



COUNCIL REGULAR SESSION

Wednesday, March 19, 2025

APPROVED MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mayor Jennifer Massey
Council President Jessica Chilton
Councilor Mark Gundersen
Councilor Russell Hubbard
Councilor Brandon Sundeen

STAFF PRESENT

John Walsh, City Administrator	Evin Eustice, Police Sergeant
Kathy Payne, City Recorder	Jeremy Howell, Police Sergeant
Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder	Kolten Edwards, Police Officer
Joe Hogue, Acting Police Chief	Ashley Wigod, Contracted City Attorney
Jose Castilleja, Police Sergeant	

OTHERS

Brady Preheim	Rochelle Russell
Steve Topaz	Jenni Gilbert
Art Leskowich	Tresa Edwards
Mitzi	Dustin King

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

AWARD BID/CONTRACT

1. Award Bid and Authorize Mayor to Execute Contract with Stateline LLC for St. Helens Dock Repair and Debris Boom Project No. M-541 in the amount of \$190,500

Motion: Motion made by Council President Chilton and seconded by Councilor Sundeen to approve '1' above.

Councilor Hubbard expressed curiosity about the spread in the bids received. City Administrator Walsh explained that it was a grant-funded project by the Marine Board, and while there was a wide range from high to low bids, the scope of work was well-defined. Mayor Massey added that some contractors seemed to focus on rebuilding rather than stabilizing the loading and dock fingers.

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

APPOINTMENTS TO CITY BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

2. Appoint Nick Flory to Parks and Trails Commission

Motion: Motion made by Councilor Sundeen and seconded by Councilor Gundersen to appoint Nick Flory to the Parks and Trails Commission. **Vote:** Yea: Mayor Massey, Council President Chilton, Councilor Gundersen, Councilor Hubbard, Councilor Sundeen

CONSENT AGENDA FOR ACCEPTANCE

3. Library Board Minutes dated February 10, 2025
4. Planning Commission Minutes dated February 11, 2025

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

CONSENT AGENDA FOR APPROVAL

5. City Council Minutes dated March 5, 2025
6. Staff Monthly Report to Council Template
7. OLCC Licenses
8. Accounts Payable Bill Lists

Motion: Motion made by Councilor Sundeen and seconded by Council President Chilton to approve '5' through '8' above. **Vote:** Yea: Mayor Massey, Council President Chilton, Councilor Gundersen, Councilor Hubbard, Councilor Sundeen

WORK SESSION ACTION ITEMS**Police Chief Position**

Mayor Massey disclosed a potential conflict of interest due to her husband being a St. Helens Police Officer.

City Administrator Walsh provided an update on the interim police chief position. He explained that at the previous Council meeting, a motion was made to offer Chief Hogue the interim chief role, subject to a mutually acceptable agreement. However, an agreement could not be reached.

Walsh outlined two tracks for filling the position: an internal candidate track and an external track. He noted that the Council expressed a desire to follow the City's process for employment recruitment, which typically involves opening the position for a minimum period, allowing interested employees to apply, reviewing applications, and conducting interviews before making an appointment.

Contracted City Attorney Wigod clarified that the previous motion to appoint Chief Hogue as interim chief was subject to a mutually agreeable employment contract, which was not achieved.

Motion: Motion made by Council President Chilton and seconded by Councilor Sundeen to open the Chief of Police position to an internal recruitment process for a 10-day period and appoint Joe Hogue to the Interim Chief of Police.

Councilor Sundeen thanked community members for their feedback and fellow Council members for their effective discussion during the earlier session. He expressed hope that the motion would be a good compromise and work out for the best, emphasizing his objective to do what's best for the community and its citizens.

Council President Chilton explained her stance, focusing on promoting consistency within the City, following procedures, and maintaining a process that is consistent across all departments. She emphasized that her decision was not personal and aimed to allow for unbiased decision-making in the future.

