



COUNCIL REGULAR SESSION

Wednesday, August 20, 2025

APPROVED MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT

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

MEMBERS ABSENT

Council President Jessica Chilton

STAFF

John Walsh, City Administrator
Kathy Payne, City Recorder
Lisa Scholl Deputy City Recorder
Jacob Graichen, City Planner
Alex Bird, Engineer II
Ashley Wigod, Contracted City Attorney

OTHERS

Brady Preheim	Susie Wilson
Steve LeSollen	Jenni Gilbert
Jim Coleman	Steve Toschi
Holcombe Waller	

CALL REGULAR SESSION TO ORDER – 7:00 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

- ◆ Brady Preheim. Expressed concerns about the mayor's listening skills during public comments. He raised issues about allegedly toxic soil that had been spread out, questioned the timing of appointing Matt Smith as police chief while litigation with Joe Hogue was pending, expressed concerns about construction punch list items not being fully identified on sidewalks, believes the boat is owned by E2C, and voiced opposition to Ordinance No. 3316, calling it a "cheap trick to circumvent Harvey's initiative."
- ◆ Steve Toschi. Spoke about the water taxi, suggesting that the City could simply store it for a year without incurring significant costs rather than selling it. He emphasized that the water taxi had operated successfully for two years with expenses fully absorbed by the tourism program. Encouraged the Council to focus on social issues facing the City, particularly challenges with education and school test scores.
- ◆ Jim Coleman. Advocated against the City operating a tourist boat. He suggested the City should not be in the boat business and referenced ongoing Coast Guard inspection requirements and

insurance concerns. Indicated private individuals in other cities successfully operate tourist boat services and recommended the City sell the boat through a bid process.

- ◆ Holcombe Waller, owner of Klondike. Spoke in favor of retaining the water taxi. He described it as a valuable asset that aligns with the City's waterfront development strategy and river engagement efforts. Suggested exploring options for the boat's use, possibly involving local businesses and Treadway Productions, rather than selling it immediately.

DELIBERATIONS

1. Annexation of Property Located at 58506 Kavanagh Street (Mark Comfort/Tom Mahaffey)

Motion: Motion made by Councilor Gundersen and seconded by Councilor Sundeen to approve the annexation of 58506 Kavanagh Street. **Vote:** Yea: Mayor Massey, Councilor Gundersen, Councilor Hubbard, Councilor Sundeen

ORDINANCES – Final Reading

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

Mayor Massey read Ordinance No. 3310 by title. **Motion:** Motion made by Councilor Sundeen and seconded by Councilor Gundersen to adopt Ordinance No. 3310. **Vote:** Yea: Mayor Massey, Councilor Gundersen, Councilor Hubbard, Councilor Sundeen

ORDINANCES – First Reading

3. **Ordinance No. 3315:** An Ordinance Amending the St. Helens Municipal Code Chapter 13.30, Adding a Sunset Provision to the Public Safety Fee

Mayor Massey read Ordinance No. 3315 by title. The final reading will be at the next meeting.

4. **Ordinance No. 3316:** An Ordinance Amending the St. Helens Municipal Code Chapter 13.32, Requiring Voter Approval Before the Establishment of New Fees on Utility Bills Unrelated to Utility Services

Mayor Massey read Ordinance No. 3316 by title. The final reading will be at the next meeting.

RESOLUTIONS

5. **Resolution No. 2052:** A Resolution Appointing Matthew Smith as the Chief of Police of the City of St. Helens

Mayor Massey declared a potential conflict of interest and abstained from the discussion and vote.

Councilor Sundeen inquired about the timing of the appointment in relation to pending litigation, referencing public comments made earlier. Contracted City Attorney Wigod explained that since Joe Hogue had already resigned his position, the litigation primarily related to damages and should not affect the appointment process. She confirmed that Matthew Smith had successfully passed all required background checks and psychological evaluations. Under the new governing policy, the city administrator selects department heads and it is subject to confirmation by City Council.

Motion: Motion made by Councilor Sundeen and seconded by Councilor Hubbard to adopt Resolution No. 2052. **Vote:** Yea: Councilor Gundersen, Councilor Hubbard, Councilor Sundeen; Abstaining: Mayor Massey

AWARD BID/CONTRACT

6. Award Bid and Authorize Mayor to Sign Contract with Specialized Pavement Marking, LLC for 2025 Pavement Striping, Project No. R-723, in the Amount of \$65,946.10

Motion: Motion made by Councilor Sundeen and seconded by Councilor Gundersen to award bid and authorize mayor to sign contract with Specialized Pavement Marking, LLC. **Vote:** Yea: Mayor Massey, Councilor Gundersen, Councilor Hubbard, Councilor Sundeen

7. Award Bid and Authorize Mayor to Sign Contract with S-2 Contractors, Inc. for 2025 Pavement Patching, Project No. R-722, in the Amount of \$54,654.00

Motion: Motion made by Councilor Sundeen and seconded by Councilor Gundersen to award bid and authorize mayor sign contract with S-2 Contractors, LLC. **Vote:** Yea: Mayor Massey, Councilor Gundersen, Councilor Hubbard, Councilor Sundeen

APPROVE AND/OR AUTHORIZE FOR SIGNATURE

8. Extension of Agreement with McKinstry Essention LLC for Microgrid Planning and Preliminary Design related to the OR C-REP Grant Award

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

Councilor Hubbard asked for background information about McKinstry Essention LLC. City Administrator Walsh explained that they were an energy contractor who had performed initial work on the Kaster Road design for solar installation grants. The project had shifted to the library but wasn't funded. The current opportunity could bring funds back to the police station project, with a requirement that 1.5% of construction costs go to solar, which would offset some costs. Walsh noted there would be no fees to the City.

