



COUNCIL WORK SESSION

Wednesday, March 15, 2023

APPROVED MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mayor Rick Scholl
Council President Jessica Chilton
Councilor Patrick Birkle
Councilor Mark Gundersen
Councilor Brandon Sundeen

STAFF PRESENT

John Walsh, City Administrator	Crystal King, Communications Officer
Kathy Payne, City Recorder	Suzanne Bishop, Library Director
Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder	Bill Monahan, Contracted Attorney

OTHERS

Steve Topaz
Justin Watson
Amy Pritchett

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

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

- ◆ Steven Topaz. Mr. Topaz responded to questions presented at previous meetings. Regarding progress on the vessel being tested by the Coast Guard, that has been completed, and everything is okay. Regarding why the building down at McCormick Parks was not used for the police station, that was also looked into and there are a number of physical reasons why that was not handled. The questions regarding the sewer lines on the west side were answered by Engineering Manager Sharon Darroux, which were given to City Recorder Payne. Last time, the agenda did not include notification of the sewer plant tour. The newspaper described the sewer plant tour as definition and explanation for repurposing the lagoon, which it was not. Communications Officer King should be asked to have the newspaper correct the fact that the meeting was not publicly noted in the agenda and the fact that it was how the sewer plant worked. He has asked questions previously about the status of the litigation of the mill problem. It has been delayed again another 30 days. He provided a list of all the delays, which started in 2021. The litigation of Boise Cascade is still ongoing. The Coast Guard reports the boat has been tested. The stabilization test data has not been reviewed, and there are a number of other questions that have to be answered before it's given approval to be moved. That hasn't been done yet. When he was on the Council in 2022, he had been told that the vessel is in Portland. It is still in Florida. He believed that the City has not gotten the truth about the location, condition, and destination of the vessel. There should be a public statement/public information on the litigation and conditions of the legal problems with Boise Cascade and the City of St. Helens about the property. There were no questions from Council.

DISCUSSION TOPICS

1. Senior Center Semi-Annual Report - *Justin Watson, Executive Director*

Mr. Watson presented the report, starting with a video about Senior Center resources and activities. A copy is included in the archive packet.

- Specific organizations that use the Center were enumerated, including the VFW Auxiliary and Columbia County Business Leaders Network, and Parkinson's Resource of Oregon. The Red Cross holds several blood drives throughout the year. Schultz Financial Services are holding recurring classes related to Medicare and Social Security at the Center as well. They were also the first Platinum level sponsors for 2022.
- The Center will host this year's Living Well with Diabetes course, a six-week course provided through the State and the Community Action Team. The dates are March 23 - April 27.
- AARP has been a very strong partner. They are currently preparing taxes for free for residents of St. Helens. They are fully booked, but the Scappoose Senior Center is taking appointments. They also do safe driving courses so seniors can get insurance discounts.
- Activities held at the Center include billiards, exercise classes, computer classes, yoga, pinochle, Tai Chi, square dancing, line dancing, craft hour. They need help from more crafters because they have recently entered into a partnership with the Sheriff's office to repair jumpsuits for resident inmates.
- The Center received a donation of 20 tablets from InRoads, which can be checked out and taken home by seniors who have completed instruction on connecting and using the tablets.
- The Center acts as a daytime cooling shelter and/or warming shelter, depending on the weather.
- Building maintenance was addressed. The Center would like to have the basement completed, even if just basic, so they would have more storage space in it. The finished basement was included in the 2010 community block grant, but it ran out of funds before it was completed.
- Public Works has cleaned up the property border. It is starting to look good as grass is growing in.
- There have been issues with the houseless loitering, so the Center will install cameras in the back of the property and continue to protect the Center's assets.
- The Center would like to expand the Food Bank's garden by having a garden in the back. They would also like to have outdoor seating with a canopy available off the back entrance of the dining room.
- The Shoestring Players Actors Guild performed a show for five nights and also used the Center for practice.
- The Center is ramping up advertising of activities. They are considering changing the agreement to avoid raising the hourly cost, which is currently \$75 an hour with a \$150 deposit. There are no fees to cover the costs of administration, water or electricity use, or staff who have to be on hand. They are considering a \$300 deposit, with 70% refundable, to help with administrative costs.
- Other partners throughout the community included South Columbia Chamber of Commerce, InRoads Credit Union, Grocery Outlets of St. Helens and Scappoose, Food Bank, Broadleaf Arbor, the Recreation Program, Avamere, and Meadow Park Living.
- The Center currently has over 200 members. They are still trying to bridge the gap with the families. They believe working with the Recreation Program and Broadleaf Arbor will help bridge that gap. That will ultimately raise memberships at the Senior Center, but it will also get the Center involved at the senior level so we can promote intergenerational communities.
- The Center is considering a lifetime membership option.
- The event calendar has been finalized. The block party will be July 1. Micro-fundraisers on the schedule include the St. Patrick's Day Luncheon, bazaars, a Mother's Day tea party, a Father's Day breakfast, and other events. The micro-events will lead up to the big fundraiser at the end of the year, a black tie dinner and auction.

