



# COUNCIL WORK SESSION

Wednesday, June 19, 2024

## APPROVED MINUTES

### MEMBERS PRESENT

Mayor Rick Scholl  
Council President Jessica Chilton  
Councilor Mark Gundersen  
Councilor Russell Hubbard  
Councilor Brandon Sundeen

### STAFF PRESENT

John Walsh, City Administrator	Jacob Graichen, City Planner
Kathy Payne, City Recorder	Jenny Dimsho, Associate Planner
Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder	Bill Monahan, Contracted City Attorney
Gloria Butsch, Finance Director	Ashley Wigod, Contracted City Attorney

### OTHERS

Ron Trommlitz	Paul Vogel
Steve Topaz	Chris Iverson
Mitz	David Wasylenko
Brady Preheim	Scott Jacobson
Jennifer Shoemaker	

### CALL WORK SESSION TO ORDER – 7:00 p.m.

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

- ◆ Ron Trommlitz. Reviewed his concerns about the 2 million-gallon (2MG) water reservoir, the City's lack of transparency regarding the failure of the reservoir's rehabilitation, and the confusing Council update by Public Works on replacement of the reservoir.
- ◆ Brady Preheim. Thanked the Council for not eliminating visitor comments during work sessions. He addressed the Event Coordinator presentations/interviews and the RFP process, citing concerns that Councilor Hubbard was biased. He asked how the applicants were vetted, noting one applicant had incorrect data, adding he was waiting for his public records request for the score sheets. He described how the past Tourism Committee and the entire process was a disaster, opposing a revival of the Committee.
- ◆ Steve Topaz. Pleased to see all the Council minutes in the agenda for approval, unfortunately the information in the minutes was unavailable for use at meetings prior to tonight. Later today, a public hearing would be held on the Millard property and later on, Council would declare the property surplus. He described the proper procedure to declare property surplus and believed the City would be sued for not following procedure and any sale would be declared null and void.

Contracted Attorney Bill Monahan, who was retiring, introduced Ashley Wigod who would be the City's new contracted attorney, describing her experience.

He confirmed the procedure regarding the surplus property had been followed properly as the meeting had been noticed by City Recorder Payne and a public hearing would be held tonight. He agreed to attend tonight's meeting at Mayor Scholl's request.

## **DISCUSSION TOPICS**

### **1. Annual Report from City's Insurance Agent of Record - *Chris Iverson, Hagan Hamilton Insurance***

Chris Iverson and David Wasylenko presented the annual report, a copy of which was included in the archive packet for this meeting, and hard copies were distributed to Council. Key items included a comparison of premiums for the upcoming year with the expiring year, and highlighting coverage for liability, auto, property, earthquake, flood, crime, cyber, and Workers' Compensation with SAIF. They offered to discuss particulars on current litigated claims with the Council either one-on-one or during an executive session.

Questions from the Council were addressed as follows:

- Previously nothing was insured at Sand Island campgrounds, as it was under construction.
- The agents recommended the City consider upgrading its cyber coverage. They would talk to City Administrator Walsh about upgrading and try to get the Council numbers on proceeding, as there were some IT requirements for the higher limits.
- The cyber coverage limit was increased about two years ago.

Mayor Scholl believed looking into higher limits for cyber claims was a good idea.

### **2. Discussion regarding Downtown Parking - *City Planner Jacob Graichen***

City Planner Graichen reviewed his report, a copy of which was included in the archive packet for this meeting. Key items presented included permanent use as an exception to off-street parking in the Houlton Business District and Riverfront District; parking options, including lots and street parking in the downtown core, and the current sensitivity about the downtown parking supply due to the construction. He noted future expected increased demand included the County fully occupying the John Gumm School, highlighting opportunities for additional capacity with parallel parking on Columbia Boulevard and angled parking on St. Helens Street in the north area of downtown and opportunities in the south. He noted the City's last parking study was in 2002 and the Urban Renewal Plan's included a public parking management strategy.

Mayor Scholl noted the genesis of the discussion was a downtown building proposal being denied by the Planning Commission due to lack of parking. The Council should start talking about preventing such issues.

Planning Commissioner Jacobson said the Transportation Master Plan addressed the matter, adding that with the events the city had, mass transit was needed, such as shuttles and buses.

Mayor Scholl described how the 5<sup>th</sup> Street/St. Helens Street intersection area could be used for parking and City Administrator Walsh indicated the area's location, which was near the river and noted the Sorensons' private property nearby. Commissioner Jacobson recalled ideas around parking within the new development area. A brief discussion ensued about ways to utilize different areas for parking.

