



# COUNCIL WORK SESSION

Wednesday, June 05, 2024

## APPROVED MINUTES

### MEMBERS PRESENT

Mayor Rick Scholl  
Council President Jessica Chilton  
Councilor Mark Gundersen  
Councilor Russell Hubbard - arrived at 2:17 p.m.  
Councilor Brandon Sundeen

### STAFF

John Walsh, City Administrator	Suzanne Bishop, Library Director
Kathy Payne, City Recorder	Gloria Butsch, Finance Director
Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder	Bill Monahan, Contracted City Attorney
Jacob Graichen, City Planner	Matthew Kahl, Contracted City Attorney

### OTHERS

Stephanie Patterson	Don Patterson	Ron Trommlitz	Hannah Woods
Bill Eagle	Claudia Eagle	Nancy Whitney	Jenni Gilbert
Steve Topaz	Jay Tappan	Brady Preheim	Julie Pelletier
Chris Rich	Jane Garcia	Diana Weiner	Margaret Trenchard-Smith
Jennifer Massey	Michelle	Adam St. Pierre	AI
Jenn	Mitz	Matthew, CCMH	Claire Catt
Erin Salisbury	Marci Sanders	MM	

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

### VISITOR COMMENTS

- ◆ Nancy Whitney. Ms. Whitney said she did not understand why the Council was questioning the Event Coordinator's contract renewal, describing how E2C had brought more money into the city than this Council or any previous council. She asked if the Council was aware of Portland being sued for fees added to utility bills and if the Council would add \$35 to the water bill before or after the election. She was offended by the Council considering eliminating public comment at its meetings.

Mayor Scholl explained the Council had discussed moving the public comment period to the regular session agenda rather than during the work session.

- ◆ Margaret Trenchard-Smith. Ms. Trenchard-Smith, speaking on behalf of the Kiwanis Club of which she was President-Elect, addressed their service organization's efforts supporting children and families in the community for almost 100 years and the work they do to raise funds including during the Children's Fair and Spirit of Halloweentown. She was concerned about how their work would change if the City's Event Coordinator changes and a new model were considered where the Club's volunteers would be redefined as workers and paid as individuals, explaining why the Club preferred to continue as before with the Club being compensated for the volunteer hours of its members. She asked the Council to clarify the matter.

- ◆ Ron Trommlitz. Mr. Trommlitz addressed the 2 million-gallon (2MG) Water Reservoir on Pittsburg Road, its leaking, the Council now facing the decision of abandoning the reservoir or using an alternate reservoir site, and John Walsh's leadership administration failure which needed to change. The City was seeking \$10 million in grants to replace the reservoir, and those issuing the grants should review the history of the 2MG reservoir. The City should not need grants for its operation. The delays had led to increasing costs. Honesty and transparency were missing.
- ◆ Bill Eagle. Mr. Eagle, Kiwanis Club Secretary, noted that all the money the Club earned during Spirit of Halloweentown stayed within the community. He asked the Council to take the Club's concerns about the new model into consideration.

Mayor Scholl asked was there a part of the Request for Proposal (RFP) process where the Kiwanis Club would not be included. Mr. Walsh replied he was not aware of anything, noting they are paid differently in the proposed contract.

- ◆ Julie Pelletier. Ms. Pelletier who performed at Spirit of Halloweentown with the Witches of St. Helens Dance, said they were in support of keeping E2C and Tina as the Event Coordinator, sharing her background of four years with the Fair Board planning a local event.
- ◆ Brady Preheim. Mr. Preheim pointed out the people who came for public comment in the afternoon were not necessarily the same as the ones who come at night. With only four meetings a month, it would not be too much to ask to keep public comment during both meetings. He renewed his objection to the RFP process. Hardly anyone on the review committee was qualified to consider. The City should use a special contractor to evaluate the RFPs. He explained why Jenni Gilbert should be eliminated from the process, as she had posted comments on social media about Tina and E2C. He submitted copies of screenshots into the record.

Councilor Hubbard arrived at 2:17 p.m.

- ◆ Diana Weiner. Ms. Weiner encouraged the Council to create an advisory board for tourism, explaining why.
- ◆ Steve Topaz. Mr. Topaz addressed how during his time on the Council, John Walsh and the Recorder had decided not to put on the agenda items he submitted to the Recorder to be added, suggesting the Council remove the certified two Recorders, as they took an oath to follow state law which they violated when they refused to post the item he wanted. He asked Mayor Scholl to read aloud if he had the time The Philosophy of Good Society.

