



COUNCIL WORK SESSION

Wednesday, October 20, 2021

APPROVED MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mayor Rick Scholl
Council President Doug Morten – via Zoom
Councilor Patrick Birkle – arrived at 1:05 p.m.
Councilor Stephen R. Topaz
Councilor Jessica Chilton

STAFF PRESENT

John Walsh, City Administrator
Matt Brown, Deputy City Administrator
Kathy Payne, City Recorder
Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder
Mouhamad Zaher, Public Works Director
Brian Greenway, Police Chief
Joe Hogue, Police Lieutenant

Jacob Graichen, City Planner
Jenny Dimsho, Associate Planner
Crystal King, Communications Officer
Tina Curry, Event Coordinator
Matthew Kahl, City Attorney
David Rabbino, City Attorney
Peter Hicks, City Attorney

OTHERS

Jeremy
Claire Catt

CALL WORK SESSION TO ORDER – 1:00 p.m.

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

- ◆ Tina Curry. Halloweentown update:
 - Very busy last weekend
 - About 60,000 people have visited so far this year
 - Hot Rod Rally Car Show on Saturday was fantastic. People were excited about it.
 - Garbage is insane. They are using every can available, and supplies are limited. Hudson Garbage Services empties the cans on Monday and staff picks up garbage on the ground that morning.
 - Celebrities will be coming this weekend
 - They are in the black and able to cover expenses
 - The Little Spooks parade is on the last Saturday of the month
 - More celebrities will be coming the last weekend
 - There will be a street party the last weekend

DISCUSSION TOPICS

1. Planning Division Semi-Annual Report - **Jacob Graichen, City Planner**

City Planner Graichen and Associate Planner/Community Development Project Manager Dimsho reviewed their presentation. A copy is included in the archive packet for this meeting.

Strategic Plan 2021 Update

- 2021 Development Code amendments complete
- N. 10th/11th Street Bluff not complete
- St. Helens Industrial Business Park moving forward
- Riverwalk Design and Phase I Construction moving forward
 - December 15 tentative open house to review 30% design
- Bennett Building
 - New windows installed in the front
 - Bids in process for new parapet roofing and new/refurbished metal cornice
- Columbia Pacific Food Bank relocation plans to be complete in January
- Millard Road Development RFP results coming to Council soon
- Project Management Support
 - Business Oregon IFA Special Public Works Low Interest Loan Program for Riverfront District Public Improvements
 - OSMB Technical Assistance Program for Grey Cliffs Park in-water facility
 - OPRD Local Government Grant for Campbell Park Sports Courts project
 - Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board grant assistance
 - ODOT Safe Routes to School being managed by City Engineer Sue Nelson. Waiting on an MOU from the County.
 - Marshall Street/US 30 closure - waiting on a bid to acquire/install closure
- Current Planning Update:
 - St. Helens Place Apartments on Matzen Street is almost complete. The only thing left to do is construct storage units.
 - Grocery Outlet is complete
 - The building permit for Popeye's Chicken is close to being issued
 - Marijuana facility at 100 St. Helens Street is complete, after two appeals
 - Graystone Estates is near completion
 - New facility for Control Solutions at the corner of Industrial Way and McNulty Way
 - Armstrong property lines moved
 - Belton Road land division is complete
 - Running Dogs proposal for a house and micro-brew facility near N. 18th Street and St. Helens Street
 - Permits issued for the new apartments on Gable Road. Graichen acted as the responsible party because they were HUD funded.
 - St. Helens High School renovations are underway
 - Mark Comfort's RV park on Kavanagh is moving forward
 - Four-lot commercial subdivision on Highway 30 near Columbia Commons
 - Proposed subdivision in the County that Graichen has been reviewing because it is in the City's Urban Growth Area
 - Normally process one annexation a year. In 2021, on track to process nine annexations.
- Reviewed other Planning news
- Participated in a Certified Local Government four-year review in July.
- Looking ahead:
 - Current planning
 - Staff training
 - Beekeeping rules
 - Cottage cluster and annexation amendments
 - New strategic plan efforts
 - Anticipate at least one large subdivision application
 - Water Master Plan support

- Parks & Recreation Master Plan support
- Planning Commission vacancy efforts
- Reviewed long-term needs

Councilor Topaz talked about a meeting last week about the Waterfront beach. The architects did not seem to understand the river. The town was built on the river. There is a lot of land that cannot be built on because of the water, including the mill property area. What is the main theme of the mill property? At some point, the mill will die. How will they operate a sewer plant without a lot of water? They have toxic waste under water along that whole line. What kind of industrial business do they want there? He has not seen a good design or understanding of the value of the river. Is there a 20-year plan for that? Graichen responded that there is not a plan for a specific industry. There is a plan to extend utilities and parcelization of the property. Councilor Topaz said that parcelization could kill it for some industries. Apartments can go anywhere but industry cannot. Just recently, there has been a big problem with getting goods into the US. They are trying to make a deep-water port across the river. Does the City have any plans to provide a tugboat, fueling, etc. as an auxiliary to that? Graichen said no, not that he's aware of. There are challenges accessing the water because the mill encompasses so much of it. The spur is in that area as well. However, they do have a plan to ensure that the spur is not blocked off and there is a way to get around the mill, despite the challenges. Councilor Topaz talked about the potential of the mill being gone in the next 20 years, making the building obsolete. Graichen explained that the plan does not include the elimination of the mill.

Councilor Birkle believes the role of Planning is to help implement Council's direction. He agrees with Councilor Topaz's concerns for visioning but pointed out that it should be directed to the Council. Mayor Scholl agreed.

