



COUNCIL REGULAR SESSION

Wednesday, September 02, 2020

APPROVED MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mayor Rick Scholl
Council President Doug Morten
Councilor Keith Locke
Councilor Ginny Carlson
Councilor Stephen R. Topaz

STAFF PRESENT

John Walsh, City Administrator
Matt Brown, Assistant City Administrator
Kathy Payne, City Recorder
Sue Nelson, Interim Public Works Director
Jacob Graichen, City Planner
Jenny Dimsho, Associate Planner
Tina Curry, Event Coordinator

OTHERS

Brady Preheim

CALL REGULAR SESSION TO ORDER VIA ZOOM – 7:08 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

MAYOR SCHOLL READ THE CITY COUNCIL MANTRA

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

- ◆ Brady Preheim. Last Sunday, Councilor Topaz wrote a letter to the Spotlight indicating that he was going to go home because he no longer has a voice on City Council. Brady encouraged Topaz to go home and stay there for two years. Ever since Topaz was elected, it has been clear that he has no interest in serving the citizens that he swore in oath to represent. Instead, his tenure has been about getting heavy revenge of the City for a flooded basement that was litigated, re-litigated, lost, and re-lost. He has been disruptive because “he doesn’t like the way the City is being run.” Topaz’s letter was full of misinformation and outright lies. Brady watched the August meeting where Topaz was muted. He was not muted for asking questions about Spirit of Halloweentown, the cost of chlorination, the rent due from pot growers, or the parking in downtown. He was muted because he was attacking a vendor of the City that was contracted with the City of St. Helens. He claimed he wrote the letter as a citizen and not a councilor but that is a lie. He only had access to the reports because he is a City Councilor. The report is not complete and has not been made public. He is using his office to launch an attack, while claiming he is doing it as a private citizen and engineer. Brady does not know if he was ever an engineer, but he does know that he was never a licensed engineer in Oregon and has been sanctioned by an Oregon Court for claiming that he was an engineer. Topaz also lied about other Councilors not

being interested in what is happening with the tourism director. He spoke with the City's tourism director and found that the other Councilors have all had direct contact with her about upcoming Spirit of Halloweentown activities. During the Tourism report, Topaz did not ask questions, did not appear to have additional questions, and was not muted during that portion of the meeting. It is also a lie that the usual requirements to have a safety review have been eliminated. All parties have been consulted and will sign off on a plan before it is approved. CERT also meets to review the plan. E2C will continue to have ongoing meetings and conversations with agencies, just as what has been done for the past eight years. E2C has run a well-organized event that has brought thousands of people to our town to spend money. The pandemic presents new challenges but E2C has adapted, and will continue to adapt, to new regulations that will keep visitors, volunteers, and citizens safe. This is not their first rodeo. There is always an option to meeting one-on-one with E2C staff. Topaz has never taken the opportunity. Council should be more concerned that Topaz has initiated racist comments against Chinese vendors on at least two occasions and has made allegations of backdoor deals with the tourism director, despite evidence to the contrary. Council should be concerned that Topaz uses his office for what he can get out of it personally and not what he can do for the City. It is a violation of ethics and oath of office. All of this comes at a huge cost. A recent Public Records Request that he made to the City showed that Topaz has cost the City over \$228,000. The ongoing ethics complaint filed by Topaz cost \$11,000. Legal fees regarding the sale of the property to the cannabis company was \$8,000. The Petersen's also filed a lawsuit that Topaz was involved in, cost another \$24,000. That lawsuit also devalued the property, that the City was going to sell, by another \$1.4 million. Add in the cost of having to have a City attorney present at all meetings because of the destruction by Topaz, that adds another \$8,652 through June. There still is an undetermined cost of grievances that have already been filed by City staff. The City is looking at over \$1.8 million that Topaz has directly cost the City. They cannot afford his continued antics. Please go home and stay there.

PROCLAMATIONS

1. Home Inventory Week for September National Preparedness Month

Mayor Scholl read the proclamation into the record...

WHEREAS, each September is recognized as National Preparedness Month; and

WHEREAS, Oregonians have witnessed and experienced natural disasters in our own community; and

WHEREAS, every community member can take active steps to protect their families and neighbors from natural and manmade disasters; and

WHEREAS, every family and business in St. Helens is encouraged to take active steps to be financially secure after a disaster; and

WHEREAS, every community member is encouraged to make sure they are properly insured against fire, flood, earthquakes, and storms; and

WHEREAS, every community member is encouraged to create a home inventory to include as part of their disaster preparedness kit.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Rick Scholl, Mayor of the City of St. Helens, do hereby declare that the first week of September 2020, be known as

Home Inventory Week

and join cities across Oregon to encourage everyone to build a home inventory of their personal property and speak with an insurance agent to make sure they are financially prepared for a disaster.

DELIBERATIONS - Comprehensive Plan Map and Zoning District Map Change for Millard Road Property owned by the City

Mayor Scholl acknowledged City Planner Graichen's thorough report.

