



MINUTES
RICHLAND CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING
Tuesday, May 7, 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	Absent
Councilmember Jones	Present
Councilmember Lukson	Present
Councilmember Maier	Present
Councilmember VanDyke	Present (Remote via Zoom)
Councilmember Whitten	Absent

COUNCILMEMBER LUKSON MOVED AND COUNCILMEMBER JONES SECONDED THE MOTION TO EXCUSE MAYOR PRO TEM KENT AND COUNCILMEMBER WHITTEN. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.

Also present were City Manager Amundson, Deputy City Manager Schiessl, Assistant City Manager Florence, City Attorney Kintzley, Fire Chief Huntington, Development Services Director Jensen, Finance Director Allen, Parks & Public Facilities Director Waite, Interim Public Works Director D'Alessandro, Interim Chief of Police Meidl, and City Clerk Rogers.

Pledge of Allegiance
Councilmember Jones led the Council and audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Agenda
COUNCILMEMBER LUKSON MOVED AND COUNCILMEMBER JONES SECONDED THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS PUBLISHED. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.

Presentations
1. National Public Service Recognition Week Proclamation
Mayor Richardson read aloud a proclamation declaring May 5-11, 2024 to be National

Public Service Recognition Week in the City of Richland, then presented the proclamation to City Clerk Rogers.

2. New Hires and Retirements

A video featuring the new hires and retirements for April 2024 was played for the audience.

The City welcomed eight (8) new employees to the City of Richland in April 2024.

- Dane Marlin – Parks & Recreation Coordinator, Recreation Division
- Adrian Colvin – Laborer, Parks & Facilities Division
- Dustin Headley – Journey Lineworker, Power Operations Division
- Marissa Davila – Customer Service Associate, Solid Waste Disposal Division
- Billy Hale – Utility Craftsworker, Water Maintenance Division
- Anthony Bench – BCES Emergency Planner
- John York – Customer Service Representative, Finance Division
- Chris Waite – Parks & Public Facilities Director

The City also recognized the retirement of two (2) employees in April.

- Pete Rogalsky retired after thirty (30) years of dedicated service. Mr. Rogalsky began his career with the City of Richland as a Civil Engineer III, and after approximately ten (10) years in the role, promoted to City Engineer in 2003 and Public Works Director in November 2004.
- Stein Karspeck retired after twenty-five (25) years of dedicated service. Mr. Karspeck began his career as a firefighter 1999, advanced to Fire Lieutenant in 2011, and became Fire Captain in 2015.

Public Hearing

City Clerk Rogers read the Public Hearing and Public Comments procedures.

3. Proposed Amendment to the 2024 Budget to Include the 2023 Budget Carryovers, Ordinance No. 2024-17

Mayor Richardson opened and closed the public hearing at 6: 09 p.m. No testimony was offered.

4. Proposed Latecomer Assessment Area and Latecomer Agreement with Pahlisch Homes at Westcliffe Heights, LLC, Ordinance No. 2024-20

Mayor Richardson opened the public hearing at 6:10 p.m.

- Jason Mattox of PBS Engineering and Environmental, representing Pahlisch Homes at Westcliffe Heights, LLC, expressed no issue with the agreement, but raised concerns regarding how the assessment was calculated. Mr. Mattox noted that the lift station was only sized for 100 lots on 75.56 acres, limiting the property to 44% capacity while paying 52% of the costs. This discrepancy may lead to future buyers mistakenly believing the station can handle the entire acreage. Mr. Mattox suggested that the document should mention this limitation to protect the City and current property owners, noting that a retrofit would be necessary to maximize development. Mr. Mattox urged staff to revisit the methodology used.

No other testimony was offered. Mayor Richardson closed the public hearing at 6:13 p.m.

5. Proposed Surplus and Relinquishment of a Portion of a Utility Easement lying within 1122 Marshall Avenue, Resolution No. 2024-63

Mayor Richardson opened and closed the public hearing at 6: 14 p.m. No testimony was offered.

