in 2017, and unfortunately, did not receive any submittals until it was over. They are in a much different place now with plans and the economy. It will be kicked off with the video telling the City's story.

Councilor Topaz talked about the Code for the zoning of the property. There was a 50-foot-wide zone on the front end. The pictures in the RFQ don't match the 50-foot zone. Walsh responded that it is an average and can flex in and out.

Councilor Topaz said he spoke to a developer who looked at the property this week. That developer spoke to some other developers, and they have some problems with information that has not been told to them when they look at the property. Councilor Chilton asked Councilor Topaz if he is making them aware of the information. Councilor Topaz responded that he is only telling the Council. He has been called a liar by Council and he doesn't say anything to the developer that he tells Council. He has known one of the developers longer than he has lived here. There are jokes about what's between 3rd and 4th Street. They said the City has really messed up there. They understand some of the things the City has done, which is why they have problems with this.

Mayor Scholl does not want to bring Councilor Topaz's stormwater concerns for his house, which is between 3rd and 4th Street, into this project. The Council has been very patient and considerate with Topaz. It has been Topaz who goes off. He needs to be aware of his own behavior and actions. They are not trying to hurt him. They are trying to better each other.

Councilor Topaz said there was a problem in 2009. These are contractors who have big projects. This is not a big project. He is telling Council that they see a problem and Council is calling him a liar. Mayor Scholl said that no one is calling him a liar. Councilor Topaz argued that he has. Mayor Scholl wants to allow Walsh to continue his report. He is holding information secret and doing business on the side with his contractor buddies. Councilor Topaz argued he doesn't have business going on the side.

Councilor Birkle said Councilor Topaz is not revealing the information for the Council to determine the problem. It does not help to say he has knowledge that is pertinent to a decision that Council needs to make. Mayor Scholl said that Councilor Topaz likes to destroy things the City has going. He tried to sue the City but lost, there's a historical creek that has always flooded in that area. There is a beautiful presentation and video. They are moving forward despite what Councilor Topaz says. He encouraged the community to do their own research and bring concerns to the Council if there is validity to it, and if not, they should take what Councilor Topaz says with a grain of salt. Councilor Topaz asked Walsh to confirm that an RFP went out and there were no responses. Mayor Scholl pointed out that Topaz is not respecting the Council and their time. Topaz confirmed that is correct.

Walsh hopes that this can be positive and celebrated.

Mayor Scholl agreed with Steve Toschi to have more time for the public to review it by changing from 30 days to 45 days. That gives developers more time to view the site and ask staff questions. Council President Morten agreed. Councilor Birkle heard those same concerns and agreed with it being extended. How is it marketed? Walsh said it will go in the DJC on Friday. They have learned that no one does anything until the last minute. This was a way to move it along quicker.

Councilor Topaz asked how long a developer needs to do the work. Walsh said they are going to ask developers to share their vision, their process, approach, challenges, public engagement, how will it be funded, timeline, experience, references, etc. Mayor Scholl added that they will have the opportunity to contact the City's consultants. Walsh added they will upload all the needed documents to the website for their access. Councilor Chilton pointed out that the ideas will all come back to the Council.

Councilor Topaz talked about services being put in before the developer does their work. They shouldn't tell the developer where the services will be. Walsh said they are just plans and not built. If someone comes up with a vision that everyone likes, they can do that before they put the money into the infrastructure.

Councilor Topaz asked Walsh what considerations would be made if the developer came in with their own money. Councilor Birkle asked what he is talking about. The non-negotiables are the riverwalk and street extensions. They are talking about what goes in-between. Councilor Topaz responded that kills the project for the developer. Councilor Birkle disagrees. They are beyond the point of discussing whether the riverwalk goes in and if they extend the streets. The only discussion is what is going between the riverwalk, which has been promised to the public. They have overwhelmingly told the City that they want public access to the river. Councilor Topaz agreed with access to the river. It kills the project to say the riverwalk is non-negotiable. Councilor Birkle said it may for that developer.

Councilor Chilton mentioned that they weren't prepared last time they did this. What has changed since the RFQ in 2017? Walsh said there's been a lot more planning and the economy has improved. They're more prepared.

Councilor Topaz said that Paul Vogel pointed out how valuable the riverfront is. Councilor Birkle said it will bring people to the community and inspiration for development of the Industrial Park. It wasn't attractive before. They can make this a beautiful City on the waterfront. It's what the residents want. Council President Morten talked about how this aligns with the City's mission.