Vote: Yea: Council President Chilton, Councilor Hubbard, Councilor Sundeen; Nay: Mayor Massey, Councilor Gundersen

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

- ◆ Jenni Gilbert. Expressed that she was unable to hear the Council's discussion clearly, prompting her request for a summary or recap of what had just transpired. She addressed her concerns to Mayor Massey, stating that Massey was violating ethics laws by discussing the chief's position. Gilbert contended that Mayor Massey was named in a police investigative report and asserted that as a result, she should not be involved in discussions about appointing the police chief. Gilbert also emphasized that Mayor Massey should not be making decisions that could affect her family's finances, suggesting potential personal interest in the matter due to familial ties with the Police Department. She announced her intention to report the perceived violation to the Ethics Commission.
- ◆ Brady Preheim. Accused the Council of violating executive session rules, pointing out that the employment topic was not mentioned in the executive session agenda, which Preheim claimed was a violation. Preheim warned that denying access to executive sessions could result in personal fines for the Council members. Additionally, Preheim was critical of the Council's handling of the police chief situation, stating that Mayor Massey should not be involved due to potential personal interests, as her husband is a City Police Officer. Preheim highlighted concerns about the allocation of tourism revenue, specifically questioning what happened to the \$463,000, which he argued should be transferred to the City's General Fund and subsequently used to support the Police Department. Preheim recalled discussions with the Council, emphasizing that the purpose of the new tourism contract was to channel revenue to the City, and demanded an explanation for why the allocation was not being discussed or acted upon.
- ◆ Art Leskowich. He recalled the Special Session that took place earlier concerning waste disposal from Portland Harbor. He expressed significant concerns about various aspects of the project that had not been adequately addressed. Among his primary worries was the potential impact on the City's drinking water intake, which is located just a mile downstream from where the discharge is planned. Leskowich pointed out that the shoreline in the Multnomah Channel, where the unloading of barges is proposed, is currently contaminated, raising further issues. He noted that despite these concerns, there has been no substantial discussion on how to mitigate such risks. Leskowich also criticized the logistics of engineering a landfill near a wetland, considering it remarkably unrealistic to expect the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) to approve such a plan. He suggested that there were issues with a lack of options for disposal other than a landfill and insisted that other solutions should be considered. He proposed exploring the possibility of cleaning up Area C and using parts of Areas A and B, which are deemed suitable, for disposal of the City's waste. This approach, he argued, would also address the issue of the contaminated lagoon used by the Fire Department for dumping training materials with PFAS constituents for years. He also brought up discussions about possibly working with the State of Portland, which has notable financial stakes or liabilities in the cleanup of Portland Harbor. He stressed the importance of examining these potential partnerships further, given the implications they have for the area's cleanup efforts. Leskowich concluded his comments by requesting copies of the technical reports referred to in the earlier discussion, underscoring the need for all involved to conduct comprehensive research and review all available data before making any decisions about pursuing the landfill project.

COUNCIL MEMBER REPORTS

Councilor Sundeen reported...

- Thanked the Police Department for their hard work.
- Expressed appreciation for Acting Chief Hogue.

- Reported on the Parks and Trails Commission:
 - Discussed the Milton Creek Woodland Reserve.
 - Announced upcoming work parties at Nob Hill and McCormick Park Japanese Gardens on April 5.

No further reports from Council members were made.

MAYOR MASSEY REPORTS

- Thanked City Recorder office staff for their hard work in providing information and keeping the City running.
- Expressed gratitude to the Police Department employees, Public Works employees, and other City employees.
- Announced plans to include positive community activities in her future reports to encourage public participation.

OTHER BUSINESS

ADJOURN – 7:19 p.m.

Respectfully transcribed by ClerkMinutes and submitted by Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder.

ATTEST:

/s/ Kathy Payne

Kathy Payne, City Recorder

/s/ Jennifer Massey

Jennifer Massey, Mayor