Public Comments

- Laila Krowiak of Richland, WA expressed concern regarding the safety of children crossing busy streets like George Washington Way and Jadwin Avenue. Ms. Krowiak urged Council to prioritize safety over traffic flow efficiency and suggested reallocating funds to create safer routes. She emphasized the need to implement strategies such as road diets, traffic calming measures, and a stronger commitment to Vision Zero Goals to protect the community's children.
- David Harvey of Richland, WA expressed concerns about the need for traffic calming measures near Leslie Groves Park. He highlighted increasing traffic problems, particularly on the 1900 and 2000 blocks of Harris Avenue. Mr. Harvey emphasized the need for effective traffic calming measures, noting that time is of the essence.
- Rob Egbert of Richland, WA expressed concern about student safety, particularly near George Washington Way and Jadwin Avenue. Despite recent safety improvements, Mr. Egbert believes more action is needed. Mr. Egbert urged Council to allocate adequate funds to implement safety measures and to enable community involvement in safety planning.
- Anna King of Richland, WA stressed the importance of protecting the community's youth, who have limited transportation options, by implementing traffic calming strategies.
- Judith Loomis of Richland, WA shared personal observations and incidents to underline the daily dangers residents face due to speeding and inadequate traffic management.

- Danielle Massie of Richland, WA expressed concerns about the lack of traffic calming measures on Hains Avenue and underlined the daily dangers residents face due to speeding and inadequate traffic management. Ms. Massie urged continued cooperation between the Richland Police Department, area schools, and families to address the issue.
- Erin Morrison of Richland, WA emphasized the importance of creating safer streets for children. She expressed concern about the speed-focused design of streets like George Washington Way and Jadwin Avenue, which creates safety hazards for pedestrians and cyclists. Ms. Morrison advocated for solutions such as speed bumps and better crosswalk management to ensure that children can navigate the community safely.
- Molly Petersen of Richland, WA expressed her concern about the lack of safety improvements in her neighborhood despite her repeated advocacy over the years and urged Council to take action.
- Penney Stringer of Richland, WA expressed concern regarding traffic safety, particularly for children walking to school and young drivers navigating unprotected streets. Ms. Stringer focused on the need for robust infrastructure to ensure the safety of non-motorized commuters. Additionally, Ms. Stringer mentioned that as an economic development issue, attracting families is vital. Ms. Stringer praised Ms. Krowiak's advocacy efforts to improve safety, urging others to listen to her, as she is committed to improving the City for everyone's benefit.
- Reverend Jane Schmoetzer of Richland, WA cited recent accidents involving students and warned against increasing speed limits. She urged Council to prioritize pedestrian and cyclist safety over vehicular speed, highlighting that blinking crosswalk lights are not sufficient. Reverend Schmoetzer called for better urban planning to protect all non-motorized commuters.
- Jessa Szecsody of Richland, WA expressed concern about traffic issues on Davison Avenue. She and her son have collected signatures on a petition advocating for traffic calming measures. Ms. Szecsody praised the City for installing stop signs at key intersections, but noted that some drivers disregard them, posing a risk to cyclists and children. She urged for more effective traffic measures to prevent potential accidents.
- Francesca Maier of Richland, WA expressed frustration with Council, criticizing them for appearing inattentive during comments about pedestrian safety. She emphasized that her comments are consistent with those she had made previously, noting that little action has been taken to prevent accidents at certain intersections. Ms. Maier urged Council to empower the Public Works Department to implement effective safety measures, calling for better use of local expertise rather than relying on external consultants. She specifically highlighted a speed limit setting policy that, in her view, could exacerbate safety issues, and implored

Council to reject it in favor of a policy developed with local consultation.