Walsh said the timeline is the most critical. He recommends keeping it but is fine extending it if needed. Mayor Scholl prefers extending it before it's published. Dimsho explained that it opens on Friday and closes March 25. That would give Council and staff an opportunity to review the submittals. They would interview selected developers on April 20, during a public meeting. Mayor Scholl suggested leaving it open until April 1. No objection from Council. Walsh added that they also reserve the right to work with more than one at a time.

Mayor Scholl wants more information about how Independence did this. It's a return on investment and not giving the property away.

Dimsho added that it will be published three times, she will share it with all the developers they have worked with in the past, and anyone can share it. They have touched basis with developers and are not going in blindly.

Break - 3:19 p.m.

6. City Administrator Report - *John Walsh*

- Congratulations for getting the RFQ out. It's a landmark.
- He proposes a joint meeting with Planning Commission and City Council to hear from OTAK and Mayer Reed about the street extension project, riverwalk project, and Columbia View Park. Discussion of a date and location to meet. The meeting will be held in the Council Chambers on Wednesday, March 16, 2022 at 5:30 p.m. Community members can come in-person or they can view on Zoom or YouTube.
- Holding weekly meetings for the Public Safety Facility. They are working on space planning.

- Communicating with PGE about moving the location of the substation on the Industrial Park property.
- Responsible Boating Community continues to make good progress
 - The kiosk is here
 - Working on a relationship with the County for enforcement of the docks and Sand Island
 - St. Helens Marina is interested in the role of Harbor Master
 - Will bring dock Code amendments to Council for review
 - IT is investigating cameras to have on the docks
- He and Finance Director Brown met with all the departments to review budget requests. They are looking at what is realistic.
- There will be a Library Director debrief after this meeting.

Councilor Chilton asked about the Community Action Team (CAT) loan payoff on tonight's agenda. Councilor Birkle said he has a similar situation. He received a loan from CAT years ago for their roof. It is an interest-free loan that they pay back. The funds go back into a pool. There is a lien on their property until is paid back. City Recorder Payne agreed. When the property is sold, the check goes to the City, the City deposits it, and then sends a check to CAT for the Revolving Loan Fund. The funds have to be administered by a City or County agency.

ADJOURN – 3:54 p.m.

RECONVENE EXECUTIVE SESSION

Respectfully submitted by Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder.

ATTEST:

Kathy Payne, City Recorder

Rick Scholl, Mayor

City of St. Helens
CITY COUNCIL

Executive Session Summary

February 16, 2022

Members Present: Rick Scholl, Mayor
Doug Morten, Council President
Patrick Birkle, Councilor
Stephen R. Topaz, Councilor
Jessica Chilton, Councilor

Staff Present: John Walsh, City Administrator
Kathy Payne, City Recorder
William Monahan, City Attorney with Jordan Ramis PC



At 4:15 p.m., Mayor Scholl opened the Executive Session pursuant to the ORS numbers listed below and then gave Council roll call. Representatives of the news media and designated staff shall be allowed to attend the executive session. All other members of the audience are asked to leave the room. 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 sale of Millard Road property.

- **Consult with Counsel, under ORS 192.660(2)(h)**
 - Update on disposition of City-owned property on S. 12th Street.
 - Update on litigation with Cascades Tissue.
 - Update regarding potential liability associated with City’s ownership of the lagoon.

The Executive Session was adjourned at 4:30 p.m.



ATTEST:

Kathy Payne, City Recorder

Rick Scholl, Mayor



COUNCIL PUBLIC HEARING

Wednesday, February 16, 2022

DRAFT MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mayor Rick Scholl
Council President Doug Morten
Councilor Patrick Birkle
Councilor Stephen R. Topaz
Councilor Jessica Chilton

STAFF PRESENT

John Walsh, City Administrator
Kathy Payne, City Recorder
Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder
Jenny Dimsho, Associate Planner
Jacob Graichen, City Planner

OTHERS

Brady Preheim
Art Leskovich
Jeanne Morain
Rhonda Kirtland
Shauna Stroup-Harrison
Vicky Njust
Larry Scott
Jen Massey

OPEN PUBLIC HEARING – 6:30 p.m.

