



MINUTES

RICHLAND CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING

Tuesday, March 19, 2024

Richland City Hall ~ Council Chambers
625 Swift Boulevard

City Council Regular Meeting - 6:00 p.m.

Mayor Richardson called the Council meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Welcome and Roll Call

Mayor Richardson welcomed those in the audience and expressed appreciation for their attendance.

Attendance:	Mayor Richardson	Present
	Mayor Pro Tem Kent	Present
	Councilmember Jones	Present
	Councilmember Lukson	Present
	Councilmember Maier	Present
	Councilmember VanDyke	Present
	Councilmember Whitten	Present

Also present were City Manager Amundson, Deputy City Manager Schiessl, Assistant City Manager Florence, City Attorney Kintzley, Interim Chief of Police Neher, Fire Chief Huntington, Public Works Director Rogalsky, Energy Services Director Whitney, Finance Director Allen, Human Resources Director Paulsen, and Acting Deputy City Clerk Fulton.

Pledge of Allegiance

Councilmember VanDyke led the Council and audience in the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Agenda

MAYOR PRO TEM KENT MOVED AND COUNCILMEMBER JONES SECONDED THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS PUBLISHED. MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

Presentations

1. Visit Tri-Cities 2023 Annual Report and 2024 Work Plan

Kevin Lewis, Visit Tri-Cities President & CEO, presented the Visit Tri-Cities 2023 Annual Report and Work Plan. Highlights included a discussion of Visit Tri-Cities' mission and vision, the local visitor economy and spending breakdown, and the benefits of nurturing community vitality. Additional details on 2023 revenues and expenditures, Visit Tri-Cities' updated messaging strategy, and the agency's five (5) Pillars of Success are available in the PowerPoint presentation included in the agenda packet. A short video was played

highlighting the Tri-Cities as a tourist destination. Mr. Lewis then discussed signature events including Ironman and the NHPA World Tournament (horseshoe pitching), and touched on strategic sales associated with group visits. Mr. Lewis encouraged Council to review the work plan submitted with the agenda packet for additional details. Prior to closing the presentation, Mr. Lewis provided detail on the current TPA Reserve Fund balance and asked that \$176,100 be authorized for reinvestment in tourism-related projects. A resolution authorizing the transfer of funds is on tonight's consent calendar (see Resolution No. 2024-44).

Council engaged in a question-and-answer session with Mr. Lewis.

2. REACH Museum 2023 Recap & 10th Anniversary Plans

Bill King, Richland Public Facilities District (RPF) Board President, and Rosanna Sharpe, REACH Museum Executive Director, presented on the current state of the REACH Museum. Mr. King spoke briefly about the need for future expansion and foreshadowed the Richland Public Facilities District connecting with Richland City Council for guidance and support. Ms. Sharpe described the REACH as an indispensable "place space" critical to educating the community's youth and serving as an epicenter for tourism and economic growth. After providing a brief introduction, Ms. Sharpe introduced Education Manager Pauline Shaffer to discuss the programming offered by the REACH. Ms. Shaffer described the valuable partnerships and collaboration occurring at the REACH on events like Earth Day, Screech at the REACH, and Tri-Tech Film Students, to name a few. Additional details regarding REACH programming is available in the presentation included in the agenda packet.

After Ms. Shaffer concluded her portion of the presentation, Ms. Sharpe resumed her presentation and discussed the challenges facing the REACH, including inflation and low attendance. However, Ms. Sharpe is optimistic that revenue will bounce back in 2024. In addition, Ms. Sharpe shared that the REACH is planning a significant celebration for the REACH's 10th anniversary.

Councilmember Jones sought clarity regarding the REACH's venue identity – is it a wedding venue, is it a museum, is it a library – Councilmember Jones described what she perceives as a lack of focus for the purpose of the facility. Councilmember Jones also asked whether the REACH was operating in the black before COVID, and what the attendance levels were before COVID. Ms. Sharpe responded that the REACH had approximately 1,450 memberships before COVID and during the first year of COVID, but those numbers dropped in the second and third years of the pandemic. Ms. Sharpe advised that current membership is about 1,500 members.

Councilmember VanDyke expressed concerns with the REACH operating at a loss, and asked how much dependance the REACH has on reserves. Ms. Sharpe shared a slide showing the annual budget and percentages of revenue coming from earned income from categories including museum operations, REACH Foundation endowment, and the 631 Fund. Councilmember VanDyke expressed interest in learning more about the financial

picture of the REACH at a future workshop meeting. Councilmember Lukson concurred.

