



## **BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING #3 (READJOURNMENT)**

Thursday, May 29, 2025, at 6:30 PM, Immediately following URA Budget Committee Meeting  
HYBRID: City Hall Council Chambers, 265 Strand Street & Zoom (details below)

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### **AGENDA**

#### **CALL TO ORDER**

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- [1.](#) May 15, 2025, Budget Committee Minutes

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT (3 MINUTES EACH)**

#### **STAFF REVISIONS & OPPORTUNITY DISCUSSION**

#### **APPROVAL OF THE PROPOSED BUDGET**

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

### **VIRTUAL MEETING DETAILS**

**Join Zoom Meeting:** <https://zoom.us/j/94535675980?pwd=Re0FD4wUx0OuxIPEn7OR8kUfmwa9vX.1>

**MEETING ID:** 945 3567 5980

**PASSCODE:** 254838

**Call in:** +1 253 215 8782 US

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The meeting location is accessible to persons with disabilities. A request for an interpreter for the hearing impaired or for other accommodations for persons with disabilities should be made at least 48 hours before the meeting to City Hall at 503-397-6272.

Be a part of the vision and get involved...volunteer for a City Board or Commission! For more information or for an application, go to [www.sthelensoregon.gov](http://www.sthelensoregon.gov) or call 503-366-8217.



## BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING #2 (READJOURNMENT)

Thursday, May 15, 2025, at 6:00 PM

### DRAFT MINUTES

#### Members Present

Council President Jessica Chilton  
 Councilor Mark Gundersen  
 Councilor Russell Hubbard  
 Councilor Brandon Sundeen

Chair Lew Mason  
 Vice Chair Steve Toschi  
 Committee Member Jennifer Gilbert  
 Committee Member Ivan Salas

#### Members Absent:

Mayor Jennifer Massey

#### Staff Present:

Gloria Butsch, Finance Director - Budget Officer  
 John Walsh, City Administrator  
 Jamie Edwards, Accountant III- Budget Comm. Sec.  
 Jennifer Johnson, Accountant III  
 Ashley Wigod, City Attorney  
 Kathy Payne, HR Coordinator/City Recorder  
 Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder  
 Jacob Graichen, City Planner  
 Brenda Herren-Kenaga, Reference Librarian  
 Jana Wiersma, Youth & Makerspace Librarian

Sharon Darroux, Engineering Manager  
 Suzanne Bishop, Library Director  
 Shanna Duggan, Recreation Manager  
 Buck Tupper, Facility Maintenance Supervisor  
 Aaron Kunders, Water Quality Manager  
 Alex Bird, Engineer II  
 Crystal King, Communications Officer  
 Tyler Hills, Water Quality Operator

#### Others:

KOIN  
 Aaron Martin  
 Elsadye  
 JoAnn Dohn  
 Troy  
 Ikennifer Massey  
 Roger  
 Scott  
 Shauna Stroup-Harrison  
 Wendy  
 Tari  
 Michelle  
 Teegee  
 Erin Wheeldon  
 Dominique Dubois  
 Joe

Brittani  
 Jamerson  
 Bobby Bushay  
 Angel  
 Becky  
 Teresa  
 Rick Scholl  
 Jameson  
 Patrick Birkle  
 Walt Petersen  
 Brady Preheim  
 Reed Hjort  
 Charlotte Hart  
 Tina Curry  
 Gannon Smith  
 Eric Schnell  
 Steve Topaz

Jane Garcia  
 Nick Flory  
 Laurie Raffin  
 Ashlee  
 Molly Matchak  
 Nick Hellmich  
 Alana Gilstch  
 Lynne Pettit  
 Pam Benham  
 Robyn Toschi  
 Melissa  
 David  
 Linda Sprau  
 Catherine  
 Dav

**Call to Order – 6:00 PM**

Introductions were made around the table, starting with the committee members and City staff.

**Budget Officer Comments**

Finance Director Gloria Butsch welcomed and thanked the audience and Committee. Gloria read the role of the Budget Committee. She emphasized that the Committee's role is not to make management decisions such as establishing or eliminating programs or services. Butsch also stressed the importance of being respectful and avoiding disparaging comments about staff, as it erodes morale and causes divisiveness among departments.

**Public Comment (3 minutes each)**

Chair Mason welcomed public comments, limiting them to three minutes each and requesting that speakers state their name and confirm they are citizens of St. Helens. Public comments were heard by: Steve Topaz, Ellen Jacobson, Nicholas Hellmich, Molly Matchak, Alana Gilston, Tyler Hills, Patrick Birkle, Brady Preheim, Dannon, Linda Sprau, Nick Flori, Christina Sullivan, Charlotte Hart, Kathy Payne, Joe, Dwayne, JoAnn Dohn, Shauna Stroup Harrison, Angel, Jameson, and Rick Scholl.

