



COUNCIL REGULAR SESSION

Wednesday, July 16, 2025

APPROVED MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mayor Jennifer Massey
Councilor Mark Gundersen
Councilor Russell Hubbard
Councilor Brandon Sundeen

MEMBERS ABSENT

Council President Jessica Chilton

STAFF PRESENT

John Walsh, City Administrator
Kathy Payne, City Recorder
Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder
Matthew Smith, Acting Police Chief
Ashley Wigod, Contracted City Attorney

OTHERS

Adam St. Pierre	JoAnn Dohn
JMD	Joel Warner
Nick Flory	Nick Hellmich
Brady Preheim	Martha Sherry
Jim Coleman	Shauna Harrison

CALL REGULAR SESSION TO ORDER – 7:00 P.M.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

- ◆ Joel Warner. Expressed concern about the dance floor at the 13 Nights on the River event. He reported that the dance floor had been replaced with a sidewalk, leading to safety issues. He mentioned witnessing multiple people rolling their ankles while dancing and one person tripping and breaking their arm. Warner urged the Council to remove the sidewalk and reinstate the dance floor for safety reasons and to allow people to enjoy dancing at the event.
- ◆ Jim Coleman. Addressed the issue of the City-owned boat discussed in the work session. Drawing from his 30-40 years of experience on the water, he strongly advised selling the boat. He reminded the Council that he had previously testified against buying the boat, citing concerns about Coast Guard approval. Coleman suggested that the boat, while in good condition, does not serve its intended purpose. He warned about potential liability issues, especially if used for ferrying passengers to Sand Island. He recommended selling the boat and getting out of the "boat business" to avoid further complications and liabilities.

- ◆ Brady Preheim. Criticized Mayor Massey's leadership, pointing out several unfulfilled promises and initiatives. He mentioned the failure to move public comments to the end of meetings, the lack of a hometown hero program, delays in the police station groundbreaking, and the cancellation of the sandcastle contest. Preheim also brought up concerns about a lawsuit with Chief Hogue and issues with the City's contractor, Treadway. He urged the Council to consider changing contractors, particularly for events like Spirit of Halloweentown, warning that the projected revenue might not meet expectations. Preheim also commented on the proposed charter amendment, suggesting that the mayor's support came too late and that an alternative amendment might be more beneficial for citizens.
- ◆ Adam St. Pierre. Expressed surprise at agreeing with previous speakers, Walsh and Preheim. He supported the idea of letting the community choose what they can afford and suggested freezing all budget increases until the City reaches a 30% reserve. St. Pierre also voiced support for Harvey's petition to eliminate the public safety fee. He acknowledged the difficulty of creating government budgets but emphasized the importance of making necessary cuts and allowing voters to see the direct consequences of their decisions.
- ◆ Nicholas Hellmich. Informed Council that he had submitted a FOIA request for all communications (including personal and work-related) between Mayor Massey, Councilor Hubbard, Council President Chilton, Councilor Gundersen, and Councilor Sundeen. He expressed concerns about potential violations of open meetings laws. Hellmich also criticized the Mayor's attempt to limit public criticism during Council meetings, comparing it to her own past criticisms of the previous administration. He brought up safety concerns regarding a fire on a barge during the Fourth of July celebration and questioned whether Council members had read the Jim Band investigation before voting on it. Finally, he inquired about potential conflicts of interest regarding riverfront development.
- ◆ Shauna Harrison. Expressed concerns about water and sewer services in the City. She mentioned the ongoing discussions about changing the City charter regarding water fees and the inadequacy of current sewer lines. Harrison acknowledged the complexity of the issue but urged the Council to find a solution that would allow residents to maintain their properties without excessive financial burden. She emphasized the need for a balanced approach that addresses both infrastructure needs and affordability for citizens.
- ◆ Nick Flory. Commented on the water bill and the City's ability to add unrelated fees. He suggested that any proposed fees should be voted on by citizens and supported the idea of lowering fees over time. Flory also praised the recent Community Day in the Park event and expressed appreciation for the hard work of public safety officials. He recommended halting unnecessary spending and implementing budget cuts to address financial concerns.

