



COUNCIL WORK SESSION

Wednesday, June 21, 2023

DRAFT MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mayor Rick Scholl
Council President Jessica Chilton
Councilor Patrick Birkle
Councilor Mark Gundersen
Councilor Brandon Sundeen

STAFF PRESENT

John Walsh, City Administrator
Kathy Payne, City Recorder
Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder
Crystal King, Communications Officer
Brian Greenway, Police Chief
Joe Hogue, Police Lieutenant
Suzanne Bishop, Library Director
Gloria Butsch, Finance Director

Dylan Gaston, Police Detective
Jamin Coy, Police Officer
Adam Hartless, Police Officer
Johnathon Sprinzl, Police Officer
Jonathon Anderson, Police Officer
Everardo Medina, Code Enforcement Officer
Bill Monahan, Contracted City Attorney
Tina Curry, Contracted Event Coordinator

OTHERS

Steve Toschi	Chris Iverson
Brady Preheim	Eddie Dunton
Steve Topaz	Suzie Dahl
Conor Delaney	Barbara Dickerson

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

INTRODUCTION OF NEW POLICE OFFICERS JOHNATHON SPRINZL AND JONATHON ANDERSON

Lieutenant Joe Hogue introduced new Police Officers Johnathon Sprinzl and Jonathon Anderson, followed by a pinning ceremony. They will be attending a 16-week academy in October.

Mayor and council members welcomed them to the City.

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

- ◆ Steve Toschi. He talked about the City's successful tourism events. They are successful because of all the work done by Tina Curry and Chris Cannard. It's difficult to make everyone happy. There's room to do more if people want to add events.
- ◆ Steve Topaz. He submitted a copy of his testimony into the record.
 1. There was a DEQ Zoom meeting a couple weeks ago about the Pulp & Talbot property. No one from the City attended. He explained that contaminants must be removed and then a barrier would go between the surface and bedrock. It is estimated to cost \$25 million. That property is smaller than the White Paper Mill's site, which DEQ suggests a sand and charcoal separation method.

2. Council approved adding a Police Officer position, but now it is not being filled because of finances. He suggests eliminating the Government Affairs Specialist position because it was not approved by Council to help fund it.
3. He was asked why he keeps speaking at Council meetings when his questions are not answered and the minutes lack details. He knows Council doesn't listen. He warns businesses and developers against doing business in St. Helens.

DISCUSSION TOPICS

1. Length of Service Recognition - Building Official Mike De Roia for 5 Years

Mayor Scholl recognized Mike De Roia for five years of service. De Roia is in the field conducting building inspections right now.

Columbia County Land Development Services Director Suzie Dahl talked about the relationship between the City and County to provide Building plan review and inspections services. She has worked with De Roia for five years and has experienced his sincere dedication to serve with compassion and community wellbeing. His positive can-do attitude, communication skills, professionalism, and expertise are invaluable. She congratulated De Roia for his five years and looks forward to many more.

Mayor Scholl thanked Suzie for her kind words and agreed that he's a great guy.

2. Annual Report from Insurance Agent of Record - *Chris Iverson, Hagan Hamilton Insurance*

Chris Iverson reviewed his report. A copy is included in the archive packet for this meeting. Some highlights were:

- He recommends staying in the CIS program.
- There is an increase in premiums.
- Council can reduce the Cyber Liability deductible from \$50,000 to \$25,000 for an additional \$1,700.
- He recommends an increase to Workers Comp insurance.

It was the consensus of the Council to lower the deductible for Cyber Liability and bring back an estimate to City Administrator Walsh for Workers Comp insurance.

3. Annual Report from City Auditor - *Conor Delaney of Pauly Rogers Co*

Conor Delaney reviewed his report. A copy is included in the archive packet for this meeting. Some highlights were:

- It does not appear that public notice was distributed for the June 2022 Supplemental Budget Hearing.
- There were some instances of actual expenditures exceeding the appropriations. He pointed out that is common among cities with not knowing exactly what expenditures will be for the year.
- Thanked Contracted Finance Director Jon Ellis for the work he did.
- Thanked Finance Director Gloria Butsch and her staff for helping complete the audit.

Mayor Scholl thanked Ellis and Butsch.