- Steve Topaz spoke about the list of possible changes and additions presented by Kathy Payne, noting that it showed failures of the City and a lack of accountability for mistakes. He expressed concern about potential retaliation for bringing up problems.
- Ellen Jacobson, a resident and Library Board member, spoke in support of the library. She highlighted the value the library provides for the community and expressed concern about potential staff and service reductions. Jacobson also voiced her discomfort with the proposed \$42 fee on the water bill.
- Nicholas Hellmich, a citizen of St. Helens, commented on the proposed \$42.10 fee addition to the utility bill. He expressed concern about the impact on low-income residents and suggested alternatives such as adding the fee to property taxes or charging corporations.
- Molly Matchak, a long-time resident, spoke about the importance of the library to her family and the community. She emphasized the library's role in children's development and learning.
- Alana Gilston, a 30-year resident, praised the Library's improvements over the years and stressed its importance in providing services to marginalized people and children. She expressed concern about the potential impact of furloughing part-time employees.
- Tyler Hills, a City Employee and Union President, expressed strong opposition to the implementation of furlough days. He urged the Committee to explore other cost-saving measures that would not cause undue harm to workers.
- Patrick Birkle, a former City Council Member, commented on the Library and the proposed fee. He suggested that the City could step up to provide opportunities for children through library services and the recreation program, especially considering potential school budget cuts. He also expressed concern about the proposed fee on the utility bill.
- Brady Preheim criticized the Committee for ignoring budget issues that were apparent two years ago. He argued that the Committee should have acted earlier to prevent the current situation.
- Gannon, a local resident, expressed frustration with the City's priorities and the potential cuts to the library. He argued against putting additional financial burdens on residents and suggested reconsidering spending on projects like waterfront development.
- Linda Sprau spoke in support of the Library and the various programs it offers the senior citizens and younger citizens.
- Nick Flori, spoke on behalf of the St. Helens Parks and Trails Committee, expressing concerns on maintenance for the new waterfront, urging the Committee to keep this in mind for future Parks Budget. Flori also spoke in favor for the library budget and concern over additional fees.

- Christina Sullivan expressed concern about the ongoing deficit and questioned the fairness of adding a \$42 fee to residents' bills. She suggested looking at other areas for potential savings, such as Police wages, Council pay, and Unrepresented Staff pay scales.
- Charlotte Hart spoke about the history of the library and its importance to the community. She emphasized the Library's role in providing activities and resources for children and adults alike.
- Kathy Payne, City Recorder and Human Resources Coordinator, spoke in opposition to any changes that would adversely affect the Employees' pay, including furlough days. Payne further requested the need to balance the budget not be placed on Employees.
- Joe, a long-time resident, spoke about the changing nature of St. Helens as a commuter town and the financial struggles of many residents. He urged the Committee to consider the impact of any fee increases on the community.
- Wayne, a 30-year resident, questioned the allocation of funds from previous fees, particularly regarding the Recreation Center.
- JoAnn Dohn, a resident of St. Helens who is a Therapist in this County, expressed concern that the \$42.10 fee will have a significant impact on the most vulnerable citizens.
- Shauna Stroup-Harrison discussed a petition she started regarding concerns about the proposed \$42 water bill fee. She highlighted the City's financial challenges and urged finding solutions that don't burden existing consumers.
- Angel, a renter in St. Helens, expressed concern about the proposed fee increase and its impact on lower-income residents. She questioned why water rates in St. Helens are so high compared to other areas.
- Jameson, a local resident who had lived in various other states, commented on the high-water rates in St. Helens compared to other places she had lived.
- Rick Scholl, former Mayor, discussed the Police Department budget and suggested that the Council needs to take more proactive measures to address budget issues. He recommended considering cuts to the Police Department and exploring other revenue sources.

Additional public comments were written and provided to the Committee prior to the meeting.

### Approval of Minutes

1. Budget Committee Minutes dated 5/1/2025

**Motion:** Motion made by Committee Member Jennifer Gilbert to approve the Budget Committee Minutes from 5/1/2025, seconded by Council President Jessica Chilton.

Voting Yea: Councilor Gundersen, Councilor Hubbard, Councilor Sundeen, Vice Chair Mason, Committee Member Gilbert, Committee Member Salas, Committee Member Toschi

### Review Submitted Questions & Staff Responses

Chair Mason advised the Committee was emailed the submitted questions and staff responses. Finance Director Butsch asked if there were additional questions.

Gloria Butsch presented various budget scenarios to the Committee. These included:

1. The proposed budget with a 2.5% COLA and a \$42.10 fee.
2. A scenario with 2.5% COLA, 12 furlough days a year (except for police officers), and a \$16 fee.
3. A scenario with no COLAs, no furloughs, a hiring freeze, and a \$13.70 fee.