TOPIC

1. Annexation of Property located Southeast of the Intersection of Pittsburg Road & Meadowview Drive (Morain)

Associate Planner Jenny Dimsho covered preliminary matters and presented the staff report, a copy of which is included in the archive packet for this meeting. Mayor Scholl declared that he mowed the property but does not believe it impacts his ability to make a fair decision. There were no other ex-parte contacts, conflicts of interest, or bias in this matter. There were no objections from the audience for the Council to make a fair decision. Planning Commission recommends approval of the annexation with a Comprehensive Plan designation of Suburban Residential (Incorporated) SR, be zoned as Moderate Residential (R7), and be designated as “developing.”

APPLICANT TESTIMONY

- ◆ Jeanne Morain. She talked about the history of the property. They spoke to different developers who could create a community that would pay tribute to the ancestors and leave a legacy for the family and land. She also talked to the neighbors to find out what they would like to see, which included a trail and low density that would allow for ample parking. She agrees with zoning the property as R7.

TESTIMONY IN FAVOR – None

TESTIMONY IN NEUTRAL

- ◆ Shauna Stroup Harrison. She is very familiar with this property. Her father-in-law developed Meadowview Drive. At that time, they were limited to half acre lots. The area is growing, and

properties are being annexed frequently. She is concerned about the traffic implementations. All the lots on Edna Barr Lane are over 7,000 sq. ft. She thinks R10 would be a better fit for this property to preserve the rural area. The housing crisis continues. As a realtor, they continue to get multiple offers on homes, regardless of price. A traffic report would be required if it was zoned R5. It would be short sided for them to not consider that the houses on Meadowview Drive are half acre. She requested Council strongly consider the size of the lots. People want more space. Well thought-out, larger lot developments, usually end up with a better resale value. Congratulations on more property coming into St. Helens.

Dimsho clarified that a Transportation Impact Analysis will be required as part of the subdivision development because of the size.

- ◆ Vicky Njust. She lives off Westboro Way. She made comments at the last meeting about possible egress on the Barr Avenue side. If that doesn't happen, she is very concerned about the impact to the existing community. They are inundated with traffic now and people are going very fast. She would not go any lower than R7. Is there a possibility for a Planned Community Development overlay allowing more than one house per lot?

Dimsho responded that they are mandated by the State to allow two dwellings on any residential lot. Vicky is most concerned about high density. She talked about the high volume and speed of traffic through there. It's not safe to walk along there. She asked about side-by-side parking versus tandem. Mayor Scholl confirmed that side-by-side parking is required.

Councilor Chilton asked if R7 is larger than R10? Dimsho said no. R7 is 7,000 sq. ft. minimum and R10 is 10,000 sq. ft. minimum.

- ◆ Larry Scott. He lives right there and has a drainage ditch that drains from that wetland. If they get a lot of snow and rain, the ditch fills up. It's gone over the road in the past. Is the ditch going to stay open? Are they going to put a culvert in? If so, he wants a big enough culvert, so it doesn't back up on him. He just wants to make sure the ditch stays clear.

City Planner Graichen said his property was developed in the 1990's. The City didn't have wetland protection rules at that time. They were just dealing with the State rules. The State let them put the road through, mitigate some of the wetland loss, and put the culverts in. Now the wetlands are rated as significant to the City. It's much more difficult to just do away with them now. They anticipate they will remain open so water can flow.

Larry expressed his concerns about drainage. Graichen said a drainage analysis will be an important part of the development. Larry is happy to keep the drainage ditch open.

TESTMONY IN OPPOSITION – None

REBUTTAL

- ◆ Jeanne Morain.
 - They did hire an expert in Oregon to find out what the best use of land was, which is where R7 came from.
 - They did apply to have the wetland registered with the State.
 - She appreciates the feedback about drainage. She will share that with the developer.
 - They accepted a buyer that had a 5-star rating. They understand topography, complications, and community. They want people to think of heritage and community contribution when they hear the Comstock name.
 - A traffic study will be done. She is aware that another road will not be put off Pittsburg Road. It will be through the existing side streets.

- They have put a lot of thought into this and the legacy that it will leave to the Comstock name.

CLOSE PUBLIC HEARING – 7:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder.