Planning Commissioner Shoemaker stated the Planning Commission did not want any implied development moratoriums because of parking. She was interested in doing a shared cost with developers on a parking garage, adding deeded parking was a possibility for funding.

Graichen clarified that off-street parking requirements still applied to the Riverfront and Houlton Districts; however, parking exceptions in such districts were not unlimited, citing a new building project that required a substantial variance.

Council President Chilton stated the plan should be updated and accounted for in the next Urban Renewal Budget, and asked what Council could do right now to address the parking issue, such as changing parallel parking spaces to diagonal spaces. Graichen replied the Public Works Director should be included in such discussions, but agreed as far as a capital improvement, adding capacity could be done cheaply with paint to re-stripe for angled parking, especially along Columbia Blvd.

Associate Planner Dimsho confirmed Urban Renewal had the authority to do a development agreement with a future owner which would establish terms and conditions on the sale which could include a shared parking arrangement on a City-owned piece of property within Urban Renewal District.

Commissioner Shoemaker noted that creating a temporary parking area on a City-owned property could cause issues when the City was ready to build a parking structure on that same land.

Mayor Scholl noted the 5<sup>th</sup> Street property was rarely full and less than two blocks away from where people wanted to go. He confirmed the City owned a parcel behind John Gumm School as well as another property he indicated on a map that fed into 3<sup>rd</sup> Street.

Associate Planner Dimsho noted Holcomb would have a grandfathered parking demand if he successfully brought back the Klondike Hotel due to the previous use, so he would not be limited like new developments.

Councilor Gundersen understood the Planning Commission's decision to deny was because the variance request was excessive. The city would have parking in the future, and it was a shame to not let development occur and deny an application for such a great building simply because of parking; perhaps projects could get a green light with a caveat that parking would be available.

Council discussed donating the City-owned property at the 5<sup>th</sup> Street/St. Helens Street intersection area and having the new owners do improvements, noting the land could be reclaimed for development or a parking structure. The City owned lot could be a good permanent solution for a parking garage, so using the area up against the bluff could be a temporary solution. It was important to find a solution now before a developer came in wanting parking exceptions and setting precedents for future developers.

Associate Planner Dimsho noted the Riverfront District had three subdistricts, and per the Code, a development agreement with a future developer in the Plaza Subdistrict could trump all other requirements in the zoning district if the Council agreed to the terms of the agreement, which provided some flexibility around parking.

City Administrator Walsh described the limitations of working with a master developer and the difficulty of finding a wholistic solution when doing parking a la carte.

Council President Chilton wanted to see a temporary parking lot downtown, maybe in the Mill District, until things change downtown, and then look into the Urban Renewal Budget for a full scope parking plan.

Mayor Scholl suggested using a cutout by the stairwell for temporary parking, noting the sidewalk had not been put in yet.

Discussion continued about whether a temporary lot would have helped the development that was denied. While the capacity would not have been onsite, a temporary lot could be used, depending how the City managed the lot, and could be a basis for a variance argument. With the increased parking capacity, a variance request could be within a closer scale.

Planning and Engineering staff were asked to work together to consider options like an interim service lot and re-striping for angled parking.

Walsh noted the Urban Renewal Agency did have the re-striping as a project, noting Transportation Growth Management (TGM) funding could also be pursued for parking solutions. He confirmed including such projects in the updated Transportation Systems Plan (TSP) would increase the City's ability to be awarded grants. He noted the 5<sup>th</sup> Street to 7<sup>th</sup> Street area was a potential parking lot location for staff to explore, adding much of the area was in the right-of-way, giving the City some flexibility on the lot design.

Mayor Scholl stated Walsh had the Council's authority to see if the Sorenson's, who owned property along 5th Street and Old Portland Road, would be interested in selling.

### **3. Review Joint Memorandum of Understanding with Columbia Economic Team for Growing Rural Oregon (GRO) Initiative - *CET Executive Director Paul Vogel***

Paul Vogel reviewed the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which was a housekeeping item to address transitions that occurred with CET assuming the role of coordinator. There was no material change to the grant amount and The Ford Family Foundation was fine with the new arrangement. A copy of the MOU was included in the archive packet for this meeting.