4. Semi-Annual Report on Tourism - *Tina Curry, E2C Productions*

Contracted Event Coordinator Tina Curry reviewed her report. A copy is included in the archive packet for this meeting. Some highlights were:

- 13 Nights on the River is going well. They have solved some of the problems they were having with kids.
- Science Circus in the Plaza in May
- 4th of July activities are coming up. Parking will need to be planned in advance.
- Third Annual Sand Island Sandcastle Competition is in August

- Mardi Gras Street Party in July
- Spirit of Halloweentown activities begin September 16
- Retail sales increase during events
- New sponsors have been added
- Halloween Hunt will take visitors Uptown
- Nightmare on 4th Street returns
- Additions to the Alien Museum
- Event billboards will be on Highway 30
- Reviewed tourism highlights
- Volunteers needed
- Updated haunted house
- More celebrities coming, including Marnie
- Spirit of Halloweentown will not have downtown parking. Parking will be via shuttle service at the Recreation Center.
- Enhanced video surveillance
- Public Works is helping with boat prep
- Penny press at Split Ink now
- Vending machine is now in the black
- Upgrades to Sand Island
- New Halloween installations
- SunMaid Raisins campaign was very successful last year
- Film crew will be back to continue their documentary
- OPB will do a segment on the Sandcastle competition
- Thanked Council, staff, volunteers, organizations, guests, and the community
- Talked about the challenges with harassment, parking, and correcting inaccurate information when it's heard
- Volunteering to help people clean up front yards

Council President Chilton asked about a pre-Halloweentown meeting. Tina said she has been meeting with individual groups and vendors. She plans to have a meeting the second or third week of July.

Mayor Scholl pointed out that Tina's wages are not paid from the General Fund. She is paid by the revenue generated from events. Tina gives back to the community more than the City spends. There have been a lot of questions and concerns of why the City is paying for tourism and they are cutting an officer position. He asked how Tina feels about a public safety fee being added to ticket sales. Tina said she does not think that's a good idea. Mayor Scholl is concerned that additional public safety is needed for events and that is a mechanism to pay for it. Tina said they tried to hire the Police Department and pay them time and a half, but they refused. Mayor Scholl pointed out they are short-staffed. Tina explained that money from events does go back into the General Fund and they can spend that however they want. She is in favor of security during events. Council President Chilton would like to talk about it further at a future meeting.

Council thanked Tina.

5. Review Amendment to Otak Agreement for Project Management of Public Safety Building - *City Administrator John Walsh*

City Administrator Walsh reviewed the amendment. A copy is included in the archive packet for this meeting. It's on tonight's agenda for approval.

6. Report from City Administrator John Walsh

- There has been some social media discussion about the City going broke. It always looks dismal to forecast. The reality is they have control of expenses and revenues and can adjust accordingly.

- Investing in the community's future with projects.
- Urban Renewal is doing well.
- Working with staff for funding the vacant Police Officer position. They can use the Urban Renewal Agency funds to fund some of the Administration staff, which would free some money. A special Urban Renewal Agency meeting would need to be held with a Supplemental Budget to make that change. Mayor Scholl directed staff to move forward with that.
- Working with Police Chief Greenway to continue providing 24/7 services.
- The City has a policy for moving derelict vehicles in the right-of-way. They tag them and try to find out who the owner is, which is not always possible. They have towed a few but it can be very expensive to tow an RV. There needs to be recourse for who dumped it.
- They had a kick-off meeting for the new police station with Howard S. Wright.
- There was a pre-bid meeting yesterday for the new water reservoir. It was a great turnout.
- Citizens Day in the Park is on Saturday.
- St. Helens Marina has donated the use of their barge and small tug for 4th of July fireworks.
- This is his last year of serving on the League of Oregon Cities (LOC) Board. He was recently invited to serve as president elect for the Oregon Managers Association (OMA) and is considering it. Finance Director Butsch is the current president of Oregon Government Finance Officers Association (OGFOA).
- As part of his International City Manager credential status, there is an ongoing commitment to education and evaluation. Council will be receiving an email.
- Building Inspector John Hicks has resigned. That is a potential budget savings. He recommends reallocating those resources back to the General Fund. Building has been slowing down and they have a really good relationship with the County for assistance.
- The tourism audit is being done by Jon Ellis.
- Today is the longest day of the year.
- Margaret Trenchard-Smith expressed her sincere appreciation of the Council supporting the Columbia Chorale.

ADJOURN – 3:29 p.m.**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

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

Respectfully submitted by Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder.

ATTEST:

Kathy Payne, City Recorder

Rick Scholl, Mayor