ORDINANCES – Final Reading

- 1. Ordinance No. 3311:** An Ordinance to Annex and Designate the Zone of Certain Property at 35262 Fir Street

Mayor Massey read Ordinance No. 3311 by title. **Motion:** Motion made by Councilor Sundeen and seconded by Councilor Gundersen to adopt Ordinance No. 3311. **Vote:** Yea: Mayor Massey, Councilor Gundersen, Councilor Hubbard, Councilor Sundeen

2. Ordinance No. 3312: An Ordinance to Annex and Designate the Zone of Certain Property at 58909 Firlok Park Street

Mayor Massey read Ordinance No. 3312 by title. **Motion:** Motion made by Councilor Sundeen and seconded by Councilor Gundersen to adopt Ordinance No 3312. **Vote:** Yea: Mayor Massey, Councilor Gundersen, Councilor Hubbard, Councilor Sundeen

3. Ordinance No. 3313: An Ordinance Adding Chapter 12.36 to the St. Helens Municipal Code Establishing a Pavement Cut Moratorium on Newly Constructed or Resurfaced Streets

Mayor Massey read Ordinance No. 3313 by title. **Moton:** Motion made by Councilor Sundeen and seconded by Councilor Gundersen to adopt Ordinance No. 3313. **Vote:** Yea: Mayor Massey, Councilor Gundersen, Councilor Hubbard, Councilor Sundeen

ORDINANCES – First Reading

4. Ordinance No. 3310: An Ordinance Amending St. Helens Municipal Code Chapter 2.12 "City Administrator"

Mayor Massey read Ordinance No. 3310 by title. The final reading will be held at the next meeting.

5. Ordinance No. 3314: An Ordinance Revising Chapter 18.36 of the St. Helens Municipal Code to Meet the City's Requirement as a Designated Management Agency Under the DEQ's Willamette Basin Mercury Total Maximum Daily Load

Mayor Massey read Ordinance No. 3314 by title. The final reading will be held at the next meeting.

RESOLUTIONS

6. PUBLIC COMMENT - Update Universal Fee Schedule

- ◆ Nick Flory. Commented that any proposed fees should be voted on by citizens. He supported the idea of being able to lower fees over time but felt that no extra fees should be added. Flory suggested that any additional costs should be addressed through budget cuts.

Contracted City Attorney Ashley Wigod clarified that the fee schedule primarily pertained to service-related fees, rather than additional charges on utility bills.

- ◆ Adam St. Pierre. Reiterated his earlier comment, suggesting a freeze on all fees and spending until the City's budget is under control. He proposed letting citizens decide on each fee individually, predicting that essential services like sewer and police would be prioritized while other services might be cut.

Resolution No. 2048: A Resolution Adopting a Universal Fee Schedule, and Superseding Resolution No. 2004

Mayor Massey read Resolution No. 2048 by title. **Motion:** Motion made by Councilor Sundeen and seconded by Councilor Gundersen to adopt Resolution No. 2048.

Discussion.

Councilor Hubbard raised concerns about certain items in the fee schedule, particularly mentioning erosion permits and business taxes. He worried that increased business taxes might lead to higher rents.

Councilor Sundeen suggested removing the erosion control items from the resolution until they could be discussed further. The Council agreed to this amendment.

Vote: Nay: Mayor Massey, Councilor Gundersen, Councilor Hubbard, Councilor Sundeen

Motion: Motion made by Councilor Sundeen and seconded by Councilor Gundersen to adopt Resolution No. 2048 with exception of the fees relating to erosion control. **Vote:** Voting Yea: Mayor Massey, Councilor Gundersen, Councilor Sundeen; Nay: Councilor Hubbard

- 7. Resolution No. 2049:** A Resolution Determining that a Nuisance Exists upon Property Located at 1321 Tualatin Street within the City of St. Helens and Directing that Notice to Abate the Nuisance be Posted on Said Premises

Mayor Massey read Resolution No. 2049 by title. **Motion:** Motion made by Councilor Sundeen and seconded by Councilor Gundersen to adopt Resolution No. 2049. **Vote:** Yea: Mayor Massey, Councilor Gundersen, Councilor Hubbard, Councilor Sundeen