Mayor Pro Tem Kent gave kudos to Ms. Sharpe and Mr. King for the great things happening at the REACH. Mayor Pro Tem Kent then described that it will be essential for Richland City Council to have a clear understanding of the REACH's financials before a conversation is had about receiving additional Council support. Mayor Pro Tem Kent was encouraging about the REACH's future, but expects full disclosure regarding financials and plans to elevate the REACH to the next level.

Mayor Richardson asked for a brief description of the 631 Fund. Mr. King shared that the 631 Fund is a fund the City holds on the REACH's behalf.

Public Hearing

Acting Deputy City Clerk Fulton read the Public Comment procedures.

Public Comments

The following individuals provided public comment:

- Leigh Terrass, Kennewick resident – Ms. Terrass shared that she spent copious amounts of time at the REACH with her late father, and opined that museums need support from city government. Ms. Terrass said the REACH is a gem in this community.
- Charmine Faulkner, Richland homeowner – Ms. Faulkner is in possession of a framed 1968 proclamation establishing Family Week in Richland from August 2 – 11, 1968. Ms. Faulkner is calling upon her fellow citizens to bring back Family Week in Richland.
- Edward Munoz, Richland resident – Mr. Munoz expressed his displeasure with Camo Dave's use of a city gazebo to feed the homeless. Mr. Munoz claimed that Camo Dave is present non-stop (seven (7) days a week) making it impossible for anyone else to use the park. Mr. Munoz believes this to be a violation of park rules and the ADA. Mr. Munoz is concerned that Richland will take no action and allow a tent city to become established in the area where Camo Dave feeds the homeless.
- Connie Munoz, Richland resident – Ms. Munoz provided City Council with two (2) months of police calls to the gazebo in Columbia Park West where Camo Dave feeds the homeless. Ms. Munoz has a mobility-limiting condition and is upset that she cannot use the gazebo close to the bathroom. Ms. Munoz demanded action to restrict Camo Dave's use of the gazebo.
- Dana Ward, Pasco resident – Mr. Ward, President of the Lower Columbia Basin Audubon Society, promoted the City's support of the REACH Museum. Mr. Ward

also encouraged the City of Richland to plan carefully for the Ironman event.

- Michael Landry, Richland resident – Mr. Landry thanked City Council for ongoing support of the REACH Museum.
- Erin O'Brien, Richland resident – Ms. O'Brien moved to the Tri-Cities after researching the area. Ms. O'Brien encouraged the City Council to continue to support the REACH, and shared that she just started working at the REACH as a part-time educator.
- Randy Slovic, Richland resident – As follow-up to the Visit Tri-Cities presentation delivered by Mr. Kevin Lewis, Ms. Slovic shared that American wine sales are predicated to decline, that wine is the old "new" thing, and that wine is being overproduced in Washington and California. Ms. Slovic suggested that Richland concentrate on what is unique to the Tri-Cities and not chase a wine industry that is in decline.

Consent Calendar

Acting Deputy City Clerk Fulton read the Consent Calendar.

Minutes

3. Approval of the March 5, 2024 City Council Regular Meeting Minutes

Ordinances - First Reading

4. Ordinance No. 2024-14, Amending the 2024 Budget in the General Fund to include Seattle Police Department Internet Crimes Against Children Pass-Through Funding
5. Ordinance No. 2024-15, Amending RMC Title 9: Related to Trespass - First Degree

Ordinances - Second Reading & Passage

6. Ordinance No. 2024-05, Amending Chapter 7.03 of the Richland Municipal Code related to Animal Control
7. Ordinance No. 2024-06, Repealing and Replacing Richland Municipal Code Title 24: Plats and Subdivision
8. Ordinance No. 2024-07, Adopting the 2023 Comprehensive Plan Amendments into the existing 2017 Comprehensive Plan
9. Ordinance No. 2024-08, Amending Richland Municipal Code Title 23: Zoning Regulations and the City's Official Zoning Map to Conform to the Updated 2017 Comprehensive Plan