Butsch also presented potential revenue-generating ideas, such as increasing business license fees for multi-unit residential rentals and commercial rentals and adding an impact fee on event ticket sales.

The Committee discussed these options and asked questions about various aspects of the budget, including Police staffing levels, the Tourism program, and potential cuts to different departments.

**Review Staff Revisions**

Butsch presented staff revisions to the budget, including reductions in personnel services, pausing the vehicle replacement program, and reducing professional development across departments. She also discussed potential new revenue sources, such as increased business license fees and an impact fee on event ticket sales.

The Committee engaged in extensive discussion about these revisions, particularly focusing on the Police Department budget, the Tourism program, and potential ways to increase revenue or reduce expenses.

**Opportunity Discussion**

The Committee discussed assorted topics, including:

1. The Police station project and its budget constraints.
2. The potential sale of surplus property, including the Millard Road property and the mill property.
3. The Tourism program and ways to potentially increase revenue from events like Spirit of Halloweentown.
4. The possibility of reducing or eliminating certain community events to save money.
5. The need for more information from the Police Chief about potential budget reductions.

The Committee requested that the Police Chief be present at the next meeting to answer questions about the Department's budget and staffing needs.

**Open & Close Public Hearing for State Shared Revenue**

Chair Mason opened the public hearing for State Shared Revenue. Butsch explained that the State Shared Revenue includes taxes collected by the State, such as cigarette and liquor taxes, which are then shared with cities. To receive these funds, the City must hold a public hearing and demonstrate that it funds police or fire services.

No public comments were made during this hearing.

Chair Mason closed the public hearing for State Shared Revenue.

**Check In for Adjournment to May 29, 2025**

The Committee agreed to check in for adjournment to May 29, 2025. They discussed items to be addressed at the next meeting, including having the Interim Police Chief present to answer questions about the Department's budget.

**Motion:** motion was made by Committee Member Jennifer Gilbert to adjourn at 9:14 p.m., seconded by Councilor Brandon Sundeen.

**Adjourned** at 9:14 p.m. to May 29, 2025,

Respectfully submitted by Jamie Edwards, Accountant III, with assisted transcription by ClerkMinutes.

May 29, 2025

Budget Committee Members,

Hello. My name is Kathy Payne and I'm here to remind you that, as I mentioned in my comments on May 15, Measures 5 and 50 had an enormous negative impact on the City of St. Helens, as did the closures of several major manufacturing businesses in town. Our General Fund has taken a big hit, and as costs continue to rise, it will be harder and harder to balance our budget. We need more action taken through economic development promotion to invite large industrial businesses to locate here in the city limits. We have the land. Our tax rate is extremely low at \$1.90 and it's going to take years to get any big business on the tax rolls with Enterprise Zone incentives, but we have to do it NOW. We can't afford to wait. We must do what it takes to attract those businesses to develop here. We can't sit idly by and expect them to knock on our door. We need to invite them here. I know the City and CET are working on it, but I'd like to see more focus...urgent focus...on St. Helens.

Next, I'd like to talk to you about our employees. We have approximately 75 hard working employees that chose a career in public service. This is not a profession for the faint of heart. Working for the government is challenging in so many ways but can also be very rewarding. In my 40-year career as a public servant, I have had many highs and many lows. Working for the City for the past 24 years, I've seen many of those highs and lows. My greatest joy in these past 24 years is working with some of the best people I've ever known; intelligent, determined, people who care about our town and want the best for it. We don't deserve to have our salaries reduced by requiring furlough days, freezing merit increases, changing our PERS retirement benefit, or any other method by which employees' pay would be negatively impacted. I think foregoing a cost-of-living this coming fiscal year is acceptable but please carefully consider the impacts that inflation and increased tariffs have on our employees and their families, and keep in mind that COLAs should be implemented in future fiscal years. We want to help balance the budget and we are all willing to make cuts in each of our departments and divisions to get to a balanced budget.

Now, as a citizen of St. Helens, I'd like to talk to you about the \$10 Public Safety Fee. I support an increase in this fee because we need the Police in our town. We don't want to end up in a situation where we are competing with other cities for services from the Sheriff's Office or any other department. I support increasing the fee also so that we can build a better facility for our Police Officers and staff. If you haven't visited the current Station, I beg you to take the time to do that. It's disgraceful that we don't have adequate facilities for our first responders. I don't want to see us lose any more officers to other jurisdictions. Let's take care of our officers!!!