ATTEST:

Kathy Payne, City Recorder

Rick Scholl, Mayor



COUNCIL REGULAR SESSION

Wednesday, February 16, 2022

DRAFT MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mayor Rick Scholl
Council President Doug Morten
Councilor Patrick Birkle
Councilor Stephen R. Topaz
Councilor Jessica Chilton

STAFF PRESENT

John Walsh, City Administrator	Jenny Dimsho, Associate Planner
Kathy Payne, City Recorder	Jacob Graichen, City Planner
Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder	Tina Curry, Event Coordinator

OTHERS

Brady Preheim	Shauna Stroup-Harrison	Angela Wayman
Art Leskowich	Vicky Njust	Dan Theull
Jeanne Morain	Larry Scott	Jane Garcia
Rhonda Kirtland	Jen Massey	Officers from St. Helens Police Department
James Shober		

CALL REGULAR SESSION TO ORDER – 7:12 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

VISITOR COMMENTS – *Limited to five (5) minutes per speaker*

- ◆ Jennifer Massey. She is a 25-year resident of St. Helens. Her family has lived here for generations. She and her husband raised two daughters here and they are a small business owner. She has been a certified safety and risk professional for the last 25+ years. She has been employed as a Safety Health and Environmental Administrator for the United Association, which includes the entire US and Canada, about 370,000 construction workers. Her profession does not embrace “the sky is falling methodology.” It’s a holistic evaluation of the potential risk factors. She has spent a lot of time in Oakland and LA. She was concerned at the time about all the homeless and suspicious individuals. She currently works at an office in Southeast Portland. It is far worse than any part of Oakland or LA. In the last four weeks, they have had one attempted assault, two employees were assaulted, and a broken window. She and her daughter work in that facility. The citizens in St. Helens don’t want our town to become Portland. She observes the same changes in St. Helens that she saw in Portland. The remnants of Portland are spilling over here. Graffiti is becoming more prevalent. She has had her car at St. Helens Auto Body for eight weeks trying to get it repaired after being hit and run by an uninsured, unlicensed motorist, who had a federal warrant in Portland. Someone cut off the fence last week and stole four catalytic converters, one of which was hers. She will not have her car for the foreseeable future. Richardson’s Furniture just had a truck broken into last night. She runs all over the town. She sees suspicious individuals more often. More people seem to be under the influence of drugs. It’s unnerving. Neighbors share

videos of prowlers on Ring. It feels very unsafe. She locks her doors more than she ever did before. The town is changing and growing. She has no issues with affordable housing. What is the plan to protect property and citizens? Is there any validity to a homeless shelter going into the current Food Bank or somewhere else? If they are not aware of it, she is requesting they have someone research it and report back. St. Helens has always been a small town, community feel. Her family has been here since 1928. Increasing population can come with an undesired price if it's not managed appropriately. If they're going to allow more people, more densely populated housing, then they must increase the safety and health resources to protect the community. Otherwise, it's a disrespect to the current residents who call this home.

Mayor Scholl asked where she heard that about the Food Bank building. Jennifer heard the rumor from a valid source. It's near her home. She'll see if she can find out more. She doesn't want it on her backdoor. Mayor Scholl asked Planning if zoning would allow that. Associate Planner Dimsho said it's Industrial there. Mayor Scholl said there are a lot of criminals everywhere. They take their policing very seriously.

Council President Morten said they were the first city in the State to pass no camping in Parks or on public property. Portland is finally starting to clamp down on no camping.

- ◆ Dan Theull, attorney for St. Helens Police Association. They are a new member of the Oregon Fraternal of Police. He sent a letter about staffing concerns to the Council and City Administrator Walsh. There are several members of the Police Department here tonight. If they don't act soon, they will have a crisis within 24 months. He highlighted some numbers from the letter:
 - Within two years, they will lose between 4-6 officers to retirement.
 - The timeframe to train new officers is two years. That is without delays sending officers to the academy for training. There is a backlog at the academy right now.
 - If the City does not add officers now, they will not have the ability to provide 24-hour protection.
 - In 2012, a report suggested they should have 25 patrol officers. That excludes police administrators; school resource officers, which they currently don't have because of staffing; and detectives. Right now, they have 11 patrol officers and two and a half patrol sergeants. The others are a chief, lieutenant, and one and half administrative sergeants.
 - The two police detectives are currently working on about a dozen internet crimes, including child pornography cases. One of those cases required a detective to review 500,000 to one million child pornography images. That took months of employee time to handle one case. They don't have the staff to handle that number of cases.
 - The chief recently requested three officers. He suggests adding five. He understands the financial impact. To replace the officers leaving in two years, they need to hire replacements now.
 - The City is not meeting the collective bargaining agreement with the limited bodies on now. He is urging Council to add bodies.

