



COUNCIL WORK SESSION

Wednesday, August 17, 2022

APPROVED MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mayor Rick Scholl
Council President Doug Morten
Councilor Patrick Birkle
Councilor Stephen R. Topaz
Councilor Jessica Chilton - via Zoom

STAFF PRESENT

John Walsh, City Administrator
Kathy Payne, City Recorder
Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder
Mouhamad Zaher, Public Works Director
Sharon Darroux, Engineering Manager
Jacob Graichen, City Planner

Crystal King, Communications Officer
Aaron Kunders, Water Quality Manager
Jenny Dimsho, Associate Planner
Mike De Roia, Building Official
Bill Monahan, City Attorney
Tina Curry, Event Coordinator

OTHERS

Paul Vogel
Jason Moos
Jak Massey

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

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

None

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

1. Employee Length of Service Recognition - Jose Castilleja (15 years), Curt LeMont (15 years), and Jacob Graichen (15 years)

Mayor Scholl and Council members congratulated and thanked Police Sergeant Jose Castilleja, Public Works Utility Worker II Curt LeMont, and City Planner Jacob Graichen. Graichen was the only one able to attend in person.

3. Semi-Annual Report from Columbia Economic Team - *Paul Vogel, Executive Director*

Paul Vogel reviewed his report. A copy is included in the archive packet for this meeting.

- Thanked Council for their consistent support and participation
- Reviewed collaborative initiatives with the County and St. Helens
- Provided grant application assistance
- Reviewed recruitment projects
- Reviewed retention, expansion, and recovery
- Keep it Local provides digital marketing
- Reviewed tourism efforts and partnerships
- Focusing on membership
- Reviewed primary objectives

Paul introduced Small Business Development Center Director Jason Moos. Jason will be meeting with each City in the County to find out how the Center can best serve them. He will also be bringing training to small businesses. City Administrator Walsh will coordinate a time for Jason to come back to a Council meeting. Jason agreed to provide questions for Council to review in advance.

Councilor Topaz asked if they are focused on any particular industries, such as aircraft, farm instruments, medical, etc. to help with build systems at OMIC. Paul responded that it's agnostic. It's up to OMIC, and their members, what they do. CET is only a partner. They're not driving their strategy or Board of Directors. Paul can connect him to the OMIC members.

2. Semi-Annual Report from South Columbia County Chamber of Commerce - *Jak Massey, Member Relationship Manager*

Jak Massey reviewed her report. A copy is included in the archive packet for this meeting.

- 114 active members
- Networking events are well attended
- Reviewed marketing improvements and community outreach
- *Trips to Discover* magazine listed St. Helens as one of the top 18 best small towns to visit during Halloween
- She was contacted by American Pickers asking for assistance with promoting their visit in October. The Chamber is not able to help them because they specifically stated they do not want to work with businesses, and that is what the Chamber supports. She can pass contact information on to the City if they want to follow-up.
- Reviewed support available to members
- Welcomed new Board members
- Return of the Ambassador Program
- Bringing back the Awards Banquet
- Reviewed community involvement and legislative updates
- Candidate forum September 29
- No longer pursuing funds to act as a Visitor Center. Their responsibility is to businesses. They will continue to provide visitor information during their open hours.

Councilor Birkle attended the Food Bank ribbon cutting and evening event. It was good to see the presence of the Chamber ambassadors and hear that businesses feel supported by the Chamber.

Council President Morten thanked Jak for her report. Kiwanis is redoing their sign to pay tribute to all civic organizations.

Walsh told Jak that the City can remove and store the visitor sign if they decide to do that.

Mayor Scholl looks forward to the banquet returning.

Councilor Topaz talked about the train depot memorabilia in the attic that American Pickers may be interested in. Jak is interested in looking at it and possibly displaying it. Councilor Topaz explained how to access the attic. Mayor Scholl is willing to help Jak if she needs it.

4. Citizen's Day Debriefing - *Lisa and Crystal*

Communications Officer Crystal King and Deputy City Recorder Lisa Scholl reviewed their presentation. A copy is included in the archive packet for this meeting.