- Dori Luzzo Gilmour of Richland, WA recounted her longstanding advocacy for safer streets. She urged Council to install further safety measures to restrict dangerous turns on George Washington Way. While she acknowledged improved police enforcement near elementary schools, she stressed that middle and high school students remain at risk.
- Randy Slovic of Richland, WA emphasized the importance of creating a walkable community in North Richland, stating that it's a missed opportunity not to develop it as such. Ms. Slovic called for proactive measures to address the traffic safety issues to enhance the quality of life and safety.
- May Hays, a member of the West Richland City Council and a representative for Washington State Veteran's Affairs, shared updates on a project to establish a Tri-City Veterans Cemetery, an initiative that has been in progress for approximately two years. A town hall meeting will be held on May 22, 2024 at the West Richland Police Department, where leaders from Olympia will discuss this project. Ms. Hays emphasized the importance of the cemetery to local veterans, who desire to be buried close to home. Ms. Hays asked Council to assist in promoting awareness about the meeting and the project.

Ms. Hays then thanked Council for supporting the return of Cool Desert Nights. As a member of the Richland Chamber Board, she expressed gratitude for the City's support, and praised city staff, particularly Parks & Recreation Coordinator Stan Johnson, Recreation Manager Julie Piper, and Parks & Public Facilities Director Chris Waite for their assistance. Ms. Hays encouraged further collaborations and thanked Council for assisting with these community events.

Consent Calendar

City Clerk Rogers read the Consent Calendar.

Minutes

6. Approval of the April 16, 2024 City Council Regular Meeting Minutes and the April 23, 2024 City Council Workshop Meeting Minutes

Ordinances - First Reading

None.

Ordinances - Second Reading & Passage

7. Ordinance No. 2024-19, Dedicating the Right-of-Way for a portion of North Columbia Center Boulevard

Resolutions - Adoption

8. Resolution No. 2024-58, Authorizing 2024 Park Partnership Program Grant Awards
9. Resolution No. 2024-59, Authorizing a Grant Application to the Washington State Military Department for a State and Local Cybersecurity Grant Program (SLCGP)
10. Resolution No. 2024-60, Authorizing Award of Bid to Intermountain Slurry Seal, Inc. for the 2024 Microsurfacing Project
11. Resolution No. 2024-61, Authorizing Award of Bid to Doolittle Construction, LLC for the 2024 Slurry Seal Project
12. Resolution No. 2024-62, Authorizing a Consultant Agreement with Herrera Environmental Consultants, Inc. for the Solid Waste Organics Processing Feasibility Study

Items - Approval

13. Appointment to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Citizens Review Committee: Deborah Titus

COUNCILMEMBER LUKSON MOVED AND COUNCILMEMBER JONES SECONDED THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA AS PUBLISHED. THOSE IN FAVOR: MAYOR RICHARDSON AND COUNCILMEMBERS JONES, LUKSON, MAIER AND VANDYKE. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.

Items of Business

14. Ordinance No. 2024-17, Amending the 2024 Budget to Include the 2023 Budget Carryovers

Finance Director Allen provided an overview of the proposed budget amendment. Ordinance No. 2024-17 amends the 2024 Budget to increase appropriations in the funds listed in the ordinance for the proposed carryovers. The proposed 2023 Budget carryover totaling \$91,893,639 includes previously approved capital improvement projects (CIP), grant-funded programs, and encumbered goods and services not yet received at year-end.

The source of funds for the 2023 Budget carryovers includes unrealized grants, loans, and contributions/transfers of \$15,283,338 and fund balances of \$76,610,301. All items included in the carryover ordinance were previously budgeted in the prior year.

COUNCILMEMBER VANDYKE MOVED AND COUNCILMEMBER MAIER SECONDED THE MOTION TO ADOPT ORDINANCE NO. 2024-17, AMENDING THE 2024 BUDGET TO INCLUDE THE 2023 BUDGET CARRYOVERS, FOR FIRST READING, BY TITLE ONLY. THOSE IN FAVOR: MAYOR RICHARDSON AND COUNCILMEMBERS

JONES, LUKSON, MAIER AND VANDYKE. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.

