



COUNCIL REGULAR SESSION

Wednesday, October 20, 2021

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
Matt Brown, Deputy City Administrator
Kathy Payne, City Recorder
Jacob Graichen, City Planner
Dustin King, Police Corporal
Crystal King, Communications Officer
Tina Curry, Event Coordinator

OTHERS

Jane Garcia
Brady Preheim
Steve Toschi

CALL REGULAR SESSION TO ORDER – 7 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Scholl led us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Councilor Birkle read the Council Mantra.

VISITOR COMMENTS – *Limited to five (5) minutes per speaker*

- ◆ Kim Harris. She moved here in 2005 and is very grateful for the small town. She works at the Dark Market and has met people from England, Sweden, and probably someone from every state in the United States. People travel to see Spirit of Halloweentown. It grows every year. Everyone has been nice, polite, and respectful of our little town. She is very grateful to work in the little store. She has never had a nicer, more hard-working boss than she has now. She is absolutely amazing. She can call her night or day and she never gets upset with her. She works hard and has done such an amazing job of organizing all of it. She is truly grateful that she has been part of the event and the town.
- ◆ Brady Preheim. Halloween has done amazing, even in the middle of Covid, with no outbreaks. It says a lot about the control and organization of the Tourism Director. The sheer number of people that come here from all over the world is amazing. The vendors, merchants, and tourists are all happy. He thinks the tourism director needs more money. The amount that she works is not fair.

There should be some sort of profit sharing. She works like this is her business and she gets really nothing from it. Unlike Councilor Chilton's statement, this event is going to continue to grow and make everybody happy. The Police Chief and Lieutenant made comments today about needing new staff. They have been given new cars, a new building, raises, and now they want more staff to provide coverage to the entire county. Why are they providing policing to the entire county? They can't even police their own property, such as Sand Island and derelict boats. They need to be compensated if they are going to police the entire county. It is not fair for the citizens who are paying for it. He also expressed concerns about the Chief's statement today that we are similar to Seattle. Seattle has a population of 775,000 people. There really is no comparison. Last week, they authorized almost \$2 million for design. Before the police station moves forward, they need to vote on it. It should not be a decision the City makes on its own. A lot more outreach needs to be done. Until that happens, they should not move forward with the police station.

- ◆ Steve Toschi. They are witnessing a renaissance as they welcome new people into the city. He complimented the Council for its steadfast determination to make the City one of the best places to live. The support of the Council for businesses, tourism, law enforcement, and every citizen is evident. St. Helens is a great place to live and visit. He and his wife, Robin, have a lot of family here. Robin was born and raised here and was the St. Helens High School Class President in 1981. After graduating college, she moved to the Bay area where they raised their family. They spent about 30 years here as tourists. Her uncle used to own Bar Harbor and her parents owned Sherlock's and Zatterberg's. They purchased a home here four years ago. From the outside looking in, St. Helens was a place trying to shake off the economic devastation from the mills closing. Over the last few years, they have seen the momentum growing. Tourism events in St. Helens are outstanding. St. Helens is a fun place to be. Halloweentown is a lot of fun and a great success. He spent a lot of time here on the river. He has driven his boat many times from here to Portland and around Rainier. St. Helens has one of the most valuable waterfronts on the Columbia River. Sand Island is another success for the City Council by transferring the concession to Brad Hendrickson. The views are phenomenal. This is a great place to be. Encouraged Council to stay the course and continue in the direction it is headed. There are many people afraid of change and those who resent the success of others. Resist those impulses. St. Helens is doing a great job. 13 Nights on the River in 2021 broke the ice of the horrible year of Covid. It brought tears to his eyes see kids playing and people dancing. The Sand Island Sandcastle Contest was great. It's great to see people coming for Halloweentown. Keep it up and protect it. There's a lot of work ahead. Too often they hear complaints, but he is here to tell them, "job well done."

Mayor Scholl clarified the policing issue brought up by Brady Preheim. Speaking as a taxpayer, someone may have perceived him ranting about the Columbia County services that they get for their tax dollar versus what they get from St. Helens, was confused. They are not policing Columbia County, Scappoose, or Columbia City. If there is a call that requires all police to respond, they all do that for each other. They have done a lot of public outreach. The fee has been narrowed down to \$3. This has been a long process. They are not going to stop because one person is against it.

APPROVE AND/OR AUTHORIZE FOR SIGNATURE

1. Satisfaction of Mortgage for CAT Loan Payoff - 474 S. 13th Street (Seastone)
2. Amendment to Contract with JH Kelly, LLC for Columbia Pacific Food Bank Renovation Project
3. Amendment to Grant Agreement with Oregon Parks and Recreation Dept. for Campbell Park Sports Court
4. Contract Payments

Motion: Motion made by Councilor Chilton and seconded by Councilor Topaz to approve '1' through '4' above. **Vote:** Yea: Mayor Scholl, Councilor Birkle, Councilor Topaz, Councilor Chilton

APPOINTMENTS TO CITY BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

5. Reappoint Russ Hubbard and Jennifer Pugsley to Additional 4-year Terms on the Planning Commission

Motion: Motion made by Councilor Topaz and seconded by Councilor Chilton to remove Shanna Cavanaugh from Planning Commission. **Vote:** Yea: Mayor Scholl, Councilor Birkle, Councilor Topaz, Councilor Chilton