Councilor Chilton asked if he noted the five officers in his letter. Dan did not include that. The number of retiring officers increased since the time he wrote the letter. He knows there will be at least four and maybe six officers retiring in 2024.

Councilor Birkle did not receive an email from Dan. He did take advantage of the opportunity to do a ride along. Officer Coy said it was a slow night, but it sure didn't seem that way. It was a great opportunity to engage with Coy. He is also concerned about the impact the retirements will have on staff. They are being heard. Dan appreciates that. It's so important to have good relationships between the officers and elected officials. There has to be hundreds of applicants to get just five qualified applicants. Agencies all over Oregon are short-staffed.

Mayor Scholl thanked the officers in attendance for their service. They have committed to hiring one position. They take policing very seriously. A year ago, they spent a million more than the Columbia County Sheriff's Office. It's not on deaf ears but they do have a limited budget.

- ◆ Angela Wayman. She would be happy to take over fireworks. She met with Mayor Scholl in November to discuss what needs to be done. She did leave her name and number with a receptionist at the Elks but never heard back. Mayor Scholl stated at a previous meeting that she was asking the Elks for money, but she wasn't.

Mayor Scholl received a call from an Elks Board member who asked who Angela was and that she was seeking donations for fireworks. They are already really far behind. Western Fireworks needed a decision.

Angela would still like to be a part of the fireworks. She has helped with 13 Nights on the River, fireworks, and Spirit of Halloweentown in the past. People have talked about wanting more money spent on the show. She suggested a classic show as a fundraiser, which would include cars, motorcycles, etc.

Councilor Chilton thanked Angela for coming. She would like to allow her to participate and allow more input.

Angela did not come forward last year because she had two people tell her that she would not be allowed to do it. Mayor Scholl said she should have come to Council to ask about that. The proposal she submitted is not adequate to operate a show. Councilor Chilton pointed out that this is not the correct forum to discuss that. She suggested Angela bring a PowerPoint presentation with her proposal. Councilor Birkle suggested Angela work with City Administrator Walsh.

Angela repeated that she's willing to take it over or help this year.

- ◆ Shauna Stroup Harrison. She is very concerned about the policing issue. The City is pushing tourism and density. The police showed up tonight and said they wouldn't be able to withstand the lack of personnel. The Council needs to consider adding positions. Break-ins are occurring almost nightly.
- ◆ Brady Preheim.
 - He watched part of their show this afternoon. It's very entertaining and is like watching a movie, so he brought popcorn.
 - Councilor Topaz wants to change the Waterfront Plan after they've had drawings and a plan for five years.
 - He is still opposed to the police station and how it was funded. He is in favor of police. They need to add more police officers and not buildings.
 - What happens when someone is promoted to Assistant City Administrator and then demoted? It doesn't seem right that they kept their salary but not the duties. Those funds could pay for fireworks instead of stealing if from tourism.
 - Where is the tourism contract? Someone wanting to do fireworks should have stepped up months ago. The Tourism Director can do them. The City has already decided they would pay for it. They need to start fundraising now for next year.
 - Concerned about the homeless. He didn't know about a potential homeless shelter moving into the current Food Bank location. He lives near there and hopes that it doesn't happen.
 - The derelict boat is gone.
- ◆ James Shober. He is concerned about housing going in and adding tourism, but not adding police officers. They may need to cancel the police station and figure out something else. He would prefer having more officers instead of a new station. Do they plan on doing road improvements on Pittsburg Road?

Mayor Scholl responded that the application was for an annexation. It's not for a development yet.

DELIBERATIONS

1. Deliberations - Annexation of Property located Southeast of the Intersection of Pittsburg Road & Meadowview Drive (Morain)

Councilor Birkle is in favor of the annexation and the Planning Commission recommendations. Council President Morten agreed. He concurs with the staff recommendation. Councilor Chilton acknowledged the work the applicant put in to add value for not just herself, but also for the community. She agrees with the staff recommendation. Councilor Topaz and Mayor Scholl both agreed with the Planning Commission recommendations as well.

