



COUNCIL WORK SESSION

Wednesday, December 21, 2022

APPROVED MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mayor Rick Scholl
Councilor Patrick Birkle
Councilor Stephen R. Topaz
Councilor Jessica Chilton

MEMBERS ABSENT

Council President Doug Morten

STAFF PRESENT

John Walsh, City Administrator
Kathy Payne, City Recorder
Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder
Mouhamad Zaher, Public Works Director
Sharon Darroux, Engineering Manager
Alex Bird, Engineer II

Tim Underwood, Construction Inspector
Suzanne Bishop, Library Director
Crystal King, Communications Officer
Rachael Barry, Government Affairs Specialist
Bill Monahan, City Attorney
Tina Curry, Event Coordinator

OTHERS

Benjamin Tiscareno
Lynne Pettit

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

RECOGNITION OF COUNCILOR TOPAZ'S 4-YEAR TENURE ON CITY COUNCIL

Mayor Scholl recognized Councilor Topaz for his service on the Council with a plaque and card.

Library Director recognized Councilor Topaz for his support of the Library, especially the Makerspace.

Councilor Chilton thanked Councilor Topaz for his service. His passion for the community and Food Bank have not gone unnoticed. She hopes to see him continue.

Councilor Birkle appreciates Councilor Topaz's support of the Library.

Councilor Topaz acknowledged the great Library and staff they have.

City Administrator Walsh mentioned the wild ride.

Public Works Director Zaher appreciated his leadership and bread baking.

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

None

DISCUSSION TOPICS

1. **Semi-Annual Public Works Department Report - Mouhamad Zaher, Director**

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

- Paving of local streets
- Implementation of the Mercury TMDL Plan
- Built a kennel for the new Police K-9 dog
- Collaborated to work on projects in-house and save the City money
- Cost recovery has improved with increased fees
- Construction management cost for the S. First and Strand Street Extension Project was reduced nearly in half due to effective negotiations. Project is estimated to be complete in September 2024.
- Reviewed upcoming projects
 - Sanitary Sewer capacity upgrades
 - Engineering Manual update
 - City Standard Details for Construction update
 - Create new CAD Standards manual
 - Salmonberry Recreation Reservoir Water Rights renewal
 - New 2MG Reservoir
 - Distributed an additional list of on-going projects

Thanked the Council and Walsh for their leadership and support.

Councilor Topaz talked about St. Helens Street being paved between 1st and 5th Street when it didn't need it. Did the State require that? Is the State requiring the TMDL Plan? Are they paying for it? Zaher and Darroux both said the TMDL is being required by DEQ. They have been notified about grants to help pay for it. Councilor Topaz encouraged them to communicate to the public that the State is hurting the City by requiring this.

Mayor Scholl thanked Zaher for his leadership.

Councilor Birkle congratulated Public Works Construction Inspector Tim Underwood for earning the Certified Public Infrastructure Inspector (CPII) designation. Zaher acknowledged the certification. He takes pride in his staff becoming certified. The certification brings a lot of credibility to the City and staff.

2. Review Application for Community Grants - *Kathy*

City Recorder Payne reviewed the application. A copy is included in the archive packet for this meeting. Council talked about the recipients volunteering at a local event. She added 4th of July as a possible volunteer opportunity. Event Coordinator Tina Curry expressed concern about volunteers at some of her events. She doesn't have time to train volunteers and manage people who may not show up. It can add a burden during a very busy time. Fourth of July and Citizens Day in the Park are both better suited to volunteers.

Discussion ensued about requiring grant recipients to commit to volunteer time. It was the consensus of the Council to remove the volunteer requirement from the application.

Payne talked about the statement that only allows nonprofits located in the City to apply. Council agreed to keep it the same. Payne added that there is only \$3,000 left in the budget.

3. Report from City Administrator John Walsh

Reviewed 2022 Accomplishments:

- Great Public Works report
- Last Work Session of the year
- Heard from several people at Henry Heimuller's retirement about how great our staff members are. Many staff members are involved in Boards outside of the City.
- Safety Coordinator Ethan Stirling is doing a great job improving safety
- Improved community partnerships
- Dock improvements

- Riverwalk 90% drawings have been received
- Staff met to discuss homelessness. They updated the Planning Commission, and all are on the same page.
- New Library Director
- New Youth Librarian
- Accountant Carol Green is planning to retire at the end of the year and stay on during the recruitment process
- Restructuring Parks & Recreation. Parks & Recreation Manager Shanna Duggan is overseeing both right now. Historically, Parks was underneath Public Works. This was an experiment. They would like to move Parks back to Public Works. That would create capacity for Duggan to do more great things and seek more funding for programs. Zaher has worked hard to break down silos dividing departments. They are cross-training to support each other. One representative from each division will continue to attend Parks & Recreation Commission meetings. Council agreed that would be more efficient.
- Christmas Ships and Santa was nice. Mayor Scholl would like to see the Plaza decorated more. Councilor Birkle suggested the Arts & Cultural Commission be involved in design and decorating.
- The last year has been busy
- Seeking funding for projects
- A call-in hotline has been implemented for inclement weather
- Pleasure to be here and serve St. Helens

ADJOURN – 3:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder.

ATTEST:

/s/ Kathy Payne
Kathy Payne, City Recorder

/s/ Rick Scholl
Rick Scholl, Mayor