



# COUNCIL WORK SESSION

Wednesday, August 04, 2021

## APPROVED 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  
Matt Brown, Deputy City Administrator  
Kathy Payne, City Recorder  
Jacob Graichen, City Planner  
Margaret Jeffries, Library Director

Jenny Dimsho, Associate Planner  
Kolten Edwards, Police Officer  
Bill Monahan, City Attorney  
Tina Curry, Event Coordinator

### OTHERS

Linda Zahl  
Andrew Schlumpberger  
Dave Dworschak

### CALL WORK SESSION TO ORDER – 1:01 p.m.

#### CITY COUNCIL MANTRA – Read by Council President Morten

Mayor Scholl announced that there have been issues with Councilor Topaz coming into City Hall without checking in. He has already been warned once. First, Councilor Topaz went to the Deputy City Recorder demanding that Resolution No. 1872 be added to the agenda for discussion. She asked him if he has support from two other Councilors or the Mayor, and he responded, no but that it better be added to the agenda or there would be trouble. Topaz did not check in with City Administrator Walsh. Second, Mayor Scholl was notified by Brent Thompson from the Columbia County Sheriff's Office that Councilor Topaz was pulled over. Topaz handed the deputy his City Council card when he was approached. The City takes these issues very seriously and they need to take action at tonight's meeting.

Councilor Topaz clarified that he handed the deputy his card, and the City Council card was on the dash. Mayor Scholl pointed out that it is on video. The deputy reported it to his supervisor because he felt it was very inappropriate. That represents the Council as a whole. Topaz was warned and given a six-month probation. They are only three months into this, and he is threatening staff to get something on the agenda. There is a process for that.

This will be further discussed at tonight's meeting.

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

- ◆ Andrew Schlumpberger. He was here a couple months ago for his lot partition. The hybrid was approved. However, City Planner Graichen wrote down a full street improvement, which includes

a 24x30 turnout with the entire width of road in front. He is fine with that, if that is what the Council considered a hybrid option.

Council President Morten reported that he suggested Andrew come today for clarification about the hybrid option. Councilor Chilton asked if staff was clear about the hybrid option. Graichen responded that staff was clear. This was a controversial issue and there was a lot of time put into it. The draft final decision was reviewed by the applicant's legal counsel, reviewed by the Council in the final decision, and discussed in the minutes. He referred to the discussion about the hybrid option in the minutes. Mayor Scholl requested to review the video segment at tonight's meeting where the motion was made.

Andrew is just looking for clarification as they begin working with the Engineer. He does not want to extend the process.

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

**1. Closure of Marshall Street at Highway 30 - Jacob**

Graichen reviewed his report. A copy is included in the archive packet for this meeting. The property owner is requesting the intersection of Marshall Street and Highway 30 be closed.

Dave Dworschak, owner of Don's Rental. He is representing three-fourths of the properties on Marshall Street. Don's Rental and Ace Hardware run fork-lifts across Marshall Street to access their storage units. People coming from Highway 30 onto Marshall Street driving at high speeds is creating a safety issue. He was fine with putting in a barricade that could be moved for fire access.

Council President Morten asked if Dave has considered a street vacation. Dave responded that he has not considered that. There is a parking lot that serves 2250, 2252, and 2254 Columbia Blvd., but is accessed by Marshall Street. He reviewed the history of the street and surrounding properties.

Councilor Topaz pointed out that some of those properties could sell and change use over the next 50 years. That needs to be considered when making a decision.

Council directed Graichen to work with ODOT to find out if the street can be closed.

**2. Beekeeping Inside City Limits - Jacob**

Graichen reviewed the request and model ordinance for beekeeping. A copy is included in the archive packet for this meeting. Beekeeping is prohibited in the Animal Control Code. When Linda Zahl was annexed into the city, she thought her bees would be grandfathered in. However, they were not, and a Code Enforcement complaint was made. Does Council want staff to create an ordinance to allow beekeeping?

Mayor Scholl talked about the location of the Zahl property and ensuring that the bees are not an immediate threat to a neighbor.

Councilor Topaz talked about green energy and green ground. He needs bees to keep going. Do they have to be eliminated? Graichen said it is not a prohibition of wild bees.

Linda Zahl approached the Council to talk about bees. The City Code addresses bees in general at this time. That could be interpreted to include mason bee houses, which are native bees, but would be illegal per Code. Honeybees are not native. They were brought here for agriculture purposes because most of the food Europeans are used to eating need to be pollinated by honeybees. Native plants can also be pollinated by honeybees. They pollenate the maple trees really well. The ordinance is specific to honeybees. The request is specific to backyard beekeeping. It is not thousands of bees in boxes. Africanized bees cannot survive this environment. Linda talked about the health advantages of bees.

Council President Morten suggested a committee be formed to make sure they address concerns. Graichen talked about the template Code provided by League of Oregon Cities (LOC). They would work with beekeepers.

Councilor Chilton would like to hear from Code Enforcement. She referred to a letter Council received suggesting a cap on the number of beehives. Linda pointed out that the letter was unsigned. She wants to work with people who are opposed due to fear. There is a resolution that says cities cannot prohibit backyard beekeeping, but they can create rules to govern it. Bees have a death rate of about 25%. Three hives are recommended.

Mayor Scholl directed Graichen and Linda to work together.

Councilor Topaz talked about commercial bees. Can there be an ordinance that fluctuates based on time of year? Graichen responded, conceivably. How many miles from a hive do bees travel? Linda responded that a forager could go between two to five miles.