15. Ordinance No. 2024-20, Establishing a Sewer Latecomer Assessment Area and Authorizing a Latecomer Agreement with Pahlisch Homes at Westcliffe Heights, LLC

Interim Public Works Director D'Alessandro presented on the proposed Latecomer Assessment Area and the accompanying agreement with Pahlisch Homes at Westcliffe Heights, LLC regarding the construction of a sewer lift station and sewer force main built for the Westcliff Heights development. He explained that the City reviewed and approved both the design and cost of these improvements.

Interim Public Works Director D'Alessandro described the latecomer assessment area Council is being asked to form, which is a collection of parcels that will benefit from the new sewer infrastructure if, at some point in the future, the owners decide to connect to it. Director D'Alessandro also mentioned that discussions have been had about the full development potential of parcels within the assessment area, and that further discussions with Mr. Mattox will be scheduled to discuss the concerns he raised during the public hearing.

Staff recommended moving forward with first reading of Ordinance No. 2024-20 while considering potential modifications based on conversations with the developer before second reading. Detailed information can be found in the PowerPoint Presentation included in the agenda packet.

After the presentation, councilmembers provided feedback and participated in a question-and-answer session with staff.

At Mayor Richardson's request, City Attorney Kintzley clarified that first reading is by title only, and any necessary changes that result from staff discussions with the developer could be made to the ordinance before second reading, provided they do not significantly alter the ordinance's intent. Delaying the first reading would necessitate an additional first reading, which would ultimately delay implementation and funding provided through the ordinance.

COUNCILMEMBER LUKSON MOVED AND COUNCILMEMBER JONES SECONDED THE MOTION TO ADOPT ORDINANCE NO. 2024-20, ESTABLISHING A SEWER LATECOMER ASSESSMENT AREA AND AUTHORIZING A LATECOMER AGREEMENT WITH PAHLISCH HOMES AT WESTCLIFFE HEIGHTS, LLC, FOR FIRST READING, BY TITLE ONLY. THOSE IN FAVOR: MAYOR RICHARDSON AND COUNCILMEMBERS JONES, LUKSON, MAIER AND VANDYKE. THOSE OPPOSED: NONE. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.

16. Resolution No. 2024-63, Declaring Surplus and Authorizing Relinquishment of a Portion of a Utility Easement lying within 1122 Marshall Avenue

Interim Public Works Director D'Alessandro stated that Johnnie and Debra Grimm,

property owners of 1122 Marshall Avenue, have requested relinquishment of a certain portion of a utility easement to accommodate new construction. The portion of the easement to be relinquished is no longer needed for municipal purposes as the utilities that occupied the easement have been relocated to an alternate location. Staff recommended adoption of Resolution No. 2024-63.

COUNCILMEMBER LUKSON MOVED AND COUNCILMEMBER MAIER SECONDED THE MOTION TO ADOPT RESOLUTION NO. 2024-63, DECLARING SURPLUS AND AUTHORIZING RELINQUISHMENT OF A PORTION OF A UTILITY EASEMENT LYING WITHIN 1122 MARSHALL AVENUE. THOSE IN FAVOR: MAYOR RICHARDSON AND COUNCILMEMBERS JONES, LUKSON, MAIER AND VANDYKE. THOSE OPPOSED: NONE. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.

17. Resolution No. 2024-64, Adopting the City of Richland Speed Limit Setting Policy

Interim Public Works Director D'Alessandro presented a high-level overview of the goals, methodology, and steps involved in implementing the new Speed Limit Setting Policy.

The proposed Speed Limit Setting Policy aims to standardize the process of establishing speed limits within the city, utilizing the latest findings from the National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP) Report 966. This methodology takes into account a variety of contextual factors such as crash history, traffic volumes, and the presence of pedestrian and bicycle facilities, categorizing roads into Speed Limit Setting Groups (SLSG) based on their urban, suburban, or industrial context. Recommendations for new speed limits are based on the data collected, combined with engineering judgment.

