



# COUNCIL WORK SESSION

Wednesday, August 18, 2021

## APPROVED MINUTES

### MEMBERS PRESENT

Mayor Rick Scholl  
Council President Doug Morten (arrived at 1:18 p.m.)  
Councilor Patrick Birkle  
Councilor Stephen R. Topaz  
Councilor Jessica Chilton

### STAFF PRESENT

John Walsh, City Administrator  
Matt Brown, Deputy City Administrator  
Kathy Payne, City Recorder  
Brian Greenway, Police Chief  
Jose Castilleja, Police Sergeant

Evin Eustice, Police Sergeant  
Shanna Duggan, Parks & Recreation Manager  
Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder  
Tim Ramis, City Attorney

### OTHERS

Paul Vogel  
Susana Hensley  
Hailey Iverson  
Dana Lathrope  
Claire Catt

### CALL WORK SESSION TO ORDER – 1:01 p.m.

**CITY COUNCIL MANTRA** – Read by Councilor Topaz

**VISITOR COMMENTS** - *Limited to five (5) minutes per speaker*  
No visitor comments.

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

#### 1. Employee Length of Service Recognition - **Sgt. Eustice (5 years)**

One employee has reached a milestone in their employment with the City of St. Helens.

##### 5 Years

On August 2, 2016, the City Police Department hired Evin Eustice as a Patrol Officer. He was promoted to Sergeant on June 1, 2018, where he currently serves the citizens of our community.

Congratulations, Sgt. Eustice, and thank you for your service!

#### 2. South Columbia County Chamber of Commerce Semi-Annual Report

South Columbia County Chamber of Commerce Board Vice President Susana Hensley and Board Members Hailey Iverson and Dana Lathrope were in attendance to review their report. Copies were distributed to Council and are available in the archive packet for this meeting.

- Focusing on core values.
- Hiring a part-time Member Relationship Manager and a Grant Writer.
- Began meeting in-person.

- Coffee & Commerce meetings.
- Happy Hour meetings for networking.
- Planning the next Awards Banquet for 2022.
- 100-Year Building Celebration on September 18.
- Holding quarterly gift shops.
- Small Business Appreciation Week Celebration, September 14 & 15.
- Partnership opportunity – Columbia County Visitor Center
  - Requesting funding assistance for full-time Visitor Center Office Coordinator
  - Extending the proposal to City of Scappoose and Columbia County Economic Team (CCET)
  - Extends business hours
  - Provides tourism assistance
  - Promotes businesses in the city

1:18 p.m. Council President Morten arrived.

The Visitor Center is currently by appointment only. The Chamber covers it as much they can, but they are primarily operated by volunteers. Visitors associate it with a city service. If it's not funded, they will have to remove the Visitor Center sign to avoid further confusion.

Councilor Chilton asked about the Chamber's partnership with Mainstreet. Susana responded that Mainstreet is a member of the Chamber. Some of the Mainstreet members are Chamber ambassadors and help with events.

Council President Morten asked about their partnership with CCET. Dana explained that it's very similar to Mainstreet. They are a member of the Chamber. The Chamber works with CCET on events and assists with marketing. They all have the same goal to support the community and boost the economic vitality of South Columbia County. Council President Morten asked if they attend each other's Board meetings. Dana said no.

Mayor Scholl said that a lot of money was donated to help with the building upgrades three years ago. The following year the City provided funding to CCET and this year they are supporting Mainstreet. They have to spread the funding sources.

Councilor Birkle asked what challenges restrict increasing membership. Susana explained that the main challenge has been the pandemic. It's a new Board that started right at the beginning of the pandemic. The Chamber has grown with a lot of volunteer work. It also suffered with not having an Executive Director. They are trying to make the Chamber self-sustainable. It's important to have an active Board and Committees.

Mayor Scholl talked about the City's financial support of the 100-year celebration. Having a grant writer is crucial. Discussion of partnerships to help with funding. Columbia County should also be contacted for financial support.

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

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

- Rebranded
- New website [www.columbiaeconomicteam.com](http://www.columbiaeconomicteam.com)
- Weekly newsletter
- Coordinating with local agencies and partners
- Reviewed projects
- Brought in \$93,000 in grants for tourism
- Reviewed tourism projects
- Reviewed Small Business Center

- Small Business Celebration Week, September 13-17
- Keep it Local update
  - New director is Sierra Trass

Council President Morten requested that future reports include a list of goals and their status, as well as a financial report for accountability and objectivity.

Councilor Topaz talked about the connectivity over the river and railroad being a problem, which is a block to major industry. He has spoken with people across the river about a ferry boat. He asked about advertising in journals. Oregon always seems to be absent from promotions. Paul said they are planning more targeted marketing but have to be very particular with limited funding.