Motion: Motion made by Councilor Topaz and seconded by Councilor Chilton to reappoint Russ Hubbard and Jennifer Pugsley to the Planning Commission. **Vote:** Yea: Mayor Scholl, Councilor Birkle, Councilor Topaz, Councilor Chilton

CONSENT AGENDA FOR ACCEPTANCE

6. Parks and Trails Commission Minutes dated September 13, 2021
7. Planning Commission Minutes dated August 10, 2021
8. Library Board Minutes dated September 13, 2021

Motion: Motion made by Councilor Chilton and seconded by Councilor Topaz to approve '6' through '8' above. **Vote:** Yea: Mayor Scholl, Councilor Birkle, Councilor Topaz, Councilor Chilton

CONSENT AGENDA FOR APPROVAL

9. Joint Planning Commission/City Council Minutes dated September 22, 2021 and Council Minutes dated October 6, 2021
10. New Custodian Job Description
11. Parks and Recreation Master Plan Request for Proposals (RFP)
12. Declare Surplus Property - McCormick Park Caretaker House
13. Accounts Payable Bill Lists

Motion: Motion made by Councilor Birkle and seconded by Councilor Chilton to approve '9' through '13' above.

Discussion.

Councilor Topaz addressed the discussion about property sales timing in the October 6, 2021 City Council Regular Session minutes. That time schedule was not followed for the sale of the 12th Street property. He would like to make sure that is mentioned in the minutes since they have more property to sell and need to follow correct procedure.

1. Public announcement in a public newspaper
2. Public hearing
3. Sale of the property

Mayor Scholl pointed out that it was not part of the minutes. It will be part of the record for this meeting. They cannot go back and hybrid what they meant to say in a meeting.

Vote: Yea: Mayor Scholl, Councilor Birkle, Councilor Topaz, Councilor Chilton

WORK SESSION ACTION ITEMS

No items.

MAYOR SCHOLL REPORTS

- Attended a groundbreaking/ground blasting at Broadleaf Development on Gable Road. City Planner Graichen has been very involved assisting with the project. It will create 229 NOHA assisted housing units.
- Reminded people to unclog leaves from storm drains in preparation for the rainy season.
- Congratulated Senator Betsy Johnson on running for governor. She would be a great governor. She was at the Broadleaf Development event.

COUNCIL MEMBER REPORTS

Councilor Topaz reported...

- The Makespace Grand Opening went spectacularly well. Library Director Jeffries invited all of the staff who worked on the facility to thank them. They had a very good turnout. It is a spectacular space.
- He received a call from a developer who is interested in the Waterfront property. He cannot fulfill some of their questions because he's not allowed into City Hall. They have a problem in this group. He is limited with what he can do because of the way he has been treated.

Mayor Scholl disagreed, and pointed out that it was because he was censured. The censure time limit is coming up. He broke the censure a couple times, and nothing was done about it. Councilor Topaz argued that the censure was wrong. He will tell the people that the City is not interested. Mayor Scholl said it was a Council decision. He represents all citizens. If there was an actual developer, he would not withhold information from the voting public allowing them to develop that land the way the public wants it developed. He is very appalled that Councilor Topaz would use those tactics.

Councilor Topaz was charged with an unethical process... He will tell the developer, who has done a number of projects in Portland, that they are not interested. Councilor Chilton commented that was blackmail.

Councilor Chilton reported...

- She had dinner at the Klondike last weekend. She met the owner and talked about their projects. It looks great in there and the staff is wonderful. She encouraged everyone to go see it before they close after Halloween for a full remodel.
- Riverfront planning is coming together.
- Public Safety Facility planning is continuing. She is going to tour the Oregon City police station.
- On Friday, she is going to attend the League of Oregon Cities (LOC) virtual business meeting as a voting delegate for our City. She is hopeful that it will be in-person next year.

Councilor Birkle reported...

- Thanked City Recorder Payne for sharing the LOC article with suggestions of how to achieve a high-functioning Council. They are often criticized for not following the mantra, but he believes they always try. He hopes they all take the opportunity to read it.
- He attended the Makespace preview as well. Public Works crews did great work putting the space together and Library staff did great organizing it. They are hiring someone to staff the space. It opens up a world of opportunities.
- He attended the Scappoose Bay Watershed Council plant sale and made a connection with someone from Mackenzie. He told her about his suggestion to repurpose wood from the trees they are going to take down for the Public Safety Facility. He received an education about what is involved with that process. You can't simply remove an oak tree and use it for construction. It has to go through engineering and be tested. They may not have those trees in the building, but they may be able to share them with the community.
- He continues to come down here dressed up on Saturday nights to haunt the Plaza and businesses. He talks to people and asks what brings them here. It's been interesting talking to people and hearing how they like St. Helens.
- He will be coordinating the interview process to fill the Planning Commission vacancy. Several members have already expressed an interest in participating in the process.
- At the October 12 Planning Commission meeting, there was a presentation about the sanitary and storm sewer systems needs.
- Annexations are coming up.
- He admires the work being done by the Planning and Building divisions staff.

OTHER BUSINESS

ADJOURN – 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder.

ATTEST:

/s/ Kathy Payne
Kathy Payne, City Recorder

/s/ Rick Scholl
Rick Scholl, Mayor