- Free barbecue lunch
- Live music
- Car show
- 48 Vendors with activities
- Approximately 1,000 attendees
- Received positive feedback from attendees

- Selecting a date early is very helpful
- Recognized staff that took lead positions, helped leading up to the event, and the day of the event
- CERT controlled traffic and parking
- Event cost approximately \$7,512.65. They received \$5,919.45 in donations, thanks to local businesses.
- Staff and volunteer hours totaled approximately 404.25 hours
- More assistance is needed for the event in the future
- Staff recommends hosting the event June 24, 2023
 - July and August have higher potential for extreme heat and smoke from fires
 - Unfortunately, that does mean three weekends in a row for staff and volunteers with the Kiwanis Community Parade the week prior and 4th of July the week after
- Needs for the future
 - Electricity for vendors
 - Additional parking
 - CERT can't help people cross at Old Portland Road and S. 18th Street because of the absence of crosswalks and sidewalks
 - Move to Columbia View Park after construction

Mayor Scholl talked about this being his idea and it started small. He did all the planning and did not ask for assistance until the day of the event. It has since grown to what it is now. They can work with Public Works Director Zaher to get additional power sources. He emphasized starting now to have it ready in time. June serves citizens the best.

Councilor Topaz suggested cleaning up gravel piles to allow for more parking. He is not in favor of making the event smaller. They can increase power and water to be ready for next year. There are plans to upgrade Old Portland Road, so they can start early by installing sidewalks and painting crosswalks. He recognized the work done by staff. The attendees were happy.

Council President Morten appreciated the thorough debrief. There is potential to combine events. This will only get bigger and better. He suggested it be facilitated by the Event Coordinator. That would reduce staff demand.

Councilor Birkle acknowledged that it was a great event. He would like to set a date prior to January.

Mayor Scholl talked about this being an opportunity for the public to meet the elected officials, department heads, and all staff. This is the best park and may just need some infrastructure improvements. He suggests putting in a ferris wheel. He spoke with almost every vendor, and they were having fun. It was a great event, which staff has helped grow. He suggests they keep it how it is now and not making it bigger.

Council agreed to June 24, 2023 for next year's event. Staff will return to the October 5, 2022 meeting for follow-up.

5. Review City's Mercury TMDL Implementation Plan for Willamette River Watershed - Mouhamad & Sharon

Public Works Director Mouhamad Zaher and Engineering Manager Sharon Darroux reviewed their presentation. A copy is included in the archive packet for this meeting.

- Necessary reduction of pollutants into the Willamette River
- Reviewed stormwater measures
 - Pollution prevention and good housekeeping for municipal operations
 - Public education and outreach
 - Public involvement and participation

- Illicit discharge detection and elimination
 - Construction site run-off control
 - Post construction site runoff for new developments and redevelopments
- Monitor and report to DEQ
- Implementation needs to begin by September 3, 2022
- Reviewed planned strategies
- Reviewed next steps
- Will require funding
 - Additional Public Works Operations
 - TMDL program coordination
 - Public programs and training

Councilor Topaz asked if there is really a mercury load problem in town or is this just bureaucratic. Zaher said that they are required by DEQ to implement the program. He believes DEQ did extensive research prior to requiring it. The pollutants are not necessarily coming from St. Helens but could be coming from upstream.

Mayor Scholl appreciates the education piece and the increased protection of fish. He sees the need for additional staffing.

Councilor Birkle talked about public education including painted signs at storm drains to remind people about the need to protect waterways. Zaher and Darroux agreed. Public education is very important. It will help with all pollutants.

Mayor Scholl asked if there would be a fee. Darroux said a small fee and a plan will need to be submitted. City Administrator Walsh pointed out that the stormwater fund is lacking. Councilor Topaz asked if there is any funding assistance from the State. Darroux said they could apply for a loan and could also seek grants.

Council President Morten talked about staff being more effective and efficient. Darroux agreed they have a good team and work well with Public Works.