I recommend adding an additional \$15 to the \$10 Public Safety Fee making it \$25 for FY25/26 and increasing it incrementally in future fiscal years until we have a 20% reserve in the General Fund. I know this statement won't be widely accepted, but I think that since the taxpayers are only paying \$1.90 per \$1,000 of assessed value, we need to increase the Public Safety Fee to take care of our Police Department since it is one of the biggest budgets in the General Fund and all citizens need their services.

I understand the impact an increase has on some of our most vulnerable citizens who are on fixed incomes and those who live paycheck to paycheck. It's hard but we need to support public safety in our community just as much as we needed the jail levy to pass. We can't go without police because it will lead to more crime and more criminally minded people moving here. I don't want that, and I don't think our citizens want that either.

I would like to recommend that the City start sending funds to Community Action Team to help keep the public assistance for City utilities program for low-income households operating for citizens inside the city limits of St. Helens and implement something like the CRPUD's GLOW program to allow citizens to donate to the assistance fund.

Please do not put the responsibility for balancing the budget on the employees! And please consider the need to balance the budget with the safety and well-being of our employees and citizens of St. Helens.

I appreciate you taking the time to listen to my thoughts on our budget situation.

Kathy Payne



May 23, 2025

Regarding the proposal to add a minimum of \$42.00 per month to the city services/ water bill.

Item #2.

Attn: Mayor Jennifer Massey

Chair Lew Mason

~~Council President Jessica Chilton~~

City Council Members:

Councilor Mark Gundersen

Councilor Brandon Sundeen

Committee Member Ivan Salas

Council President Jessica Chilton

Vice Chair Steve Toschi

Councilor Russel Hubbard

Committee Member Jennifer Gilbert

Staff:

Gloria Butsch, Finance Director - Budget Officer

John Walsh, City Administrator

Jamie Edwards, Accountant III- Budget Committee Secretary

Jennifer Johnson, Accountant III

Ashley Wigod, City Attorney

The city should not be balancing its budget on the backs of the city residents' water bill! This is a TAX on which we are not given a vote. And it continues to set a dangerous precedent, as has been shown only a year or so ago, with a \$10 increase in 'fees' on our water bill, that the city continues to hold our water bills hostage to their attempts to balance its budget. *If we cannot pay, the city can shut off our water.* What part of extortion does this not make? Basic and affordable water is something we should all have access. And our water should not be held hostage.

Adding \$500 - \$600 a year so that we can have access to city water is insane. Many of us cannot afford this. As the train wreck of the federal government continues to cut or massively reduce services to Americans including SNAP, food bank deliveries; millions about to lose Medicaid coverage, who knows what impacts on Medicare and Social Security, the intentional stock market instability, tariffs increasing costs of basic items; these are and will seriously impact the residents of St Helens. We are not a wealthy city. At least most of us are not. Trying to live on social security, maybe a little extra from a pension or investments, or what's left of them, is challenging enough when our health, car and home insurances and property taxes continue to increase every year, and food and basic necessities only climb higher.

I am 68, retired on a modest, at best, income of social security, a small pension I inherited from my Mom, and tanking investments. I do not purchase alcohol, tobacco, junk or convenience food, or soft drinks. I don't get tattoos or do drugs. I buy my clothes used from Top Notch. I grow a large amount of my own vegetables and fruit, trade with neighbors and friends, and donate a portion of what I grow to the Food Bank. I do a lot of canning, but need assistance via the Food Bank in the winter months and until my summer harvest comes in.

I have never carried a credit card balance: if I can't afford it, I don't purchase it. My house and 17 year old Honda are paid off. I have no debt. I don't take vacations, go to movies or concerts. I garden, with plants donated and traded with my gardener friends. I have rain barrels and even haul my toilet water from them every day to save a few dollars a month.

Yet I struggle when the inevitable unexpected bills come up: the last several years these have included thousands in unexpected vet and dental bills, car repairs, hot water tank and water pipes under the house replaced, etc. The city adds another \$500 - \$600 a year to a bill I will HAVE to pay if I want some basic water to drink and shower with..... where is that supposed to come from?

The Budget Committee is appointed by the City Council and serves in an advisory capacity. So ultimately the 'BUCK' stops with the City Council and the Mayor. But all of you are responsible. If you can spend millions to make the water front pretty but can't afford to budget for enough police so that we had to have a month of NO evening/overnight coverage, or have to hold the resident's hostage to be able to access city water, then you are NOT doing your job.

We should all have access to city water. Our water bill should NOT be held hostage to attempts to balance the budget. Please be considerate and respectful of the residents of St Helens. That is all of your jobs.

Thank you for your consideration.