Mayor Scholl pointed out that he reviewed every single agenda. He did not remember the incident Mr. Topaz referenced, but he was sure he was at fault, as he was not perfect.

- ◆ Steve Toschi. Mr. Toschi explained provisions in the Event Coordinator contract that would require the event planner to identify each person that worked the event and how much each person made. Paying it to service organizations was a questionable practice. The City should deal with a contractor that could bring a service to the city, and the City should stay as far away from getting into the tourism business as possible, maintaining a model of a contractor who could handle the business and the finances.
- ◆ Adam St. Pierre. Mr. St. Pierre thanked the Council for following through with the Event Coordinator RFP which had to be put out along with a contract because John Walsh did not do his job and follow through in a timely fashion. The Council needed to make sure the contract that

came out with the RFP would be what actually got enacted. He believed every person on the selection committee had some type of bias.

Mayor Scholl thanked the Kiwanis for their service and attending the meeting.

## **DISCUSSION TOPICS**

### **1. Library Board Annual Report - *Diana Wiener***

Library Board Member Diana Wiener presented the annual report via PowerPoint, a copy of which was included in the archive packet for this meeting. Key items highlighted were as follows:

- The officers and members of the Library Board.
- The 2023-2028 Strategic Plan and City Work Plan.
- The Board's goals.
- FY 2024 highlights.
- Resources the library provided.
- The library's databases.
- The library staff and volunteers.
- Friends of St. Helens Public Library.
- Open hours and visits data.
- The solar panel microgrid project.
- Looking at the year ahead.
- Behind the scenes images of the library staff.
- Strategic Plan Goals 1-3.

### **2. Planning Commission Annual Report - *City Planner Jacob Graichen***

City Planner Jacob Graichen presented the annual report, covering activities from June 2023 to May 2024, a copy of which was included in the archive packet for this meeting. Key items highlighted included the Commission's number of meetings and public hearings, Planning Director decisions, discussion items, architectural reviews, proactive items, future projects/plans, and what the Council could do to support the Commission.

### **3. Review of Proposed Changes to Planning Fees - *City Planner Jacob Graichen***

City Planner Graichen reviewed the proposed changes to the Planning Department Fee Schedule, a copy of which was included in the archive packet for this meeting. The proposed changes would increase most fees by 3.6 percent and were on tonight's agenda for approval. If the resolution were approved, the changes would go into effect July 1. He described the fee items different from the roughly 3.5 percent increase: the Historic Resource Review, notice fee, a referral, temporary use permit for food carts/trucks and pods, and time extensions. He confirmed all the fees were increasing.

Mayor Scholl recalled the last time the Planning fees increased, a contractor spoke to the Council and asked what the Council was doing. Mr. Graichen noted this time the increase was more modest.

He clarified the City decided referrals, and the referred projects would pay the referral fee. The referral was typically at his discretion. Council President Chilton was concerned, as the practice did not seem fair. He explained how sometimes people wanted to go to the Planning Commission as a strategy.

### **4. Review Proposed Amendments to Development Code - *City Planner Jacob Graichen***

City Planner Jacob Graichen presented the proposed Development Code amendments, a copy of which was included in the archive packet for this meeting, noting some of the amendments the Council had discussed previously. Key items highlighted included:

- Modifying the multi-family development rules that in some places units could be detached.
- Provisions regulating Measure 109 legalizing psilocybin under the land use laws.
- Aligning the Code with the manufactured home rules.
- Aligning the Code with the rules expanding childcare facilities to non-residential areas.

- Reexamining validity periods such as approved land use permits and planned development overlays.
- Adding single-room occupancies to the list of needed housing.
- Housekeeping and scrivener error items including proposing a five-year delay to do a 20 percent reduction to the setback when a home had been there for a while and the owner wanted to do an addition.
- Changes by zoning district.
- Special notice considerations when a rule could potentially affect the value of property.

He added recent discussions with Columbia Community Mental Health (CCMH) and possibilities along their campus to meet their goal regarding Senate Bill 8 concerning affordable housing on non-residential land and House Bill 2916 regarding transitional housing within the Urban Growth Boundary were not mentioned in the memo in the packet and would be brought back to the Council.

