



COUNCIL REGULAR SESSION

Wednesday, September 04, 2024

APPROVED 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:

/s/ Kathy Payne
Kathy Payne, City Recorder

/s/ Rick Scholl
Rick Scholl, Mayor