Over the next four years, a thorough analysis of the existing arterial and collector streets will be conducted. Additionally, updates to the speed limits specified in Chapter 11.08 RMC are planned to occur at regular intervals. These updates will be supported by the existing budget capacity in the Streets Maintenance Fund, which will also cover the installation of new signs by city crews. Staff recommended adoption of the proposed policy. Detailed information can be found in the PowerPoint Presentation included in the agenda packet.

Following the presentation, staff addressed questions from Council. Councilmember Maier objected to the proposed policy, expressing the position that it is not truly a policy, but a system that reinforces traffic patterns, and creates the opportunity for speed limits to increase every five years until they are 50 miles per hour everywhere. Councilmember Maier also expressed concern that the proposed Speed Limit Setting Policy does not reflect the City's intent related to establishing speed limits.

Councilmember Jones concurred with Councilmember Maier's statements and expressed concern that the policy is designed for the comfort of road users as opposed to pedestrians. Councilmember Jones advocated for taking the speeds to the residents who are directly affected. Councilmember Jones expressed doubt that the proposed policy would make the streets safer.

Councilmember VanDyke stressed that the proposed policy represents an effort to improve the current situation related to establishing speed limits, and recommended against discarding the proposed policy altogether. Councilmember VanDyke concurred with previous councilmembers' statements related to the importance of public input.

Councilmember Lukson concurred with Councilmember VanDyke and supported the notion that speed limit setting should involve both an objective and subjective component. Councilmember Lukson asked for additional dialogue on the concerns presented by Councilmember Maier before moving forward.

Director D'Alessandro cautioned against assuming what the speed limits would be before the engineering study is completed, stating that there are many factors considered when setting speed limits. Director D'Alessandro also pointed out that speeds under the policy are never rounded up, they are always rounded down. Without the data, however, it is premature to decide that speeds will only increase under the policy if adopted. Further, engineering judgment remains a part of the process, and staff would not recommend increasing speed on a street if doing so is not in the City's best interests. All speed increases are ultimately approved by City Council, who has ultimate authority over speed limits in Richland.

COUNCILMEMBER LUKSON MOVED AND COUNCILMEMBER VANDYKE SECONDED THE MOTION TO ADOPT RESOLUTION NO. 2024-64, ADOPTING THE CITY OF RICHLAND SPEED LIMIT SETTING POLICY. THOSE IN FAVOR: MAYOR RICHARDSON AND COUNCILMEMBERS JONES, LUKSON AND VANDYKE. THOSE OPPOSED: COUNCILMEMBER MAIER. MOTION CARRIED 4-1.

18. Benton County Emergency Services - Administrative Overview & History (Discussion Only)

With the aid of a PowerPoint Presentation, Assistant City Manager Florence and Benton County Emergency Services Executive Director Atwood provided a comprehensive overview and shared operational details of Benton County Emergency Services (BCES), focusing on its evolution, governance, and financial management.

In 1991, Benton County joined the Emergency Dispatch Center (EDC) previously created by interlocal agreement between Kennewick and Richland. In 1996, additional parties expressed a desire to share in consolidated dispatch services, and Benton County sought to centralize its emergency management function with emergency dispatch functions, which resulted in the formation of Benton County Emergency Services.

Member agencies of BCES as of 1996 included Richland, Kennewick, West Richland, Prosser, Benton City and Benton County. The governing interlocal agreement combined Benton County's emergency management function with the cities' and county's single system for emergency police, medical and fire communication services to provide a county-wide operation of emergency management and emergency dispatching services.

In 2018, Franklin County and the City of Pasco joined BCES for consolidated bi-county dispatch services. Franklin County's emergency management function remains with Franklin County.

The City of Richland has served as the administrative jurisdiction since 1992, first for the Emergency Dispatch Center, and then for Benton County Emergency Services. Richland is responsible for all staffing, finance, purchasing, legal and risk management functions concerning BCES.