10. Ordinance No. 2024-09, Rezoning Three Parcels of Property at 801 Dalton Street from Business and Commerce (B-C) to Medium Industrial (I-M) (Closed Record)
11. Ordinance No. 2024-10, Rezoning Approximately 366 Acres near Twin Bridges Road and State Highway 240 from Agricultural (AG) to Public Parks & Facilities (PPF) (Closed Record)
12. Ordinance No. 2024-11, Rezoning One Parcel of Property at 953 Jericho Court from Retail Business (C-2) to General Business (C-3) (Closed Record)
13. Ordinance No. 2024-12, Dedicating Public Street Right-of-Way for the South Orchard Subdivision

Resolutions - Adoption

14. Resolution No. 2024-34, Authorizing a Seventh Amendment to the Landfill Gas- to-Fuel Project Agreement
15. Resolution No. 2024-40, Authorizing a Local Agency Haul Road/Detour Agreement with the Washington State Department of Transportation for the SR-240 Widening Project between Stevens Drive and Hagen Road
16. Resolution No. 2024-41, Authorizing a Consultant Agreement with Analytical Resources, LLC for Groundwater Monitoring Laboratory Services for the Horn Rapids Landfill
17. Resolution No. 2024-42, Authorizing Change Order No. 2 to the Stevens Drive Pavement Preservation Project Contract
18. Resolution No. 2024-43, Authorizing a Third Amended and Restated Interlocal Agreement for Benton County Emergency Services
19. Resolution No. 2024-44, Authorizing \$176,100 from the Tourism Promotion Area Reserve Account for Supplemental Tourism-Related Projects in 2024
20. Resolution No. 2024-45, Authorizing an Internet Crimes Against Children Memorandum of Understanding with the Seattle Police Department

Items - Approval

21. Appointment to the Arts Commission: Nathan Reynolds and Gemma Ponte
22. Appointment to the Code Enforcement Board: Skye White
23. Appointment to the Economic Development Committee: Richard French and Thea Hall

24. Appointment to the Personnel Committee: Danny Lowe

Expenditures - Approval

25. Expenditures from February 1, 2024 to February 29, 2024 for \$28,290,315.73 including Travel Checks Nos. 20468-20484, Accounts Payable Check Nos. 320097-320852, Accounts Payable Wire Nos. 9918-9965, Payroll Wires & ACH Nos. 13832-13900, Payroll Direct Deposit & Check Nos. 219054-220808, and Pension Check Nos. 6680-6702

COUNCILMEMBER WHITTEN MOVED AND COUNCILMEMBER JONES SECONDED THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA AS PUBLISHED. THOSE IN FAVOR: MAYOR RICHARDSON, MAYOR PRO TEM KENT, AND COUNCILMEMBERS JONES, LUKSON, MAIER, VANDYKE AND WHITTEN. THOSE OPPOSED: NONE. MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

Items of Business

26. Ordinance No. 2024-13, Amending Richland Municipal Code Section 13.06.400 regarding Ambulance Utility Service Fees

With the use of a PowerPoint presentation, Fire Chief Huntington described the utility fee increase proposed for June 1, 2024. As part of the overall funding approach to the staffing and operation of the new fire station in the Badger Mountain South community on Trowbridge Blvd., staff is recommending an increase in ambulance utility fees from the current daily rate of \$0.3288 (\$10.00 monthly equivalent) to \$0.3771 (\$11.47 monthly equivalent). The ambulance transport fee and per-mile rate will remain unchanged, and will be evaluated in 2025.

On May 9, 2023, the proposed rate increase was reviewed and endorsed by the Utility Advisory Committee. Staff delayed bringing the recommendation forward in 2023 due to uncertainty about changes to Ground Emergency Medical Transportation (GEMT) program funding, and the associated potential rate impacts. Although the GEMT funding issue is still being worked through at the legislative level, the City anticipates manageable impacts on the EMS utility should the proposed changes take effect.

The proposed Medical Utility rate increase is an important part of the overall management strategy for the Medical Utility Fund and the operating budget for Fire Station No. 76. The rates are still competitive in comparison to neighboring jurisdictions Kennewick and Pasco.

City Council engaged in a question-and-answer session with Chief Huntington. Mayor Pro Tem Kent asked for a reminder why the cost of staffing Fire Station No. 76 is not included in the General Fund budget. Chief Huntington advised that four (4) of the positions for Fire Station No. 76 are funded by the General Fund, and the remainder are through this funding increase recommended by the Utility Advisory Committee. Chief Huntington further advised that more information will be available when he debriefs City Council on

the regional Standards of Cover Study that was recently conducted.

