



COUNCIL REGULAR SESSION

Wednesday, July 19, 2023

APPROVED MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mayor Rick Scholl
Councilor Mark Gundersen
Councilor Brandon Sundeen

MEMBERS ABSENT

Council President Jessica Chilton
Councilor Patrick Birkle

STAFF PRESENT

Kathy Payne, City Recorder
Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder
Tina Curry, Contracted Event Coordinator

OTHERS

Brady Preheim
Nick Hellmich
Jacob Woodruff
Eddie Dunton
Jim Coleman

CALL REGULAR SESSION TO ORDER – 7:00 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

- ◆ Nick Hellmich. He read an article into the record from the Columbia County Spotlight, written by Philip Stanton.

"When I took a course in pharmacology once back in college, I attended a lecture from a renowned cardiologist. His topic was the proper approach to prescribing blood pressure medications.

He began the lecture with a simple question: "What is the most effective way to lower blood pressure?" After a long silence from the class, he replied. "The most effective way to lower blood pressure is, of course, to kill the patient. It lowers the blood pressure to zero in a matter of seconds." Then, after a dramatic pause, he added: "But always keep in mind, killing the patient is rarely the best approach to improving the patient's overall health."

I cannot help to think of this sage advice as I observe the deaths of three beloved businesses in St. Helens' Old Town: Running Dog Brewery, Dockside Restaurant, and Molly's Market. Though the circumstances of each of these closures are multifaceted, all three closures do share one common symptom: the triggering of Fire Codes that prevented these businesses from connecting existing dining areas. In the case of Running Dog, the issue was a Fire Code preventing the owners from reopening the previously existing passage between their two adjoining pub spaces.

This same Fire Code came into play when Dockside owners considered the newly defunct Running Dog space as an option for remaining open in the Old Town after their current building was sold. In the case of Molly's Market, the same Fire Code prevented Molly Matchak from opening her newly remodeled bar area, directly resulting in her deciding to close her store entirely at the end of April.

No one would suggest that cities should not use Fire Codes to make buildings and business districts safer, any more than my professor was advocating that doctors should not prescribe blood pressure medications to increase the health of their patients. But if the ultimate result of applying Codes to make buildings safer results in the perpetual closure of vital businesses, perhaps it is time to consider the overall effect that these closures have on both the life of our business districts and the ultimate level of public safety we are trying to achieve. There are many factors that affect overall public safety and health, including whether buildings and businesses are open and serving the public good. One could ask, "What is the most effective way to keep the public safe in older buildings?" The answer, of course, is to close them entirely and lock the doors. It seems we are seeing this pattern playing itself out in the Old Town today in real-time. But at some point, perhaps we should keep in mind my old professor's advice: "Killing the patient is rarely the best approach to improving the patient's overall health."

- ◆ Brady Preheim. He only heard part of City Administrator Walsh's report about the lagoon. His concern is that there was no discussion about building a new sewer plant if they get rid of the lagoon. It's a huge expense and he doesn't think they have the funds to rebuild it.
- ◆ Jim Coleman. Last year at the April Council meeting, the tourism director requested \$250,000 to purchase a water taxi. In May, there was public testimony and she said it was already COI inspected. He has 30 years of maritime experience and is familiar with Coast Guard inspections, and it didn't have a COI at that time. The Council approved the purchase of the boat in Florida. The money went to Florida, but the boat didn't come to Oregon because it didn't have a COI. It arrived last month with a Florida COI. The Portland Coast Guard office still has jurisdiction of this boat and they must do an onsite inspection with the captain. It is still not in service and still does not have a COI.

RESOLUTIONS

1. **Resolution No. 1987:** A Resolution Expressing Support for and Authorizing Staff to Apply for a Transportation and Growth Management Grant from the Oregon Department of Transportation to Help Fund an Update to the City's Transportation System Management Plan

Mayor Scholl read Resolution No. 1987 by title. **Motion:** Motion made by Councilor Sundeen and seconded by Councilor Gundersen to adopt Resolution No. 1987. **Vote:** Yea: Mayor Scholl, Councilor Gundersen, Councilor Sundeen

AWARD BID AND/OR CONTRACT

2. Award Bid and Authorize Mayor to Sign Contract with Specialized Pavement Marking LLC for 2023 Street Striping Project in the Amount of \$53,944

Motion: Motion made by Councilor Sundeen and seconded by Councilor Gundersen to approve '2' above.

Vote: Yea: Mayor Scholl, Councilor Gundersen, Councilor Sundeen

APPROVE AND/OR AUTHORIZE FOR SIGNATURE

3. First Amendment to Kittelson & Associates, Inc. Agreement for S. 1st Street & St. Helens Street Intersection Improvements Project
4. Agreement with McKinstry Essention, LLC for Microgrid Planning and Preliminary Design for the Public Safety Building

5. Amendment No. 1 to Mackenzie Agreement for Public Safety Building Design

Motion: Motion made by Councilor Gundersen and seconded by Councilor Sundeen to approve '3' through '5' above. **Vote:** Yea: Mayor Scholl, Councilor Gundersen, Councilor Sundeen

CONSENT AGENDA FOR ACCEPTANCE

6. Grant Agreement with Oregon Parks and Recreation Department for McCormick Park Veterans Memorial Upgrade Project
7. Agreement with Native Plantscapes NW, LLC for Blackberry Mowing & Herbicide Application in and around Columbia View Park
8. Library Board Minutes dated June 12, 2023
9. Parks and Trails Commission Minutes dated June 12, 2023
10. Planning Commission Minutes dated May 9 and June 13, 2023

Motion: Motion made by Councilor Sundeen and seconded by Councilor Gundersen to approve '6' through '10' above. **Vote:** Yea: Mayor Scholl, Councilor Gundersen, Councilor Sundeen

CONSENT AGENDA FOR APPROVAL

11. Council Minutes dated June 7, 2023
- ~~12. Library Board 5-Year Strategic Plan~~
13. Accounts Payable Bill Lists
14. (NEW) Council Regular Session Minutes dated June 21, 2023

The Library Board 5-year Strategic Plan is on hold.

Motion: Motion made by Councilor Gundersen and seconded by Councilor Sundeen to approve '11, 13, and 14.'

Mayor Scholl pointed out that '14' was added due to time sensitive materials needing to be approved.

Vote: Yea: Mayor Scholl, Councilor Gundersen, Councilor Sundeen

WORK SESSION ACTION ITEMS

None

COUNCIL MEMBER REPORTS

Councilor Sundeen reported...

- Planning for the new Police Station continues. He looks forward to a finalized plan soon.
- Parks & Trials Commission met last week
 - Reviewing Parks and Special Use Permit fees
 - A liaison will begin attending Council and Planning Commission meetings
- Enjoyed attending the City/County meeting and dinner
- Looking forward to the Columbia County Fair

Councilor Gundersen reported...

- Attended the Planning Commission meeting last week. It went well. He is excited about the subcommittees and Gateway feature.

MAYOR SCHOLL REPORTS

- The City/County dinner hosted by the City went really well. Jim McCauley from League of Oregon Cities (LOC) gave a report of what is going on with the State and some of the difficulties of the walkout. It was nice having Senator Suzanne Weber attend the dinner. She is also in town today to meet with community members.
- Reminded everyone to have patience with all the construction in town
- Columbia County Fair is this week
- The Sand Island Sandcastle competition is coming up

OTHER BUSINESS

ADJOURN – 7:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder.

ATTEST:

/s/ Kathy Payne
Kathy Payne, City Recorder

/s/ Rick Scholl
Rick Scholl, Mayor