Catherine Ross

114 May Ave, St Helens, Oregon 97051

Home owner and resident since 2015



**From:** [Sarah Rychart](#)  
**To:** [Jamie Edwards](#)  
**Subject:** [External] Regarding the budget & possible cuts to the library  
**Date:** Thursday, May 15, 2025 7:29:27 PM

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### Budget Committee members

I want to express how much the library and its services mean to me. It's not just a place where you can check out materials such as books and movies, it's also a place that offers community. My children and I have greatly benefited from the programs and classes at the library- such as the Summer Reading program, the library book club and Adults and Crafts, to name a few. Since I am currently a stay at home parent, the classes and activities the library provides allows me the opportunity to interact and connect with other members of this community, something that would be difficult to do if I had to come up those activities on my own.

The library is an important Third Space, where families with young children can attend weekly Story times, people can access the internet if they don't have internet access in their homes and use the Makerspace to work on projects involving sewing machines, 3D printers and Cricuts, for example. People of all ages benefit from access to the library, whether it's young children, teenagers, stay at home parents, people who work outside their homes and retired people. The library also serves as a cooling center on those hottest of days during the summer for many vulnerable people who don't have access to air conditioning, proper ventilation or fans so they can stay safe and not succumb to heat stroke. Our community benefits from having a fully functional library with services and activities that the public wants and a robust library staff that can help patrons find the materials, resources and information that they need.

Sincerely,

Sarah Rychart  
St Helens resident of 12 years

**From:** [Breezy Smith](#)  
**To:** [Jamie Edwards](#)  
**Cc:** [Shanna Duggan](#)  
**Subject:** [External] S.H.A.R.P. After-school Program Funding  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 28, 2025 1:11:38 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
**Importance:** High

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Good afternoon,

I hope this email finds you well. I am reaching out on behalf of myself and my children in support of the SHARP after-school care program. My son has attended this after-school program for the last four years, and my daughter is finishing her first year in the program. SHARP has been a consistent source of care and support for my family over the years. I trust that my children are not only in a clean and safe environment, but they are also well taken care of. As a parent, I have found there is nothing comparable in St Helens for providing these care needs. Not to mention, the staff are invested in my children by providing them with one-on-one support, fun, and educational activities daily! If there is anything I can do to show my support for maintaining funds for this program, please feel free to reach out to me directly at 503.501.0925.

Thank you,

**Breezy Smith**

971.412.8549

[Breezy@telluric-ent.us](mailto:Breezy@telluric-ent.us)

[www.telluric-ent.us](http://www.telluric-ent.us)



**From:** [Jillian Sederburg](#)  
**To:** [Jamie Edwards](#)  
**Subject:** [External] SHARP program  
**Date:** Tuesday, May 27, 2025 1:36:58 PM  
**Attachments:** [SHARP letter.pdf](#)

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Good afternoon

I hope this message finds you well. I am writing to share my strong support for the SHARP Afterschool Program and to express how much it has meant to both my child and our family.

As the future of the program is being considered, I wanted to take a moment to personally highlight the positive impact it has had on my kindergartner's growth, learning, and sense of belonging. I've attached a letter that outlines our experience in more detail and why we believe SHARP is such a valuable part of the community.

I truly hope you will consider the voices of families like ours when making any decisions about the program's future. Eliminating SHARP would not only affect the dedicated staff and working families who rely on it, but would also be a significant loss for the children who thrive in its safe, enriching environment.

Thank you for your time, consideration, and all the work you do to support our children.

Warm regards,

Jillian Sederburg



Jillian Sederburg  
484 S 11th St.  
Saint Helens, OR 97051  
971-203-6352  
[jillian.ps06@gmail.com](mailto:jillian.ps06@gmail.com)

May 27, 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to express my heartfelt appreciation for the SHARP Afterschool Program and the incredibly positive impact it has had on both my kindergartner and our family.

From the very beginning, the program has provided a safe, nurturing environment where my daughter feels welcomed, supported, and engaged. As working parents, it brings us tremendous peace of mind knowing she is in a trusted and enriching space while we complete our workdays. The dedication and compassion of the staff are truly unmatched.

Our daughter has flourished socially and academically through the variety of learning opportunities, creative activities, and meaningful friendships she has developed. The presence of engaging guest speakers and enriching experiences has sparked her curiosity and deepened her love of learning in ways we could not have imagined.

It's clear to us that SHARP is more than just an afterschool program, it's a vital part of our community. The potential loss of this program would be deeply felt. It would not only negatively affect the families who rely on it and the devoted staff who make it possible, but most importantly, it would impact the children who benefit from the structure, safety, and inspiration it provides every day.

We are sincerely grateful for everything SHARP has offered, and we hope this essential program continues to serve our community for years to come.

With heartfelt thanks,

Jillian Sederburg

To the City of St. Helens Budget Committee:

I respectfully request that the city of St. Helens fully fund and staff the St. Helens Public Library for the next fiscal budget.

The library provides essential services and resources for the community in which we live.