Councilmember Jones shared her understanding that the country was seeing an increase in fires based on batteries from electric cars and electric bikes. Councilmember Jones asked for data related to increased fires and whether a study has been done to assist in crafting a response to this issue. Chief Huntington advised that lithium battery fires are an emerging issue in the industry, and that it is too soon to know the full extent of the impacts. Chief Huntington did share that costs associated with fire response in general have increased exponentially, and that the response and clean-up efforts related to lithium battery fires are significantly more hazardous, and therefore more extensive, than typical fire events.

City Manager Amundson followed up on Mayor Pro Tem Kent's question regarding staffing Fire Station No. 76 with General Fund monies by describing the competing services that are required to also be funded by the General Fund (police, fire, parks, development services, etc.). Where possible, the City will utilize multiple revenue sources and allocate to the appropriate utility to free up General Fund dollars for competing and equally important city services.

COUNCILMEMBER WHITTEN MOVED AND COUNCILMEMBER JONES SECONDED THE MOTION TO APPROVE ORDINANCE NO. 2024-13, AMENDING RICHLAND MUNICIPAL CODE SECTION 13.06.400 REGARDING AMBULANCE UTILITY SERVICE FEES, FOR FIRST READING, BY TITLE ONLY. THOSE IN FAVOR: MAYOR RICHARDSON, MAYOR PRO TEM KENT, AND COUNCILMEMBERS JONES, LUKSON, MAIER, VANDYKE AND WHITTEN. THOSE OPPOSED: NONE. MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

Reports and Comments

City Manager

City Manager Amundson shared that the Richland Public Library has a new free app available on iPhone and Android that provides a great customer experience. In addition, City Manager Amundson encouraged City Council to sign the thank-you cards he is circulating to thank the region's elected state representatives for their efforts during the last legislative session.

City Council

Councilmember Lukson shared information about the first day of Spring, including the fact that it was a day early in 2024 because 2024 is a leap year. Councilmember Lukson also shared that the wine tourism industry is expected to expand by approximately 13% over the next decade.

In response to Councilmember Lukson's wine industry comment, Mayor Pro Tem Kent shared that more people are also enjoying mocktails, so potential exists to expand that tourism element. Mayor Pro Tem Kent built on City Manager Amundson's comments

regarding the Richland Public Library's new app designed to help connect citizens to activities in the region, check out library books and extend holds. Mayor Pro Tem Kent also gave kudos to Deputy City Manager Schiessl for presenting the City's 2024-2026 Strategic Plan to the Richland Public Library Board of Trustees.

Councilmember VanDyke shared that the Hanford Communities Governing Board is meeting on March 21, 2024, and that the annual Chamber of Commerce Awards Banquet is being held on March 20, 2024. On Monday, March 25, 2024, Councilmember VanDyke will participate in Planning Commission candidate interviews. Councilmember VanDyke also shared a brief overview of the topics of discussion at the ECA conference last week, and mentioned that the conference will be coming to Richland. Finally, Councilmember VanDyke asked for an update on the challenges related to homelessness.

Councilmember Jones thanked Public Works Director Pete Rogalsky for taking the time to educate her on how to best serve as an effective member on the board of the Benton-Franklin Council of Governments. Next, Councilmember Jones shared that a bike and pedestrian planning open house will be held on March 21, 2024 for citizens to share input.

Councilmember Whitten thanked everyone who applied to join the Richland Arts Commission and welcomed those who were appointed on tonight's agenda. Councilmember Whitten also congratulated Sky White for her reappointment to the Code Enforcement Board. Councilmember Whitten then thanked RPD Officer De La Riva for the ride-along last Friday.

Councilmember Maier agreed with Councilmember Whitten on his compliments of Sky White on the Code Enforcement Board. Next, Councilmember Maier shared his opinion that the answer to Camo Dave is to construct a second ADA accessible gazebo.

Mayor

Mayor Richardson had no comments.

Adjournment

Mayor Richardson adjourned the meeting at 8:16 p.m.

APPROVED:



Theresa Richardson, Mayor

ATTEST:



Jennifer Rogers, City Clerk

DATE APPROVED: April 2, 2024

DATE PUBLISHED: April 4, 2024