



MINUTES
RICHLAND CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP MEETING
Tuesday, July 23, 2024
Richland City Hall ~ Council Chambers
625 Swift Boulevard

City Council Workshop - 6:00 p.m.

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

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

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

Agenda Items

1. Public Safety Power Shutoffs

With the assistance of a PowerPoint Presentation, Energy Services Director Whitney began his presentation by defining a Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS) and its purpose. The PSPS outlines the protocols and procedures for implementing a temporary planned power shutoff during high-risk wildfire weather conditions.

Energy Services Director Whitney stated that while the City does not expect to identify any areas in Richland as high risk subject to a PSPS, the City may be called on to support Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) with a PSPS due to load levels or extreme weather conditions. Circumstances and steps for non-BPA PSPS in Richland include Tri-Cities transmission capacity constraints, equipment failure, wildfires, extreme weather and other outage actions. The City will communicate with impacted customers in advance of and during a PSPS.

House Bill 1032, passed in 2023, requires all electric utilities to adopt and submit a Wildfire Mitigation Plan to the Department of Natural Resources by October 31, 2024. The Richland Energy Services (RES) Wildfire Mitigation Plan will be presented to the Utility Advisory Committee (UAC) in September, followed by presentation to the Richland City Council for adoption in either September or October.

At the conclusion of the presentation, Councilmember Jones provided comments and emphasized the importance of communicating a PSPS with the community. She recommended that PSPS notifications should be shared in multiple formats to reach residents who use social media and those who do not. Energy Services Director Whitney committed to continued collaboration with the City's Communications & Marketing team to keep residents informed.

Mayor Richardson thanked Energy Services Director Whitney for his presentation.

2. 2025 Legislative Priorities – Initial Discussion

Each fall, Council considers the city's state and federal legislative priorities in advance of the next upcoming legislative session. Tonight's discussion will be the first opportunity to evaluate the organization's priorities before engaging with state and federal elected officials.

Deputy City Manager Schiessl distributed the 2024 Legislative Priorities document to be used as a conversation guide in drafting the 2025 Legislative Priorities. The adopted 2024 Legislative Priorities included the following projects:

- Amendments to the Targeted Urban Area (TUA) to support economic development
- Capital budget funding for infrastructure upgrades and repairs
- Capital assistance for transportation and infrastructure projects
- Regional low barrier homeless housing and housing inventory
- Support statewide efforts by the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs (WSPSC) to improve community safety
- Support for hydroelectric power
- TRIDEC shoreline reconveyance

Additionally, City Manager Amundson provided an update on the status on several projects, their funding sources, and funding received to date. The City will continue to advocate for projects requiring additional funding. Council offered comments and suggestions related to the proposed legislative priorities.

3. Revisions to Chapter 8.10 RMC Public Camping

DCM Schiessl began his presentation by showing an image depicting a public camping site in the city, then provided an overview of the scope of public land in the City of Richland. He then reviewed Chapter 8.10 RMC, which was the City's response to *Martin v. City of Boise*, which prohibited the imposition of penalties on homeless individuals for sitting, sleeping, or lying outside on public property when unable to obtain shelter.

DCM Schiessl then shared information about *City of Grants Pass v. Johnson*, a recent United States Supreme Court decision that reversed the 9th Court's decision in *Martin v. City of Boise*. The decision rejected the 9th Circuit's conclusion that criminal penalties arising from no public camping ordinances violate the 8th Amendment's prohibition

against cruel and unusual punishment. The ruling restored local government's ability to enforce public camping ordinances irrespective of the availability of shelter space.

At the conclusion of his presentation, DCM Schiessl pointed out a number of edits to Chapter 8.10 RMC recommended by the City's legal department. The edits are necessary to remove elements of the code that are no longer required to be proven at trial. Staff further discussed the option of moving some of the processes currently codified into an internal policy so ensure that homeless individuals are still offered housing assistance and resources before enforcement action is taken. Detailed information is available in DCM Schiessl's PowerPoint Presentation.

DCM Schiessl sought Council's guidance on the proposed edits to Chapter 8.10 RMC and staff's policy suggestions. Council had an in-depth discussion on this topic, offered feedback and suggestions, and engaged in a comprehensive question and answer session with staff.

Closing Comments

City Manager Amundson informed Council that a letter of support was being drafted for Bonneville Power Administration's (BPA) South Tri-Cities Reinforcement Project. The letter will be provided to Council for review and feedback before it is submitted.

Finally, City Manager Amundson congratulated Carlo D'Alessandro on his promotion to Public Works Director, noting that he has been effectively managing dual roles as interim Public Works Director and Transportation & Development Manager for several months.

Adjournment

Mayor Richardson adjourned the meeting at 7:26 p.m.

APPROVED:

ATTEST:


Theresa Richardson, Mayor


Jennifer Rogers, City Clerk

DATE APPROVED: August 7, 2024

DATE PUBLISHED: August 8, 2024