- Makerspace providing opportunities for acquiring employment skills and education
- Access to valuable information and educational materials and programs
- Meeting space for vulnerable community members, tutoring, CCMH, WorkSource, mentoring and teen meetings.
- A meeting space and auditorium for organizations and businesses, that also provides library income.
- Cooling/warming center for vulnerable population

It will be difficult to retain staff if there is a reduction in pay and employee benefits. The cost of hiring and training new employees and the loss of a cohesive work environment would be detrimental for operations.

I personally do not live in St. Helens, but I purchase a St. Helens Public Library card because it is important to me.

Thank you, Teresa Knight  
Coordinator for Art Happens @ the Library  
Member of the Columbia Arts Guild  
1700 1<sup>st</sup> Street, Columbia City, Oregon 97018

**From:** [Gloria Butsch](#)  
**To:** [Jamie Edwards](#)  
**Subject:** FW: [External] Library concerns  
**Date:** Thursday, May 15, 2025 5:16:40 PM

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Gloria  
Gloria Butsch, CPFO  
Finance Director  
City of St Helens  
503-366-8227

“Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much” – Helen Keller

-----Original Message-----

From: Katie Marsh <katie.luttrell@me.com>  
Sent: Thursday, May 15, 2025 5:15 PM  
To: John Walsh <jwalsh@sthelensoregon.gov>; Gloria Butsch <gbutsch@sthelensoregon.gov>  
Subject: [External] Library concerns

To whom it may concern,

I am reaching out about the possible budget cuts to the library. I have been going to the St Helen's library off and on , since I was a child, as of last year, my children and I go to check out books weekly. It's something we look forward to as a family and since we have been going, my son who is 6 reads 54 words per min and my daughter who is 8 now reads 228 words per min. We enjoy picking out books, utilizing the sensory activities in the children's space and then the occasional Lego nights. These are just a few things that our family participates with among the MANY other benefits the library has to offer. Cutting the budget to the library would be a huge detriment to our community. The library is a safe place to many and without the plethora of books for us to choose from, we would not be able to afford to buy the amount of books we check out which would be a hindrance to my children's and many others, growth.

Please reconsider cutting the library's budget as this is one of the last free, safe places for people of all walks to learn, to grow and to have a sense of community, especially with the current state of the world, this should be the last thing we consider skimping on.

Warmly,  
Katie Marsh  
Two Flowers Farm LLC



5/27/25

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing as a single parent to share how deeply the SHARP Afterschool Program has impacted my life and the well-being of my child. In my situation, where I am the sole provider and also caring for an ailing mother, SHARP has been nothing short of a lifeline.

Raising a young child while balancing work and caregiving responsibilities is incredibly difficult, especially without a support system. Knowing that my child has a safe, structured, and supportive place to go after school has lifted a tremendous burden from my shoulders. SHARP allows me to meet the demands of my job and care for my mother, all while feeling confident that my child is learning, socializing, and growing in a positive environment.

My child has truly thrived through this program. The learning opportunities, engaging guest speakers, and friendships formed have sparked a joy and curiosity that I might not have been able to provide on my own under these circumstances. The kindness and dedication of the staff have made my child feel seen, safe, and valued.

The potential loss of the SHARP Program would be devastating—not only for my family, but for countless others who rely on it. It would affect the children who benefit from its care, the working parents who depend on its support, and the committed staff who give so much of themselves to our community.

Please consider the real and lasting impact SHARP has on families like mine. It is more than an afterschool program—it is a vital source of stability, learning, and hope.

With deepest gratitude,

Lindsay Burke

Sped Teacher

SHMS

May 23, 2025

Regarding the proposal to add a minimum of \$42.00 per month to the city services/ water bill.

Item #2.

Attn: Mayor Jennifer Massey  
Chair Lew Mason  
~~Council President Jessica Chilton~~  
City Council Members:

Councilor Mark Gundersen  
Councilor Brandon Sundeen  
Committee Member Ivan Salas

Council President Jessica Chilton  
Vice Chair Steve Toschi

Councilor Russel Hubbard  
Committee Member Jennifer Gilbert

Staff:

Gloria Butsch, Finance Director - Budget Officer

John Walsh, City Administrator

Jamie Edwards, Accountant III- Budget Committee Secretary

Jennifer Johnson, Accountant III

Ashley Wigod, City Attorney

The city should not be balancing its budget on the backs of the city residents' water bill! This is a TAX on which we are not given a vote. And it continues to set a dangerous precedent, as has been shown only a year or so ago, with a \$10 increase in 'fees' on our water bill, that the city continues to hold our water bills hostage to their attempts to balance its budget. *If we cannot pay, the city can shut off our water.* What part of extortion does this not make? Basic and affordable water is something we should all have access. And our water should not be held hostage.