APPROVE AND/OR AUTHORIZE FOR SIGNATURE

8. Amendment No. 4 to OTAK CPM Agreement for Management of Subconsultant Services for Evaluation of Columbia Blvd. Property for Public Safety Building
9. Agreement with Mark Comfort for Services Related to the Clean-up of Various Properties, including Declared Nuisance Properties, within City Limits
10. Agreement with Columbia County Junk Removal for Services Related to the Clean-up of Various Properties, including Declared Nuisance Properties, within City Limits
11. Extension of Agreement with Steve Sharfstein for Legal Defense Services
12. Extension of Agreement with Steven Leskin for Legal Defense Services
13. Intergovernmental Agreement with Oregon Department of Consumer & Business Services - Building Codes Division and other Joining Parties to Provide Mutually Agreed Upon Building Official Services, Plan Review Services, or Inspection Services
14. Fifth Amendment to Sewer Service Agreement with Greg and Amanda McFeron for 35262 Fir Street
15. Amendment No. 13 to Intergovernmental Agreement with Columbia County for Supervised Community Corrections Work Crews General Labor Assistance
16. Purchase and Sale Agreement for 1771 Columbia Blvd. with 1771ColumbiaBlvd, LLC
17. Ground Lease for 1771 Columbia Blvd. with 1771ColumbiaBlvd, LLC
18. Amendment No. 3 to Agreement with Oregon Business Development Department for Sewer Capacity Improvement Project

Motion: Motion made by Councilor Sundeen and seconded by Councilor Gundersen to approve '8' through '18' above.

Discussion.

Councilor Hubbard inquired about item eight, specifically the amount already paid to OTAK and the additional fees requested. It was clarified that \$207,000 had been spent, with an additional \$41,800 being requested as part of the remaining budget for the public safety building project.

Vote: Yea: Mayor Massey, Councilor Gundersen, Councilor Hubbard, Councilor Sundeen

APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

19. Reappoint Members and Appoint New Member to Library Board

None at this time due to Library Board meeting cancellation.

CONSENT AGENDA FOR ACCEPTANCE

20. Planning Commission Minutes dated May 13, 2025

Motion: Motion made by Councilor Sundeen and seconded by Councilor Gundersen to approve '20' above. **Vote:** Yea: Mayor Massey, Councilor Gundersen, Councilor Hubbard, Councilor Sundeen

CONSENT AGENDA FOR APPROVAL

21. City Council Minutes dated June 18, 2025
22. OLCC Licenses
23. Accounts Payable Bill Lists

Motion: Motion made by Councilor Sundeen and seconded by Councilor Gundersen to approve '21' through '23' above. **Vote:** Yea: Mayor Massey, Councilor Gundersen, Councilor Hubbard, Councilor Sundeen

WORK SESSION ACTION ITEMS

Motion: Motion made by Councilor Gundersen and seconded by Councilor Sundeen to direct staff and counsel to draft a referral measure for the ballot that amends the City Charter by requiring voter approval of any new fees on utility bills that are unrelated to utility services and to bring that referral measure text to City Council for further review and discussion.

Discussion.

Councilor Sundeen suggested including a sunset clause for fees when they are no longer needed or when associated loans are paid off. Mayor Massey clarified that the proposed charter language would likely include the purpose of the fee, the initial amount, and a sunset clause. She added that the Council would retain the ability to reduce fees without voter approval if circumstances allowed.

Vote: Yea: Mayor Massey, Councilor Gundersen, Councilor Hubbard, Councilor Sundeen

COUNCIL MEMBER REPORTS

Councilor Sundeen reported...

- The summer meeting break has been nice.
- Reported on recent summer events, including the Fourth of July celebration and 13 Nights on the River. Noted positive feedback from the community, as well as pointing out that the tourism contractor had nothing to do the fireworks fire.
- Discussed the recent Parks and Trails Commission meeting, highlighting ongoing discussions about the Milton Creek Woodland Reserve and potential volunteer groups for McCormick Park and the botanical gardens.

Councilor Hubbard reported...

- Planning Commission has had ongoing discussions about improving storefronts in the City. He suggested focusing on celebrating recent improvements throughout the district rather than solely on storefront changes.

Councilor Gundersen reported...

- Expressed satisfaction with the turnout and community enjoyment at 13 Nights on the River events.

MAYOR MASSEY REPORTS

- The Library Board appointments have been postponed due to the cancellation of this week's Library Board meeting.
- Praised Library Director Suzanne Bishop for her efforts at the library, noting services such as resume writing assistance and the popular Maker Space.
- Thanked City staff, especially City Recorder Kathy Payne and Deputy City Recorder Lisa Scholl, for their diligence in preparing Council packets and other materials.
- Acknowledged the hard work of all City departments, including Public Works, Police, and Parks.

- Highlighted the City's progress and emphasized the Council's proactive steps to address issues and propel the City forward.
- Happy Birthday to City Administrator John Walsh!

OTHER BUSINESS

ADJOURN – 7:39 p.m.

Respectfully transcribed by ClerkMinutes and submitted by Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder.

ATTEST:

/s/ Kathy Payne
Kathy Payne, City Recorder

/s/ Jennifer Massey
Jennifer Massey, Mayor