Governance of BCES is facilitated by an executive board comprising representatives from all member agencies. This structure is further supported by two (2) advisory groups, the Strategic Advisory Team (SAT) and Customer Agency Group (CAG), which provide policy and operational recommendations. Assistant City Manager Florence emphasized the importance of these groups in making strategic decisions and adapting to evolving regional needs.

Financial sustainability is a critical focus, with the presentation detailing funding mechanisms through annual assessments based on service type and additional capital funds for specific projects. Current and future capital projects include the microwave system upgrade, 800 MHz radio system, BCES expansion/new facility, Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD), Records Management System (RMS), and the construction of a warm redundant back-up center.

Future considerations involve transitioning BCES to an independent legal agency, which would require developing a charter and reviewing asset ownership and management, as well as exploring new funding sources such as a regional Emergency Communications Sales Tax to ensure long-term viability and effectiveness.

Following the presentation, staff engaged in an extensive question-and-answer session with Council. Council generally supported the idea that BCES should evolve to a separate legal entity.

Reports and Comments

City Manager

City Manager Amundson announced that the National Community Survey has been launched and is presently in its initial phase of collecting information from a targeted valid sample of residents. In the following weeks, the survey will be open to all residents, and will be advertised on the City's social media platforms and websites.

City Manager Amundson then stated that applications have been submitted to Senator Murray, Senator Cantwell, and Representative Newhouse in hopes of securing congressional funding for emergency communications infrastructure. Additionally, the City is seeking funding to support the Northwest Advanced Clean Energy Park to establish an interconnect to the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) grid to boost

electricity capacity in North Richland to support future growth.

Lastly, City Manager Amundson announced the Tri-Cities is hosting the national Energy Communities Alliance (ECA) conference, an event focused on nuclear energy. Several staff members and Council representatives will be in attendance to explore how they can support clean energy projects.

City Council

Councilmember Lukson highlighted the success of the recent Washington State Chess Championship held in Richland which attracted visitors to the area.

Addressing public concerns, Councilmember Lukson recommended the City give greater visibility to the actions the City has undertaken to improve street safety and its future planned safety enhancements, and suggested these efforts and achievements be made available on the City's website. Councilmember Lukson highlighted some of the City's achievements. Councilmember Lukson acknowledged the challenges in balancing differing opinions on traffic and street safety, and concluded by expressing interest in discussing reallocating funds for certain programs, if needed, to balance community interests.

Councilmember Jones had no comments.

Councilmember Maier stated that safety is priority and expressed a willingness to discussing reallocating funds to enhance traffic safety measures. He acknowledged community concerns regarding ongoing safety issues, and discussed various strategies, including traffic calming measures and road design improvements. In conclusion, Councilmember Maier addressed the problem of street racing, and suggested that solutions could involve more than just construction, such as reallocating personnel to problematic areas.

Councilmember VanDyke supported comments made by Councilmember Lukson and emphasized the importance of communication and transparency. Councilmember VanDyke praised RPD's Traffic Safety Unit for its positive contribution to safety. Councilmember VanDyke then addressed the significance of the BPA grid interconnectivity issue, recognizing its importance to both the City and the community, and called for ongoing discussions to keep everyone informed on challenges. Lastly, Councilmember VanDyke commended Assistant City Manager Florence for securing a successful third cybersecurity grant.

Mayor

In light of comments made by previous councilmembers, Mayor Richardson favored using the phrase *improve communications* instead of the term *transparency*, as transparency suggests concealment of information. Mayor Richardson shared her concern that the information is not reaching those who are most concerned about the issues. Further, on

behalf of Councilmember Whitten, Mayor Richardson thanked those responsible for quickly restoring power during an outage last Sunday morning.

Adjournment

Mayor Richardson adjourned the meeting at 9:11 p.m.

APPROVED:



Theresa Richardson, Mayor

ATTEST:



Jennifer Rogers, City Clerk

DATE APPROVED: May 21, 2024

DATE PUBLISHED: May 28, 2024