He clarified regarding the setbacks with the modification to multi-family development rules, some stipulations were already in place with the duplex rules.

Mayor Scholl noted City Planner Graichen always made sure there were 1.5 parking spaces per unit. The Council discussed infrastructure needs for each unit which concerned Council President Chilton. City Planner Graichen acknowledged two parties on a lot could share a water meter, etc.

Mayor Scholl explained why he did not like the five-year delay to do a 20 percent reduction to the setback. Mr. Graichen said the period of the delay could change through the public hearing process of the amendments. Mayor Scholl clarified he did not believe a year's delay would be more appropriate.

#### **5. Review of Proposed Utility Rates Changes - Finance Director Gloria Butsch**

Finance Director Gloria Butsch reviewed the proposed rate adjustments for water, sewer, and storm (memo included in the meeting packet) based on the rate study performed by Steve Donovan of Donovan Enterprises. The City would budget to have a refreshed rate study in FY2026. For this year, the total increases between all three utilities would be a \$3.76 per month to the average residential utility bill. This item was on tonight's regular meeting agenda for approval.

Mayor Scholl noted the increases were for the Water, Sewer, and Storm Master Plans.

#### **6. Utility Bill Leak Adjustment Request for 555 Commons Drive (Columbia River Foursquare Church) - City Administrator John Walsh**

City Administrator John Walsh presented the leak adjustment request for Foursquare Church, a copy of which was included in the archive packet. The church's typical bill was about \$450. The bill in question was \$2300. All the leak repair receipts were in order, and the request was on tonight's agenda for approval.

#### **7. Discussion regarding Proposals Received for Special Event Coordination and Management Services - City Administrator John Walsh**

City Administrator Walsh explained his role in handling the proposals after hearing criticism that he was too close to the process.

Attorney Matthew Kahl reported that the evaluation process was not complete at this time. It would need to go back to the evaluation committee for further review to then be brought back before the Council for discussion either at a special meeting or the next regular meeting.

He clarified the scoring of the proposals was not complete and that the attorneys were still in the process of making sure everything was scored in accordance with the provisions of the RFP and the Public Contracting Code.

City Administrator Walsh said the Council could have a coordinating call after the meeting to understand what the shortcomings were.

### **8. Report from City Administrator John Walsh**

City Administrator Walsh stated he was offended by the public comment about the City Recorder and Deputy City Recorder, both of whom were appreciated. Highlights of his report were as follows:

- He addressed the construction downtown with three contractors at work.
- Citizens Day in the Park would be held June 22, and the logistics were coming together.
- The film crew filming downtown was just about wrapped up.
- The Columbia View Park project was underway. The stage in the park was completely rotten. The City asked the contractor for a price to bring the stage up to grade level with a gravel pad.
- Project Arcadia was moving forward at the mill, and meetings and check-ins were going well.
- The electrical upgrades at McCormick Park were completed with Columbia River PUD's help.
- He addressed several big decisions on tonight's agenda involving Budget issues including losing several positions and using one-time revenues to balance the Budget.
- The City met with its community partners this week for an extreme weather meeting to respond to people in need. For the most part, the City's public facilities and the Senior Center's assets were being considered for warming and cooling.
- Public hearings will be held for the Budget tonight.
- Tonight's meeting includes an Ordinance to allow alcohol in McCormick Park. The OLCC permit will not be done in time for 13 Nights on the River.
- He opened a discussion on the governance and oversight of the tourism and event management program, addressing the history of the City's tourism and events since he started working for St. Helens. He added the Council might want to consider re-enacting the Tourism Committee.

Council President Chilton believed re-enacting the Tourism Committee was a good idea and that tourism had grown too much for the City Administrator to handle among all his tasks. City Administrator Walsh described all of his current responsibilities.

Council President Chilton asked for the Tourism Committee to be on the next agenda for discussion. City Recorder Payne would provide the current Code on the Tourism Committee to the Council.

Mayor Scholl recalled his understanding of the contention on the Tourism Committee that resulted in its being repealed.

**ADJOURN – 3:47 p.m.**

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

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

Respectfully submitted by Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder.

ATTEST:

/s/ Kathy Payne

Kathy Payne, City Recorder

/s/ Rick Scholl

Rick Scholl, Mayor