Motion: Motion made by Council President Morten and seconded by Councilor Topaz to approve the annexation as recommended in the staff report. **Vote:** Yea: Mayor Scholl, Council President Morten, Councilor Birkle, Councilor Topaz, Councilor Chilton

ORDINANCES – Final Reading

2. Ordinance No. 3280: An Ordinance to Annex and Designate the Zone of Certain Property at 58389 Columbia River Highway

Mayor Scholl read Ordinance No. 3280 by title. Motion made by Council President Morten and seconded by Councilor Topaz to adopt Ordinance No. 3280. **Vote:** Yea: Mayor Scholl, Council President Morten, Councilor Birkle, Councilor Topaz, Councilor Chilton

APPROVE AND/OR AUTHORIZE FOR SIGNATURE

3. Request for Full Reconveyance for CAT Loan Payoff at 425 N. 11th Street (Kooyman)
4. [RATIFY] Contract for Water Assistance Provisions between Community Action Team, Inc. and the City

Motion: Motion made by Council President Morten and seconded by Councilor Topaz to approve '3' and '4' above. **Vote:** Yea: Mayor Scholl, Council President Morten, Councilor Birkle, Councilor Topaz, Councilor Chilton

CONSENT AGENDA FOR ACCEPTANCE

5. Planning Commission Minutes dated January 11, 2022

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

CONSENT AGENDA FOR APPROVAL

6. Riverfront Development Request for Qualifications (RFQ)
7. Council Work Session, Executive Session, and Regular Session Minutes dated February 2, 2022
8. Animal Facility Licenses
9. OLCC Licenses
10. Accounts Payable Bill Lists

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

Discussion.

Councilor Topaz talked about the Riverfront Development. There were adjustments as it went along and what they were able to do. Councilor Birkle said they are only asking for qualifications. Councilor Topaz asked if they are qualified to talk to us. Councilor Birkle responded that the Council would determine if

they are qualified by reviewing their submittals. Mayor Scholl said they would likely be doing the work. There is another process for the work to be done.

Walsh clarified that the only difference in the packet is an extension of the date. All the screening criteria and expectations have stayed the same.

Discussion ensued about the process of an RFQ. Councilor Topaz said there are two steps. Walsh said there are more than two. Associate Planner Dimsho added that this is the first step. Councilor Topaz said they are going to choose someone who they think can do the job, then qualify them to do the work, and then give them permission to do the work.

Vote: Yea: Mayor Scholl, Council President Morten, Councilor Birkle, Councilor Topaz, Councilor Chilton

WORK SESSION ACTION ITEMS

January 5, 2022 Council Work Session Minutes

Mayor Scholl reported that the motion made to amend and approve the minutes at the last meeting was not seconded.

Motion: Motion made by Council President Morten and seconded by Councilor Chilton to amend the January 5, 2022 Council Work Session Minutes to include the number of employees who were surveyed.

Vote: Yea: Mayor Scholl, Council President Morten, Councilor Birkle, Councilor Topaz, Councilor Chilton

Grant Applications

Mayor Scholl reported that the grant applications were reviewed during the work session. He wishes they had more money to give. Council discussed granting the following:

- CCMH - \$684.70
- United Way - \$500
- CERT - \$500
- Riverside Community Outreach - \$400

Motion: Motion made by Council President Morten and seconded by Councilor Topaz to approve the grant amounts as listed above. **Vote:** Yea: Mayor Scholl, Council President Morten, Councilor Birkle, Councilor Topaz, Councilor Chilton

Mayor Scholl apologized to the other nonprofit applicants.

Right-of-Way Dedication on Barr Avenue

Motion: Motion made by Council President Morten and seconded by Councilor Topaz to approve the concept for the right-of-way dedication on Barr Avenue. **Vote:** Yea: Mayor Scholl, Council President Morten, Councilor Birkle, Councilor Topaz, Councilor Chilton

Tailgating and Fireworks Launch Location on 4th of July

Mayor Scholl said he was misunderstood about the tailgating concept. He doesn't drink but is still an advocate for tailgating and the experiences people have.

Councilor Topaz asked how many tailgate versus park? Mayor Scholl responded that about a quarter of the people tailgate and others just park there.

Councilor Chilton is fine with tailgating there. She doesn't see a reason why they shouldn't allow it. She's not aware of any problems it has caused. Pretty soon that property won't be available. She spoke with Tina to get her insight about a fireworks location. The best option is the barge. It causes the fewest problems and is the safest. Councilor Birkle agreed with the barge.