Mayor Scholl emphasized power remained a priority, and CET should let the City know anything it could do to assist in the process. Mr. Vogel agreed and reported on CET's recent efforts, including two grant applications, one for preliminary design of the substation and one for transmission and load planning. In terms of requests for power, CET had met with Project Arcadia, connecting them with several different entities. Additionally, the purchaser at Armstrong was meeting with the PUD yesterday and both load requirements were within a reasonable threshold. CET did a site visit with Columbia Commerce Center this morning and its power ramp fits within the thresholds; its 50-megawatt requirement would be needed in about nine years, which is much more favorable than the Project Sprint requirements. He noted CET finally had the funding intended to help the community aspect and support utilities.

Mayor Scholl reported another solar cell manufacturer had reached out, and he told them the City had the water and sewer, but not the power for their company, encouraging them to reach back out in about five years.

### **4. Discussion regarding Possibility of Bringing Back a Tourism Committee**

Mayor Scholl believed having a Tourism Committee was a good idea. Given the public testimony, Council should be sure to work with the contractor for the first six months or so, being open to their ideas with Council being the ultimate authority that knew the community well.

Key discussion items on bringing back a Tourism Committee were as follows:

- Treadway would need the most assistance in the beginning, and Council should step up to provide direction and community insights so City Administrator Walsh would not end up with extra work. Hard decisions would be made upfront and things would get easier. After six months or so, a committee could be formed if further direction is needed.
- It would be good to know why the previous committee was described as a "disaster" to avoid repeating the same results.
- Discussion is needed around the committee's role and how it would work with the contractor.
- The prior Tourism Committee consisted of stakeholders, including a City Councilor, Chamber representative, and business owner. Including residents on the Committee was suggested to provide further community insights.
- Council would hear a lot from people as the work begins, which may help inform how the committee could help carry tourism onward.

- Previously, when the Tourism Committee was working, the City's part-time tourism director at the time was more focused on marketing, not events. At the time, it was determined that hotels were able to accommodate events in town.
- Forming the committee would require additional work by staff, including taking minutes, being present at the meetings, etc.
- Understanding both Council's and Treadway's roles would be important as well as to delineate the responsibilities.
- Council should work with Treadway, addressing any issues or information requested, during public meetings by having Treadway on the agenda to avoid serial meetings. Council must also be mindful of any ex parte contact.
- Tourism should be taken off Council's plate as soon as possible since Council's role was to set policy and address other matters.

Council consented to work with the contractor, Treadway, during the transition and to engage the public on what was happening. Forming a Tourism Committee could be revisited after several months.

Mayor Scholl commended Tina Curry for all her long hours and hard work as Event Coordinator for the past 10 years.

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

City Administrator Walsh reported that the notice of intent to award the tourism contract to Treadway went out yesterday. The seven-day limit to protest would end June 25. Treadway would be in town to attend 13 Nights on the River.

- He explained that band performances were booked through July 4. The next performance in question was on July 11, so nine more bands were needed. He clarified the bands were reserved but not yet contracted.

Mayor Scholl stated Hit Machine wanted to play. He noted the vendors expressed concerns about paying for their food trucks and wanted the City to keep the event going. He added if Treadway was not on board by July 11, City Administrator Walsh was empowered to manage the event.

Walsh stated with no alcohol revenue, the City would have some expenses to pay for the bands, and he was nervous about how to get the revenue. As far as the money in the Wauna account, the E2C financial summaries are being requested for review, but the documents would not be available by June 30. He provided details regarding the E2C contract.

Finance Director Butsch explained the budget may be affected by timing on revenues coming in and the change of contractors, however, the City would be able to cover the expenses of bands for 13 Nights. The important part was making sure someone could manage the event.

City Administrator Walsh explained that to fast track the contract with Treadway, Council would need to hold a special meeting. However, as Spirit of Halloweentown and 13 Nights had grown into very popular events, drawing people from outside the area, maintaining continuity for both residents' and visitors' expectations was important. Without another contractor on board, the work fell to staff. He described some of the important work that Staff was not getting done. It was difficult to meet expectations when spread so thin. Council President Chilton reminded him to ask Council for support. He concluded his report stating:

- The Kiwanis Parade was great, and the weather looked to be great for Citizens Day in the Park.
- Brent Keller from Mason, Bruce, and Girard reached out for confirmation that the City wanted to move forward with the bid process for the timber sale. Council confirmed the answer was yes.

Mayor Scholl added he checked with IGA, Sunshine, Safeway, and followed up with Stan's, noting the Citizens Day event was coming together and looked like it was a go. More volunteers were always needed.

**ADJOURN – 3:35 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