Mayor Scholl thanked staff for their work and great presentation. Kudos to Dimsho for her growth over the last few years. He is encouraged with her work and understanding of the Urban Renewal Plan.

Councilor Topaz asked if there is a budget to further educate Dimsho. Mayor Scholl has noticed that she's been self-educating well on her own. Education is always encouraged. Graichen added that Planning has a budget for professional development.

Mayor Scholl asked for an update about the Millard Road property. Graichen responded that they have been speaking with the developer's planner. Discussions have been going well and they will have a presentation for Council soon.

Councilor Birkle acknowledged the need to look at future staffing.

City Administrator Walsh talked about the parcelization framework plan for the Industrial property. The mill site was not really included in that. An Economic Opportunities Analysis would help target industries for the property.

Councilor Topaz has noticed that consulting firms don't tend to look at water being an important part of economic development. Mayor Scholl agreed that they need to consider the water.

2. Strategic Action Plan Updates

Brown reviewed...

- Parks & Recreation Master Plan RFP on tonight's agenda.
- A broadband survey is being conducted. Mayor Scholl pointed out that people are saying the survey takes too long and are quitting before they are done. Brown confirmed the survey takes about 18 minutes. It has been developed over the last 10 years by S&G. All of the questions are necessary. Brown will work with Communications Officer King to announce the length and why it's necessary at the beginning of the survey.

- Will begin holding monthly meetings with Mackenzie for the Public Safety Facility (PSF). Councilor Chilton has been invited.
- Planning a community engagement event on December 1 for Mackenzie to give a PSF update.

3. City Administrator Report - *John Walsh*

- Fantastic Planning report. There is a lot of work involved with growth.
- Police staffing discussion. Government was created based on a foundation of safety. St. Helens leads public safety for the region. Keeping it staffed is a challenge. It's a balance between maintaining a high level of service and fiscal reality. Improvements were made this year to retain officers, but they know they will lose some due to retirement next year. Lieutenant Hogue suggested a hiring list to select from as needed. Roles have reversed and qualified officers will go where they want to work.

Hogue attended training in Olympia about recruiting and retention. The goal is to stay ahead when it takes so long to recruit and train.

Chief Greenway heard Planning talk about an increase in development. The Police Department is spending \$18,000/month on overtime. Last year, that was \$14,000/month. There is a possibility of burnout. There are officers who don't want to work overtime and they can't require it. He would like the Council to put safety as a priority. They have already reduced services to the community. They want to be able to continue the level of service that residents expect and deserve. The officers are committed to keeping the community safe, but the City needs to keep them safe and motivated.

Discussion of creating a hiring list now to be ready when they have funding and openings. Hogue talked about the City of Hillsboro being continuously open for lateral officers. Greenway added that other agencies continue to attempt to take our officers, even with the wage adjustment. They need to be aggressive and communicate the new station and incentives.

Councilor Topaz talked about future pandemics and being prepared. They need more bodies.

Councilor Birkle talked about the community being supportive of the Police Department. They need to continue to communicate the needs to the public.

Councilor Chilton expressed frustration that this item was removed from the agenda. She wants to make sure they follow-up with this and communicate that they are supported.

Mayor Scholl wants to be sure this is included in the next budget. This opens the door for discussion.

Walsh suggested they consider continuous hiring like Hillsboro. Greenway agreed. His only concern is that there is no money in the budget right now for additional staff. He wants to be cautious with interviewing and not being able to hire. Mayor Scholl suggested they wait for a while until it gets closer to the new fiscal year. Councilor Topaz suggested moving money from the General Fund to the Police Department for staffing. Mayor Scholl responded that there are no extra funds for staffing with the new facility. They may need to consider \$4/month for the new PSF.

Greenway will work with staff to develop a plan and bring it back to Council for review.

- City dock use discussion
 - Dock Use Advisory Committee proposed members:
 - Mayor Scholl, Council President Morten, and Councilor Topaz – rotating so only two attend a time
 - City Administrator Walsh
 - City Prosecutor Erskine
 - Police Department representative – Corporal King
 - Columbia County Marine Patrol representative – Sheriff Pixley or MP Deputy

- St. Helens Marina representative – Brad Hendrickson and/or Toni Doggett
- Columbia River Yachting Association representative – Andy or Jolene
- Marine Board representative – Janine Belleque
- Citizens at large – Rich Mason & Art Leskovich
- Kiosk
 - Charge a fee? If so, how much?
 - Enforce time restrictions?
 - Who will enforce?
 - Need to train officers
- St. Helens does not have a great reputation with boaters. However, they are not alone in that and are working on it.
- Riverwalk and Street projects are going well
- Working with NW Natural Gas to renew their franchise agreement
- Columbia River PUD will be installing an EV station behind the Mason Building. They are also working on relocating power to underground.
- Halloween is pushing new boundaries every year. People are here all day long.
- Discussion of when to have a meeting to discuss Urban Renewal, what it is, what the boundaries are, what its used for, etc. Consensus of Council to have the meeting November 17 at 5:00 p.m. with dinner.
- The Library Board would like to have a joint meeting with Council in November or December. He will work with staff to figure out a date.
- Need to set a date for a Council retreat. He will bring back some dates to Council for discussion.
- Attended the LOC Board virtual meeting this morning.
- LOC has their general meeting on Friday. Councilor Chilton will attend as a voting delegate.

Councilor Chilton asked about changes to Parks & Recreation. Will that come to Council? Walsh said he will bring that to Council soon.

ADJOURN – 3:00 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