Council President Morten asked if they charged for tailgating last year and did service groups help with that. Tina said they did charge last year. Unfortunately, they were not able to get help from service groups last year. Police and fire personnel were there at the appropriate times.

Motion: Motion made by Councilor Birkle and seconded by Councilor Chilton to approve 4th of July tailgating on the Veneer property and pursue the launch of fireworks from a barge.

Discussion.

Council President Morten asked how much was charged for tailgating last year. Tina said it was \$25.

Vote: Yea: Mayor Scholl, Council President Morten, Councilor Birkle, Councilor Topaz, Councilor Chilton

COUNCIL MEMBER REPORTS

Council President Morten reported...

- He received a Valentine's letter of appreciation and treats in his mailbox from AmeriCorps and Columbia County RSVP. He was very honored by their thoughtfulness towards himself and other veterans.

Councilor Topaz reported...

- They are working on recruitment for a new Library Director.

Councilor Chilton reported...

- She recently met with Judy Thompson and discussed the Kiwanis Parade. She is excited to have it come back.
- She applied to be on the Local Public Safety Coordinating Committee with the County. She received a phone call from the District Attorney, who said they are reorganizing the Committee to include a City Council position. No objection from Council for her to represent the Council on the Committee.
- This is the third time she has brought the need to increase police staffing to the Council. She's not okay with the possibility of losing 24-hour staffing. They are growing. They owe it to citizens and police to maintain staffing. Councilor Topaz acknowledged that crime happens 24-hours a day here. They need 24-hour service. Council President Morten said there were 24 officers when he joined the Council in 2006. Now the number is lower. They are really missing an officer in the school. Students have learned to respect the officer when they're at the school. Councilor Topaz was at the police station on Monday and found out that the officer had been at the high school three times because of fights.
- They need to consider that our officers could be drawn to Portland.

Councilor Birkle reported...

- The police ride-along was eye opening. They are doing so much at once.
- He has a strong concern to keep the officers. It's having a big impact on their personal lives. They do not want to lose them in the current system. When the new apartments go in, there will be 1,000 new residents. He knows they need more Planning staff, but they need to make priorities. There is no direct connection between the officers and the new safety facility. They are not going to attract the best candidates with the existing building. They cannot ask them to change their uniforms at home. If they want high quality, they need a high-class facility. He doesn't regret the decision to build a new facility.
- He loves shorter work sessions. He had the opportunity to get his hair cut at a local business and speak to residents.
- Every day in his classroom there is a signal word. Today's word was "parallel." Tomorrow's word was going to be "degree," but he might change it to "qualifications."

MAYOR SCHOLL REPORT

- A lot of good things are happening in Columbia County
 - Columbia County Economic Team (CET) update
 - Keep it Local
 - Travel Oregon

- Business Oregon
- Annexation of Comstock property. R7 was the right vision.
- Officers are needed. It's frustrating to not have the money to pay for everything.
- There are growing pains. They have a great staff. It starts with Walsh, who doesn't get near the credit that he deserves. He meets with department heads on a regular basis. Walsh thanked him. He talked about the police concerns. They are looking at incentive packages. Open recruitment for laterals all the time is a possibility. They have a good relationship with the Police Association. Councilor Topaz asked if they could send officers to out of state academies. Walsh said it's a combination of education and experience.

OTHER BUSINESS

ADJOURN – 8:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder.

ATTEST:

Kathy Payne, City Recorder

Rick Scholl, Mayor

City of St. Helens
CITY COUNCIL

Executive Session Summary

February 22, 2022

Members Present: Rick Scholl, Mayor
Doug Morten, Council President
Patrick Birkle, Councilor
Stephen R. Topaz, Councilor
Jessica Chilton, Councilor

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



At 5:32 p.m., Mayor Scholl opened the Executive Session pursuant to the ORS numbers listed below and then gave Council roll call. Representatives of the news media and designated staff shall be allowed to attend the executive session. All other members of the audience are asked to leave the room. 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.

- **Consider Employment of a Public Officer, under ORS 192.660(2)(a)**
 - The Council interviewed one finalist for the Library Director position.

The Executive Session was adjourned at 7:12 p.m.



ATTEST:

Kathy Payne, City Recorder

Rick Scholl, Mayor