- Lunches are served from 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., with the exception of Fridays, when they serve at 12:00 p.m. Reservations are not needed but are appreciated so the proper amount of food can be served without waste.
- The Center has been serving 180 seniors throughout South Columbia County. More volunteer drivers are needed. Mileage is reimbursed for the complete route from home, the route, and back home. SNAP is strong. The Center is working towards digitizing the program so that deliveries are logged immediately, which will help with reports to Community Action and the State.
- Amy Pritchett, the new Activities Coordinator, was introduced. She is a local resident and has lived in the area her entire life.
- The Columbia County Search and Rescue was recognized for their help when four routes could not be covered due to unexpected snow. Everyone was fed that day thanks to their help.
- The kitchen is in good repair.
- The Center was awarded the congregate infrastructure upgrade grant. They have installed new sprayers on sinks and new pot handles. The new generator will power just the kitchen and dining room, not the entire building. They have received quotes for the generator work, but they were not acceptable. Public Works understands what they are trying to do and will work with the Center to install it.
- The new virtual café, St. Helens Eats, is going well. To find it on the website, go to shseniorcenter.org and click on the St. Helens Eats tab. They would like to add a salad bar. The Community Action Team has told them they can serve breakfast and/or dinner as well, so they are looking at whether they can expand their programming into those areas.
- The Thrift Store, under the management of Melissa and Joe, is doing very well. The store has been remodeled, which has helped increase sales, which supports the Senior Center.
- Financially, the Center has launched the sponsorships membership program. This allows both for-profit and non-profit organizations that work with the Center to contribute financially. They would like 34 platinum-level sponsors. They hope to raise \$50,000 through an online auction at the end of the year.
- The Center is finishing up the grant project. The State would like a tentative report, but he prefers to wait and put in a final report so the actual budget used can be reported.
- Council President Chilton requested an update about the partnership with Broadleaf Arbor
 - The Center will work with Engage, the program management company at Broadleaf.
 - The cohort includes the Community Action Team, CCM Age, the Latino Network, the Food Bank, and CCOPC. They meet monthly to see where they can support the program.
 - The first 24 families should move in March 29, including about 38 children. The School District is ready for the families. There will be grants for organizations that want to hold after-school or summer programs.
 - The Center may bring their meals program there twice a week to serve the seniors where they are at, which should lower some of their routes.
 - Of the 24 homes, only three are from out of town. The remainder are from St. Helens.
- Mayor Scholl requested an update on what needs to be completed in the basement.
 - It has been framed.
 - The dirt still needs to be removed before sheet rock, walls, floors, and lighting can be installed.
 - When finished, the basement will provide dry storage.
- Council President Chilton was very impressed by her last visit to the Center. She took Avamere there recently, and they plan to return. She appreciated how well it is managed.

2. Review Supplemental Fiscal Year 2022/23 Budget Report Changes - Jon Ellis

Contract Interim Finance Director Jon Ellis reminded everyone that there will be a public hearing tonight for budget adjustments. A copy is included in the archive packet.

- On the Community Development project side, all the loan money from Business Oregon will not be reflected in this budget, nor will the capital be increased.
 - It will be reflected in next year's budget since it isn't being spent this fiscal year.
 - This reduced the budget by about \$11 million.
- The Police Department has identified facility improvements needed.
 - The furniture and equipment are now coming from the State site, which is inexpensive and/or free.
 - This should also reduce the budget.
 - A memo describing the project is included in the packet.
- The budget for the tech division was increased by \$40,000 after finding the multi-year contract for security of the infrastructure, which is due for renewal, was not included.
- The impacts of the changes, included in the attachment, were reviewed.
- Last-minute changes can still be made before the resolution is adopted. Mayor Scholl clarified that after the budget is adopted, proposed changes would have to go through the appropriations process again.
- Councilor Birkle asked for clarification that the purpose of the new tourism vendor contract was to streamline revenue to come to City for recording and then returned to the contractor to create a single stream to track. That was why he voted for the contract in the past. Was that the correct understanding?
 - Council President Chilton replied that this was her understanding. The preference is for more online payments, which would go through City bank accounts.
 - Mr. Ellis reported that if payments came through the City, they would be reflected in the budget. The budget was built the year before with everything flowing through. This year's budget did not reflect the activity that really occurred. In next year's budget, if the City collects the revenue, it would be turned over to the contractor covering events.
 - Next year's budget should be built with three lines of revenues: TOT tax, gate funds for events, and reimbursement for the Masonic Building. On the expenditure side, payments line items would be for the contractor, the Masonic Building, fireworks for the 4th of July, and another line for reimbursement to the General Fund or Public Works or another event done by City.
 - Money collected next year will not show up as revenue. It would be recorded in a liability account since it needs to be paid to the contractor. The contractor should be audited annually to make sure everything shores up.
- Councilor Birkle asked, in response to an e-mail request, if anyone recalled the date the contract was signed and if it was after the budget was adopted.
 - Mr. Ellis did not know the date without looking at the folder in his office.
- Council President Chilton asked that changes resulting from the signed contract are implemented in the City moving forward.