Councilor Carlson commented that Mixed Use allows the greatest discretion for use of the property. It has been well vetted and well thought out. Council President Morten agreed. Graichen did a great job in his report. He is in support of the staff's recommendation.

Mayor Scholl reminded them that the park has been designated to be named Dahlgren Park. Graichen added that the stipulation can be added in the Ordinance.

Motion: Motion made by Locke and seconded by Morten to approve the Comprehensive Plan Map and Zoning District Map Change for Millard Road Property owned by the City as recommended by staff. Voting Yea: Scholl, Morten, Locke, Carlson, Topaz

PUBLIC COMMENT - Rates Increase for Drop Box Services
No public comment.

RESOLUTIONS

2. Resolution No. 1898: A Resolution Establishing Drop Box Rates and Superseding Resolution No. 1863

Mayor Scholl read Resolution No. 1989 by title. **Motion:** Motion made by Carlson and seconded by Topaz to adopt Resolution No. 1898. Voting Yea: Scholl, Morten, Locke, Carlson, Topaz

AWARD BID/CONTRACT

3. N. Vernonia Sidewalk Improvement Project to Emery & Sons Construction Group, LLC in the Amount of \$590,149.50
4. Storm Drain Improvements at S. 14th & Tualatin Streets Project to TFT Construction, Inc. in the Amount of \$47,519

Motion: Motion made by Carlson and seconded by Locke to approve '3' and '4' above. Voting Yea: Scholl, Morten, Locke, Carlson, Topaz

APPROVE AND/OR AUTHORIZE FOR SIGNATURE

5. Final Plat for Partition at St. Helens Place Apartments
6. Contract Payments

Motion: Motion made by Carlson and seconded by Locke to approve '5' and '6' above. Voting Yea: Scholl, Morten, Locke, Carlson, Topaz

CONSENT AGENDA FOR ACCEPTANCE

7. Library Board Minutes dated June 8, 2020

Motion: Motion made by Carlson and seconded by Locke to approve '7' above. Voting Yea: Scholl, Morten, Locke, Carlson, Topaz

CONSENT AGENDA FOR APPROVAL

8. Council Executive Session, Work Session, and Regular Session Minutes dated July 29 and August 19, 2020
9. Accounts Payable Bill Lists

Motion: Motion made by Carlson and seconded by Morten to approve '8' and '9' above. Voting Yea: Scholl, Morten, Locke, Carlson, Topaz

WORK SESSION ACTION ITEMS

Councilor Carlson asked if there should be a recommendation of properties to surplus based on the list that was presented during the work session. Mayor Scholl agreed.

Discussion ensued. Mayor Scholl suggested Graichen add that to his list of projects but not as a priority.

MAYOR SCHOLL REPORT

- It was a good Urban Renewal Agency meeting.
- The Waterfront Property is moving forward and going to be developed.
- He will be having lunch with the "If I Were Mayor..." Student Contest participants tomorrow. Council members are invited to attend. The City's poster winner Olivia Fantus won second place at the State. She was awarded \$300 and a certificate. Congratulations to her!
- Be careful on the river. There have been several drownings.
- He camped at Sand Island for the first time. The shuttle service they have has so much more potential. Brad Hendrickson and Andrew Neimi have done a great job.

COUNCIL MEMBER REPORTS

Council President Morten reported...

- He is proud of what is happening on Sand Island. There have been comments about parking at the marina. He would like staff to revisit parking on First Street. Improvements are needed for ingress and egress.
- Thanked fellow Kiwanians for helping with clean-up on Highway 30 in front of the Chamber of Commerce. A huge thanks to Public Works for prepping the area. They went above and beyond the expectations.

Councilor Topaz asked if there is enough ground to make a parking lot on Second Street. Council President Morten does not believe so. It would create an ingress and egress. The parking area could possibly be worked out with Brad behind his storage areas. Councilor Topaz added that there is some room for parking. Council President Morten will be asking staff to look at that area.

Councilor Locke reported...

- There are rumors at the State Legislature of possibly giving the money that goes to Community Action Team (CAT) to other agencies. They are claiming that CAT has not done enough over the years. He asked for the Council to support CAT if they hear anything.

Mayor Scholl added that CAT does a lot of good in the community.

Councilor Carlson reported...

- She recalls the conversation about parking, access, and egress with Brad, so it should not come as a surprise.
- She is so appreciative of the City parks. It is nice to have those spaces to take her clients.
- The National Guard troops returned home last weekend. They were unable to do a huge event due to COVID. The Youth Council is working on a welcome back thank you in cooperation with Hometown Heroes. She appreciates their service.

Councilor Topaz reported...

- The Library has been working with the Recreation Program to offer games in the park. They are going to expand into more parks. Personnel is being creative.

OTHER BUSINESS

Councilor Carlson added a congratulations to the "If I Were Mayor..." Student Contest second place winner at State. She is proud of the participants! Thank you to staff for making it available.

ADJOURNMENT – 7:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder.

ATTEST:

/s/ Kathy Payne
Kathy Payne, City Recorder

/s/ Rick Scholl
Rick Scholl, Mayor