Councilor Birkle pointed out that bees are paying attention to the plants and not bothering with people. Bees are welcome. Steps can be taken to be safe. Swarming is not a major issue. He would like to see staff proceed with working with Linda.

Council President Morten talked about mason bees. They have a purpose for agricultural. They do not sting. He suggested including that in the ordinance.

Mayor Scholl would like to allow Linda to continue. Councilor Chilton would like to hear from Code Enforcement first. Graichen said this will be more efficient to work on in-house. He will contact Code Enforcement and work with Linda.

Councilor Chilton asked how many bees are per hive. Linda said there are between 30,000-50,000 per hive. They only leave the hive during the last three weeks of their lives. She will help educate people on what plants to not to have to reduce bees in their yard.

### **3. Library Department Semi-Annual Report - *Library Director Margaret Jeffries***

Library Director Jeffries reviewed her PowerPoint Presentation. A copy is included in the archive packet for this meeting.

- Eight Library Board members
- Hours have been expanded
- Served as a cooling center
- Reviewed summer programs held outside
- Reviewed summer adult programs
- Ukulele Orchestra met on the porch
- New things for Library of Things
- Reviewed grants received
- Genealogy Conference – September 17-18, 2021
- Columbia County Reads 2021 – Hidden Figures
- Makerspace Open House – Saturday, October 9, 2021, 10 a.m. – noon

Council President Morten talked about a session he attended at the National League of Cities Conference. There was a mantra about healthy people in healthy cities, which resonated with him. A healthy city reaches out to all populations and the library does that.

Councilor Topaz talked about how much information Jeffries must read to stay up to date on changes. Jeffries is honored to do what they do at the library. She appreciates the Council's support.

#### **4. Review Proposed Updates to Municipal Code Title 2 Administration & Personnel - Rachael/Matt**

City Administrator Walsh reviewed the proposed changes. A copy is included in the archive packet for this meeting. It is updating everything to match current practices.

City Attorney Monahan reviewed St. Helens Municipal Code Section 2.32. There is not a Charter restriction for elected positions. The Council can choose to have electors select a position or have them on one list and the name(s) with the most votes is elected, which is the fairest.

Mayor Scholl said they talked about it at a previous meeting and Council was not interested in changing it.

Councilor Chilton asked if they have had a problem filling positions. Council President Morten said it has been a problem multiple times. Filers wait until the last minute to find out what positions are unopposed and then file for that seat.

Councilor Topaz asked if he is allowed to ask who is running. City Recorder Payne said it is public record.

Mayor Scholl pointed out that it would cause everyone to run a campaign if they all went onto the same list.

Councilor Topaz asked about write-ins. Monahan said if there were a significant number of write-ins the election's officer would tally that list. They Council has the authority to make its determination on local elections.

Mayor Scholl is in favor of voting for your top two candidates. That is how Scappoose does it.

Discussion ensued.

Brown clarified that this is not being approved tonight. It will be reviewed by legal counsel and then brought back at a later time.

Councilor Birkle wants to give people an opportunity to comment at a public forum. Mayor Scholl suggested that Communications Officer Crystal King share information on social media. Brown said this could be shared at a public informational meeting held prior to a regular meeting. Discussion of ways to share the proposed change with the public.

#### **5. Review Community Grant Applications Received**

Council reviewed the grant requests. A copy is included in the archive packet for this meeting. Community Support Funds is \$10,000 for the entire year.

Councilor Chilton asked if any of the requests can be covered with ARPA funds. Brown said yes, but they would have to take away from something else.

Discussion of processes other cities use to limit requests and funds. In the future, the application needs to include a dollar limit and nonprofit requirement. Council talked about selecting a certain number of applicants and donating \$500 to each of them.

City Recorder Payne talked about how community grants were given in the past. Brown added that many cities align the grants with their goals.

Discussion ensued about donating \$500 to the following nonprofit applicants:

- Amani Center
- Boy Scouts of America Unit 106
- Connect St. Helens
- Elks Veterans Bunker
- Kiwanis Club of St. Helens
- My Next Step

- South Columbia County Chamber of Commerce – Railway Station Centennial Celebration
- St. Helens Band Patrons
- St. Helens Saints Baseball

Council will vote on this at tonight's meeting.

### **3:11 p.m. Break**

#### **6. Strategic Action Plan Updates**

Brown reported...

- Working on the scope for the St. Helens Industrial Park.

#### **7. City Administrator Report**

- The International City Managers Association (ICMA) Conference will be held in Portland this year.
- Riverwalk meeting tonight.
- Working with Columbia River PUD and County Commissioners to add electric vehicle stations in the downtown area.
- The E-Newsletter is going to change to bi-monthly publications. It has a new name, "The St. Helens Strand."
- Chief Greenway, Lieutenant Hogue, Brown, and he met with St. Helens Superintendent Stockwell about the Recreation Center and School Resource Officer expectations. COVID has added challenges to public safety. It's becoming harder to meet those needs.
- Working on strategies to improve tourism. Staff has been meeting weekly to talk about what they can do to meet the Council's expectations. They will bring information back to Council.
- Grocery Outlet grand opening is August 12 at 8 a.m. It would be nice to have Council in attendance.

**ADJOURN – 3:27 p.m.**

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Respectfully submitted by Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder.

ATTEST:

/s/ Kathy Payne

Kathy Payne, City Recorder

/s/ Rick Scholl

Rick Scholl, Mayor