



# COUNCIL SPECIAL SESSION

Wednesday, November 17, 2021

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## APPROVED MINUTES

### MEMBERS PRESENT

Mayor Rick Scholl  
Council President Doug Morten  
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  
Rachael Barry, Government Affairs Specialist

### CALL SPECIAL SESSION TO ORDER – 5:30 p.m.

### DISCUSSION TOPICS

#### 1. Council Retreat Part 1:

- 2022 Goal Setting
- Celebrate Accomplishments
- SWOT Exercise

Rachael Barry, Government Affairs Specialist, was the facilitator for this meeting.

City Administrator Walsh reviewed the Council's Goal Areas and some of the projects and accomplishments that are listed on the City's website at

<https://www.sthelensoregon.gov/administration/page/strategic-work-plan>:

- Effective and Efficient Organization
- Community and Civic Engagement
- Livable and Safe Community
- Economic Development
- Long Term Planning

Council President Morten talked about federal funds available for infrastructure. He wants to make sure Master Plans are updated to include possible projects, such as an overpass over the railroad, so they can be ready to apply for funding. Walsh and Barry agreed that infrastructure, especially pertaining to rail, is a priority. Moving the switching yard and safer crossings are two examples of priorities.

The Council went through a SWOT exercise. At the end, they each selected their top two as numbered below.

#### Strengths

- Different modes of transportation
- Connection to water – 2
- Planning

- Safe city – 3
- Passion
- Access to nature – 1
- Dedicated staff – 2
- Visioning – 2
- Commission volunteers and friends groups

Weaknesses

- Hwy 30/Gable Road intersection – 2
- Industrial past – 1
- Fragments of town – 2
- Council communications (internal) – 5
- Serial meetings
- Surface transportation
- Lack of local jobs

Opportunities

- Master plans working together – 1
- General connectivity – 1
- Industrial past – 1
- Passion
- Relationship with railroad
- Regional meetings – 1
- Regionalism in general
- Culture Change – 2
- Job creation – 4
- Ferry
- Building in flexibility for staff and council to make decisions/take opportunity

Threats

- Natural disasters – 1
- Passion
- Overextended – 3
- Misinformation – 4
- Perception of Portland – 1
- Out commute (time availability) – 1

**OTHER BUSINESS**

None

**ADJOURN – 6:42 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted by Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder.

ATTEST:

/s/ Kathy Payne  
 Kathy Payne, City Recorder

/s/ Rick Scholl  
 Rick Scholl, Mayor