Adding \$500 - \$600 a year so that we can have access to city water is insane. Many of us cannot afford this. As the train wreck of the federal government continues to cut or massively reduce services to Americans including SNAP, food bank deliveries; millions about to lose Medicaid coverage, who knows what impacts on Medicare and Social Security, the intentional stock market instability, tariffs increasing costs of basic items; these are and will seriously impact the residents of St Helens. We are not a wealthy city. At least most of us are not. Trying to live on social security, maybe a little extra from a pension or investments, or what's left of them, is challenging enough when our health, car and home insurances and property taxes continue to increase every year, and food and basic necessities only climb higher.

I am 68, retired on a modest, at best, income of social security, a small pension I inherited from my Mom, and tanking investments. I do not purchase alcohol, tobacco, junk or convenience food, or soft drinks. I don't get tattoos or do drugs. I buy my clothes used from Top Notch. I grow a large amount of my own vegetables and fruit, trade with neighbors and friends, and donate a portion of what I grow to the Food Bank. I do a lot of canning, but need assistance via the Food Bank in the winter months and until my summer harvest comes in.

I have never carried a credit card balance: if I can't afford it, I don't purchase it. My house and 17 year old Honda are paid off. I have no debt. I don't take vacations, go to movies or concerts. I garden, with plants donated and traded with my gardener friends. I have rain barrels and even haul my toilet water from them every day to save a few dollars a month.

Yet I struggle when the inevitable unexpected bills come up: the last several years these have included thousands in unexpected vet and dental bills, car repairs, hot water tank and water pipes under the house replaced, etc. The city adds another \$500 - \$600 a year to a bill I will HAVE to pay if I want some basic water to drink and shower with..... where is that supposed to come from?

The Budget Committee is appointed by the City Council and serves in an advisory capacity. So ultimately the 'BUCK' stops with the City Council and the Mayor. But all of you are responsible. If you can spend millions to make the water front pretty but can't afford to budget for enough police so that we had to have a month of NO evening/overnight coverage, or have to hold the resident's hostage to be able to access city water, then you are NOT doing your job.

We should all have access to city water. Our water bill should NOT be held hostage to attempts to balance the budget. Please be considerate and respectful of the residents of St Helens. That is all of your jobs.

Thank you for your consideration.

Catherine Ross  
114 May Ave, St Helens, Oregon 97051  
Home owner and resident since 2015

		#1	#2		#3	#4		#5				
Fund	Dept	Proposed Budget		Furloughs \$16 Fee		No COLA No Furlough \$13.70 Fee (some adj& hire freeze)		#3 w/cuts and No Fee		#4 and \$7.00 Fee		% Cut
		Resources	Expenses	Resources	Expenses	Resources	Expenses	Resources	Expenses	Resources	Expenses	
General Fund		14,829,864		13,191,832		13,019,864		12,251,714		12,751,714		
	Administration		573,200		554,600		553,800		544,800		544,800	5%
	City Recorder/HR		421,500		406,300		411,900		394,900		394,900	7%
	City Council		135,840		135,840		135,840		90,680		90,680	50%
	Muni Court		492,100		482,500		486,000		485,700		485,700	1%
	Police		6,069,500		5,843,500		5,552,000		5,511,000		5,511,000	10%
	Library		885,800		846,300		857,700		855,050		855,050	4%
	Finance		1,113,200		1,094,100		1,096,800		1,039,300		1,039,300	7%
	Parks		629,700		591,900		606,500		576,500		576,500	9%
	Recreation		431,700		372,900		380,700		375,500		375,500	15%
	CD-Planning		453,700		430,500		444,200		355,500		355,500	28%
	CD-Building		414,000		398,800		409,600		409,900		409,900	1%
	Technology		709,000		588,400		591,200		566,200		566,200	25%
	General Services		359,000		359,000		359,000		303,000		303,000	18%
	Contingency & Reserve		2,141,624		1,087,192		1,134,624		743,684		1,243,684	
	Reserve %		17%		9%		10%		6%		11%	
Visitor Tourism		1,381,879	1,381,879	1,381,879	1,381,879	1,581,879	1,581,879	1,581,879	1,581,879	1,581,879	1,581,879	
Community Development		20,874,124		20,874,124		20,874,124		20,874,124		20,874,124		
	Economic Planning		168,500		168,500		168,500		168,500		168,500	
	Industrial Bus. Park		16,881,000		16,881,000		16,881,000		16,881,000		16,881,000	
	Riverfront		74,760		74,760		74,760		74,760		74,760	
	Forestry		190,500		190,500		190,500		190,500		190,500	
	Central Waterfront		900,000		900,000		900,000		900,000		900,000	
	Contingency & Reserve		2,659,364		2,659,364		2,659,364		2,659,364		2,659,364	
Community Enhancement												
	Administration	68,325	-	68,325	-	68,325	-	68,325	-	68,325	-	
	Police	110,250	10,000	110,250	10,000	110,250	10,000	110,250	10,000	110,250	10,000	
	Library	25,890		25,890	-	25,890	-	25,890	-	25,890	-	
	Parks	(34,509)		(34,509)	-	(34,509)	-	(34,509)	-	(34,509)	-	
	Recreation	53,165	150,000	53,165	150,000	53,165	150,000	53,165	150,000	53,165	150,000	
	Building	75,772	5,000	75,772	5,000	75,772	5,000	75,772	5,000	75,772	5,000	
	ACC	40	-	40	-	40	-	40	-	40	-	
	Transitional Housing	6,680	-	6,680	-	6,680	-	6,680	-	6,680	-	