Councilor Chilton requested the report be narrowed down to St. Helens and what benefits businesses in the city are provided.

Mayor Scholl would like to see a SWOT analysis done again with local agencies. Paul agreed and said they are looking at doing another session.

#### **4. Public Safety Facility Utility Fee Discussion - *Matt***

Deputy City Administrator Brown reviewed his report. A copy is included in the archive packet for this meeting. Brown is requesting Council finalize a monthly utility fee amount tonight. The fee would take effect in January 2022.

- Reviewed timeline
- Reviewed results from community outreach
- Reviewed funding sources
- Reviewed legislature changes that will affect revenue
- Reviewed repayment plan

Discussion of a utility fee amount. Councilor Topaz talked about having language to never exceed \$8 in utility fees. Council President Morten is in favor a \$2 utility fee. He envisions the city growing and can reassess in 2033. Mayor Scholl is in favor of a \$3 utility fee. They will likely have a shortfall if it's any lower than that. Councilor Topaz asked them to consider the number of citizens struggling financially when setting the fee. Councilor Chilton asked what the status is of contributing to Community Action Team (CAT) to help with utility bill assistance. Brown responded that the City has contributed \$15,000 from late fees. He has been in contact with CAT, and they have not used all of those funds. They can give them more as users have a need. Councilor Birkle is in favor of a \$3 utility fee, with the ability to reduce the amount as growth occurs.

Council will vote on this at tonight's meeting.

#### **5. Citizens Day Debrief - *Shanna/Lisa***

Parks & Recreation Manager Shanna Duggan and Deputy City Recorder Lisa Scholl gave a debrief from Citizens Day in the Park.

- It was a great event with a lot of community participation.
- Thankful for all of the sponsors.
- Served about 450 meals.
- This was the first year it was open for vendors/booths. They had 17 participate.
- Highway 30 Cruisers organized the car show.
- Public Works and Parks & Recreation were a huge help with setup, assistance, and cleanup.
- Proposed June 25, 2022, for next year's event. Council concurred.
- Proposed City departments display booths to provide information and meet staff.
- Display McCormick Park history at the event.

**3:24 p.m. – Break**

## **6. Strategic Action Plan Updates**

Brown updated the Council on the main five Goals.

### **Goal Area One: Effective and Efficient Organization**

- There were nine items to complete.
- They are on track to do all but one, which is the media training for Council and Commission. They would prefer that to be done in-person. It will be moved to the next Strategic Plan.

### **Goal Area Two: Community and Civic Engagement**

- There were three items to complete.
- They completed all, except for the Strategic Communications Plan. That was put on hold due to COVID and Communications Officer King working remotely. It will be moved to the next Strategic Plan.

### **Goal Area Three: Livable and Safe community**

- Most have been completed.
- Godfrey Park improvements are on hold until the Master Plan is updated. They will involve the community to find out what they would like to see.

### **Goal Area Four: Economic Development**

- Most have been completed.
- The property on N. 10<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup> Street bluff will be moved to the next Strategic Plan.
- Central Waterfront Development Plan
  - Moving forward on construction plans for the Industrial Business Park
  - Already have plans in place for the Waterfront Property
  - It will remain on the Strategic Plan as funding is still needed. Walsh added that they are continuing to seek funding.

### **Goal Area Five: Long-Term Planning**

- A lot of master plans are being started or close to being complete
- Public safety plan is moving forward

## **7. City Administrator Report**

- Staff is investigating ways to increase enforcement of City docks. Discussion ensued.
  - Kiosk
  - State Marine Board suggested adding a rule that all boats at the docks be licensed and registered. If they are not, they can be trespassed.
  - State Marine Board allows fees to be charged to stay at the docks.
  - The insurance company does not want our officers on the docks unless they have training.
- Discussing partnerships and training for enforcement of Sand Island.
- The Sandcastle event was remarkable this weekend. The builders love our sand.
- Hit Machine is playing at 13 Nights on the River on Thursday. Curtis Salgado is next Thursday.
- Working on changes with the tourism contract. There will be a report at the next meeting.
- Working with PGE for electrical access at the St. Helens Industrial Business Park.
- Mainstreet is working on bylaws and the coordinator job description.
- House Bill 2560 requires virtual public meeting options beginning in January 2022. Council can choose to switch to that sooner.
- Street and utilities project and Riverwalk project are moving forward. Discussion ensued about the Riverfront property.

## **ADJOURN – 4:07 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted by Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder.

ATTEST:

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Kathy Payne, City Recorder

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Rick Scholl, Mayor