Mayor Scholl thanked staff. There are a lot of big projects, and they need help. Zaher acknowledged they are overwhelmed but try not to ask for help until they really need it.

6. Review Annual Recommendation to Adjust Cascades Reserve Allocation - *Mouhamad & Aaron*

Public Works Director Mouhamad Zaher and Water Quality Manager Aaron Kunders reviewed the recommendation. A copy is included in the archive packet for this meeting. Recommended adjusting the rate to 83.3%.

Councilor Topaz asked if there are any problems if DEQ changes their rules. Kunders responded that this doesn't have anything to do with DEQ directly. Loading from the mill can affect what DEQ limits.

Break - 3:09 p.m.

7. Comstock Planned Development Overlay Final Decision Considerations - *Jacob*

City Planner Jacob Graichen reviewed his report. A copy is included in the archive packet for this meeting. The ordinance on tonight's agenda is silent about the sewer. The second reading is tonight. If they decide they don't agree with something about the public hearing, they can choose not to adopt the ordinance. Based on the subdivision public hearing tonight, it will help them make a decision.

Mayor Scholl is going to recuse himself from tonight's subdivision hearing. He does want to know if tonight's hearing is mute. Graichen explained that the sewer concerns will come up tonight and will bring up more things to think about.

Mayor Scholl pointed out that this will come up again. Are they going to deny everyone? Rumor has it that Stimson property does not have adequate sewer. Councilor Topaz asked if he wants to build and there's not adequate sewer, can they just say there's not adequate sewer. Graichen does not want to have this discussion prior to tonight's hearing.

Mayor Scholl is confused about the Planned Community Development showing a different zone than tonight's subdivision hearing. Graichen will bring that up tonight.

8. Review Proposed Amendments to Public Works Director Job Description - John

City Administrator Walsh reviewed the job description. A copy is included in the archive packet for this meeting.

- Updates language
- Updates supervision component

Councilor Topaz pointed out under minimum qualifications that it lists an undergraduate degree in civil engineering. He wants to make sure that a civil engineer has a Professional Engineer (P.E.) license. It also says that a master's degree is preferred but does not say what field it should be in. He wants it to be more specific.

Walsh said that it's a manager position and not meant for technical review. City Recorder Payne added that the master's would be the same as listed as a bachelors. Councilor Topaz repeated that the position must have a P.E. Mayor Scholl pointed out that Councilor Topaz is micromanaging because of his engineering background. The Public Works Director is overseeing an entire operation. They are not managing projects. Councilor Topaz continues to waste their time. Councilor Topaz disagreed. He wants that position to have a technical master's degree. Council President Morten does not want to limit applicants with that requirement. Zaher said it's likely that whoever applies will have an educational background in engineering. Councilor Topaz wants it to be a master's degree in technical science. Councilor Birkle said they shouldn't require it if it's not required in a bachelor's degree.

Councilor Topaz said this position is political. Mayor Scholl disagreed. He treats everyone fairly. Councilor Birkle agreed, employees are not political.

Walsh said there is additional language in the job description referencing the Public Works Director as an emergency responder. This position is exempt and on-call 24/7.

9. Report from City Administrator John Walsh

- Tonight's agenda highlights
 - Agreement with Pauly Rogers for auditing services
 - Agreement with Scappoose Bay Watershed Council for Nob Hill Nature Park, McCormick Park, and Godfrey Park
 - Amendment to 1st and Strand Street project
 - IGA for judicial services
- Oregon Government Ethics Commission (OGE) training here at 5:30 p.m. on September 21
- There is new legislation called the Oregon Paid Leave Program
 - 1% employment tax to fund a State program that creates 12 weeks of paid leave
 - Managed through the State, through the City as self-funded, or a third-party option they can look at
 - Based on income
 - 60% split for employee and 40% for employer
 - There is an administrative component of how it benefits that needs to be figured out
- Docks
 - Going well
 - Don't have an IGA for the Harbor Master yet

- People are paying
- Kids are jumping in the water there. There is underground electricity and very dangerous. Mayor Scholl suggested additional signage for no swimming.

ADJOURN – 3:53 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