3. Review "If I Were Mayor..." Student Contest Entries

- Mayor Scholl reported that 12 posters (5th grade), 2 essays (6th-8th grade), 23 digital presentations (9th-12th grade) were received for the contest, for a total 42 participants.
 - One of the high school teachers used the contest as a lesson for the entire class to submit.
- The winners will be announced at tonight's meeting.
- Council discussed potholes, which were brought up by multiple students.

- It was suggested that they make a presentation with students' comments to show them how the process works and ask the County to think about budgeting to fix the roads.
 - Students did their homework and correctly estimated the cost of filling in the potholes near the high school, which is inexpensive.
 - It would be better if the County put asphalt down on the back streets.
- The top six videos, as selected by Council members, were presented. It was agreed by Council to watch them at the end of the session.

4. Report from City Administrator John Walsh

City Administrator Walsh presented his report, updating Council on key items as follows.

- It was positive to see the community pride spoken about in student contest entries.
- Auditors are still finishing up the audit. He has been meeting with department heads to start next year's budget process. The new Finance Director will start tomorrow.
- The Statement of Economic Interest (SEI) forms are out, and all Councilors should have received them. Councilors need to track spending and disclose relationships.
 - Mayor Scholl reminded everyone that failure to meet the deadline results in a fine.
- The Urban Renewal Budget process is woven with the regular budget process. Historically, their budget has been done with the City budget because it is a very simple budget.
- Budget Committee appointments need to be filled before budget season starts. There are three applicants. Mayor Scholl, Councilor Gundersen, and Budget Committee Chair Claire Catt will sit on the interview subcommittee, who will make recommendations to the Budget Committee. Interviews can be conducted via Zoom if that is better for all involved.
 - Both open seats are appointments, but one is an unfulfilled term. Normally, the top choice would fill the seat open for a full term. The second choice would be appointed to the short-term seat.
 - The subcommittee should make their recommendations within the next two weeks to be included in the packet for appointments to be made on April 5.
 - There is not a set slate of interview questions. The panel may ask what they would like, He received a criticism that the open house at the Wastewater Treatment Plant was not advertised on the agenda at the last City Council meeting. However, it was not a public meeting. There will be another on April 6. He suggested extensively advertising it on social media.
- Council discussed the location of the boat. The Coast Guard wants their final payment, but Mr. Walsh is not willing to make that payment until the City receives the certificates. The Coast Guard will let him know when it is ready.
- The Chamber dinner and the Black Tie and Blue Jean events are coming up. The budget would allow for Council to have tables at both.
- The League of Oregon Cities (LOC) spring conference is in Seaside in April, if any Council members would like to attend. The Fall conference is bigger, but several hundred elected officials attend the spring conference.
- A follow-up from the joint City Council and Planning Commission (CC/PC) meeting, the City is working with an attorney on HB 3115.
 - Council did not want to have sanctioned sleeping areas.
 - House bills would address the state-created danger of liability that would give indemnities to cities that did create sanctioned sleeping areas.
- The rendering of the new Columbia View Park amphitheater has been approved. The consultant staked out the new stage and theater, which had been moved a little bit. The new rendering should be ready for release soon.

- Mr. Walsh and Councilor Sundeen have been working on the public safety project, with a lot of conversation around flood plain issues.
 - Mayor Scholl confirmed it will go before the Planning Commission.
 - The project timeline is delayed but still looks good.
- An update for Fireworks 2023 was provided.
 - Brad Hendrickson of St. Helen's Marina is donating his barge and tug to use for fireworks.
 - He is working on the budget. Last year, the City spent about \$20,000 the fireworks.
 - Contracts for the show will be forthcoming.

ADJOURN – 3:26 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