Ending Fund Balance		140,613		140,613		140,613		140,613		140,613	
Street	1,999,879	1,824,300	1,999,879	1,733,300	1,999,879	1,789,400	1,999,879	1,789,400	1,999,879	1,789,400	2%
Contingency & Reserve		175,579		266,579		210,479		210,479		210,479	
Street SDC	1,983,614	375,000	1,983,614	375,000	1,983,614	375,000	1,983,614	375,000	1,983,614	375,000	
Contingency & Reserve		1,608,614		1,608,614		1,608,614		1,608,614		1,608,614	
Water SDC	1,156,488	503,000	1,156,488	503,000	1,156,488	503,000	1,156,488	503,000	1,156,488	503,000	
Contingency & Reserve		653,488		653,488		653,488		653,488		653,488	
Sewer SDC	2,157,149	645,000	2,157,149	645,000	2,157,149	645,000	2,157,149	645,000	2,157,149	645,000	
Contingency & Reserve		1,512,149		1,512,149		1,512,149		1,512,149		1,512,149	
Storm SDC	635,196	102,000	635,196	102,000	635,196	102,000	635,196	102,000	635,196	102,000	
Contingency & Reserve		533,196		533,196		533,196		533,196		533,196	
Parks SDC	213,163	51,500	213,163	51,500	213,163	51,500	213,163	51,500	213,163	51,500	
Contingency & Reserve		161,663		161,663		161,663		161,663		161,663	
Water	8,409,678		8,409,678		8,409,678		8,409,678		8,409,678		
Distribution		4,403,900		4,209,600		4,273,400		4,273,400		4,273,400	3%
Filtration		994,300		949,000		882,000		882,000		882,000	13%
Non-Departmental		512,670		512,670		512,670		512,670		512,670	0%
Contingency & Reserve		2,498,808		2,738,408		2,741,608		2,741,608		2,741,608	
Sewer	19,283,649		19,283,649		19,283,649		19,283,649		19,283,649		
Collection		3,447,700		3,430,400		3,341,200		3,341,200		3,341,200	3%
Primary Treatment		540,600		489,300		435,300		435,300		435,300	24%
Secondary Treatment		772,000		731,700		652,700		652,700		652,700	18%
Pump Services		204,600		198,600		193,600		193,600		193,600	6%
Non-Departmental		12,883,140		12,883,140		12,883,140		12,883,140		12,883,140	0%
Contingency & Reserve		1,435,609		1,550,509		1,777,709		1,777,709		1,777,709	
Storm	2,944,154	2,444,200	2,944,154	2,435,200	2,944,154	2,007,000	2,944,154	2,007,000	2,944,154	2,007,000	22%
Contingency & Reserve		499,954		508,954		937,154		937,154		937,154	
Equipment Reserve	200,000		200,000		200,000		200,000		200,000		
Contingency & Reserve		200,000		200,000		200,000		200,000		200,000	
Public Works	5,136,592		4,818,392		4,421,492		4,421,492		4,421,492		
Engineering		805,500		786,000		698,800		698,800		698,800	15%

Operations		2,843,300		2,966,000		3,093,300		3,093,300		3,093,300	-8%
Facilities Maint		814,300		602,000		607,100		607,100		607,100	34%
Contingency & Reserve		673,492		464,392		22,292		22,292		22,292	
Public Safety Facility	13,655,957	11,231,800	13,655,957	11,231,800	13,655,957	11,231,800	13,655,957	11,231,800	13,655,957	11,231,800	
Contingency & Reserve		2,424,157		2,424,157		2,424,157		2,424,157		2,424,157	
TOTAL		<u>95,166,999</u>	<u>95,166,999</u>	<u>93,210,767</u>	<u>93,210,767</u>	<u>92,841,899</u>	<u>92,841,899</u>	<u>92,073,749</u>	<u>92,073,749</u>	<u>92,573,749</u>	<u>92,573,749</u>