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

CONSENT AGENDA FOR ACCEPTANCE

9. Parks & Trails Commission Minutes dated June 9, 2025
10. Planning Commission Minutes dated July 8, 2025

Motion: Motion made by Councilor Gundersen and seconded by Councilor Sundeen to approve '9' and '10' above. **Vote:** Yea: Mayor Massey, Councilor Gundersen, Councilor Hubbard, Councilor Sundeen

CONSENT AGENDA FOR APPROVAL

11. City Council Minutes dated July 16 and August 4, 2025
12. Declare Surplus Property - Real Properties described as Tax Account Nos. 9983, 10015, and 28848
13. Accounts Payable Bill Lists

Motion: Motion made by Councilor Sundeen and seconded by Councilor Gundersen to approve '11' through '13' above.

Discussion.

Councilor Hubbard recused himself from Tax Account Nos. 9983 and 10015.

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

Motion: Motion made by Councilor Sundeen and seconded by Councilor Gundersen to approve '11' above. **Vote:** Yea: Mayor Massey, Councilor Gundersen, Councilor Hubbard, Councilor Sundeen

Motion: Motion made by Councilor Sundeen and seconded by Councilor Gundersen to approve '12' above, only including Tax Account Nos. 9983 and 10015.

Discussion.

Councilor Hubbard repeated that he is recusing from voting on those tax account numbers.

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

Motion: Motion made by Councilor Sundeen and seconded by Councilor Gundersen to approve '12' above, only including Tax Account No. 28848. **Vote:** Yea: Mayor Massey, Councilor Gundersen, Councilor Hubbard, Councilor Sundeen

Motion: Motion made by Councilor Gundersen and seconded by Councilor Sundeen to approve '13' above. **Vote:** Yea: Mayor Massey, Councilor Gundersen, Councilor Hubbard, Councilor Sundeen

WORK SESSION ACTION ITEMS

Human Resources Professional

Motion: Motion made by Councilor Sundeen and seconded by Councilor Gundersen to direct staff to develop an RFP to solicit proposals from HR professionals for Human Resources professional services as needed, and direct the expenses to be paid by the affected departments. **Vote:** Yea: Mayor Massey, Councilor Gundersen, Councilor Hubbard, Councilor Sundeen

COUNCIL MEMBER REPORTS

Councilor Sundeen reported...

- Highlights from the Parks and Trails Commission meeting:
 - They are developing an online assessment tool for Commissioners which will help in documenting park conditions and concerns.
 - The Commission is undertaking a review of their bylaws to ensure their procedures are up to date.
- Shared historical note:
 - St. Helens celebrated the opening of JCPenney 100 years ago. Its original location was at the current law library, before moving to where 2C's currently stands, and finally relocating to what is now The Vault.
- Responded to Being Called a "Little Weasel":
 - Addressed a public comment made by Brady Preheim that accused him of disrespect by clarifying he actually supported inviting the former mayor to the ribbon cutting ceremony despite having no involvement in the planning process.

Councilor Hubbard reported...

- Nothing to report.

Councilor Gundersen reported...

- Emphasized the water taxi is a valuable asset that deserves exploration of potential uses instead of rushing to sell it. Noted the unique opportunities presented by the city's location near the river and campground.

MAYOR MASSEY REPORTS

- Expressed gratitude to City staff, particularly City Recorder Payne Deputy City Recorder Scholl, for their diligence in preparing the meeting packets.

- Supported Councilor Sundeen on the issue regarding the former mayor's participation in the ribbon cutting:
 - Acknowledged that Councilor Sundeen had advocated for including the former mayor while she had a different viewpoint about his involvement.
- Addressed ongoing issues about the public safety fee:
 - Reaffirmed the need to clarify misinformation regarding the \$750,000 payment.
 - Highlighted the importance of informing citizens about potential service cuts if the fee is repealed.
- Discussed improved relations with City Administrator Walsh:
 - Mentioned the gradual improvement in communication and trust-building processes with Walsh, noting positive developments have been made each month.
- Proposed scheduling a presentation:
 - Suggested arranging a session with Steve Topaz and Art Leskowich to discuss the lagoon.
 - The Council agreed on a public forum on October 1 at 6:00 p.m., tasking staff to collaborate with the presenters on structuring a detailed agenda.

PROACTIVE ITEMS**OTHER BUSINESS****ADJOURN – 7:45 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